Audiovisual productions consumption and gender and sexual orientation constitution by non-cisheterosexual persons

Consumo de produções audiovisuais e constituição de gênero e de orientação sexual de sujeitos não cisheterossexuais

Consumo de producciones audiovisuales y constitución del género y orientación sexual de sujetos no cisheterosexuales

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Abstract

Sexes, genders, and sexual orientations are social products that influence as much as they are influenced by audiovisual content. The aim of this research was to investigate consumption of social audiovisual technologies of sexuality and gender by persons who do not recognize themselves as cisheterosexual. Fifteen persons participated in this research through semi-structured interviews via Google Meet. The answers were organized into three categories (Identifying aspects; Communicational aspects; Consumption aspects) from a thematic content analysis and were analyzed based on Teresa De Lauretis' arguments. The main results highlighted the tensions between dependencies and resistances that produce participants' gender identifications and sexual orientations in the consumption of audiovisual productions.

Keywords: Sexuality. Gender. Audiovisual. Cultural Industry. LGBTQIAP+.

Introduction

For Foucault (2014), sexuality is a complex social construct that organizes the constitution and expression of subjects' identity based on different discourses that regulate the production of pleasures. Lauretis (1996) argues that sex and sexual difference have long been used as a determinant for gender, however, subjects are not only constituted by biological aspects, but mainly by linguistic aspects and representations that interpellates individuals' ones as male or female. Thus, the speeches that link attitudinal aspects of gender and libido as results of biological-sexual aspects is called cisheteronormativity – imposition of a compulsory heterosexuality that rejects plurality (Sousa, 2018).

Therefore, in opposition to cisgender people there are transgender people. And in opposition to heterosexuals there are a diversity of sexual orientations – designated as LGBTQIAP+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, pansexual and others). Gender is defined as a set of representations historically constituted from various social technologies among them, according to Lauretis (1996), are cinema and other audiovisual productions (animations, advertisements, video games, social network sites, podcasts, music videos, radio, theater, etc.). Each one of these are commercially exploits and distributes values and ideals to the producers and consumers of these technologies (Hagemeyer, 2013).

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the necessary social distancing and isolation measures, the demand for entertainment at home increased – a trend observed even before the pandemic –, including the consumption of audiovisual streaming (Bezerra *et al.*, 2020). This highlights the relevance of the cultural industry that affects how art and culture are propagated. Briefly, the cultural industry transforms art and culture into commodities to be consumed (Costa, 2013). However, it is not just a relationship of consumption of objects as well as the distribution of modes of subjectivation based on values, ideals, and norms built-in in these commodities that generates social expectations (Silva Junior, 2019). The consumption of audiovisual productions is significant for the subjective

constitution because they are loaded with values and symbolism that propagate certain effects on subjects (Silva, 2015).

It is possible to consider that, according to Lauretis (1996), the gender attributed and/or recognized by the subject is one of the effects of their styles of consumption of audiovisual products in a society that pressures them to position themselves as either men or women – that is, in one of the poles established by binarism –, with their subjectivities resulting from social impacts rather than biological determinations. The objective of this research is to investigate consumption styles of audiovisual technologies of sexuality and gender by persons who do not recognize themselves as cisheterossexual.

Research methodology

This is a descriptive, exploratory, and qualitative research in Psychology. For the data collection, 15 semi-structured interviews were carried out with subjects who did not recognize themselves as cisheterosexual (i.e., sexual orientations other than heterosexuality and/or whose gender identity did not correspond to binary standards) between November/2020 and February/2021. Participants were recruited from the researchers' contact network within the Embaixadorxs (Brazilian project of the startup TODXS[1]), according to the snowball strategy. These participants are from several Brazilian cities, whose contact occurred through online technologies (Google Meet) to carry out and record the interviews. The main information characterizing the participants is in Chart 1.

Chart 1. Characterization of participants

Fictitious name	Age	Sexual Orientation	Gender Identity	City/State where you reside	Religious self-designation	Ethnicity
Ambrose	25	Bisexual	Cisgender man	Juiz de Fora, MG	Does not have	Black
Angel	22	Bisexual	Travesti[2] (trans woman)	Criciúma, SC	Egyptian Magic Witch	Black
Ariel	26	Pansexual	Non-Binary	Brasilia, DF	Does not have	White
Barb	23	Lesbian	Cisgender woman	Cabo Frio, RJ	Does not have	White
Blanca	24	Pansexual	Travesti (trans woman)	Mossoró, RN	Umbandarte	Black
Dana	25	Bisexual	Cisgender woman	Sao Paulo, SP	Spiritualist	White
Gilberto	22	Gay	Cisgender man	Uberaba, MG	Does not have	Brown
Jack	24	Gay	Cisgender man	Maceió, AL	Does not have	White
Kane	24	Gay	Cisgender man	Sao Paulo, SP	Agnostic	Yellow
L exandra	25	Lesbian	Cisgender woman	Viçosa, MG	Kardecist Spiritualist	White
Lin	24	Pansexual	Non-Binary Travesti	Campinas, SP	Candomblecista	Brown
Luce	24	Lesbian	Cisgender Woman	Viçosa, MG	Spiritualist	White
Maui	27	Bisexual	Cisgender man	Juiz de Fora, MG	Does not have	Black
Monica	22	Pansexual	Non-Binary	Fortaleza, Ceará	Does not have	Brown
Murilo	28	Gay	Cisgender man	Rio de Janeiro - RJ	Evangelical	Black

source: the authors (2021)

The question guide covered different topics, such as: which are the main audiovisual products consumed currently and during their development; what impact the audiovisual had on their lives; what perception they had about their own audiovisual consumption styles; if there are representation that encompasses them regarding audiovisual.

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1 Brazilian non-profit organization that promotes the inclusion of LGBTQIAP+ people in society with leadership training, research, awareness, and security initiatives.
2 The word travesti, exclusive to the Brazilian context, designates people recognized as men at   birth, but who identify with femininity. For a long time, it was a word used in a pejorative way, but currently it is used as a symbol of the fight for one's gender identity.

The interviews were fully transcribed and analyzed based on the theoretical framework of gender technologies by Teresa de Lauretis (1996). This research was approved by the Ethics Committee of the researchers' home institution under the number CAAE 38633520.4.0000.5154 of Plataforma Brasil.

Results and discussions

The contents of the interviews were organized into three thematic categories *a posteriori*: Identification Aspects, Communication Aspects and Consumption Aspects.

Category 1 – Identification Aspects

All participants mentioned that the audiovisual content consumed impacted the production of meanings about their own bodies, that is, identifying or not them with the representations contained in those productions. These identifications have links with the subjects' body image (a complex phenomenon that encompasses all the ways in which a subject conceptualizes and experiences their own body). This body identity develops through experience and is influenced by culture, building this body from imaginary and cultural elements (Tavares; Coelho, 2003). As an example, Barb reported how lesbian women were represented in audiovisual productions:

> I had a bit of a wrong perception, when I was, I do not know, 11, 12 years old, that the dyke woman [lesbian woman] turned into a man, and that was not what I wanted to be. Even though I did not have a very feminine style, I liked my little breasts that were growing, I liked my pepeca [slang to female sexual organ], so I was very comfortable with myself, and I was starting to think that I liked girls, but it seemed wrong, because what I had inside my head did not fit into the lesbian woman's patterns.

This excerpt highlights the historical construction of masculine and feminine in which gender presents itself in a predictable way: a woman who feels sexual attraction to women cannot present femininity nor be considered a truthful woman, as this escapes cisheterosexual logic (Lauretis, 1996). In this way, Barb signals differences between her own body and those that are represented by audiovisuals, entering a state of confusion.

Social technologies generate effects on gender and, therefore, multiple effects are produced on the subjects' bodies, attitudes, and social relationships. Therefore, according to Lauretis (1996), gender results from cultural conceptions about feminine and masculine justified *as if they were* the result of biological sexual differences, when they refer to power relations between groups. Gender, therefore, is not a nature, but rather a relationship between categories – men, women. Thus, from these representations there would only be two possible identifications. This results in limitations and confusion regarding gender identities and non-cisheterosexual sexual orientations, represented as mistakes or errors, problematizing body images and identifications.

Transgender subjects are those who experience a gender identity different from that assigned at birth. In common sense, not rare, there is the statement that transgender people "wish to live as the person of the opposite sex at birth" (Sampaio; Coelho, 2013, p.2). However, this is not the reality for many trans people. The participating *travestis* were satisfied with their bodies. For example, Blanca mentioned: "I even remember a text by Alice y El, called 'Reflections' which is: once again in front of the mirror, I realize that it was my voice, it was my manner, mannerisms, my hair, my   five-o-clock shadow, the body hair".

The reports of these participants corroborate the arguments of Lauretis (1996) that conceive the gender as a synonym from the sexual difference is an error, and the production of these differences occurs through different systems of representation. Participants question themselves based on the imagery of their own bodies in comparison to those represented by audiovisual productions of a cisheterosexual nature. Still in relation to body identification, Kane reported:

> I grew up like this, consuming fashion magazines [...] this, in a way, aesthetically guides me, I like to spend time on Pinterest, looking for references   to build a style... looking for icons from television or cinema, whom   I believe that has a style that I would like to have.

This allows us to consider how much corporeal representation is present in a physical reality, in which the presence of the actors' bodies provides a reflection on the spectator's identity (Andacht; Opolski, 2017). For Bergamo (2004), fashion manuals published in Brazil are generally produced for cisgender men or   women. But the participant's mention of Pinterest allows him the autonomy to search for fashion – and its identification schemes

– without it necessarily being distinguished by gender. However, the word style for the author more than to be an individual quality, refers to social recognition aimed at maintaining positions of power. In this way, through a style, a gendered order is expressed in terms of power relations (Lauretis, 1996).

Identifications also occur in the affective-emotional sphere. Stories like Lexandra's highlight the affection towards the consumption of audiovisual productions, especially the series The Hundred[3] in which her favorite character, Lexa, is murdered:

> I got emotionally involved, because the show had a wonderful character, because she was simply a dyke [lesbian woman], 21 years old, commander of all the armies, like that, all the shit, awesome [...] she got shot [...] It destroyed me, this Lexa issue, I do not think I have ever cried so much over something that wasn't personal, like someone's death, but I cried as if it were someone that, fuck, that I really knew, you know? It was very intense for me [...] it was terrible, especially because of the situation that was created, like she was happy there, she got what she wanted, what we [the entire fandom] wanted, for her to be with Clarke and all, and then in the next scene she is killed, you know?

The term "experience" is used by Lauretis (1996) to refer to the results of the subject's semiotic interaction with the outside world. This way, that experience implies a complex set of effects and perceptions that contribute to the construction of subjectivity. Thus, it is possible to consider that affective identification can be experienced as an experience based on interaction with audiovisual production. In this case, the experience described by Lexandra is characterized as mourning for a character. The participant also said that after the character's death, the LGBT Viewers Deserve Better (LGBTVDB) movement began (Navar-Gill; Stanfill, 2018). The LGBTVDB indicated that 40% of LGBT+ characters represented on TV had already been killed, in addition to characterizing the death of characters like Lexa as traumatic for the viewers mental health. This highlights Lauretis's (1996) claim that discourses of gendered technologies has power to impact the subjectivity of subjects. Finally, Lexandra said that "the producer even apologized later, it was a really strong move", highlighting how much viewers get involved and are influenced by audiovisual productions.

Another recurring theme was the representativeness. According to Nwabasili (2017), representations with their symbolic order build the world, but a representation (image) can only be considered representativeness when it concerns recognition and of the diversity of social groups. Participant Ambrose said:

> If a discussion about race is on the rise today, then there will be a character, a single character with good representation in that series, so they are able to bring that audience a little closer, or even mitigate the criticisms they were having in relation to that series. I also often see that some media alter the narrative a little depending on the social thermometer [...] I realize that in fact what was observed was not the inclusion of those people, the inclusion of those specific agendas, but rather the social thermometer in relation to that.

Foucault (2005) highlighted that sexuality is constructed in culture in accordance with the political objectives of the dominant class, producing power relations. Thus, sexuality is not necessarily prohibitive, but is shaped and implemented according to specific interests. It seems correct to state, therefore, that representations of sexuality also occur based on the discourses and interests of dominant people for whom diversity of genders and sexual orientations is not interesting. The inclusion of diversity, in this case, comes from the intention that currently audiovisual productions must include minorities, but the way in which this inclusion must be done is not questioned. Participants highlighted that sexual and gender diversity is treated in audiovisual productions not as real responses to the demands of LGBTQIAP+ minorities, but rather as advertising strategies aimed to achieve the cisheterosexual audience, as most of these productions are full of stereotypes. An example of this was Murilo's response:

> I thought that if I came out as a gay man, technically I would have to become those stereotypes that shocked me, because any black gay boy at school was called Vera Verão in the 2000s. And Vera Verão, despite having been an icon and we can recognize that today, at that time it was something very stereotyped in a very negative way. The scandalous, rambunctious black queer, and I did not want to be associated with that. So first I had to make peace with all these references that existed in my childhood to discover my place as queer.

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3 Post-apocalyptic series from the North American channel The CW tells the story of 100 teenage survivors of a space station who return to assess living conditions on planet Earth.

Stereotyping is one of the main strategies of profit production from the cultural industry. It is used with the purpose of constituting formulas that define how any content will be perceived and consumed, as well as which models of identity will be activated for the subjects. Such stereotypes are disseminated by various social technologies that constantly make them rigid. Most of these models refer to gender stereotypes represented and reproduced by the cultural industry (Faraon, 2009). This stereotypy can often have a negative connotation, as illustrated by Murilo.

In these stereotypical representations there is both violence and ideological interpellation (Lauretis, 1996), that is, an orientation on how gender audiovisual production should be interpreted and given meaning by the subjects. In this process, representation – the image of Vera Verão and the stereotype of being black and gay – is conceived by the subject as if it were his own representation when, in fact, it was previously organized by culture. In these example, intersectionality (intersection of the subjects' multiple identity elements) (Akotirene, 2019) cannot be ignored. Thus, representation is not the same for everyone due to intersectional factors, but the harmful effects end up occurring more frequently in non-white and non-cisheterossexual ones. Angel's speech illustrated this difference in representation and the production of stereotypes:

> I only saw white people, and I thought white people were normal [...] what was normalized for me was that being a man was cool, being straight was cool and being white was cool, in other words, nothing like what I am today [...]. I felt very indifferent, so, is the word, if I had not been watching that there, I probably would not have been watching anything. I'd be watching the news. Then in the news I would feel represented, because there would be black folks running around in the favela, travestis...criminalization of travestis [...] I did not feel represented in luxury, or I was only represented in trash.

Most participants cited the importance of cartoon characters and children's film characters during their childhood when participating in games, when they identified with these characters. During growth, this movement was cited as fundamental for the feeling of group belonging, generating community identification. This was reported by Barb:

> There were some things I watched to talk to the girls, for example, I never liked Barbie movies, but I watched them all [...] I say Barbie because she is a great symbol of cute, blonde dolls. But I do not know, it was a symbol of femininity, the girl had to like Barbie and she had to want to have Barbie's backpack.

From the moment that Barb reported that Barbie dolls represent femininity and that all girls would have to, compulsorily, identify with and like her, it is possible to consider that gender, according to Lauretis (1996), represents a relationship: that of a belong to a group or to a categorization class- i.e., gender is neither the result nor the expression of biology. Thus, the gender assigns subject a position within a group, designating a social relationship between the subject and their group – which happened to Barb, who reported the need to like the representations considered feminine to participate in conversations with other girls.

In this way, it becomes clear that gender is not limited to biology, but rather an imaginary representation of a symbolic relationship that organizes the group relationships (Lauretis, 1996). Therefore, when subjects identify themselves with communities that escape of the binaries, this also seems to interfere with the way they relate to other groups, as in the case of Murilo:

> Because of my sexuality, at some point I needed to choose between my faith and my sexuality and then I no longer felt comfortable going to church after I understood myself as a gay man. And my worship was over the internet, I attended the worship of a specific church on the internet. So, it was often a moment of refuge, of consolation and as I could not attend the physical temple, because I no longer felt comfortable, I continued to feed my faith, through the internet.

In this case, it is possible to consider how audiovisual production enabled Murilo to reconnect with his faith, even if he does not feel belonging to the cult in the physical temple, he can find a sense of community in online services. Murilo's discomfort in attending in person to the churches after identifying as a gay man can be understood as a response to fact that some evangelical cults try to reverse the sexual orientation of LGBTQIAP+ for considering homosexuality a sin (Trindade, 2019).

In this way, it is the cultural conceptions about masculine and feminine organizing the sex/gender system that classifies subjects as men or women (Lauretis, 1996) – the ideology establishes parameters of what is normal in a

society that intends to cause subjects to adapt. Soap operas are one of the most recurrent genre technologies in a mass society around the world by presenting characters as ideals to be followed (Montoro; Mendonça, 2015). However, this portrait is often not true to reality, as Lin stated:

> It is one production or another that has a subversive perspective. Because there is a confusion that we want to be cisgender, that we want to be them, in short, this thing that, like, there cannot be a halfway, you must have something else, you must travel this whole path for you to be 100%.

Many participants highlighted that the images of gender present in television soap operas convey that all members of the LGBTQIAP+ community have the objective of equalizing cisheterosexuality, that is, not only having their rights recognized, but being recognized second the compulsory standard to be followed by everyone. This results in a stereotype towards the LGBTQIAP+ community. Ariel cited a personal reflection based on prejudiced comments when actor Reynaldo Gianecchini (Brazilian actor) came out as pansexual:

> People say that so-and-so looks like a fagot [gay], so-and-so looks like a dyke [lesbian], so-and-so, how does a pansexual look like? Do I look pansexual to you? And then I am like... if I should have a way of expressing myself that says more about my sexuality and identifies me more in the meantime.

Ariel's response symbolizes that, even in a contradictory way, representations of genders and sexual orientations are constructed and, consequently, distributed to produce individual and social recognition (Lauretis, 1996). In this way, the fight against technologies that produce sexual oppression based on binarism must not deny the gender representations and sexual orientations, as this can oppress dissenting sexualities.

Category 2 – Communicational Aspects

According to Lauretis (1996), a subject's own choice of audiovisual consumption concerns identification and, consequently, the absorption of content that is closely linked to the genre. Likewise, this impact also (re) constructs the audiovisual in the same way that the genre starts to be represented in a specific technology. Thus, when a certain product becomes validated by institutional discourses and acquire control over the field of meanings, it also starts to function as a gender technology.

From this perspective, sexuality as a construction and self-representation allows subjects to assert themselves through the choice of certain audiovisual productions, as reported by Jack:

> I have a playlist that I call the Wine Playlist [...] practically 100% is LGBT content and this expression for me of putting it in my house, with my mother there, is like my presence, an expression, do you feel me? And that my uncles come by the house and I am listening to the queers scream loudly, anyway, talking about the things we live and all [in previously mentioned podcasts], or just by Pabllo [Vittar – Brazilian singer] bring there with a high pitch, to m e it is like an expression, it is my presence there in space too.

By stating that the songs represent your own presence, Jack makes a movement like the example mentioned by Lauretis (1996): when marking F (feminine) on a form, the feminine also marks the signer. This also occurs with Jack when he positions himself as a queer when marking the songs, he chose for his playlist. The same happens with Ariel, when using audiovisual productions to communicate to grandfather about his sexual orientation:

> My grandfather, before he passed away [...] I wanted to tell him that I was not straight [...] And then I got nervous, then we were on the couch watching TV and he decided to watch a film that was about first LGBT marches in London. We were just sitting; we were not saying anything about the subject, and he decided to watch it. I said, "You want to know? That's enough." [...] He did not need to say anything, because that is it, the sensitivity he had to understand things is very different.

Such reports illustrate how audiovisual has a powerful potential to transmit messages about those who consume it. T his communication is often marked precisely by what is not explicit but implicit. In a society marked by patriarchal aspects, sexuality is perceived as an attribute or property of the masculine, with female sexuality being opposed (in relation) to male sexuality (Lauretis, 1996), as exemplified by Dana:

> It is printed in these contents, in these programs, in a way in which sexuality is portrayed in a natural and even imposed way. Like, oh, if there is a boy and a girl, it is obvious that they are going to be a couple, or that it is going to convey the idea that they could be a couple.

This excerpt shows that whenever there is a woman and a man on the scene, they, implicitly and based on ideologically organized codes, were/are/will be emotionally or romantically involved. Thus, women are cinematographically constructed as an object/category for men (Lauretis, 1996). From these messages transmitted to viewers, that one that what deviates from gendered norms should not be consumed, making changes in power relations difficult. Ambrose talked about certain prohibitions he experienced:

> There was always a discussion, very big questions regarding my sexuality at home, so media that were radical, let's say, like a book or even a play, or a television series, that brought up questions like So, 'look, women do deserve to be highlighted in certain spaces, look, men can behave in a way that isn't that of being macho, of having to be brutish of having to be I don't know what', because in m   y parents' mind was as if that was going to condition me into a certain behavior that wasn't what they expected, so, that was prohibited, I couldn't watch a series that had it, no... in an era, it wouldn't even have to be a content that talked about LGBT issues, but if it didn't bring those stereotypes of male and female behavior, then it was already something dangerous for me to have contact with.

In this case, silencing operated by keeping certain productions secret, thus valuing the sexual difference between men and women as part of this system of representations, situating the construction of genders both as a product to be followed and as the process itself. of its representation as a difference between subjects.   However, despite their pressures, audiovisual productions do not determine the gender of subjects without them being able to resist: even when consuming audiovisual productions (or perhaps precisely because of this) in which women are devalued and masculinity is shown to be brutal and toxic, Ambrose did not identify with such representations and is currently searching for other content.

During the interviews, it was also possible to notice how the audiovisual productions consumed have potential for communication, teaching, and learning. Monica reported:

> Malhação[4], [...] it was not when I was a teenager, but now they are already dealing with issues, so like, it is a trans character who is in high school, who wants to occupy the bathroom that is hers. So, it is [...] naturalizing these processes, right? And like, you can go to your school and ask the principal to use a certain bathroom that you feel more comfortable   with or ask the teacher   to call you by the name you like. So, I think that audiovisual is also important for this, to show when you can also occupy some rights that we have already achieved here in Brazil, at least.

According to the participant, through a youth soap opera, it was possible to illustrate the rights that to the transgender people have in schools. This highlights how audiovisual productions have the power to represent and be represented by genres, constituting a personal and political force. After all, as pointed out by Lauretis (1996), a double process occurs between the social representation of gender and the individual subjective constitution, with the possibility of protagonist in micropolitical practices – as in the case of trans people to thebe represented in audiovisual productions can claim their rights in everyday life.

Some participants reported how consuming content that represents LGBTQIAP+ causes can also result in exhaustion due to various and recurring struggles. For example, Ariel said:

> I do not consume things for nothing, sometimes I consume things for nothing, yes, there are days when I do not feel like thinking, I do not feel like having to criticize anything, finding anything good or bad, well done or poorly done, I want to watch any crap like that, mental sand. That is, it, I have those days too, because that is also what it is, consuming things that we have that we are always reflecting on, criticizing, discussing, it is also exhausting, right? Because at this point it stops being entertainment, right?

This can   help to understand how   reflections, criticisms and discussions occur regarding the content that deviate from the norms, making the "mental sand" sometimes easier to consume precisely because it does not present

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4 Brazilian soap opera shown on the Globo channel whose plot shows the world of teenagers and their concerns (family, romantic and sexual relationships, professional and educational issues).

anything that is questionable. Discussing gender is discussing power position in social representations, therefore, believe in other ideologies (Lauretis, 1996).

However, it is not possible to ignore the need to move away from these questions – explained by Ariel – looking for ways to distract oneself, extracting oneself from one's own reality and from the conflicts that are represented on screen – which can, contradictorily, make confrontations of binary gender and sexual orientation schemes difficult.

Category 3 – Consumer aspects

During all interviews, directly or indirectly, streaming services were mentioned as the main means/object of consumption of audiovisual productions. Gilberto replied that:

> There are times when I say I am a 'Streaming bitch', so: it is YouTube, Netflix, Amazon Prime, Disney, [...] YouTube is more for learning something or watching something, and so, Disney and Netflix would be more for watching series and films too.

When using the expression "streaming bitch" Gilberto compared himself to a domestic animal that is under at the owner's command – in this case, streaming services. According to Montardo and Valiati (2021), streaming services consumed through various devices (smart TV, smartphones, computers, and tablets, etc.) are both a technology and a practice of the contemporary cultural industry.

Considering the variety of devices and devices, some differences were also highlighted in relation to the devices used to access content. Linn reported:

> I have a Smart TV. Ah J. [Lin's friend] who lives with me has this thing, so like, I do not watch that much on my laptop anymore, only when I really want something that I will download, like on Stremio or a torrent and such. But then we have, like, the apps, you turn on the TV and put it on the app, then you have Netflix, Prime, GloboPlay [...] And then Netflix is the algorithm itself, right? It sends the top ones there, like, it seems like there are 3 things on Netflix, and then we go to the releases.

When exemplifying Netflix as being "the algorithm itself", Linn is not mistaken, after all, these streaming recommendation systems organize automatically the selections made by users and, from them, generate recommendations that reinforce the flow of options in streaming, shaping the content based on the use of each user/consumer (Montardo; Valiati, 2021). In this way, the featured productions end up gaining greater visibility according to the number of accesses to this content and the suitability of the users' profile, that is, as Montardo and Valiati (2021) argue, algorithmic individualization consists of rules of similarities between users that are less based on singularities and more based in usage perspectives.

An important fact to be mentioned is that no matter how diverse the offers in the catalogs of audiovisual production options in streaming are, they are not unlimited, and often – as said by Linn – this specific search needs to be done by means other than the streaming services. In the interviews, audiovisual productions that were accessed or obtained illegally were often mentioned – the aforementioned "subversive productions". Lauretis (1996) states that some productions are sometimes not recognized as representations of fact and were therefore considered subversive by the participants precisely because they are on the margins of the hegemonic discourse – and Netflix highlights, for example.

In many interviews, based on questions about self-knowledge, many participants said that they used audiovisual productions to better understand their experiences. One example was Luce, who said she searched the internet looking for specific content that would help her understand what was happening to her:

> It was basically looking for websites and then I started researching people who were a little more famous, I started to follow and understand the films, like, the first film I saw. I started watching several films on the internet that had a lesbian theme, and I also started reading stories, fanfic, you know? These things... I tried to understand as much as I could, but it was basically movies, fanfics, that sort of thing, researching on the internet, looking for forums to talk about.

Lauretis (1996) argues that a subject being *gendered* means not only their constitutive dependence on sex/gender technologies (*gender*), but also that their subjectivity results from a process of being gendered by discursive

codes and representations that are assimilated as self-representations – effect of ideology. In this way, Luce's behavior and that of other participants shows how important it was to find people in other spaces that share same desires, reinforcing the perspective that gender is a representation of a relationship of belonging and a relationship between categories.

This needs to find similar people in the sex/gender system was found to be present among subjects who do not recognize themselves as cisheterosexual. The way the search is carried out also influences its results, since the use of acronyms (such as LGBTQIA+) demarcates spaces and search strategies, as pointed out by Mônica:

> If you just search for the name, for example 'ah lesbian films' on Google, it will not be a good thing for you to search, so it seems that always... it always leads to a more pornographic aspect of the thing, or you search for LGBT films, Today perhaps you are looking for the acronym LGBT and you find films with this theme, which works on this theme.

From this excerpt, the importance of using acronyms to produce the visibility of these subjects as a group that escapes the cisheteronormative standard. Another fact arising from this speech is related to the fetish of these bodies, since searches often retrieve pornographic materials more than content associates to the LGBTQIA+ political activism. In the case of lesbian women, once again, the female gender is objectified and their presence in audiovisual productions is aimed at the *voyeuristic* gaze of men, in a constant sexualization/availability/submission of the female body (Lauretis, 1996).

The COVID-19 pandemic and its repercussions were also mentioned by participants regarding their consumption styles and relationships with audiovisual productions. Ariel, when asked about her consumption of audiovisual productions, responded:

> We have [audiovisual] as a means of journalistic information, as a means of entertainment, so, I think that all instances of our lives, even in health today, thinking about this pandemic context, so, we have, you know, consultation with an online gynecologist, man!

In this way, during the pandemic routines, habits and relationships were reinvented, with technology being a widely used resource, operating once again as a social technology to produce gender subjectivities. The pandemic, although not directly explored in the interviews, significantly changed people's lives and, in some reports, such as Jack's, this was made explicit:

> Now, during the pandemic, it has increased, like, my consumption of LGBT podcasts, just to listen to queers talking and commenting, what is happening and everything, even to feel like I am in a more social environment, as I do not live with other LGBT people. Then there was also this lack, I always ended up looking for much more of this content, like both lives, videos on YouTube and sometimes even more conversation, to kind of feel like that, with company.

Podcasts (audio programs available asynchronously on streaming services) saw an increase in consumption during the pandemic (Amorim; Araújo 2021   ). Besides the fact that Jack increased his podcast consumption during the pandemic, consistent with the study by Amorim and Araújo (2021   ), there is an important detail: Jack lives with other people and, even so, needed of the company of another LGBTQIA+ persons.

According to Almeida (2020), there are differences between social isolation and loneliness (isolation is little or no contact with other people, while the loneliness is the absence of emotional connection even when interacting with other people). In fact, social distancing, and isolation as   sanitary measures to combat COVID-19 can result in feelings of anguish, fear, and sadness. But in the case of Jack – who lives with friends who do not participate in the LGBTQIA+ community – loneliness has social and political dimensions. This fact also echoes Lexandra's outbursts about gender representations in audiovisual productions:

> Let's be honest: how many gay people do you know who only hang out with straight people? The series are always like this, the straight guys   and a fagot, or the straight guys   and a dyke. See, we are in a group!

Finally, even though there are audiovisual productions with representations of characters with sexualities that deviate from cisheterosexuality, most of them were referred to by participants as cisgender and heterosexual.

Thus, subjects who do not recognize themselves as cisheterosexual remain underrepresented, underrecognized or identified with the margins and with minorities, which produce varied consequences – stereotypes, discrimination, prejudice, loneliness, and violence.

Conclusions

The concept of gender is one of the main categories to understand the power relationships, and most of the times, it is understood as a simple result of sexual (biological) differences, resulting in the unequal division of social and sexual roles – as mentioned by participants in their consumption of audiovisual productions. This study aimed to investigate consumption styles of social audiovisual technologies of sexuality and gender on part of subjects who do not recognize themselves as cisheterosexual to understand how this consumption impacts on the subjective constitutions of sexuality and at gender identity. This study is relevant as it enables greater recognition and visibility of minority groups (LGBTQIA+) who escape binarism.

In this way, it was possible to verify relationships between audiovisual consumption and the sexuality/gender/sexual orientation of the subjects, since the representations of genres in audiovisual productions do not act as determinants, but rather as guides of meaning for the subjects – based on the functioning of ideology. The main results highlighted that the subjects question themselves by resisting the cisheterosexual images disseminated massively by the mass media, but sometimes they also identify with these stereotypes. Therefore, identification with non cisheteronormative audiovisual productions is an act of resistance.

It is necessary to point out that this research has some limits, for example the fact that the recruitment of participants took place only in the TODXS network, that is, it did not cover the entire LGBTQIAP+ community, which brings together other sexual orientations than those of the participants, such as demisexual and asexual. Despite these limits, the results are potentially contributory to understanding the norms that organize contemporary society and the impacts of audiovisual productions on the subjects' trajectories.

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