

Distance Education becomes Moral Distancing in UNAM's SUAyED. Towards a Gender approach

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Abstract: This dissertation problematizes the conventional arithmetic measurement as a specific resource to explain the studies of abandonment in the Distance Education System of the UNAM, for which it offers a theoretical concept to be able to explain the Psychosocial situation attitude of abandonment, namely *moral distancing*. The concept is explained dialectically through two monographs, seen from a gender perspective, of students with a failed trajectory in the system. The possibility is left open to solve the problem.

Why did not the sky humble me in that storm that had so fiercely excited?
Why remove this body of mine from the voracious sea, if, in this even more
unfortunate misery, then my soul was horribly wrecked?

Umberto Eco, *The island of the day before* (ECO, 1995: 14-15)

The students of the Distance University are the outsiders of Education.¹ They try to reconstruct from a distant space what could not be attended from the proxemic communication in classroom.² They are disconnected, they do not suffer from bullying or the embarrassment of playing the fool in public by holding in front of their group of

¹ The distance education is the didactic system in which the teaching behaviors take place apart from the students, so that teacher-student communication is deferred in time, in space or both at the same time. It is therefore a process-learning that requires all the general conditions of the instructional systems: prior planning, orientation ... but all of them subordinate to the possibilities and intrinsic limitations of the medium used in communication: printed texts, telephone, Computer, radio or television. Distance learning is based on an indirect relationship between the teacher and the students, through the media, replacing the direct relationship characteristic of conventional teaching. This last system has important specific reinforcements, in the student's solidarity with peers and in the living relationship with his teacher, which is a source of guidance and motivation and that facilitates a continuous adaptation between the two. On the contrary, in distance education systems, the nature of teacher-student communication supports limitations imposed by the means used, resulting in a relationship less quality and more difficult to motivate. (GRANADOS, 1992: 10-13)

² The term proxemia refers to the use and perception that the human being makes of his physical space, his personal intimacy; How and with whom. One of its greatest cultists was the anthropologist Edward T. Halla from 1963 to describe the measurable distances between people as they interact with each other. Cf. (HALL, 1959)

partners an argument out of place; From the education at a distance the old wisdom is recovered that preaches that on the other side of the river everything looks better; In such a way, these students are the embodiment of the scientific method; Observe the acquisition of knowledge from a safe distance. However, the abandonment of being an outsider of education is a double negation³, a religare to suffering, whose research can be approached perfectly from a gender cut, since, to a large extent, it is due to a social behavior that obeys The care pressure of heteronormative behaviors, which are perfectly associated with the preconceived roles for each sex.⁴

Hence, the methodology proposed for the elaboration of this article is intended to be a dialectical argument, starting from the feminine point of view, with which I identify myself, as a woman and as a feminist, in order to face a thesis that arises that The distance category is a cognitive, modern and masculinizing vehicle for the formation of the world that has become a moral distance⁵; Which can be understood from the phenomenon of solitude, which is spoken so much by the students who attend the SUAyED of the UNAM (Open University System and Distance Education of the National Autonomous University of Mexico).⁶

³ From the propositional logic it is argued that those who abandon being an outsider of education undergo a process of double negation from a tautological argumentation, since who becomes an outsider of face-to-face education, ceases to suffer; Since he studies from the edges of knowledge, but whoever stops studying from the edges of knowledge takes up the suffering factor. Then this statement would be proved by saying that $A =$ the stranger and $\sim A =$ who remains, then $\sim(\sim A)$ is a false proposition, because this distance system student does not stay, he leaves.

⁴ Heteronormativity has been used in the exploitation and critique of traditional norms of sex, gender identity, social role of gender and sexuality and the social implications of these institutions. It is descriptive of a dichotomous categorization system that directly links social behavior and self-identity with the individual's genitals. This means among other things that, since there are strictly defined concepts of masculinity and femininity, there are parallel expected behaviors of both men and women. Cf. (GALLARDO, 2009: March Report)

⁵ Markus Gabriel writes in his book *Why the World Does not Exist?* Whose Spanish version has been published by the Spanish publisher Past and Present in 2015, an approximation to the illusion that implies simultaneity for the construction of the world. It is only here and now. And from that premise we decide what we do with our lives. Then, the formation of the world as a theoretical construction results in a behavioral aporia, which is rather a moral distance from the real possibilities of life. From this path we would find a masculinizing model of the world, as a created language that normalizes the modern vision, as an objective, technological and evolutionary. Terms very close to the construction of the male category.

⁶ In conversation with Dr. Víctor Germán Sánchez Arias, who is a researcher and professor at SUAyED of the UNAM, I commented that the problem that most students talk about, in order to get the credits of their subject forward, is precisely what is related to the topic of The solitude in this type of education. Then, the solitude experienced by the users of this system, comes to be seen as the social symptom, before the naturalization of

It is possible to say that normally, when one speaks of moral distancing in the field of the school, the dynamics of aggression are studied where the aggressor experiences a sort of joy against the acts of abuse on its victim. As one wants to work here, which is the case of distance university, moral distancing is a process that starts from a distortion of solitude as a result of the absence of contact with others. Moral distancing has to do with a reflexive mechanism of abandoning interest in participating in a community, since it suffers from a hyperbolization of interaction needs, where they are already sated exclusively by the resources offered by the machine and It is not necessary, apparently, for any other kind of human contact. Moral distancing, in terms of non-pessimistic education, could be understood as a preoccupation with the intervention of an emotion of solitude in the process of learning, that from a physical and a temporal distance, one enters into a sort of emotional detachment. That is why, in the hyperreality of distance education, times and distances imbricated with reality make an estrangement from the common drawbacks of interest in the circumstance of the environment; Here the real world loses importance, then there is a moral distancing from it.

In addition to the above, it may be noted that in the field of distance education there have been few contributions that deal with the suffering of school drop-out from the already disconnected from a gender perspective; The school is usually evaluated at a distance from categories linked to a teleological meaning or use of reason, such as acquiring a better job or giving a vocation to the meaning of life.⁷

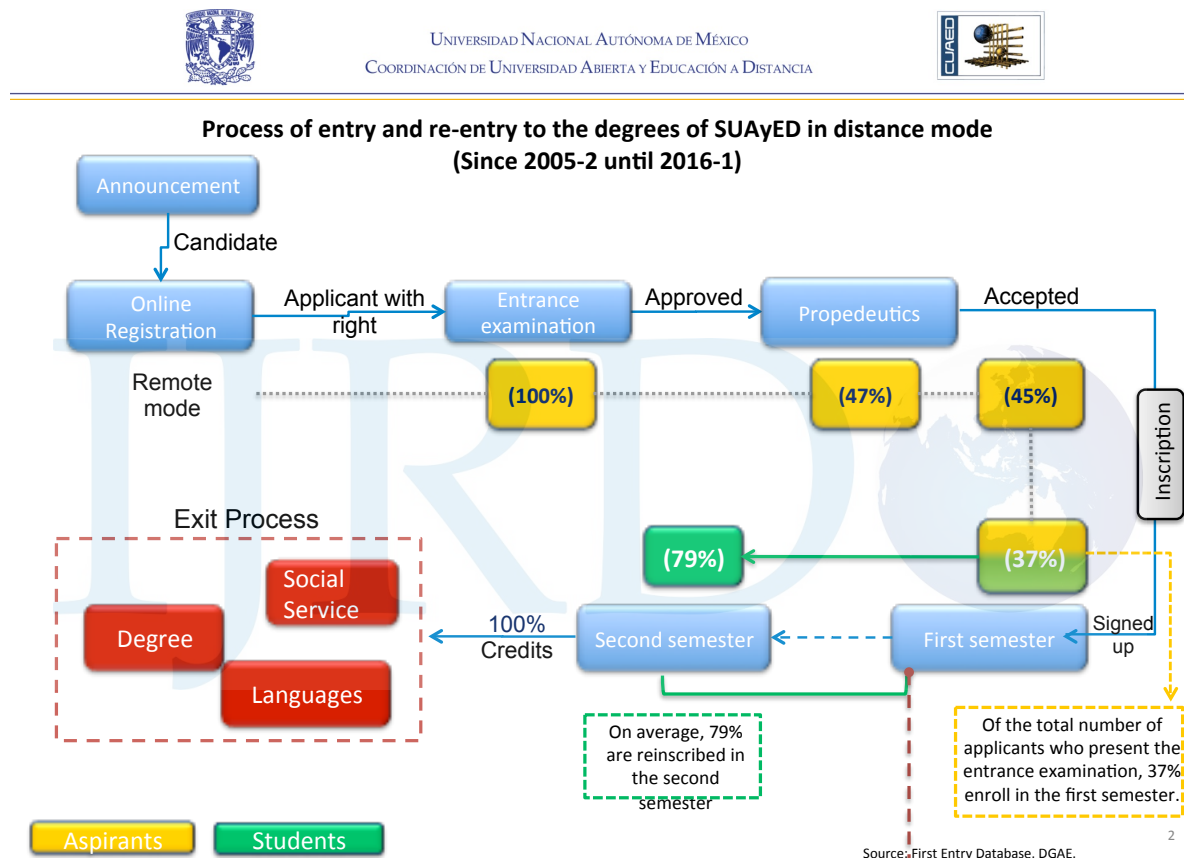
It is said, for example, that "dropout or dropout is a phenomenon of relevant impact in the framework of distance higher education programs (ESaD), among other reasons, due to the lack of self-learning and self-regulation skills, as well Such as the need on the part of the

this developmental imaginary that implies distance education as the optimal becoming for the population demands to receive instruction for the acquisition of work.

⁷ A brief state of the art of school drop-out from the distance university shows the following researches developed for this purpose: Judith Zubieta García (Et Al), Desertion and lag in distance education: promising signs of a public university in Mexico , Virtual Observatory in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2009. This article works on field analysis, the factors involved in the lag and the desertion of distance education of the UNAM. The article focuses on cases of the headquarters of Tlaxcala, which was the first to open the university. And shed some diagnostics on why students drop out. Particularly in the case of men, "work is the main enemy of education, especially in the case of men"

student to face other responsibilities in his daily life."⁸

However, it is no different to rely on another perspective to try to solve the high rate of so-called school dropout and turn the situation around, by creating an action plan that modifies that alarming rate of abandonment. Now they are shown graphs developed by researchers of the CUAED of the UNAM that give an overview of the situation.⁹

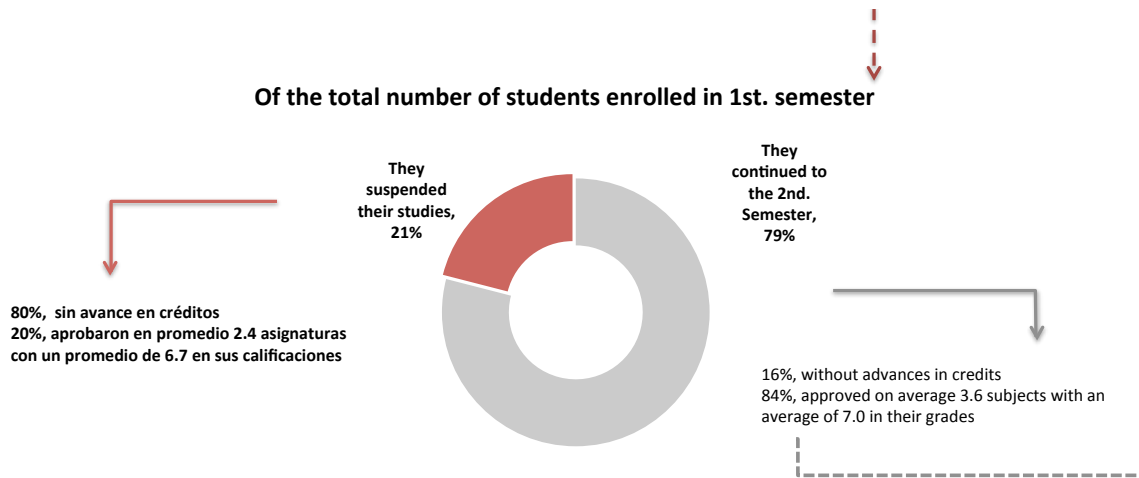


Here is a graph that shows the situation of the dropout or dropout of the degree programs taught by the UNAED SUAyED from 2005 to 2016, where it is observed that of the 100% of applicants who present the first entrance examination, Only 37% enroll in the first semester, of which only 79% goes to the second semester.¹⁰

⁸ Tomás Bautista Godínez, Artículo: *Factores de avance en el SUAyED-Distancia, análisis comparativo*, S/P, 2016

⁹ My sincere thanks to Dr. Tomas Bautista for providing me with the tables presented here for the analysis of the situation.

¹⁰ It is worth mentioning that there is a discussion in academic terms of whether it is better to call it abandonment or desertion to leave the studies unfinished in a given educational cycle. In academic discussion



When comparing the income profiles, there were no significant differences between the students who suspended their studies versus those who continued to the second semester, that is, they maintained the same proportions in their age of admission; civil status; Work status; Maximum level of studies and their averages obtained; Reason to study in the distance mode and expectations at the end of the race.

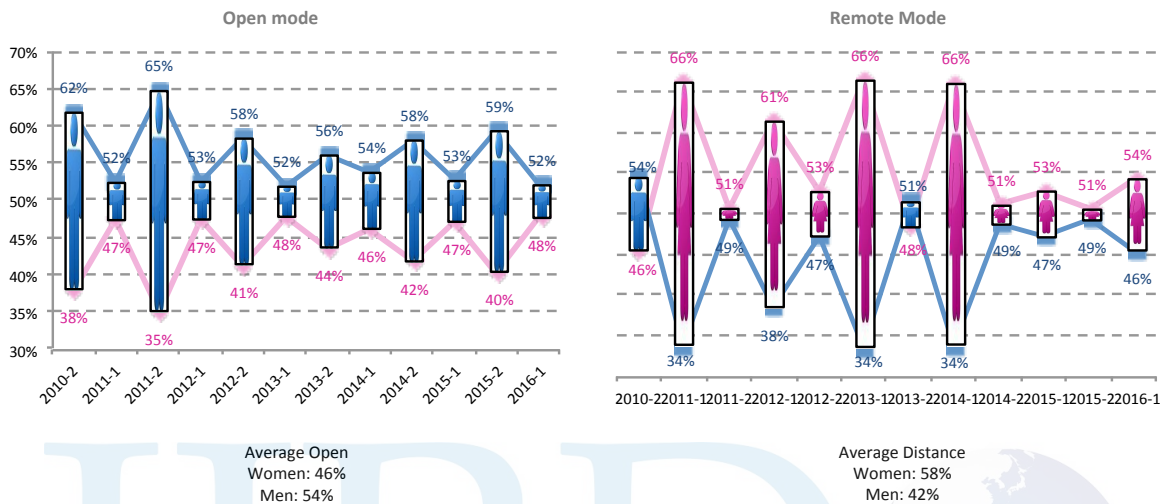
The only difference found is in the sex of the students, that is to say, those who suspended their studies in the first semester, 46% are women and 54% are men, while the students who do continue in the second semester, 55% are women And 45 are men.

* Graph and interpretation text provided by the CUAED researcher, Dr. Tomás Bautista.

within the instances of CUAED, a consensus has been reached by various members of the faculty, which it is better for this case to call it abandonment, since the term of desertion carries a military character, which is not appropriate when what is Works are school trajectories.



Profile of undergraduate student SUAyED by modality (Since 2010-2 until 2016-1)



Source: "Performance 2015-2" database, DGAE. Cut-off date: November 20, 2015

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However, the graph above shows how, while in the open mode, which is semi-presental, although there has been, over the last decade, a predominantly male population, the distance university obeys an antithetical behavior in the enrollment. What emotions lead to both sexes in this case to end up in this situation?

It is argued that the relevance of arithmetic based on a gender approach in this sense is that the social demands that are exerted on both sexes to fulfill an acquired commitment, that in this case is to finish a course or a bachelor's degree at a distance, is not the same. It is thought that socially exists a different demand for each sex gender. However, it is important to note that the physical category of distance has been a modern cognitive vehicle for world production, which has marked a break with respect to the vision we had of this (world) during obscurantism.

At the end of the fifteenth century and the beginning of the sixteenth century was born what could be called a European world economy. It was not an empire, but nevertheless it was spacious like a great empire and shared with him some characteristics. But it was something different and new. It was a type of social system

that the world had not really known before, and which constitutes the distinctive character of the modern world system.¹¹

What characterized this new world order that began to pass in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was precisely the evolution of the physical category of distance. The discovery of America implied the need to think of the journey of long trajectories, how to increase the speed and efficiency to go from one continent to another, a physical category of distance that also included the effectiveness in the transport of heavy things, this is studied by Wallerstein in the Modern world system. And what introduced this order was a new maxim, where Physical Science would gradually overlap in the imaginary about ancient religious thought. However, what is sought in this article, from the category of moral detachment embodied in the life histories developed below, is to demonstrate that the physical category of distance has evolved socially towards a type of behavior that erodes the personality of Students, leading them to frustrated careers, or in the worst case, to dropping out of school. Hence, the following is an analysis of the situation of school dropout of SUAyED of the UNAM, to attend to the memory of a student who has left aside her career, and who is here named Adriana; By whose experience, some of the causes and motivations that somehow conditioned it for the taking of this decision are exposed roughly; Later the counterpoint is incorporated to address a little more the range of the situation from a gender position. Hence the following count is made:

The Adriana case

While living in Oaxaca, I met a girl named Adriana, who had been enrolled in the career of Pedagogy offered by SUAyED of UNAM in the same state. Adriana had been enrolled in the race, while working as a seller in the market in a backpacking position. By the time I met her, she was 29 years old and suffering from an obsession that would no longer allow her to work or study, and that obsession was not knowing what was real and what was a lie in the world she perceived and in her actions. Adriana could no longer put on her shoes without crying because she did not know if they were just a figment of her imagination or if they were really good for walking. It is worth mentioning that Adriana, before studying almost completely her career in Pedagogy at SUAyED of UNAM, had been married for a

¹¹ Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World System. Capitalist agriculture and the origins of the European world-economy in the sixteenth century*. S. XXI editors, 1979, p. 19

period of one year with a religious fanatic that would prevent her from going out into the street, to avoid any lascivious behavior in her wife; A marriage that for it could take place, she had to leave the Philosophy career after attending a first semester. Now, before Adriana had fallen into this state of impossibility to live, given the confusion in her mind, she was a student who had just got a degree in Pedagogy, with a regular advance in credits to pursue her subjects, and with a Average above nine. She had had a dream, to visit the University City of the UNAM and to climb the Pumas. He could never do it. His mind had collapsed earlier, being the victim of the fear that can only lead to extreme loneliness; A fear of making a mistake, a constant obsession to sublimate their sexual repression through pornographic internet pages, and an inordinate accumulation of cyber-boyfriends who were apparently amused at asking for money after some emotional blackmail. The distortion of his sexuality was a possible cause of his mental confusion; But, in turn, such sexual distortion was probably due to the loneliness he experienced, after most of the day spent in front of a computer with almost no human contact off line. What role had the university played at a distance in this moral distance Adriana had suffered from the world, not finding in the computer, a facilitator of his online career, a pedagogical strategy that took into account his emotions in the search To reduce your sense of loneliness to facilitate your desire to finish your career and practice your profession?

To explain what happened to Adriana, this article focuses on the position of the above-mentioned moral philosopher, David Hume, who argued in a part of his work that epistemic concern has a spatial dimension and a temporal dimension; That it is impossible, for those who think their object of study, to worry, emotionally speaking, about something whose distance exceeds a certain space-time radius to itself. Losing the notion of what is true and what is false can also be explanatory of the space-time confusion in the radius of the emotions; A conflict that could be common in a distance student who experiences loneliness to an unreasonable degree and loses direct contact with the surrounding reality.

In the first place, Hume is going to establish that the action in no case depends on reason. In its demonstrative or empirical functioning reason does not create motives for action. In the first case his sphere is that of ideas, not that of reality; In the second, it only provides guidance on the relations of causes and effects, but to know that one thing is subsequent to another does not give us any impulse to act, unless the objects affect us. The reason describes, but does not originate the affection, it is an inactive faculty. The principle of

action must be elsewhere; In the passions. The action depends on the passions, in front of them reason can only give directions; In no case can prevent or originate volition: it does not make sense to speak of a conflict between reason and passions, since the former lacks efficiency.¹²

This situation of solitude, if it is brought to a more current explanation from the studies that nowadays the theory of knowledge, can be centered from that vision that had Niklas Luhmann on the theory of the systems, where the German philosopher focused to the field of the Education as a psychic system where social viability will take place, only after finding a communicative happening in that area. But in the case of the condition of loneliness, perhaps, it would be possible to speak of a decomposition of the psychic system.

Turning to the point, in the case of Adriana, solitude, explained for the field of her feeling as a student of online university, is the manifestation of the moral distance experienced by distance. It is possible to say, from a hermeneutic interpretation of the experience of abandonment of the race of Online Pedagogy carried out by Adriana, that the moral distancing, turned into feeling of solitude, she had lived with fear basically, with a permanent pain, with An intolerability of being, of staying.¹³ Very common symptoms accompanying this feeling of loneliness were, he said, nervous sweating or hyperhidrosis, when finally having to deal with people. He also tended to fall into mythomania, which was accompanied by permanent discomfort in interacting with others, since he felt that his life history was boring and uninteresting to others, but also manifested in the fear he presented to be Discovered, in something that she herself conceived as false learning, a consequence of which socially her knowledge suffered a disvalor compared to that obtained by students of systems scholarly or mixed.

Then, from the panorama observed here, one could take into account for the first moment the need to make a social communication campaign, where prejudice is reoriented towards

¹² Gerardo de la Fuente Lora, Hume: the government of human nature, research notes, College of Philosophy, Notebook No. 2, Series: Philosophy of Social Sciences, 1987

¹³ The need for a hermeneutic discipline is given by the complexities of language, which often lead to different and even conflicting conclusions as to the meaning of a text. Hermeneutics tries to decipher the meaning behind the word and, with it, tries the exegesis of reason itself about meaning. Sometimes exegesis and hermeneutics are used as synonymous terms, but hermeneutics is a broader discipline that embraces written, verbal, and non-verbal communication. Exegesis focuses mainly on texts. Cfr: Ortiz-Osés, Andrés & Lanceros, Patxi (2005). Keys to hermeneutics: for philosophy, culture and society. Bilbao: University of Deusto. Department of Publications.

distance mode, to change the popular opinion about this educational system, To dignify this type of studies and give them hope of the logic that has the sense to complete a career in this modality to its students.

Now let us begin to understand how do masculinities experience the loneliness of distance?

A masculinizing approach to the physical category of distance

It starts from the idea that for all the students, to take an online degree, speaks of a very different relation with the use of the spaces and the times. An online career can mean not having to leave the house, or do the minimum necessary. The feminist struggle for the appropriation of public space has a counterpart in technology-mediated university. What happens when masculinities are contained in the private space for the execution of this type of educational policy? What sort of emotions do the subjects that behave with the masculinities that abandon the distance education system when they no longer have to prove their manhood?

It is impossible to forget the body when constructing masculinity; However, this does not mean that it is something fixed. The corporal process, when inserted in social processes, becomes part of history (both personal and collective) and a possible object of politics. [...] Philosophy and social theory often refer to 'the body'. However, bodies are a plural (about 5 billion in 1994) and these are very diverse. There are bodies large and small; Bodies always stained with grease and dirt, humpbacked bodies for having spent many hours in front of a desk and other bodies with immaculate and well-kept hands. Each of these bodies has a trajectory in time; Each one changes as we grow and grow old. In addition, the social processes that encompass and sustain them also change. [...] Being an adult man is occupying a space, having a presence in the world. As I walk down the street I stretch my shoulders and compare myself to other men. Meeting a night with a group of young punk people, I wonder if I'll look impressive enough. In a demonstration, I compare myself with the police trying to see if I am taller and stronger, in case we come to a confrontation - which is really a

ridiculous consideration if we take into account the current techniques of mass control, however, it is Of an automatic reaction.¹⁴

Case of Luis

It's my life, I do not want to change
The boys do not cry they can only dream
It's my life, I do not want to change
The boys do not cry they have to fight
Is my life ah! It's my life ah!¹⁵

In the intervening years 2016 and 2017, I have been approaching Luis, who is a good student of SUAyED of the UNAM; He is enrolled in the distance political science career; Indeed, he is about to finish it, he only has to present the final work of four subjects to be released the credits.¹⁶ In a given case, he only addresses as the only problem of his online career, the difficulty he has to carry out the readings, since many times these are uploaded to the network arbitrarily, that is, some head and other normal, the Letters appear blurred or cut texts.¹⁷ It can be said that he looks emotionally stable, aimed at fulfilling his ultimate goal without anything diverting him from finishing his career. Well, Luis appears resolute, apparently with life resolved and without anything that distresses him; In her speech everything is going well, unlike Adriana, who from the beginning, clearly explained the emotional origin of her disability.

And although under no circumstances will Luis accept any kind of emotional defeat given the demands of his masculinity, since it is necessary for him to take care of his gallantry, it is enough to take a dive to what lies beneath his speech, to obtain a panorama of the

¹⁴ Ma. Artiguez Reawjn Conrell, *Masculinities*, UNAM, 2015, Original title: *Masculinities*, 1995, p. 89-90

¹⁵ Miguel Bosé, *The boys do not cry*, musical album, Spain, 1990.

¹⁶ To that end, there are numerous studies inside the university that realize that a great number of students who are about to finish their race online leave, leaving only one subject or the thesis to present, without reaching the conclusion of their studies. The Luis case, can exemplify the approach of those who are about to end and leave at the last moment their studies.

¹⁷ As an added critic, it is arguable, "From a methodological or sociological point of view, and just as with any other text, no matter how good they may be, reading manuals can not avoid some kind of original sin, since they are Instruments to "deposit" the words of the educator within the students. And since they limit the power of expression and creativity, they are instruments of domestication. "Paulo Freire argues in *The Political Nature of Education*, Paidós, Spain, 1990, p. 34

Situation that disrupts their social skills.¹⁸ Luis says that he comes from Chilpancingo, Guerrero México; And although he currently lives in Mexico City, he has faced an ever-present situation of economic difficulty, as he is supported by a single-parent family whose mother is the only support, so that he can live in the capital of the country.¹⁹ Luis had studied as a first English language career in a face-to-face manner, of which he said that he had felt a lot of loneliness and school bullying, given that in those days, those in control belong to the elite group of students who have lived for several years in The foreigner, and before which, those who have only lived in Mexico are in the rear as the invisible of the group before the collegiate body of teachers. Hence, from his point of view, the career of Political Science at the present time does not present any moral failure, since as he does not have to coexist with other students, he administers his time in the most convenient way. However, like Adriana, Luis presents a disorder in his way of relating to people. Adriana, unlike Luis, had an off-the-line boyfriend whom he could live with; By his side Luis not, in spite of its 39 years and physical vigor. All your brides and prospects, which are several by the way, have them in the online world. He lacks interest in living with people in everyday life, arguing that the Mexican women do not call his attention, although in reality he can only maintain relationships at a distance. It is worth mentioning that Luis can denote his masculinity, only after swimming three kilometers daily. Indeed Luis lives a torrential solitude, and although today he has tolerance to it, or covers it by sport in his need for denotation of gallardly what does it mean, as a school failure, such a situation always latent, even if it is about to To finish your career credits?

Together with feminist contributions on the construction of gender and sex, several interdisciplinary research on the formation of masculinities has emerged in recent years. In

¹⁸ Social skill (sometimes referred to as social competence) does not have a single, definite definition, since there is conceptual confusion in this respect, since there is no consensus on the part of the social-scientific community; However, this can be defined according to its main characteristics, and these indicate that social skills are a set of behaviors learned naturally (and therefore can be taught), which are manifested in socially accepted interpersonal situations (this implies Taking into account social norms and legal norms of the sociocultural context in which it is acted, as well as moral criteria), and aimed at obtaining environmental reinforcement (social reinforcement) or self-reinforcement. Cf. Rodríguez Camón, Elisabet (2016) «Social skills in childhood: what are they and how to develop them?» *Psicologiyamente.net*. Retrieved on January 24, 2017.

¹⁹ Concerning the perception about the socializing function, it is observed in the discourse that the absence of one of the spouses is perceived more as a lack in relation to the complementarity between the parents, the two parts of the couple, than as a condition without which This function can not be performed. In: Fermín Romero Navarro, Single parent families. New questions for family education, University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain, Yearbook of Philosophy, Psychology and Sociology Number 1, p. 177-178

many of these studies, the predominant view remains centered on the relationship between corporality and schooling of boys, linking it to the problem of violence towards others as a way of perpetuating hegemonic masculinity. One practice that highlights these studies in the process of 'masculinization' is the role that physical activity and sport have as socializing environments among boys, directly influencing self-concept and self-image of their bodies.²⁰

The category of distance is a modern and masculinizing cognitive vehicle for the production of the world, which has been closely linked to the concept of technology, but which in the moral field is translated into a duel that can become solitude. Aiming at a male plane, gallantry dissolves, there is only gallant masculinity in the vicinity, in the embrace of the tribe; In the distance, in the distance there is only one duel, one yearning of the group, or simply negation. Masculinities are constituted from closeness.

Now, among the memories that constitute SUAyED's great successes as icons of the great possibilities of the system, there is the case of Jorge, a truck driver, who studied the online Psychology course and who was able to do it, advancing in school work, While he stopped to eat in the restaurants of the roads between a city and another. The example of this case points precisely to that trait of masculinity that constitutes the journey. From Jorge, it is the reflection that only from a distance do heroes, not men, build themselves; The latter are due to proxemia, heroes, the mythical euthanasia.²¹ Distance education becomes the new myth of euthanasia. But how does this constitution of masculinity face those that decay, abandon the sense of continuing their studies online?

No conclusions

²⁰ Judit Vidiella (Et Al), Hegemonic Masculinity, Sport and Physical Activity, Revista Movimiento, vol. 16, no. 4, October-December, 2010 pp. 93-115 University of Barcelona, Spain

²¹ When the medieval knights set out on the crusades in search of the honor of crossing, they went to the examination of the right to heroism. It is not born being a man, man is made, and tested in the battle, in the contest; But going to battle is different than being at a distance.



The loneliness and the cornerstone of knowledge seen from art:
 Albrecht Dürer, Melancholy (The profane genius of wisdom between Science and art, accompanied by a sad angel and a starving dog). Engraving, 31x26 cm, Germany, 1514, currently exhibited in The British Museum.²²

The description of the unhappy solitude that implies the recollection between art and science finds today its vehicle of action in distance education. The loneliness lived in the student of distance education can be defined as the absence of being there. Where it does not matter the passage of time or the approach to people. As a state of being in which thoughts flood the motor faculties to immobility, or minimal mobility. The loneliness in

²² The resulting solid has six $126 - 108 - 72 - 108 - 126$ pentagonal faces and two equilateral triangular faces, and the lengths of the sides are in the ratio $1 : \frac{1}{2}(3 + \sqrt{5}) : \sqrt{\frac{1}{2}(5 + \sqrt{5})}$.

In: <http://mathworld.wolfram.com/DuerersSolid.html> Retrieved on January 11, 2017

distance education is from the metaphor of melancholy in the engraving of Dürer, an antimuse, the road to desolation in the sea of memories, the multiple arteriosclerosis of fast typing to accelerate a sinister monotony, to repeat with Slight variations a command system, where readings and activities design the terminal profile of students.

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