

## PRODUCTION OF MASCULINITY IN VIP MAGAZINE'S ARTICLES<sup>1</sup>

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**ABSTRACT.** The media is understood as an important channel of discourses that produce contemporary subjectivities, composing the “truths” that delimit our understanding of the culture. In this sense, the mediatic formulations about gender and sexuality stand out, which set the boundaries for understanding intelligible or unintelligible gender performativity in the culture. Thus, magazines aimed to the male audience are cultural elements of an important symbolic value, which help us to understand the attributes that are inserted in the composition of ideals of masculinity in our social environment. Therefore, the present study addressed the construction of masculinity patterns in VIP magazine virtual website. In the first place, 240 magazine articles were categorized. Secondly, a qualitative analysis was performed based on Critical Discourse Studies of two publications classified with the highest number of categories in the previous stage. In this way, it is discussed the ideals of masculinity spread by the magazine, the direction towards the public based on specific groups of race and social class, beyond the relation to institutions as compulsory heterosexuality and the capitalist mode of production.

**Keywords:** Media; masculinity; consumption.

## PRODUÇÃO DE MASCULINIDADE EM MATÉRIAS DA REVISTA VIP

**RESUMO.** Entende-se a mídia como importante veiculadora de discursos que produzem subjetividades no contemporâneo, compondo “verdades” que delimitam nossa compreensão do âmbito cultural. Neste sentido, destacam-se as formulações midiáticas acerca do gênero e da sexualidade, que estabelecem os limites para a compreensão de performatividades de gênero inteligíveis ou ininteligíveis na cultura. Assim, revistas voltadas ao público masculino são elementos culturais de amplo valor simbólico, que nos auxiliam a compreender os atributos que se intercalam na composição de ideais de masculinidade em nosso meio social. Deste modo, o presente trabalho aborda a construção de padrões de masculinidade no discurso da página

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virtual da revista VIP. Para tanto, foram categorizadas 240 matérias da revista. Em seguida, foi realizada uma análise qualitativa baseada nos Estudos Críticos do Discurso de duas publicações classificadas com maior número de categorias na etapa anterior. Desta forma, discutem-se os ideais de masculinidade propagados pela revista, seu direcionamento ao público baseado em recortes específicos de classe e raça, além da relação a instituições como a heterossexualidade compulsória e o modo de produção capitalista.

**Palavras-chave:** Mídia; masculinidade; consumo.

## PRODUCCIÓN DE MASCULINIDADES EN ARTÍCULOS DE LA REVISTA VIP

**RESUMEN.** Los medios de comunicación son entendidos como importantes canales de discursos que producen subjetividades contemporáneas, en la composición de “verdades” que delimitan nuestra comprensión de la cultura. En este sentido, las formulaciones mediáticas sobre el género y la sexualidad se destacan, estableciendo los límites de la comprensión de *performatividades* de género inteligibles e ininteligibles. Así, revistas dirigidas al público masculino son elementos culturales de importante valor simbólico, que nos ayudan a comprender los atributos que componen ideales de masculinidad en nuestro ambiente social. De este modo, en el presente estudio se analiza la construcción de ideales de masculinidades en la página virtual de la Revista VIP. En primer lugar, se categorizaron 240 artículos. Posteriormente, se hizo un análisis cualitativo basado en los Estudios Críticos del Discurso de dos publicaciones clasificados con el más grande número de categorías en la etapa anterior. Así, se discuten los ideales de masculinidad propagados por la revista, su direccionamiento a un público específico, basado en recortes de clase y raza, además de su relación con instituciones como la heterosexualidad compulsoria y el modo de producción capitalista.

**Palabras clave:** Media; masculinidad; consumo.

### Introduction

The present study is framed under a perspective of understanding the reality through the symbols and codes culturally produced and that, at the same time, produce subjects within the contemporaneity. This bias refers to culture as the central axis of human productions, so that every production of a subject is also understood as a cultural production. Thus, dichotomies usually related to the subject - culture binomial are rejected, since in this perspective, as Guareschi (2006) proposes, the relationship between the two occurs in a dynamic and complex way: one produces and, simultaneously, is produced by the other.

The media, in this context, is understood as an important artifact to understand the delimitations of truths that circulate in culture, as it constitutes a tool for the production of subjectivities in the contemporary (Guareschi, 2006). For this reason, we sought to analyze

here the role of the media in the consolidation of expectations and gender patterns, especially those related to masculinity. In order to do so, a content analysis was carried out regarding the virtual webpage of the VIP magazine, a far-reaching publication among the Brazilian male audience, especially in the context of the digitization in which it is inserted, as it provides an increase in readership that can access the magazine without purchasing the printed version.

In this way, next, it is approached the theoretical and conceptual foundation that bases the present research; in sequence, the methodology used, the results and respective analyses and understandings of the theme developed in the research process.

### **Theoretical-conceptual contribution**

First, the conceptualization of discourse is important, which, for Foucault (2014), refers to the set of truths that circumscribe in culture the limits of the intelligible to reality. In other words, discourse is a production that creates sets of norms and rules specific to the societies in which it operates, giving meaning to human experiences and productions within it. Thus, it is understood that there are countless socially effective discourses that intercross in the creation of a social phenomenon. However, some social agents and institutions have more power than others, so that the discourses they foment acquire greater relevance and penetration in culture (Guareschi, 2006). In this way, the discourses refer always to relations of power, which delimit their capacity for persuasion and legitimation, but also the resistances that can be made in counterpoint to the institutional discourse.

With regard to contemporary gender relations, especially to the ideals of masculinity, it can be said that there are innumerable discourses that are related in the production of gender patterns and expectations, circumscribing bodies in the scope of culture through their social significance. Within the power relations operating in this process, the role of the media as producer of subjectivities is emphasized, proposing roles and setting the boundaries for the understanding of men and women in the culture. On the social representation of men, Ribeiro and Siqueira (2007) propose that there is a new model of masculinity being divulged, mainly transmitted by its relation to consumption, and that the media is one of its most important proposers. The media institution, insofar as it is mainly based on its relation to publicity, through product announcements aimed at the target audiences of each publication, has a strong relation with the capitalist mode of production, especially in its contemporary configuration, neoliberalism. Thus, for an extended understanding of the relationship between the media and the production of masculinities, it is important to understand the transversal relation that capitalism operates in these institutions.

We cannot conceive a society as “capitalist” without the basic principle of the ideal of exchange and consumption, and it is within this sphere that we can observe its unleashing. Pointing to consumption as a primary preposition for the production of meanings, Douglas, Isherwood and Dentzien (2004) also point out that the processes before and after the act of consuming are inherent in a culture of the now, corroborating for the production and consolidation of rituals and signs by and for people within this context. Thus, in a perspective of meaning production, “to consume” is an accumulation of culture in its most different types: material goods, people relations and, above all, social markers. Hennigen and Costa (2009), for example, point to the centrality of the consumption of images in the composition of the ideals of identity consumption, so that the media, especially in its advertising bias, should

be understood as fundamental in the constitution of contemporary subjectivities, as it processes the commercialization of lifestyles. These take a significant scope, since advertising language is established as narratives available to and for all, thus building models and ideals disseminated as hegemonic (Hennigen & Costa, 2009).

Consumption imposes a policy on bodies, which Foucault (2008) would call "biopower", storing patterns and delimited by consumer society, such as ideals of masculinities, femininities, age, ethnic, religious, social groups, in others words: compositions of possibility of being. This system acts in a direct and shocking way in social relations, reducing the understanding of freedom to the individualist ideal of "personal financial independence" - besieging the idea of being "free" within a system of structures both pragmatic and complex, establishing policies under the sign of consumption. In this way, Sibilia (2002) affirms that the very notion of "being" in the capitalist context is linked to the act of consuming.

Foucault (2008) also conceptualizes the period of "disciplinary regime", a historical moment in which "biopower" was introduced, under which subjectivation would take place through the control of life. Such a model, referring to modern industrial capitalism, culminates in the formation of bodies that are both docile and productive: docile by the stagnation of identity to an institutionally predefined role of self and by submission to fixed norms of work; productive by the ability to generate wealth through labor, thereby sustaining the economy of a capitalism focused on *production*. Subsequently, historical modifications alter the central axis of capitalism, turning from then to consumption, sustained by (and sustaining) new mechanisms of subjectivation. Life-control strategies are detached from fixed models and expand into all areas of social interaction, and the concept of identity fragments itself into the mold of consumption for disposal, thus generating more consumption in a spiral way (Sibilia, 2002). For Borba and Hennigen (2015), this process would be ironic, since the images that circulate in the media massively constitute the notion of individuality valued by the discourse of neoliberal capitalism.

The identity conception of the "disciplinary regime", fixed in little changeable roles of oneself, would give way to the plurality of consumption, creating notions of self that survive only from the discarding of oneself, constantly replacing itself with other identity novelties (Sibilia, 2002). In this process, the media acts as a catalyst for replacements, accelerating the obsolescence of products and, consequently, the identities linked to them (Borba & Hennigen, 2015). Rolnik (1997) points out that such novelties, instead of giving space to the creation of new subjective assemblages, are suppressed by the consumption of pre-established models available in a homogenizing market, which is intended to be universal. This process does not exclude the identity affiliation perceived in the previous regime, on the contrary, it polarizes patterns of oneself linked to an extreme of consumerist - capitalistic destabilization to another extreme of persistence of the reference of self, that, threatened, is engaged in a recrudescence directed to the threat of destabilization (Rolnik, 1997). In this way, two patterns coexist, one allegedly hegemonic due to the globalization of capitalism, which promotes an unstable plurality through the availability of consumption, another stiffened, aimed at maintaining the self in the face of a context of instability. The confluence of these two vectors of subjectivation underlies capitalism as a producer of contemporary subjectivities, tied to economics as both origin and consequence.

Thus, gender policies in the contemporary world are established as founding parts and also effects of the capitalistic discourse, which divides identity models between a pole of destabilization and a pole of rigidity. This economic/subjective mode of production not only establishes meanings for "being man" and "being woman" but also operating on the

very conceptualization of such categories. Preciado (2010) proposes that the notions of “man” and “woman”, as they are understood today, cannot be thought of as prior to discourse, but as discursive and prosthetic productions of institutions such as the media, medicine and law, which intertwine as much as cause as the effect of a capitalistic discourse. In this way, we focus here on the creation of intelligible categories of masculinity through the mediatic institution, which articulates with others diverse in the composition of a capitalist mode of production, also reiterated in the hegemonizing notions of gender and sexuality. For this, we understand the gender as performative, that is, organized through practices of self in the reorganization of socially available discourses about the masculine and the feminine. Butler (2003) conceptualizes performativity as opposed to theories that retook the Enlightenment perspective of gender understanding, related to an interiority of “being man” or “being woman”, as well as biomedical theories, which delegate to the field of “social” the category “gender” for legitimizing the category “sex” as pre-discursive. The assumption of a gender (and therefore of a sex) takes place in the practice of re-reading and reinterpreting these culturally available norms, in a process that constitutes subjects within the order of the current discourse. However, institutions such as compulsory heterosexuality socially establish an intelligibility for the gender, encompassing performativity aligned with their expectations of body and sexuality. Thus, expressions of gender and sexuality divergent from this norm and, therefore, unintelligible by the heteronormative ideal, are delegated to the position of another object, suffering from retaliations of various orders, since they strain the limits of the knowable (Butler, 2003)

Regarding the limits of masculinity, in particular, Preciado (2010) points to Playboy magazine as fundamental to understanding this process, since, from the beginning, it carried, in addition to photos of nude women, a series of pedagogies of masculinity, which have significantly altered the binary model of gender understanding as public or private. Gender studies commonly associate men with the public plan, concerning their role in social life and in politics, while women are delegated to the private, related to motherhood and the home, as mentioned by Aboim (2012). Playboy Magazine modified this dichotomy, since it constituted a new pattern of masculinity displaced from the public ideal through the creation of a heterosexual and masculine private utopia (Preciado, 2010). Through the dissemination of consumer goods (mainly architectural), the magazine created a new domesticity, within which man, traditionally related to another plan, could occupy this space usually related to women and expand their identity possibilities through consumption, however maintaining and reiterating their masculine and heterosexual condition (Preciado, 2010).

In this way, the media discourse produces a new understanding of “being man”, generating new intelligible patterns of masculinity in the context of contemporary capitalism. No longer exclusive of the public plan, especially linked to labor, this man of post-industrial capitalism allows himself to enter the private, shifting from these attributes of femininity to reiterate as heterosexual (Preciado, 2010). Such a discourse of creating a “new private” and a “new man”, of which Playboy magazine was a pioneer, has expanded to numerous other publications, and today is not restricted to a novelty presented by a particular brand, but to a pattern of mediatic masculinity linked to prevailing capitalist ideals, which flexibilizes the male’s identity possibilities according to consumer expectations, but still contests space with previously established models.

Such patterns, inseparable from the capitalist model, as we have seen previously, are related to the culturally valid values of production and consumption, which create meanings for “being human” related to the particularities of their historical, political and economic moment. In this way, through the analysis of media contents, we sought to

understand the confluence of factors that are related to the production of contemporary masculinity patterns, which relate to other subject markers, such as race and class, producing specific “new masculinities”. Seffner and Guerra (2014) point out that there are several institutions fostering discourses about the “new man”; their contents are often divergent, but there is a well-defined demand that men are not (or should not be) as they were in past times. Thus, the present study sought to identify which is the new man the discourse of certain media deals with and, at the same time, produces, and which attributes are articulated in its formulation.

## Method

This study is the result of an analysis of virtual media data referring to the ideals of the masculine, analyzing the ways by which the media propagates about possible models of “being man” in the Brazilian reality. In this way, a documentary research was established online, from the data analysis of documents hosted in a virtual webpage of a men magazine - the VIP magazine, better presented below. We choose here a qualitative analysis, oriented to discursive productions, because, according to Gray (2012), this type of analysis is characterized by taking into account the context of material production, which often occurs for long periods. Therefore, it encompasses a series of events, internalizing emotions, prejudices, social constructs and new perspectives that are experienced here in the media and virtual environment. Therefore, an analysis of the VIP Magazine website with a one-year time period between June 2014 and June 2015 was carried out.

## The VIP Magazine

The virtual webpage of the VIP Magazine, an important magazine for the Brazilian male audience, was selected as an objective field of study for the present work. The magazine has been circulating since 1981 and was initially released as part of the Exame Magazine. It has a virtual webpage, in which are available articles that are independent of the contents of the printed magazine, divided into the categories “Women”, “Culture”, “Good Life”, “Style”, “Sex” and “Health”. This magazine is relevant for the study of the mediatic construction of masculinities in function of its comprehensive public, considering that it is in the niche of men’s magazines in a broad way, with a moral softening in relation to the others in force: it brings sensual essays with women, but these are always clothed in the photographs, according to ethnography by Monteiro (2001) in the writing of the same. In this way, VIP becomes more easily consumable, since it refers to masculinity, making the taboo of pornography more flexible.

To understand the target audience of the magazine, as well as some clues to understanding the political bias in which it inserts the models of masculinity that it divulges, it was used the Media Kit of the same, instrument used to foment publicity initiatives in the vehicles of communication. The Media Kit is a presentation of the content of the magazine, created to define target audiences and define advertising actions released in the publication. This instrument is configured as a package of information about a particular theme, business or product. It was found that, in addition to the sensual essays, the magazine divulges numerous other topics that relate to the senses that it attributes to the “being man” in the contemporaneity. In its Media Kit, it is presented by the following description:

We are looking for a simple, direct and humorous, straightforward conversation, and that is attentive to what happens in our universe. We want to see and talk about the most beautiful women in the world, get to know the best parties, bars and pubs, keep appearance up to date, convey our style through clothes and, above all, enjoy our lives (Media Kit of VIP Magazine, 2015).

Figure 1:

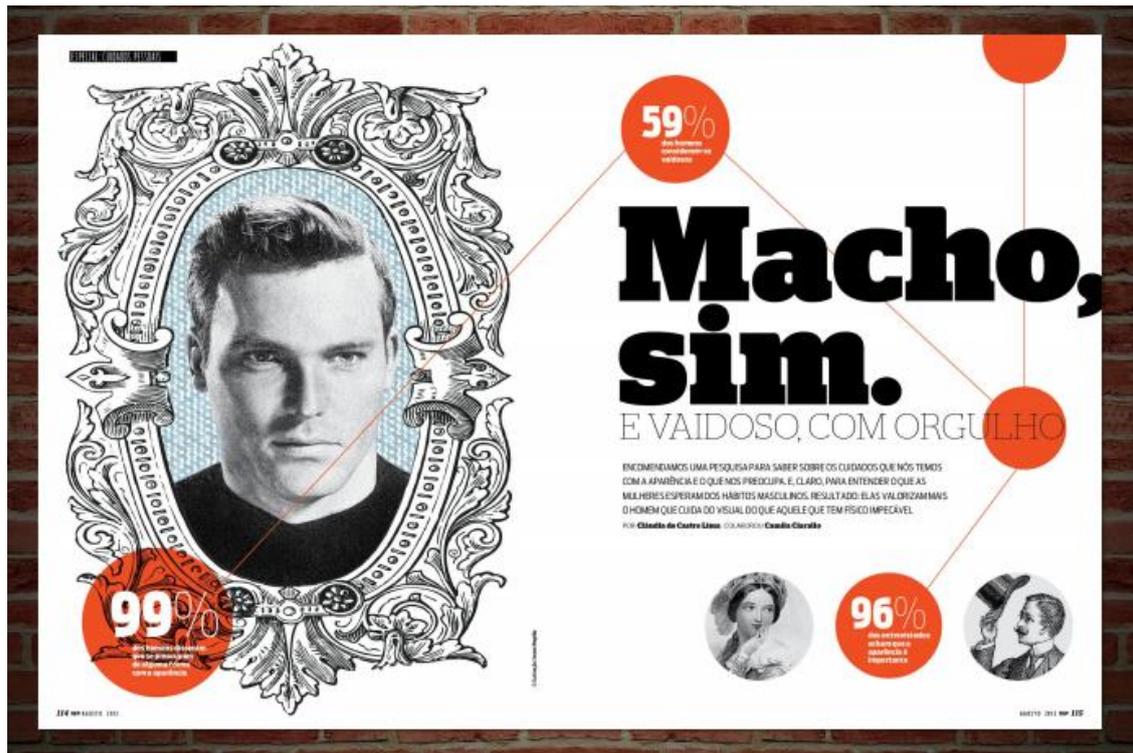


Image taken from the Media Kit of the VIP Magazine (Media Kit of the VIP Magazine, 2015).

## Data analysis

The choice for the virtual webpage instead of printed magazines was determined due to the ease of access, as a consequence of the internet, allowing for greater points of contact, besides the fact that there is a greater occurrence of updates of (new) publications, and these are released in social networks on the internet, especially on Facebook pages, for more interaction. Thus, it does not predestinate the reader only to the act of locomotion and purchase the magazine, but always keeping it updated, immersed in the convergent and ubiquitous adaptability of the magazines. In addition, the magazine virtual webpage is highlighted by the number of visitors and views. In the audience data available on the Editora Abril website, it is stated that in just one month (August 2015), the VIP Magazine website had 709,000 views among 169,952 visitors and that the average access time is 2min20s.

The selection criterion for the choice of articles analyzed in these virtual webpages was through the initial reading of all their titles, subtitles and referenced images (if there was one). Thus, after initial reading, only those whose initial reading mentioned gender and sexuality issues were analyzed. In order to analyze the image and textual contents present in such articles, it was also used - in addition to the gender and sexuality references previously discussed, which position and contextualize in a critical way the senses that gender assumes in the contemporaneity - a methodological approach to the Critical Discourse Studies (CDS), postulated by Van Dijk (2010). This mode of analysis allows a concern of the researchers to take a critical bias in relation to the studied articles, understanding the discourse not only for its content, but also, and mainly, as a socio-political tool of construction of realities. For this field of studies on discourse, language is not neutral, but opaque, that is, it can conceal power relations that are not easily understood by the readers. In this way, Oliveira (2013) refers that the Critical Discourse Studies seek to make explicit the relations of power and ideological positions hidden within the textual lines, proposing discursive resistances to situations of subordination and social domination suffered by certain groups.

Methodologically, it is understood that the analysis in CDS must be initiated by the semantic macro-structures, that is, the global meanings perceived in a reading, those that delimit the article or the topics addressed by the text in question (Oliveira, 2013). Thus, through the reading of these materials, a table of categories was formulated, aiming at an aid in the systematization of the understanding of the content presented for later analysis. The table is understood as a map of general themes present in the articles, indicating the general themes to which they refer. This categorization, however, is not intended to be neutral or universal; on the contrary, it reveals the motivations and ideological positions that lie behind this academic work, under which the identification, mapping and analysis of discourses concerning sex and gender hegemonies (as we have seen, produce and reiterate the appropriateness of certain bodies and the retaliatory inadequacy of others) is always linked to their criticism and subversion.

After reading at the macro level, the analysis based on the CDS (Oliveira, 2013) addresses the semantic microstructures or local meanings, related to the structure of the text, lexical and syntactic choices, propositional relations, use of imagery resources etc., aiming to a contextualized understanding of the manifestation of those general themes already identified. This more detailed analysis of textual content allows the understanding of the interpellative factor of discourse, the understanding of "whom" it is directed and, mainly, what linguistic resources it uses for the construction of this notion of audience. Thus, the notion of the subject present in such statements is understood, fomenting a notion of "Self" that establishes itself in relation of denial to the perception of an "other", sometimes creating, sometimes reiterating the position of an ideal of subject.

In this way, a specific analysis of the articles of the magazine was carried out, assuming the readings used for the conceptualization of gender and masculinities in the context of contemporary capitalism through an approach to Critical Discourse Studies (Van Dijk, 2010). We will illustrate this stage of analysis with two of the articles categorized in the first moment of analysis, chosen for their theoretical representativeness in relation to the categories used by the authors of the present study.

## Results

### *Stage 1 - Categorical grouping of publications*

We constructed a categorical picture of the publications from the thematic editorial axes presented by the magazine's website: "**Women**", "**Culture**", "**Good Life**", "**Style**", "**Sex**", "**Health**", plus an axis not mentioned by the magazine, "**Masculinity**", but developed by the authors to analyze the contents that mention masculinity. From the axes, categories were created, when necessary, in order to specify the contents found. A total of two hundred and forty (240) articles were analyzed during the one-year period (July 2014 to July 2015), which were selected because they explicitly addressed the themes of gender and sexuality as the central focus.

The categorization of themes was based on both written and imagery content, based on the idea that in these vehicles of communication, image and text are articulated for the establishment of common meanings. Pizzinato (2012) understands that narratives can be constructed from conjunctions of images and texts, configuring themselves as reports of symbolic value, involved in socially shared senses that constitute cultural and personal identities. In this sense, Loizos (2002) understands that the images produced by a particular culture are directly imbricated in the values that it supports, so that the meanings of such images are always established in relation to the linguistic systems in which they are inserted. In the case of photography, this is not understood as a mere record or copy of reality, since the very choice of elements to be portrayed is already part of an intention, and also because it, from the beginning, is susceptible of modifications, independently of the technology used. In this way, we understand the photographs published in these media vehicles as producers of meanings that, in consonance with written language, manifest a cultural pattern related to a certain ideology (Loizos, 2000).

From the number of articles analyzed, it was noticed that, in addition to being aimed at the male public, the majority (203 articles) referred to the same, therefore, the articles referring to women were minority (109 articles), but not null. There were also neutral articles or referring to both groups. Of these, heterosexual relations predominated (131 articles), leaving room for homosexuality in only seven (7) articles, which nevertheless appeared subtly. In the article "Responsible Advertisements" (Editorial of the VIP Magazine, July 14, 2014), fifteen images are exposed used in advertisements, denouncing and drawing attention to important causes. Among them, there is an image destined for homosexuality, which is repeated twice, appearing on the cover at the end of the article, in large size. The image is a photo of the President of the United States and the President of China kissing, with the caption "UNHATE".

This same image quoted at the end of the previous paragraph was also counted as "Black", since Barack Obama, president of the United States, is black. In addition, only eighteen other articles were found in this subcategory, totaling nineteen (19). On the other hand, fifty-nine (59) articles were found in the subcategory "White", predominantly through images and videos.

Figure 2:



Advertising image of the Benetton brand published in the article “Responsible Advertisements”, on the VIP Magazine Website (Editorial of the VIP Magazine, July 14, 2014).

The category “Consumption” gained visibility due to the number of belonging articles (123 articles), ranking third among the categories that gained more prominence. In this case, there were predominant posts about products, brands and launches, stimulating the reader to acquire them, both through images and a good description of it. On the other hand, axes such as “Health” and “Culture” appeared in reduced numbers, with an average of seventeen (17) articles, proving not to be a priority for the website and/or readers. The category “Aesthetics” appeared more sixty-two times, totaling sixty-three (63) articles.

The categories “Traditional Masculinity Stereotype” and “Other Masculinity” maintained a balance, with little difference in the number of articles. While the first appeared a hundred and fifteen times (115), the second became visible one hundred and seven times (107). As justification, it is possible to think of the hypothesis that both categories appeared several times at the same time, that is, in the same article. Thus, on the one hand, the magazine tries to establish approximations to new possibilities of masculinity and, on the other hand, it still maintains traditional patterns, transiting between the two without definitively assuming any of them. Thus, it is possible to think that the probable public of the magazine is heterogeneous. Several times the category “Other Masculinity” appeared related to the category “Domesticity”, axis “Good Life”, as for example in the matter “Forget the grinder and learn to make a hamburger with only the knife”, in which it is exposed the recipe of the dish to be carried out in a domestic environment, without great difficulties. In addition, the article contains the image of a man, the chef who created the recipe, preparing the hamburger. The category “Domesticity” obtained a total of thirty-eight articles (38).

### *Stage 2 – Critical review of representative notes*

The first article analyzed is titled “Neil Patrick Harris will present the Oscar 2015” (Editorial of the VIP Magazine, October 20, 2014), published on the VIP magazine website

on October 20, 2014. This was classified in the table from the following axes and categories: "Masculinity" (with the categories "Refers to Masculine", "Other Masculinities", "Stereotypes of Masculinities" and "White Masculinities"), "Culture", "Women" and "Sex" (with the categories "Heterosexuality" and "Homosexuality"). The category "White Masculinities" was marked by the fact that there were no non-white men quoted in the text. The article begins with the description of this future event and informs that the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences would be seeking to increase the audience of the ceremony through the non-repeated use of different presenters. Next, some presenters of past editions of the event are presented and evaluated, with praise and criticism on their performances.

The CDS (Van Dijk, 2010), in proposing discourse as a sociopolitical tool, understand the same from the associations it establishes at the social level, in a relational understanding of what is manifest with the cultural meanings that surround it. In this way, the meaning of a text exceeds the text itself, that is, for its critical analysis, it is also necessary to seek in the culture the meanings for what it exposes, marking the communicative situation in which it is inserted, both verbatim and visually (Van Dijk, 2010). For this reason, although there is no written reference to homosexual relations, the category "Homosexuality" was marked by virtue of social recognition about people mentioned in the text. From this perspective, comments about the presenters mentioned will be reproduced, which are significant for understanding the ideals and expectations of the gender conveyed by the magazine's virtual webpage.

Of particular note is the performance of comedian Seth McFarlane, responsible for presenting the ceremony in 2013. The evaluation is mainly negative, mainly due to the content of the jokes performed by him in the event.

(...) As the Oscar chases the young audience as Spielberg chases the Oscar, a comedian who does well with this audience would be an obvious choice for the 2013 ceremony, right? If they wanted jokes with fart, butt and boobs, they did. "We Saw Your Boobs", sung by him, was one of the most embarrassing moments in the history of the ceremony, with the cuts to the expressions of the actresses showing the best of the "down, you fool". (Editorial of the VIP Magazine, October 20, 2014).

The first sentence quoted refers to a certain audience, which would be the target of such a ceremony. Subsequently, it indicates that this public, if looked for in the presentation content similar to the one brought by the presenter, would be satisfied with the performance. However, in order to present disapproval to the discourse of the artist, the appeal is the female reaction, represented by the mention of their facial expressions as a consequence of the "embarrassment" caused by sexist jokes. In this way, it is understood that the target public mentioned in the first sentence was composed of men, since the negative is associated with the response of the women. Thus, two types of masculinity are presented in polarization: first, those who would feel contemplated by the content presented by the host and, on the other hand, those whose position would be closer to that expressed by women in the negative responses that associate the host with a "big fool".

Men of the first type, referred to by the classification of "big fool", are related to the stereotypes of classical masculinity, related to attributes of virility and rusticity, while the men of the second type, valued obliquely by the discourse of matter, approach the female expectation. A reorganization of the heterosexual institution is thus perceived through the refusal of clichés characteristics of the heterosexual man, thus proposing an "other masculinity". References to the host cited later, Hugh Jackman, in charge of the 2009 ceremony, may aid in understanding this new pattern of man that the magazine conveys indirectly as an ideal:

The following year, they invited the actor Hugh Jackman, a guy so versatile, who sings, dances, acts and is still a favorite of women and guys (Wolverine, fuck yeah!). In a year of economic downturn, its opening with cardboard serving as the setting for the nominated films was creative and funny. Mr. Sympathy was one of the recent great achievements of the Oscar (Editorial of the VIP Magazine, October 20, 2014).

It is understood that in the first sentence of the passage quoted, the heterosexual construction of masculinity proposed by the webpage qualifies this man as “the favorite” among both men and women. However, this preference differs qualitatively, since, in relation to women, it would be constituted by the sexual desire, while, for men, it would be a way of identification with the character interpreted by him, who carries attributes of virility, rusticity and violence, classically referred to a male stereotype (illustrated in the article by the association with the comic character Wolverine). However, such identification with the traditional stereotype of heterosexual man is countered by references to his versatility, related ability of the actor to dance, sing, act and still be nice, thus pleasing all audiences.

The predominant interpellative factor of this message consists in the association between the correspondence to the expectation of the heterosexual norm (desire for the woman, identification for the man) to the good performance of the actor in the activity of Oscar host, thus reiterating what kind of affection is expected for each gender. The heterosexuality conveyed in the commentary, however, differs from that of the actor Seth McFarlane: if the pattern of heterosexuality that contemplates it distances him from the desire of women, that of Hugh Jackman, on the contrary, brings him closer. It can be understood, therefore, that the approach to the woman’s desire is the driver for the new masculine standard that the magazine proposes, displacing some stereotypes related to the man, but without reiterating the heterosexual regime, which continues to shape the intelligible pattern of masculinity.

If the discourse about masculinity moves from the classic stereotypes, but still reiterates the heteronormative ideal, it is interesting to analyze how the discourse of the magazine contemplates people publicly recognized as homosexuals and how these relate to the ideals of gender proposed by the magazine. The last host referred to in the article is Ellen Degeneres, who was responsible for the ceremony in 2014. She is an openly lesbian woman, mediatically recognized for being married to another woman and performatizing attributes of the masculine in the way of dressing, usually in suits or social shirts. The evaluation of her performance is positive, but nothing is said about her sexual orientation or the ability to arouse sexual desires or identification with the public, as in the previous case. On the contrary, the outstanding attributes are all of a professional nature:

She is a presenter with years of experience in a live show, of course she is in 1<sup>st</sup> place. DeGeneres still managed to kill two birds with one stone: in addition to the experience of delivering more than three hours of quality entertainment, she managed to attract the attention of the young audience with the marketing move that set new records involving selfie and Twitter (Editorial of the VIP Magazine, October 20, 2014).

Her attraction to the public stems from her experience as a host and ability to make use of social technologies such as the photographic language of selfie and the Twitter platform. About the future host, Neil Patrick Harris, no statements are made about his sexual orientation or the ability to arouse some sort of desire in the viewers. These contradictions allow us to evaluate how the magazine’s discourse organizes the understandings of heterosexuality and homosexuality. If heterosexuality, even with changes in the standard of

man, follows as the founding category of the ideal of masculine, the representation of homosexuality also shifts from that to which it was classically attributed. There is no discourse of denial of homosexuality, no violence and no attributes that can be considered “homophobic”. On the contrary, there is no reference to the desire for people of the same sex. Silence keeps non-heterosexuality in the position of another, which need not be destroyed, but cannot be said. Thus, it is understood that the discourse of this article reaffirms the intelligibility of the gender according to the heterosexual norm, which remains transverse in the constitution of masculinity, whether related to “classical” stereotypes or displaced in this new standard under construction.

The magazine, which has the masculine as a target audience, directs the text of this article to men who move from the stereotype traditionally associated with their gender. In addressing these men, it contributes to their production, creating new intelligibilities for the expression of their sex and desire through the attributes we have mapped and discussed earlier. These displacements make the position of the man more flexible in relation to the woman, establishing patterns of masculinity that are designed to contemplate heterosexual female expectations and desires. Nevertheless, heterosexual hegemony is preserved, in line with the ideal of whiteness (all people cited in the text are white), fostering an ideal of man that is circumscribed in more flexible contours as to its manifestation of gender, making us rethink the classical differentiation of the studies of gender on the public and private planes, but still maintains at basal level the characteristics of compulsory heterosexuality and whiteness as hegemonic paradigm.

The second article analyzed is called “Dining table or pool table?” (Editorial of the VIP Magazine, October 30, 2014). The text consists of the dissemination of a product, a table whose function alternates between a dining table and a pool table. It was classified in the table from the categories: “It refers to masculine”, “Aesthetics”, “Heterosexuality”, “Other Masculinity” and “White Masculinity”. The subtitle of the article explains the variable character of the object, assigning its functionality to two activities: “With Fusion Tables, you can have dinner with your friends and then, ~ play a ball ~” (Editorial of the VIP Magazine, October 30 2014). This introduction allows a first understanding of the contours under which the publication proposes an ideal of masculinity: the possibility of interspersing public and private planes through the masculine.

Classical gender studies relate the ideals of masculine to the public plan, which is responsible for socialization and politics, while women are destined to the private sector, concerning domestic care and maternity (Aboim, 2012). Such a perspective, in other contexts, could find support in the activities proposed by the article (socializing with friends and “play a ball”); however, the publication refers such practices to the interior of the house, indicating that the conceptualization proposed by said gender studies no longer contemplates this “new private” or “new masculine”. The private ideal conveyed by the magazine is penetrable by the masculine ideal, in order to destabilize classic notions referring to “being a man”. It is thus necessary to map which attributes are articulated to the presented idea of domestic, how they are intercalated in the composition of a pattern of masculinity and what social representations are raised in this process.

To do so, it is worth mentioning the expression “~ play a ball ~”, written between two graphical signs of tilde, which, in the language of the internet, usually means irony. This irony can be understood through the use of the expression, usually related to the soccer game, normally carried out in external environments, thus giving a new meaning to it. The fusion table, in this way, at the same time as it displaces its functionality (dinner or games), also displaces the public and private senses to which certain practices are related. In

practical terms, the table will not reproduce the soccer game, but will allow a reference to it, symbolizing this public practice through a game held inside the domestic plane. This metaphor of the changeable is much used by Preciado (2010) in the analysis of domestic objects published in the *Playboy* magazine in the 1960s and 1970s. The author relates this alternance to the various possibilities that men can assume from these decades, occupying no more only the public plan, but also building a new private, which is malleable to the possibilities of the “new man”, as we pointed out in the theoretical foundation.

The text follows in the presentation of the product:

Belgian designers at the Aramith Group have developed a special table for pool lovers. Called Fusion Tables, the dining/pool table is available in white, black and brown in a one-of-a-kind size of 2.30m x 1.34m (if you still confuse pool and billiards, the *Mundo Estranho Magazine* website helps you to understand). The balls and the cues come in the package; and the pockets are invisible to maintain the minimalist air of the table.

The group calls themselves experts in lifestyle and sharing pleasure in the comfort of home, with family or friends of all generations. If you want this beauty in your dining room, you will have to look for a reseller because it is not available for sale online. (Editorial of the *VIP Magazine*, October 30, 2014)

There are many references to the exclusivity of the table, sold in unique sizes and with distribution restricted to its dealer. The assumption of an exclusive position through consumption resumes the proposal of Rolnik (1997), who understands capitalism as producer of identities that need to be consumed and discarded for the assumption of new ones. This flow of identity discarding metaphors the way in which neoliberal capitalism is structured, whose axis is the consumption of goods and not their production, that is, we consume identity patterns in the same way as we consume products (Sibilia, 2015). This logic is present in the contemporary discourses on gender and sex, which are defined in part by patterns of consumption. The production of an ideal of masculine carried out by advertising is perceived in this article: the table is not only a functional object, it is related to a “lifestyle”, a pattern of life made possible by the ideal that circumscribes the product sold. In this way, the masculine pattern published by the article again differs from that traditionally produced by both the publicity and the classical gender studies, displaced from the private and responsible for the public. This man presented by the article belongs to the domestic plan and effects his belonging from the aesthetic perception of the environment and influence on it through purchase.

Nevertheless, it is remarkable the concern to maintain the heterosexual order, moving the new ideal of man away from a possible shift to the desire of a socially awaited pattern for its gender. If the preoccupation with the private was previously restricted to women, the discourse that brings man closer to this feminine practice needs to reaffirm his heterosexual desire, since it remains a presupposition for the very conception of masculine. In this way, stereotypes of masculinity are applied, referring to an earlier pattern, which manifests itself in attributes that persist to the subjective destabilization provoked by contemporary capitalism. As Rolnik (1997) asserts, poles of stability and instability are produced, under which the contemporary identity possibilities vary ambivalently. On the one hand, flexible and changeable ideals; on the other, rigid patterns that seem to survive relentlessly against neoliberal assemblages. In this text, one can see this pattern in the commentary “(if you still confuse pool and billiards, the *Mundo Estranho Magazine* website helps you to understand)”, which links to a webpage of *Mundo Estranho Magazine*, explaining the

difference between two games, traditionally understood as part of male socialization. The message is: “be flexible, enter the household plan and consume, but do not neglect to preserve the tradition of man”.

In this sense, the analysis of the photographs in the article, taken from the official sales website, presents reflections that help in understanding the ambivalent ideology that surrounds the notion of heterosexuality and masculinity. The publication displays 6 photos, among which only the third shows people. In this, there is the picture of a couple, the man in the foreground and the woman behind, both white, one looking at the other, smiling while the woman stands in the position of the one who is initiating a move. The table, however, is not completely open, and the man in the picture has in his hands the board that turns that table into a dining table, taking it out. The functional alternance of the object is demonstrated from the male intervention, which changes the configuration of the table, so that the woman can make her move. The pool, symbolizing here the public plan, enters the private from the mediation of the man, so that the woman can make use of the mutability of the object.

The first two photographs show the functionality of the table, which is first shown half-covered by the board, with the dining table set, and in the other side, we can see a pool game already set up. The second shows the table in the dining function, with napkins and glasses on its surface. The two exhibit the object within their domestic context, inserted in a modern architecture environment, illuminated with natural light, that enters the picture from two large windows. Both demonstrate a clean aesthetics, with other furniture elements of appearance similar to the one of the table. The last three show details of the table, such as the “pocket” of the table and the cues of the game. The scenes of the photographs show a harmonious composition between furniture, separation of space and lighting, in an aesthetic concern that composes images of environments referring to an aesthetic ideal of architecture and design. Present in a magazine directed to men, the placement of this image pattern makes it possible to understand that domestic aesthetics is part of the possible subjects for men, producing the idea of a private space penetrable by masculinity.

The elements in the images point to a series of articulated components for the arrangement of this “new private”: an interior aesthetically suited to modern architecture, a series of tools that strain the border between the public and private, and a heterosexual couple of young whites, in an ideological choice of positions: the man in the foreground, shifting the political-spatial boundary and the woman behind, making use of her conquest. These findings help in the understanding of the continuities and changes in what permeates the ideals of masculine, in the composition of idealized images of the being man, who sometimes reiterate and sometimes refute old patterns of gender. If the destabilization of the border between the public and private planes, which inserts masculinity into the logic of the consumption of identity, creates mutable and unstable ideals in the discursive composition of the masculine, it can be understood that heterosexuality works in the opposite logic, from the idea of permanence of the masculine tradition, reaffirmed by the heterosexual desire.

## Discussion

The analysis of these data allowed to understand the values conveyed by the magazine, which, together, create the ideals and expectations of the readers. Given the capitalistic logic in which magazines are embedded (Hennigen & Costa, 2009; Borba &

Hennigen, 2015), supported by advertisements that must be answered as consumption by the reading public, it is noted that the magazine discourse presumes non-intersectional notions of masculinity, restricted in advance to its target audience. The social and economic specificities, which, in the Brazilian reality, inevitably results in racial specificities, are made present in a transverse way to the publications, so that the images of masculine presented were, for the most part, white men. The definition and consolidation of a target audience, in this way, affirms an asymmetrical relationship of power: since the media functions as a producer of subjectivities (Ribeiro & Siqueira, 2007), the discourse of this magazine fosters the intelligibility of a specific type of masculine, that is, the one who can consume the advertised products - rich men, mostly whites. These are the men who can be understood through the definition categories of the aforementioned readers proposed by the Media Kit.

Men - Young - Bold - Party - Criterious - Consumers - Early Adopters - Bohemians  
 – Outgoing - Entrepreneurs - Hedonists - Tuned - Alternative - Stylish - Barfly -  
 Sportsmen - Motorized - Classics - Ballplayer - Womanizer - Player - Music addicts  
 - Vain - Tech Freaks (Media Kit of the VIP Magazine, 2015).

However, the institution of consumption is not sufficient to understand the subjective vectors that are related in the articles; besides the class and racial specificities, heterosexual interpellation is evident, also present transversally to the texts analyzed. This orientation can be understood as a response to the destabilization caused by the prioritization of consumption as the definer of a masculine notion proposed by the magazine. As Sibilla (2015) points out, the flexibilization of identity caused by contemporary capitalism provokes anguish, and in response, subjective dichotomies are created, in which values of permanence and destabilization are polarized. The discourse of the magazine proposes a masculinity different from the one understood like “classic”, since it relates to ideals of the private plan, like aesthetic care, consumption of clothes, preoccupation with the private sphere, etc. In contrast, attributes of the prevailing stereotype of masculinity, which appear as relievers of anguish caused by deterritorializing capitalism (Rolnik, 1997), are taken up again.

In this way, heterosexuality appears as the founding value of the masculine ideal, since it challenges it transversally, from its “previous” conception, referred to the public plan, to its contemporary redefining encounter with the private. Thus, it is understood that the “other masculinity” proposed by the magazine is precisely that which is adequate to capitalist values, which does not hesitate to approach patterns previously restricted to the feminine sphere, since it is always interspersed with a stabilization vector, which guarantees the permanence of a tradition in a scenario where little can be understood as sustainable. Heterosexuality, then, is the link that guarantees the “new man” a direct connection to the nostalgic ideal that arises as a response to the destabilization of consumption, and for this reason will not be abandoned by the discourses of the “new masculinity” - as well as neither the privileges of race and class will be abandoned.

Preciado (2010) suggests that the presence of naked women on the pages of the Playboy Magazine, during its first decades, provided a consumption of information unusual for men in their other sessions, so that eroticism served as moral justification for information traditionally not consumed by the male audience. There was talk of architecture, fashion, issues of the private plan, without questioning the heterosexuality of the reader, since the motive of buying the magazine was the photos with female nudity. This pattern is repeated in the logic of the VIP Magazine, not only in the editorials, but also in the numerous references to heterosexuality, transverse to the texts transmitted, regardless of the subject

to which they refer. In this way, it can be affirmed that the discourse of the magazine expands the possibilities of subjectivation for contemporary men; however, this expansion is effected through the consumption of goods and is restricted by the ideal of heterosexuality, thus delimiting the limits to a “new masculinity”. Thus, the publication allows certain private items to be coupled with the social intelligibility (Butler, 2003) of the masculine from agreements and subjective mediations, in which the sexuality and class patterns intersect themselves. One can, for example, consume items aimed at aesthetic care, as long as the consumer subject stays in line with the heterosexual norm.

The content analyzed in the magazine points to a conjunction of stereotypes that can be related to traditional masculinity patterns, referred to the public plan, to other private ones and commonly referred to the feminine, as the appeal to the consumption of items directed to the house or the aesthetics. The discursive context in which these objects are inserted, however, leaves no doubt as to its orientation to the masculine, due to the innumerable photos of semi-naked women and references to heterosexuality, such as the phrase “Macho yes. And proudly vain” (Media Kit of the Vip Magazine, 2015), which appears prominently in the material. Monteiro (2001) notes the direction of content to a target audience characterized by young, heterosexual and upper-class men. In this way, it can be seen that the magazine does not refer to the private plan in the same way that the stereotypes of femininity do. The publication proposes an “other private”, which also interweaves the composition of an “other “masculine”, which does not abandon the traditional roles related to this gender but intersects them with new possibilities of interpellation for men, proposed mainly by publicity.

Figure 3:



Advertising image on the article “Dining table or pool table?” (Editorial of the VIP Magazine, October 30, 2014).

## Final considerations

The analyzed content of the magazine allows the understanding of a “new masculinity” published in the articles, which mixes attributes recognized as traditional of men to others understood as novelty, supported, mainly, by the access to the consumption of

goods. Seffner and Guerra (2014), however, in a survey carried out in virtual webpages of ONGS aimed at raising men's awareness about domestic violence, aimed at men of lower classes, point to the discursive construction in these media of a "new masculinity" affirmed under other parameters, such as care and love for the family. In this way, it is understood the plurality of discourses, starting from distinct places and intentions, that make up notions of masculinity as opposed to patterns referred to as "old". As these authors claim, there is a social demand that men should not be as they were in the past, but what delimits and directs men to this "other" masculinity refers to other discourses that make them socially distinct experiences of being a man, such as social class (Seffner & Guerra, 2014).

The male pattern proposed by the VIP Magazine is specific to a social segment, delimited by the magazine as a target audience, which differs from the majority of the Brazilian population due to its purchasing power. In this way, it is important to reflect on the crossings of the capitalist mode of production in contemporary subjectivation, which also delimits specific ways of experiencing gender and sexuality

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