Abstract

Based on Oscar Lewis anthropological works, this article is a study of the cultural traits of "machismo"; two of these traits, heterosexuality and aggression are commonly exaggerated and manifested through the mastery over women and the reciprocal submission to man, as well as the males courage, sexual freedom, affective detachment, physical dominance and excessive alcohol consumption. According to the Adlerian theory these traits would be a compensation for inferiority feelings. The origins of the inferiority complex is found in patterns of child rearing and the family education system: the affectionless father, the child’s respect for the father (based on fear, separation, distance), rudeness and hostility in father-son relations, praise of masculine traits and feminine submission, obedience and virginity. The author concludes that "machismo" is a cultural trait aimed at satisfying a psychological need: the inferiority complex which originates in child rearing practices.