

Labor Clinics in pandemic times

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Abstract

The present article addresses the effects of the pandemic on the labor world, based on the Clinical Labor field's perspective. Some of the new issues about changes in processes such as work organization, work experience and ethical-political-aesthetic implications in these processes were herein mapped. Ethical-political-aesthetic implications are herein understood as the ways actions focused on male and female workers are taken, on collectivization and/or individualization processes to be put in place, not to mention the statute ruling the ways of life yet to be created. It also analyzes what Labor Clinic can do during the pandemic, as well as the modulations necessary in the clinical labor field to deal with the new urgencies of our time. It emphasizes the importance of following the normativity experienced in and through labor as an activity in times of intense transformations in labor processes due to the Covid-19 health crisis.

Keywords: labor; psychology; pandemic; Covid-19.

Resumo

Clínicas do Trabalho em tempos de pandemia. O artigo aborda os efeitos da pandemia no mundo do trabalho na perspectiva do campo Clínico do Trabalho. Mapeiam-se algumas das novas questões que se apresentam em termos de mudança nos modos de organização do trabalho, experiência do labor e implicações ético-político-estéticas nesse processo. Por estas últimas, entendem-se os modos como o agir no mundo entre trabalhadoras e trabalhadores vai se desenhar, os processos de coletivização e/ou individualização que serão produzidos, bem como o estatuto dos modos de vida que serão criados. Analisa-se, ainda, o que pode a Clínica do Trabalho na pandemia, bem como quais são as modulações necessárias no campo clínico do trabalho tendo em vista as novas urgências de nosso tempo. Exaltamos a importância de acompanhar a normatividade experimentada no e pelo trabalho como atividade nesse momento de intensas transformações dos processos de trabalho em razão da crise sanitária da Covid-19.

Palavras-chave: psicologia do trabalho; pandemia; Covid-19.

Resumen

Clínicas de trabajo en tiempos de pandemia. El artículo aborda los efectos de la pandemia en el mundo del trabajo desde la perspectiva del campo del trabajo clínico. Se mapean algunas de las nuevas preguntas que se plantean en términos de cambio en las formas de organización del trabajo, experiencia laboral e implicaciones ético-político-estéticas en este proceso. Por este último entendemos las formas en que se diseñará la acción en el mundo entre trabajadores y trabajadoras, los procesos de colectivización y/o individualización que se producirán, así como el estado de las formas de vida que se crearán. También analiza qué puede hacer la Clínica del Trabajo en la pandemia, así como cuáles son las modulaciones necesarias en el campo clínico del trabajo en vista de las nuevas urgencias de nuestro tiempo, entre las cuales destacamos la importancia de seguir la normatividad experimentada en el y para el trabajo como actividad, en este momento de intensas transformaciones en los procesos laborales debido a la crisis de salud de Covid-19.

Palabras clave: trabajo; pandemia de Covid-19; clínicas laborales.

March 2020. News about a highly lethal virus affecting a small city in China had been circulating on the global news media since December 2019. At that time, it looked like a remote possibility of danger, but by mid-March, it already looked like it was not going to fulfil any forecast and we knew that we would have to implement social isolation procedures. University classes were canceled, negotiations with female and male students, as well as with the internship, extension and research fields were implemented, online meetings focused on maintaining university management processes were held, constant hygiene measures were implemented in our home environments, and extreme care was taken every time we left home. A time filled with doubts and uncertainties had started due to the threat of something imposed on us: we were already experiencing the pandemic, a word whose Greek etymology designates as “what is imposed on the people”.

Our usual routines were canceled within a short period-of-time. Some of our everyday likes (and dislikes) were postponed or canceled. We experienced a cut in the flow of time imposed on us: a time of hours, minutes and precious seconds through which we became productive and consumerist. Productive due to the academic work that has not been left unscathed by neoliberal actions explicitly focused on imposing increasing limits on it; productive in the most diverse face-to-face or internet spaces through which we stay connected to each other to keep networks of affections and businesses done in a slippery (or would it be crawling?) way among digital platforms. In one click we can talk to each other, provide data for a wide range of companies that capture our desires to offer us their products and, thus, we collaborate so that capitalism can maintain its reproduction process.

A new episode was imposed on people in March 2020. But something was already imposing itself insidiously in each normative reiteration of the logic of inhabiting an extractive, individualistic and “anti-political” planet. Such a logic was a type of “pandemic” that was already plaguing us and triggering serialized responses based on our own desires. It was anti-political for going against practices accounting for aggregating and opening forums for dialogue in city spaces. According to Hanna Arendt: “Politics is about coexistence among different people. Men politically organize themselves for certain things they have in common, which are essential in absolute chaos, or based on the absolute chaos of differences” (Arendt, 2006, p. 28). Politics is active

life; it is qualified life, rather than naked life. “[...] the fact that man is able to act means that the unexpected can be expected from him” (Arendt, 2009, p. 191). The qualified life is forged in the encounter and confrontation of pluralities, in free debates held in public spaces. Our strength to act and interfere, to form groups, and to act in communion is what makes us political beings. Therefore, for there to be action, humans must communicate, interact and express themselves through discourse in public spaces aimed at exercising freedom practices, which would be associated with individuals’ ability to act together with each other. Therefore, anti-politics would take place if the collective aspect was suppressed.

Nowadays, we are isolated in our homes (those of us who have one), experiencing the most concrete of limits to be with each other making the *polis* exist; however, we were already, in a way, separated from each other when we moved towards becoming the best profiles of an “identity presumed and heterodetermined” by capitalism. Our bodies have always been the target of actions taken by all types of policies that, it is worth emphasizing, are always policies of the body, policies that “manufacture” bodies and put them into operation. The Covid-19 pandemic experience lived by us nowadays raises important questions and intensifies an ongoing bio/necropolitical logic within the neoliberalist scope. Governmental determinations aimed at controlling the pandemic express power strategies focused on arranging the bodies based on a certain logic that, at this very moment, is marked by cyber-media control, as suggested by Preciado (2020).

The process of integrating immaterial labor (Lazzarato & Negri, 2001) in industrial work and in the service sector, based on modalities such as creation and social appropriation of values resulting from information and knowledge, has demanded new control forms. Contemporary body and subjectivity are no longer only regulated by having individuals going to disciplinary workplaces such as factories and hospitals, among others, but mainly by a set of digital, transmission and information technologies. Such regulatory outlines tend to intensify due to the pandemic, through the expansion of remote work, as well as of virtual meetings and debates held on digital platforms. This context is only one of the many scenarios in the sphere of contemporary issues associated with labor, if one takes into consideration the most diverse cases affecting women and men who are overexploited due to intense precariousness of working

conditions, as well as individuals who are overworked on the front line of coping with the virus, such as health workers and individuals working in other public policy segments, whose functions are strongly related to the population and who have been suffering due to serious attempts to withdraw public resources from their field in our country. It is also essential highlighting several self-employed individuals in the private sector, many of them “uberized” (Franco & Ferraz, 2019), as well as the large number of unemployed people, which will further increase due to the health crisis. Not to mention the varying shades of racism, sexism and capacitism¹ observed in the constellation of problems that must be taken into consideration in labor-related clinical practices performed in pandemic times.

Inequalities associated with several social markers can be seen if one follows data available in Brazil and abroad. These data indicate that Covid-19 is more deadly among black Brazilians and that it affects women in a different way, since they are often the ones accounting for taking care of children and elderly family members, as well as for doing domestic work, often in an informal way. It is also noteworthy that individuals with disabilities already face particular difficulties due to changes in work processes, which nowadays require using digital platforms for information and communication processes in modalities that impose new communicability conditions².

Millions of male and female workers have been the protagonists, often “without spotlight”, of the most diverse work situations, which are increasingly marked by precariousness, by the attack on their rights and by concrete signs of the extinction of such rights in a situation that takes on peculiar shapes in Brazilian reality. Such an extinction can gain the most varying nuances, since they can go from death to the very dissolution of what, so far, was understood as worker. Application drivers are a mix of entrepreneurs - as the market wants - and exploited and impoverished workers who offer themselves as icons of this deletion process.

In addition, unemployment has reached alarming rates in Brazil (according to data provided by IBGE, to date, the country has more than 12 million unemployed workers) and many unemployed individuals have no prospect of returning to work. Discussing the unemployment issue is not the focus of the present article, but it is a matter of the highest relevance for the Labor Clinics field. However, it is worth emphasizing that we do not disregard this issue in the labor worlds

generated by the pandemic. It is important saying that the focus of research and interventions carried out by our research group lies on male and female workers who, so far, do not had their job positions extinguished or are unemployed. They are Brazilian civil servants who have been experiencing other threat modalities, such as contingency and even budget cuts in different public policies. In addition to such governmental operations, the Coronavirus threat sets up a specific scenario with regards to the matter of Labor Clinics, since such a matter refers to the ways men and women micromanage routine work processes, which are the very basis of discussions addressed in the current article.

According to Lazzarato (2020), the triad “concentration, globalization and financialization” has produced ways of organizing health systems worldwide, which is an absolutely central sphere in Covid-19 times. It has also generated effects on the ways life and work are organized in different public and private spheres. Thus, such a triad has created a situation according to which the economy is what needs to be saved in pandemic times. The effects of such a logic on the labor field could be seen right away, since demonstrations held in “coronavirus Brazil” gathered people struggling to go back to work - despite the guidelines issued by health authorities to maintain social isolation. These demonstrations opened room for the cartoon figure of the *homo economicus* of the 21st century. Many of them belong to the economic elite, or to the middle class, and aspire to become the so-called “successful and challenge-overcoming cases” both in the business world and in life.

Thinking about the effects of the pandemic on the labor world is itself an interdisciplinary challenge³- Economics, Psychology, Anthropology, Sociology, Collective Health, among other knowledge fields - and it leads us to think about the “future” of labor or, in order words, about the labor world during and after the pandemic. Work understood as experience is what drives our thoughts in this article. As workers in the education field, as teachers and researchers in the Social and Institutional Psychology sphere, our object of study and research lies on analyzing how women and men experience labor, mainly in Public Policies. Thus, we herein address some concerns that emerged along our path as Labor Clinics within the scope of these policies. We have been asked to intervene in situations referred to as “psychological distress” experienced by male and female workers who requested support to cope with adversities faced in these times. Male and female teachers,

socio-educational agents, health workers, among many other male and female technicians working in the most different segments of public policies - who were diagnosed with panic syndrome, anxiety and depression, and who were prescribed medications - have requested other ways of dealing with this state of affairs in order to escape from this medicine whose strategy is based on biopolitics - i.e., a social body technology, as indicated by Foucault (2008). Biopolitics is a political practice essentially focused on increasing population's production, the number of active individuals in the population and the production of every active individual.

Some questions arise right away: How can one meet this demand by refusing these life-medicalization strategies? How can we think about a Labor Clinic that does not let itself be carried away by insisting attempts to psychologize the demands coming to us? How can one refuse hygienist practices that intensify the development of specialized sectors in order to "heal the social" through practices that, far from allowing the development of workers' power to act, authorize their disqualification as fragile individuals? (Clot, 2010). One direction we have taken lies on being attentive to the micropolitical dimension of labor, i.e., to movements taking place in the course of current labor situations that challenge what is already instituted by producing other normativities⁴ - in other words, movements focused on destabilizing what is already formalized. Governmental policies undergoing update processes - although they operate through macro-decisions and binary choices - present extensive undecidability dimension, since "political decisions necessarily plunge into a world of indeterminations, attractions and desires that must be foreseen or evaluated in a different way". (Deleuze, 1992, p. 102). Therefore, these policies act through molar judgments, but they happen in a micropolitical manner.

There are many perspectives through which problematic lines can be opened when it comes to addressing labor in pandemic times. The current article has followed the questioning path referring to the Labor Clinics' field, which deals with articulations among labor, subjectivity and health. Thus, the aims of the herein proposed analyses were to map some of the new issues associated with changes in the way labor is organized and experienced, as well as to investigate the ethical-political-aesthetic implications of this process. These implications are herein understood as how the ways of acting in the world between male and female workers will be designed, the collectivization and

individualization processes to be produced, as well as the regulations of the ways of life to be created. These aspects will be addressed in the section "The virus seen as 'infidelity of the environment': modulating experience by managing labor as an activity". In light of the foregoing, the second aim of the current study was to analyze what the Labor Clinic can do during the pandemic, as well as the modulations necessary in the clinical field of labor based on the new urgencies of the present time, such as the need of following the normativity experienced in, and through, labor as an activity, in this time of intense transformations in work processes due to the pandemic. These aspects will be addressed in the section "Taking care of labor in pandemic times in order to take care of those who work".

Labor Clinic is the investigation field where we have been conducting studies for a few years, mainly in the public policy sector. Health, Education, Social Work, Justice and Human Rights are the spheres explored by our research team in research-intervention modalities, whose issues associated with the triad "labor, subjectivity and health" are at the very core of our scientific production. Our research team adopts co-analytical procedures of work processes in order to access this activity. However, studies carried out by our team based on this methodological modality now faces peculiar challenges due to the need of implementing social isolation and distancing practices during the COVID-19 pandemic. This situation forced us to explore the challenges of researching in this field via Digital Platforms, a fact that led to new research challenges that will be the object of further studies.

The virus seen as "infidelity of the environment": modulating experience by managing labor as activity

Changes in the way work is organized take place in different ways among the most diverse professional fields. If in some cases, such as in the teaching field, activities were suspended right away and generated a new employment context through digital platforms, mainly in the private sector, the public education sector has faced the suspension of classes and was challenged to create feasible pedagogical modalities, due to unequal access to technological resources by students and even teachers. Not to mention the absolute infeasibility of using these resources in several locations marked by the poverty spread across the country.

Other sectors monitored by our research team – such as Health, Social Work, Prison System, Socio-Educational System, among others – could not suspend their activities, although they involve having direct contact with people. In some cases, these sectors have been clearly making efforts to keep working with reduced staff to perform hygiene procedures, more often. However, in most cases, the precariousness observed in working conditions shows its cruelest face when there is lack of PPE, cleaning products and decent facilities capable of guaranteeing the minimum cleaning and social distancing measures required. In other cases, the productive-economist frenzy marks managerial decisions focused on lessening the health risks male and female workers are subjected to in several professional sectors, on behalf resuming the economy – and we are only talking about those who still have a job.

All contexts depict intense changes in the ways work is organized and it generates new relationship modalities between working peers, as well as between workers and service users. These changes have been followed by all sorts of feelings and emotions, with emphasis on insecurity about the ways of working, since individuals must have skills to conduct work processes different from the usual ones, as well as on fear about the present and the future and on strong feeling of loneliness. The work experience is now marked by strong variation.

If we take the work experience as activity, similar to what is adopted by Ergology and Clinic of Activity (both belong to the Labor Clinics scope) – which implies taking into account the micro-management of work processes to manage the distance between Prescribed Work and Real Work –, we can perceive that the pandemic has established a peculiar situation that has been demanding a lot from workers. Thus, the infidelity of the environment, to use the term proposed by Canguilhem (2002), as well as the fact that COVID-19 required making concrete changes in work organization, working conditions and in workers' subjective experience, have led to a situation that calls for intense normativity. Normativity (Canguilhem, 2012) refers to life as transitive capacity, to the ability to move and to go from one situation to another. According to the aforementioned philosopher, life and norms have an immanence relationship: vital normativity, as an experience, is linked to transformations and to the power to create new ways of life due to variations in the existing norms. Variation of norms is exactly what the coronavirus has caused: norms for going out, norms for being in contact with

people, norms for touching objects. These norms have peculiar impacts depending on the work in question.

Based on Ergology and Clinic Activity's perspective, working consists in the partial restandardization of livelihoods (Clot, 2010; Schwartz, 2000), which refers to the experimentation of norms by those who work; such an experimentation always implies certain transformation of oneself, of the ways of working and of what becomes effective as the product of this process.

Therefore, the analytical perspective associated with the approach to work as activity enables catalyzing elements to the debate about the work experience, which touches the political sphere. According to Schwartz (2014), activity is where the biggest issues faced by politicians are processed, since the history of living beings, social history and the history of every male or female worker permeate the debate about norms associated with the ways of working. Accordingly, Clot (2013a) advocates that work presents an initiative from male and female workers that establishes a relationship that at least modifies the norm, since the history of trades is presented as the expressive subject of collective production (Clot, 2013a). According to the aforementioned author, experiencing work as an activity implies “building, in the ordinary, a world where individuals can live the experience of what is real in what is unknown and unexpected” (Clot, 2013a, p. 201). This process enables them to find – thanks to the institution – the power to act on the environment, against and beyond the institution.

Thus, it is possible seeing that working in pandemic times has generated intense normativity situations on the part of workers, and it leads to high pressure, since it shakes well-established professional spheres that deserve attention. It is a matter of taking into account that, in times like this, collective worker-protection instances can be both strengthened and weakened, depending on spaces of speech, listening and debate about work processes.

The scenario generated by the pandemic in the labor relations' field leads us to reaffirm some principles, namely: humans persistently renormatize their livelihoods and are marked by the singularity of not only having vital norms, since they mainly live under social norms. One of the universal features of human activity lies on the fact that it always involves norms that precede everyday labor situations. Human beings renormatize in order to face the adversities and infidelities of the environment, based on norms capable of referencing

a given activity before its development. These norms cannot be reduced to those produced by humans who control and exploit the work of others, but they are also the ones we want to emphasize and give visibility to, since they are norms created by workers themselves as reference to their work.

Therefore, we herein refer to a knowledge type that is always necessary in work contexts, since this knowledge includes the way human activity configures specific and locally-defined frameworks. This dynamics necessarily implies taking into consideration the intelligence of *kairós* (Schwartz, 2002), which enables coping with work contingencies. It also implies taking into account the pre-existing and stabilized conditions guiding the activities in order to produce dynamics between stabilized protocols defined *a priori* and the intelligence of *kairós*, “time of opportunity”. This intelligence supposes memorized skills and procedures resulting from a given experience that was structured along the labor path. It is the creative-inventive time of human activity when something breaks (breakdown) and deviates from the usual paths taken so far. This is where creative doing takes place.

According to Rolnik (1994), one can establish different ethics and policies to deal with the eternal differentiation process that marks the act of existing. If so, we can take into consideration a work ethics capable of embodying hardened forms that hinder the incessant movement of transforming work processes, but also an ethics focused on expanding the normative power of workers in order to open paths to differences inherent to us and to unpredictable events faced by humans in work situations. Thus, we can analyze work experience expression and creation processes, as well as reappropriate subjective components in order to create new existential maps. This normative power (Canguilhem, 2012) implies the ability to invent existence norms to deal with unexpected situations that require reorganizing our existential territories. The Covid-19 pandemic experience may be the *kairós* moment, the due time for us to resize our activities.

Even in social isolation, we cannot neglect the series of acts made available to a certain professional group - a kind of memory-to-predict, which presents the conditions for the activity in progress. In other words, a preview of actions, the history of a given tradition. This openness to deal with the contingent in labor clinicians’ activity stems from the fact that this activity is imbued with historicity. What is the clinical gesture required from us by the current

situation? Based on this perspective, collective and singularity do not dissociate from one another, which leads to the concept of subjectivity understood as a production process that is always unfinished and moving, sensitive to transformations underway in collectivities.

“Renormalizations” derive from these arbitrations, whose results constantly recreate a given story, even at an infinitely small scale: something new procedurally happens and forces us to choose like beings dealing with a world of values. This is the bet: updating a clinical gesture. The gesture and its possibilities are there to remind us that the gesture should not just be better understood or more successful. The collective experience resists and endures in the form of an uninterrupted process that every worker must keep moving, along with their peers. No one gets a ready-to-use experience; there are no foolproof solutions external to the work activity. Gestures are immersed in sharing processes and undergo the intervention of conflicts and tensions inherent to work practices.

Thus, given the unexpected Covid-19 context, workers have started an intense journey towards renormalizing the environment and creating means to keep on existing in a ballet danced without time for rehearsal. Are there any chances for the invention of other productive ways of life generated in this experience in order to re-emphasize the importance of living together in this unusual world that is being announced? How can one think about other forms of community of living beings based on the work experience?

Taking care of labor in pandemic times in order to take care of those who work

Lives, podcasts, posts, networks of people that come together to listening to workers living under pressure, among other initiatives focused on providing health care to those working in pandemic times have emerged everywhere. Health workers, mostly, but also workers from other spheres, either public or private, have been the focus of concerns about the effects of the pandemic on human health. At the same time, the unusual situation experienced has caused real breakdowns in our ways of operating Labor Clinics.

This is the time when we ask ourselves: what can Labor Clinics do in these Covid-19 pandemic times? What can Labor Clinics offer to workers living the overwhelming experience of having to work by managing a virus such as the infidelity of the environment? What

can Labor Clinics do in these times when so many workers are directly affected by having to take care of themselves and of others due to their profession? What can Labor Clinics offer as care practice at this time? What types of listening are possible? What lines of action can be activated in the public space of labor? What clinical-political effects can clinical work practices produce?

Listening and offering welcoming spaces to help workers to deal with their pain, anguish and fear at this time is undoubtedly a path to be followed. Individually or in groups, in person or remotely, any effort is welcome at this time, and this is what we have been doing. There are many operational benchmarks that can be adopted to carry out this approach; they are often different from each other, both in terms of the tools used by them and of their ethical-political reach.

Despite the different approaches adopted in the field, we are focused on thinking about ways of providing care by taking into consideration work as an activity, since we understand that health at, and through, work is seen as what a technical social worker from *Fundação de Atendimento Socioeducativo* (Socio-Educational Service Foundation) - with whom we are working, nowadays, to support the university in the pandemic context - defines as "reality is built by us". Thus, it is our goal to draw attention to the daily micromanagement of the distance between Prescribed Work and Real Work, to the dimension of work experience seen as an activity, since it is a field where we can find elements to produce unsuspected clinical effects of work, at this time of health crisis caused by coronavirus. Therefore, the question is: how can one face the infidelity of the environment in these times? Certainly, workers create standardization strategies based on the indissociability among thinking-doing-saying-working. This path implies adopting "normative" practices to destabilize the prescriptive normalizing logic that has been growing and expanding through a necro/biopolitics in these dark times. They are normative because we think that life happens through the normativity inherent to the living, as suggested by Canguilhem (2012). Performing industrial activity (Schwartz, 2014) implies taking a normative attitude, i.e., creating a heterogeneous set of strategies capable of giving power to struggles for health amid adversities resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic. Back to the socio-analytic maxim (Lourau, 2004), these struggles aim - based on our understanding - at transforming in order to better understand concrete work situations by creating devices capable of analyzing lived experiences, as well as conversation

devices that, nowadays, end up showing some peculiarities. We herein refer to unsuspected clinical effects of work because they derive from something defined by Leiriche as the silence of organs since, according to him, health is life in the silence of organs (Safatle, 2011). It is a matter of thinking about the silence of organs, which gets caught up in the institutional processes of work, in modalities often established in bureaucracy and in the instituting forces disturbing them.

Life merges with health, a power that generates a means to exist, and even to make a job exist. It is a type of (dis)simulated life that takes place in systematic confrontations presented by infidelities of the environment and that implies a kind of impersonal life that boosts us, a life that is not really anyone's, a life that is power, strength, collective and political.

However, although health in, and through, work is linked to the transitivity of the normative process and to efforts to escape everything that tries to dominate life, it is not uncommon to hear - in times when life is increasingly invested by the logic of capitalist management and by the hand, no longer so invisible, of the market - that workers' health can benefit from if each individual takes responsibility for him/herself. Techniques focused on individuals' self-capitalization as healthy subjects capable of dealing with the "inexorable" pressures of life are offered in an individualizing, normalizing (normalization⁵ differs from normativity) and depoliticizing manner.

Thus, given the constant and persistent infidelities of the environment that require creating means and throw us into experiences that, although very much wanted, are not private in everyday work situations, we often get convinced that we are resisting to forces capable of overwhelming us in a process in which we paradoxically experience the feeling that we are increasingly becoming "owners" of the situation and of ourselves.

In times of threat by the unknown, there is no doubt that things move out of place. Certainties, psychic defenses, physiological stability ... However, if we follow Georges Canguilhem (2002, p. 7), according to whom "the truly vital bewilderment lies on the anguish caused by the disease", we can position ourselves to analyze the clinical issue of work in pandemic times, based on the perspective that transitivity is implied in the normative experience of work, which is triggered by the shock generated by the virus.

There is a poem by Ferreira Gullar⁶ that says: "The common struggle ignites my blood and hits me in

the chest like the recoil of a memory". In this poem, which was written shortly after the 1964 Military Coup in Brazil, the poet points out: there is an experience that does not belong to us, but to which we belong, a vital process that overflows the contours of the individual body because it belongs to the order of what is collective, of something that is marked by differentiation and enables a creative transit that makes something like inventions without inventors feasible, a materiality typical of times when we experience work and its openness to creation. It is a kind of art that lies on the performance of our work, on the production of a story that is lived together when we arbitrate about acts at work, based on values (Schwartz, 2011).

We call attention to what is possible to be created as care practices that cover - in situations of co-analysis performed with working people - the countless arts of doing that are drawn every day amid the tension caused by the pandemic. Labor is the opportunity to build the outline of a more or less common world, says Clot (2013b). According to him, work as a craft needs to be taken care of so we can take care of people - craft results from the transit among prescriptions for work, the ways we cultivate the work in us, as well as the way we address our actions to our peers and to those whom we work with. It also has a transpersonal instance, in which genres of action and stylizations are produced. This instance is herein understood as a collective zone par excellence, since it refers to a plan of forces that enables world invention processes (Amador & Fonseca, 2011).

Investing in work as profession, as a story written on a daily basis by those who work, implies producing memories to be used as a means to reinvent the present. In the midst of so many forces that place the ways of working in a certain inertia, although in full permanent modulation of the ways of working required by capitalism - a key situation to help better understanding the dynamics of producing illness at work, which is updated every day - a sentence expresses this strength: "It is hard when we have to fight in order to work!", says a Public Policy worker referring to her usual work experience, which has gained a special contour in coronavirus pandemic times. In the herein mentioned case, it is an advisory action developed by us based on a study carried out in the Socio-educational segment with a group of technicians, psychologists and social workers who develop healthcare strategies to be applied to socio-educational workers during the pandemic. The aforementioned

technician's commentary refers - on the one hand - to divergences among the practice considered by her as necessary to listen to workers who want to talk about their work processes, conditions and organization during the pandemic, as well as about precarious situations and lack of training to deal with routine problems and, on the other hand, the worker's health policy underway within the Socio-educational scope in the state in question. This policy focuses on keeping employees working based on recommendations of individual protection measures to be taken according to the biosafety logic; therefore, it deviates from a line of collective actions focused on facing the issue (Jackson et al., 2020).

Thus, we thought about the challenges of developing Clinical Labor practices guided by professional care in such a critical time when "something is imposed on the people", although it also - and precisely for this reason - triggers unexpected resistance. Is it the time when we can also achieve unsuspected clinical and political results with regards to the power of Labor Clinics to face what oppresses and constrains us in the work environment featured by neoliberalism? Can Labor Clinics give us tools to contribute to the permanent creation of jobs, by betting on a kind of permanent mutation that would emerge as resistance? Something taught to us by the need of coping with Covid-19 since, according to Preciado (2020), just as the virus is mutant, we also need a mutation to survive?

According to Yves Schwartz (2011), the biggest issues faced by politicians lie on activity. The aforementioned author states that working implies managing collective life, deciding about the ways we live together and facing all sorts of normative arrangements affecting us as workers. Schwartz's conceptual and methodological tools enable analyzing, along with workers, the struggles experienced by them due to the distance between Prescribed Work and Real Work in labor activity. Ultimately, Schwartz's object of study lies on the policy made through work processes, since it is focused on taking care of the "people who come" (Agamben, 2013) to work, thus indicating that labor has enough energy to make worlds other than the one outlined by capitalism.

It is something like recovering one's faith in the world, as Deleuze (2010) encourages us to think:

Believing in the world is what we most lack; we lost the world; we got rid of it. Believing in the world mainly means to trigger events - even if small - that are out of control, or to engender

new space-times, even with reduced surface and volume. It is at the level of each attempt that the one's ability to resist or, on the contrary, one's submission to control are judged. Creation and people are necessary, at the same time (p. 218).

Yes, creation and people, two words that move us and "light up the blood" to operate at Labor Clinics. Helping workers in their intense ways of working while dealing with the disturbing infidelity of the environment represented by the coronavirus - which presents itself as a threat to our existence -, helping them to understand the pathways of minority struggles among their work processes and to tell the story about their craft, now marked by the pandemic, can be a way of affirming life, this persistent power that ends up justifying all our efforts.

In pandemic times, one must resist longing for the Newfoundland

If, on the one hand, the pandemic leaves us stunned by something that invisibly haunts us, a kind of "invisible hand of the virus" that quickly and violently removes us from our routine circuit of alleged freedom, on the other hand, something potent presents itself in the game, almost like a kind of "war of arms" (or is it a war of hands?) between the invisible hand of the virus and the invisible hand of the market and capital. This is not a trivial matter; after all, the metaphor of war against a given enemy shows a way to deal with the virus through the bias of death. War against an invisible enemy? Well, the metaphor of war is appropriated by government strategies focused on having total social and political control before, during and after the pandemic. A war operation that ends up targeting citizens rather than the virus. It must be a fight for life, rather than against death. Life is showing visible signs of rebellion against controls imposed to it. If one sees life as an ethical-political direction, it is necessary asking the question in a different way: what does struggle to undertake, to affirm, a life other than voluntary servitude? As occupational clinicians, how do we situate ourselves in this struggle? In an attempt to forward a response, we would say that we go in the opposite direction to the one that sees happiness as a kind of obligation. We do not associate happiness with mental health, which is exactly the ability to deal with affections, be they good or bad. Labor Clinics are not accountable for providing happiness prescriptions;

on the contrary, we affirm the legitimacy of a sort of suffering that does not pacify us or makes us indifferent to what is happening at global scale; this suffering takes us out of a certain torpor and launches us into the laborious work of creating possibilities so as not to suffocate, as indicated by Deleuze (2010). Thus, we herein propose a Labor Clinic that is not focused on dampening the affections - mostly awfully bad - produced by current times.

In the wake of what Jean-Luc Nancy (2020), Bruno Latour (2020) and Paul Preciado (2020) have suggested, the pandemic awakens resistance by imposing itself on the people. Staggering, stunned resistance, it is quite true, but they emerge through this process. According to Nancy, the virus communizes us, since we are forced to face it together; Latour wonders: how can one change the way of producing and living, since it is not a matter of simply resuming production and the economy? According to him, it is necessary challenging production itself and questioning the supposedly indispensable connections of the system. Preciado, in his turn, wonders: how can one create new strategies capable of enabling cognitive emancipation and resistance in order to put new antagonistic processes into operation?

In an attempt to indicate the pathways to be travelled, even if stumbling, the authors emphasize that we need to endure in an unknown context of high mutation resulting from the outspread of the Coronavirus, since the mutation is no longer surprising, in view of the persistent modulation of the ways of life featuring the control society (Deleuze, 1992). Resisting becomes the motto to exist and a challenge to pursue.

Resistance, a word whose political sense refers to the creation of "possible" things in a world whose power arrangements are absolutely disturbed and, in many cases, on their knees before the strength of this imperceptible virus. Yes, we must resist in order to keep on telling the story about humanity at the present time by declaring the term as belonging to the political action issue. Based on resistance, in its classic sense in Psychology, namely: what works as impediment to analysis and as maintenance of the symptom, we must create new sensitivities to access the interstices through which life keeps penetrating through the arid cracks of a battered soil.

"Working with the work of other people" is not different in the Labor Clinics field to which we, who now write these lines, dedicate ourselves. Developing

Clinical Labor practices has been a recurring demand in these pandemic times. Concerns with health professionals working in the frontline of the fight against this virus, which puts lives at risk, take center stage in the news. Likewise, the situation experienced by millions of workers worldwide, and more specifically in Brazil, is also dramatic since they have been facing inestimable losses of rights in recent years due to neoliberal policies adopted in the country. According to services within the scope of Public Policies focused on Health, Social Work, Education, Justice and Human Rights, where we carried out teaching, research and extension activities, the field of Health and Safety at Work has never been so important. Despite the differences in conceptual-methodological orientation, different Labor Clinic approaches allow asserting an interested direction that calls into question processes through which ways of thinking, feeling and acting are produced through normativities and normalizations, by exploring the ways we expanded our power of acting in the world through this experience.

The health crisis we have been experiencing is giving rise to other organisms, a sphere through which bodies without organs inevitably emerge, based on Deleuze and Guattari (1996). The virus is forcing us to test bodies that are experiencing extreme situations and transit of intensities that are peculiar to the pandemic. Thus, paradoxically, the presence of the virus sets a consistency plan, which is productive, inherent to desire, open to connections, prone to territorialization and deterritorialization, as well as an opportunity to undo certain organismic arrangements loaded with significance and open to experimentation capable of making us turn over the earth and germinate new struggles and ways of existing.

Something had been imposing itself on the population for a long time, even before the Coronavirus. About “the people to come” (Agamben, 2013), it is relaunched every minute, despite everything that turns the year of 2020 into an indelible mark that parts the waters of many existences, in the most diverse contours of struggle seen as hope for a new land where feeling, acting and thinking are asserted as possible creators of other possible things. We will cultivate it.

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¹ Social markers associated with difference or inequality have been increasingly investigated in our studies conducted in the field of labor clinics, given the scarce number of studies focused on addressing aspects of race, sex and bodies with disabilities based on the perspective of work as activity.

² Websites accessed on May 24th, 2020: <<https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/cotidiano/2020/04/coronavirus-e-mais-lethal-entre-negros-no-brasil-apon-tam-dados-da-saude.shtml>>; <http://www.onumulheres.org.br/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/ONU-MULHERES-COVID19_LAC.pdf>; <<https://nacoesunidas.org/cinco-pontos-chave-para-a-inclusao-de-pessoas-com-deficiencia-na-resposta-a-covid-19/>>.

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⁴ According to Georges Canguilhem (2012), life implies transitive capacity, the ability to move and to go from one situation to another. Based on the aforementioned philosopher, life and norms have an immanence relationship, and vital normativity is linked to transformations and to the power to create new ways of life due to variations in the existing norms.

⁵ Foucault (2008) focused on exploring the production of social norms based on the perspective of normalization society, as a way of exercising biopower, i.e., a government strategy capable of affecting the lives of different populations, by differing from, and coexisting with, the disciplinary model aimed (mainly) at optimizing individuals' labor force.

⁶ Poem called *Maio 1964*, published in the book *Toda poesia* (Gullar, 2001).

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