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## THE SEMIOTIC CONSTRUCTION OF MASCULINITY AND AFFECT: A MULTIMODAL ANALYSIS OF MEDIA TEXTS

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### **Abstract**

The aim of this paper is to observe changes in the semiotic construction of masculine identities as a dynamic flux of social representations mediated by the multimodal aspect of texts (sensory modality, salience, behaviour and point of view). The study compares previous research data from a magazine article of 2003 and its cover- page to four adverts of the 2005 edition and three recent adverts published in the 2008 edition of the same magazine, so as to perceive how they position readers ideologically in order to (1) detect how masculinity is discursively represented in its heterogeneity connected, ideologically, with power relations, vanity and emotions and (2) define their identities as consumers of goods and services.

**Key words:** Emotions; masculine identity; semiotic construction; multimodality.

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## 1 Introduction

Social Semiotics of visual communication involves the description of semiotic resources (what can be represented and communicated in images and what people say and do with images) and how they can be interpreted. One of the main contributions of social semiotics is to describe how semiotic resources are used in different contexts. It has been considered by many to be a “powerful tool in critical research”, and “it only becomes meaningful once we start to use its resources to ask questions” (Jewitt & Oyama 2001, p.136). Van Leeuwen also calls our attention to the fact that

Social Semiotics is not ‘pure’ theory, not a self-contained field. It only comes into its own when it is applied to specific problems, and it always requires immersing oneself not just in semiotic concepts and methods as such but also in some other field. It can only come into its own when social semiotics fully engages with social theory. This kind of interdisciplinarity is an absolutely essential feature of social semiotics (2005, p. 1).

Another important feature of social semiotics is that it is a form of enquiry. As Hodge and Kress (1988) have pointed out this quest for enquiry is anchored on two concepts employed in the production of messages and meanings: text and discourse. According to the authors, ‘text’ is seen “in an extended semiotic sense to refer to a structure of messages or message traces which has a socially ascribed unit” and discourse refers to “the social process in which texts are embedded, while text is the concrete material object produced in discourse” (Hodge & Kress, 1988, p. 6). Text is connected to the mimetic plane of representations whereas discourse is more related to the semiotic plane of socially constructed meaning. Hodge and Kress (1988) also

emphasize that social semiotics is concerned “with social meanings constructed through the full range of semiotic forms” (p.5). More recently, Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) have noticed an intense movement towards multimodality in our society, hence the need for a Social Semiotics of visual representation and communication.

Van Leeuwen (2005, p. 3-4) shifts his discussion away from the question of what semiotics is to what semioticians in fact do. A partial answer given by the author is to

collect, document and systematically catalogue semiotic resources... investigate how these resources are used in specific historical, cultural and institutional contexts, and how people talk about them in these contexts.

As for the resources used, he adds that

As soon as we have established that a given type of physical activity or a given type of material artefact constitutes a semiotic resource, it becomes possible to describe its *semiotic potential*, its potential for making meaning.

In this article, we set out to explore the visual representations of men, the resources used and the discourses about masculinity found in some media texts. We focus on the changes taking place in the identity construction of manhood, especially those that include representations of feelings and emotions. Our aim is to depict the semiotic construction of gender identity as a social, cultural, historical, discursive and performative phenomenon peculiar to modern society. A discussion of masculinity will be presented in the next section.

Our study comprises a comparison of our previous research, an analysis of an article published in a 2003 edition of the weekly Brazilian magazine *Veja*, its cover-page and parts of the article related to the subject mentioned in the cover-page called “The New Man”, with adverts from *Veja* magazine 2005<sup>1</sup> and also with a more recent corpus of adverts from the same magazine in one of its 2008 editions in which men are depicted as represented participants (RP). The corpora were analyzed in the light of Multimodality (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001; 2006) and the social representation of masculinity. In our work, we favored the unveiling of power dynamics between the ‘new masculine identity constructions’ and the possibilities of semiotic constructions that have been distanced from hegemonic presuppositions. So, it is an effort to depict meaning-power relations in media texts. It is also an attempt to analyse and disclose the truth of actual change and hybridity of masculine identity in media discourse. Bailey and Hall (1992, p. 21) have considered identities as being unfixed and unambiguous as well as “positional in relation to the discourses around us” and they add that “[t]hat is why the notion of representation is so important -identity can only be articulated as a set of representations”.

In this paper, we first provide a discussion on the social construction of masculinity and masculine emotions, and then proceed with the analysis. Our analysis of the data from 2003 and 2005 reveals that images can reinforce stereotyped forms of hegemonic masculinity, and the analysis of the 2008 images shows, on the other hand, that changes are starting to happen. The originality of this paper may be claimed in terms of different data set and different findings due to the time frame.

## **2. What is masculinity?**

Before we start our discussion on the definition of masculinity it is imperative to mention that, until recently, attention given to men has been scarce and they are not depicted as clear figures. However, nowadays a growing recognition of the need to define masculinity has become important in the academic world. In this sense masculinity is a way to explain men. However, there are different ideas captured with different terminology: (1) biological determinism or essentialism that equates masculinity with sex, (2) cultural or social constructionism and masculinity as a power discourse. Biological determinism and cultural construction believe that 'masculinity' is a useful tool to explain men. As biological destiny, masculinity is used to refer to the innate qualities and properties of men that distinguish men from women. In this view, masculinity is men's nature, and as such helps to explain not only differences but also inequalities between men and women. Men's political, economic and cultural privileges arise from their masculine advantage, as variously reflected in genetic predisposition to aggression (in contrast to womanlike passivity), physical strength (in contrast to the weakness of femininity) and sexual drives (in contrast to the sexual reserve of femininity). The problem with biological determinism is the arbitrary nature of the fixing of men's essential masculinity, which can range across a whole spectrum from men's innate physicality/animality to men's innate rationality.

Gender is constituted in and by society and culture, rather than by nature and biology. As has been pointed out, there is an increasing academic interest in gendering men and this interest has centered on an exploration of cultural constructions of masculinity. This exploration still seeks to explain men and their behaviour in

terms of their masculinity, but a masculinity which is defined as an embodiment of the cultural norms and social pressures that help to determine the roles, rights, responsibilities and relations available to and imposed upon men, in contrast to women. Accounts of the cultural constructions of masculinity often conceive and describe it in metaphors of roles, performances and scripts. The emphasis on the pressure that masculinity imposes on men to perform and conform to specific masculine roles (emotional and psychological as well as political and social) has highlighted the costs to men of current gender arrangements. Defining masculinity in terms of its cultural construction “offers ways to re-think men’s relationship to gender (in) equality” (Greig, Kimmel & Lang, 2000, p.54). Masculinity is presented as a social meaning, a culturally elaborate ideal or a relational system. In this sense masculinity could be described as pointing to “the order of socially sanctioned behaviour... a symbolic/imaginary place of structuring meanings of production of subjectivity...” (Oliveira, 2004, p. 13).

The construction of gender is also viewed as a project of power and creation of norms (Foucault, 1987). It is best understood as the process of socialization of men and women. Since childhood, men’s socialization in familial, educational, religious and cultural institutions is based on the configuration of a strong, self-assured, competitive being seen as a winner most of the time. In order to materialize this shaping of masculine emotions a pattern of behaviour becomes essential: never cry, show weakness, fear or insecurity. According to Corsi (2006)

traditional masculine identity is constructed based on two simultaneous and complementary psychological processes: the hyper development of the exterior self (do, act, achieve) and

the repression of the emotional sphere”. In order to conjoin the forces of both processes men have to develop self-control so as to regulate the expression of emotions by not talking about their feelings especially with other men, exercise control, power and success. (p.23)

In his discussion of masculinity Connell (2005, p. 71) describes it as being “simultaneously a place in gender relations, the practices through which men and women engage that place in gender, and the effects of these practices in bodily experience, personality and culture”. This definition warns us that masculinity is not the property of men, and reminds us to be wary of using the terms ‘men’, ‘male’ and ‘masculinity’ interchangeably. Discourses of masculinity are available to, used by and imposed upon both men and women.

Discursive perspectives on masculinity are interested in the ways that it becomes a site for these claims and contests of power. Such perspectives pluralize masculinity into masculinities and note the way that subordinate masculinities emerge in resistance to the power claims of hegemonic masculinities. Connell (2005) goes further and adds that masculinity is not only an idea in your head or a personal identity. It is extended to the world and combined in the organization of social relations as legitimate entities.

Furthermore, human interactions and the experience of emotions are (re) constructed by gender either as a performative category of the mechanisms that postulate the body (Butler, 1990) or as an analytical category and a constitutive element of social relations embodied in systems of power (Scott, 1995). Butler (1990, p. 43) defines gender as “repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being.” And Scott adds that it is the personal which becomes political. In this



paper, thus, we discuss gender as a semiotic machine that (re) builds spaces, relations, bodies, institutions, symbols and values embodied in social and personal processes of human experience as will be seen in the examples of section 3.

### **3. Masculine identity and emotions in the media**

Section 3 is divided into method and analysis. As we understand the unveiling of power dynamics between the ‘new masculine identity constructions’ and the possibilities of semiotic constructions that have been distanced from hegemonic presuppositions, our analysis is an effort to depict meaning-power relations in media texts.

#### ***3.1 Method***

The texts selected for this article focus on discourses of identity, that is, masculine identity. The discussion we want to implement takes us to five distinct important questions (1) Is there a movement towards the re-organization of masculine identity? (2) Which truth regimes (Foucault, 1987) do the magazines refer to when discussing the identity of the new man? (3) Which representations of masculine identity are portrayed in the adverts? (4) Do the images reinforce stereotyped/hegemonic forms of masculinity? (5) In what ways are emotions visually displayed in the texts?

Using the social semiotic (Kress, 2010) approach to visual analysis, associated with a social theory of masculinity will enable us to answer these questions. Our working assumption is that text is a broad notion encompassing semiotic, discursive grammatical and multimodal dimensions. It is our contention that meaning making is multimodal (and not only verbal), as reinforced by Kress and van

Leeuwen (2001; 2006). A social theory of language which is critical and multimodal starts with the principle that discourses are constitutive of social life, that is, that they represent and construct the world having as a starting point specific social-historical contexts (Kress, 2010). Discursive practices encompass four domains: discourses which are socially constructed knowledge, design “(1) a formulation of a discourse or combinations of discourses (2) a particular (inter) action, in which the discourse is embedded, and, (3) a particular way of combining semiotic modes” (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001, p. 21).

In media texts strategic choices of design, production and distribution usually incite readers and subscribers to a great consumption. In magazines the genre cover is always highlighted. Research in the area of marketing as the one developed by Marshall (2003) shows us that magazine covers may be considered as having a selling characteristic since they bring to the buyers a reality to be consumed in the same manner as adverts, since they call consumers’ attention and even arouse a desire to buy and read the magazine. The cover of a magazine, along with the articles, reports, interviews and the adverts are seen as forms of multimodal messages (verbal and visual). The cover is at the same time informative and persuasive, presenting the world and ideologies in such a seductive manner that allows it to form a hierarchy, classify and control society by reaching and modifying individual and collective behaviours depending on how it is presented. The producers of magazine covers as well as of adverts use different types of emotional, rational, fanciful strategies to entice and convince the target/readers accordingly (Marshall, 2003).

Adverts and cover-page images carry connotations and create particular interpersonal relations between the producer, the viewer and the world depicted in the picture since they represent social interactions and social relations. They may convey a sense of

duration or of nostalgia through codes of color, framing and through their public or private context. The viewer is invited to relate to an image as pointed out by Bell (2001, p. 29): “an image can engage the viewer in a fetishistic and compulsive urge to look and look again, encouraging the sense that the viewer owns the image or part of his or her identity”.

For this matter, we focus on interpersonal choices that can show the degree of visual modality or reality of an image especially in regards to the choice of color and degree of smile concerning the opening of the mouth. We emphasize that modality refers “to the truth value or credibility of statements about the world... modality judgements are social, dependent on what is considered real (or true or sacred) in the social group for which the representation is primarily intended.” (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 155-156).

Interactive meanings also suggest the attitude a reader should take towards what is being represented. Three factors play an important role in the realization of this kind of meaning: (1) social distance, (2) emotional behaviour and (3) point of view (angle). Each factor has a meaning potential, a field of possible meanings which need to be activated by the producers and viewers of images. It is important to notice that we have coined the term emotional behavior as a new category of analysis, not present in current literature on the subject. This term became imperative for the analysis of the 2005 data as well as for the images of the 2008 magazines.

Social distance (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006) has the potential of making meanings such as intimate, close personal, far personal, close social, far social and public. These are defined “in terms of how much of the (human) participant’s body is represented in the frame of the respective image” (Bell, 2001, p. 29).

Behavior according to Bell can be seen as a synthesis of Kress and van Leeuwen's image act and Goffman's ideas on values<sup>2</sup>. We have added an emotional dimension to Bell's concept of behaviour. The resources that will be considered here are clothes the RP is wearing, gaze and smile. Their meaning potential is: (1) offer/ideal- the RP offers him an idealized example of a class or attribute, looking away from the viewer, smiling or not smiling; (2) demand/affiliation (equality) - RP looks at the viewer, directly, smiling; (3) demand/submission - RP looks down at the viewer. Point of view, as a resource, is determined by the type of angle, that is, if the RP is depicted from above, from below and at eye-level. Power, detachment and involvement are a field of possible meanings which are activated by the producers of meaning. So, according to Jewitt and Oyama (2001, p.135),

if you want to express that something or someone is impressive and powerful, you are unlikely to choose high angle, and if you see someone depicted from a high angle you are unlikely to conclude that he or she is represented as an impressive and powerful person [...] symbolic relations are not real relations, and it is precisely this which makes point of view a semiotic resource.

Visual modality markers of degrees of truth and credibility are color saturation, representational detail, depth and shades. Modality is context dependent and is coded according to certain orientations. Due to the nature of the corpus, we are concerned here with sensory orientations "which are used in contexts in which the pleasure principle is allowed to be dominant: certain kinds of art, advertising, fashion" (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p.165). They add that "colour is a source of pleasure and affective meanings, and consequently it

conveys high modality: vibrant reds, soothing blues and so on...” (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p.165).

### 3.2. *Analysis*

The analysis presented below will encompass changes in visual representation of power relations, social distance, sensory modality, emotional behaviour (smile, gaze or gaze away), and age presented in the cover-page and in the article published in 2003 as compared to some advertisements published in the 2005 and the 2008 editions of the magazine, describing and explaining how these semiotic resources are used in specific domains. The specific features of our analysis will be: (1) social distance, (2) visual modality (3) emotional behaviour and (4) composition. Since in this study we explore a social semiotic view of masculine identity and how it affects forms of representation, the setting and the props, the actors' appearance, the composition of each image and the relationship between the represented participants and the viewer (encoded through the use of point of view, distance and contact) generated by the images ideas will be confronted to the literature on gender and masculinity discussed in section 2.

The discourses conveyed by the cover-page (Text 1<sup>3</sup>) and the article (Text 2) depict the 'birth of a new man' and, in addition, construct the image of this new man that will be unveiled by social semiotics through a multimodal approach and sociological studies as we have pointed out before.

As mentioned above, both texts published in 2003 'The new man' and 'The man in a new skin' announce a change in man's masculinity. Men are portrayed as having developed their sensitivity, showing their emotions, being strong and having style. In the cover-page (Text 1) this new man is being born, he is in fetal position, wearing

no clothes, salient and central occupying most of the page. However, color saturation is low bright pale yellow in the background and brown in the picture of the man. It is the ‘macho’ of the twenty first century. In Text 2, the same man is shown on the left side, with sophisticated modern leisure clothes, gaze of offer with his hand and finger pointing at God, that is, at Michaelangelo’s painting, giving life to the new transformed man. A ‘soft man’ is proclaimed in an attempt to erase “a hegemonic construction of masculinity replacing it by an imaginary community formed by different types of masculinity” (Moita Lopes, 2002, p. 139). In the text, the producer proceeds by displaying different kinds of new men, including several famous and well known metrosexuals such as footballers, actors and so on. For example, David Beckham, the famous football player, can be seen in a picture coming out of a car wearing fashionable clothes. A comment about that accompanies the picture: “nailpolish, virility and scores goals” and “a perfect combination of force and care about looks.” The writer also points out that Brad Pitt, the Hollywood actor, “is an example of the new man portrayed by research.

In 2005, the adverts we observed confirmed, to a certain extent, the existence of ‘the new soft man’. Our findings revealed that the interpersonal categories of emotional behavior indicate the forms of engagement of RPs with readers by producing meanings that are close or distant to emotional contents. Modality markers allowed us to evaluate the production of truth and reality in the texts and consequently the production of emotional/non-emotional meanings. Color, for example, in the text in which a little boy is depicted as a future engineer is of a metallic grey. The boy (Text 3) is also wearing a man’s shirt, glasses and a safety cap usually worn by engineers in a construction site. He does not smile in the same manner as an executive that is not smiling and sitting on a chair on the top of a

bridge. A smile and a high degree of emotion is expected in an image of a little boy. The analyses of the texts have confirmed that at a certain moment a particular resource was important in the design and production of emotional meanings. In other circumstances the choice of different semiotic modes were imperative for the construction of these meanings.

Our findings after the analyses of the various texts (adverts) of the 2005 editions confirmed that behavior (smile/gaze) conveys few affective emotional meanings and delimit almost exclusively spaces of power. The meaning potential of a smile accompanied by other semiotic modes depicted little proximity and emotion in contrast with the construction forms of power and distance in relation to the viewer. We have found smiles without emotions and bodies that produce wealth in a 'moment of engament' in an attempt to align with a hegemonic project of masculinity in which emotions should be controlled and power and victory should be the tonic, as Connell (2005) points out. The 'new soft man' is still disguised at points but mostly not represented in the 2005 texts. Distance, low colour modality and emotional behaviour are related to discourses of highly hierarquical masculine power, low intimacy, contact and affect.

One of the most important examples can be viewed in Text 4 (a and b): the "Itau Private Bank" advertisement reveals a picture in which an executive dressed in a suit and a tie is positioned on the top of a bridge, sitting comfortably in a chair. He is on the top of the world. In his behaviour, modality, colour saturation and contextualization are low, while the lack of smile and a gaze of offer display no contact with the viewer and a context where pleasure and emotional principles of affect shape the scene of the powerful strong winner. In addition, a vertical low angle conveys far social distance and power. This image represents the most hegemonic and rational

construction of social masculinity. The socially and culturally constructed meanings are inserted in an ideological and political context of the capitalist work ethics.

In 2008, changes become more evident and 'the new man' is portrayed at a moment of separation from hegemonic masculinity in which meanings of resignation and submission are conjugated with the production of contact, intimacy and emotions. In this context, two characteristics are markedly revealed, namely the capacity to be expressive and to tell the truth, especially about having feelings, being sensitive, having an aesthetic sense and being strong but with style.

From our 2008 corpora we have chosen to show three examples (Text 5, 6 -and 7) which represent the discourses produced in the magazines in the bigger corpora. The examples will be analysed taking into account 'simultaneous systems' of display of interactive meanings and their realizations (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 148-9). It is important to emphasize that besides looking at social distance, visual modality and composition, as proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen, our study has incorporated other features of analysis, namely emotional behaviour (gaze, dance and other kind of bodily movements, smile), and position on the page, all of which are key elements for the observation of changes in the semiotic construction of masculine identities.

#### Text 5 Tim Nokia series

In this advertisement Fernando Meligeni, a famous Brazilian tennis player is chosen by the producers of the advertisement of a Nokia cell phone. Our analysis shows how the system of interactive meanings is put together so as to create more complex and subtle relations between the represented participants: Meligeni and the Nokia cell phone.

Regarding social distance, a long shot framing is used, that is, the full body is shown producing meanings of impersonal far social



distance. Intertextuality is used in the text playing a crucial role in the assemblage of the network of the system of interactive meanings. The RP is holding a frame that places him in second perspective. The product and the uses of the mobile phone are in a poster in front of Meligeni. The poster is the actor of the narrative representation, the most salient participant, from which different vectors in the form of arrows point in the direction of the different uses of the product and its price. Meligeni's hands are holding the poster and his fingers are shown clearly in a horizontal line.

In terms of visual modality, dark colours far from real can be seen in the background and colour modulation conveys low modality. The RP's face and hands are the only parts that are illuminated in contrast with the rest of the image, which is in the dark. The area concerning the real which is related to the product and its description "Now everything is connected" is red and can be related to pleasure. Emotional behavior is expressed by a gaze of demand and an open smile which produce emotional meanings of pleasure and happiness.

In relation to composition, occupying the central position, and in a position of salience, we can see a poster containing a picture of the product with its uses and price. However, the represented participant's face, hands and legs can be seen in first perspective, and even though he is carrying the poster, his smiles and his fingers stand out lowering its position of centrality and salience. It could be stated that emotion and pleasure are preponderant in the text.

#### Text 6 - Claro mobile phone

The represented participant of this ad resembles the "new man" announced in the 2003 texts. One could dare to say that he is the metrosexual mentioned in the 2003 article.

Social distance can be observed in the long shot which shows the entire body of the represented participant from his legs up,

suggesting an impersonal interactive distance. However, since the RP is sitting, emphasis is placed on his waist up lowering the social distance from far impersonal to social and also personal to some extent due to his open smile. Concerning visual modality, one can almost feel a sensory orientation in this image in the direction of pleasure by the excessive brightness, the shades of bright yellow in the back, as well as the absence of details in the blurred picture of the background. The high modality of the background is lowered by the shades of grey in the RP's clothes.

Emotional behavior is realized by a gaze of offer in which the RP is looking away from the viewer, which diminishes contact and is then enhanced by an open smile, including the viewer in an atmosphere of involvement and intimacy, adding emotional meanings to the image already represented and communicated by means of the other resources used in the picture. In terms of compositional features, the RP is on the right, in a position of *new*, intensifying his position of power even though the product ( the phone) is also in a position of *new* lowering slightly the power attributed to the RP, who is talking to a possible represented participant who might be a consumer of the product.

#### Text 7- Centrum silver vitamins

The represented participant is an executive over 50 years old (information provided by the ad) dressed in formal clothes related to the image of the winner in the workplace.

While social distance in this ad is realized by the framing of medium shot which cuts the RP at the waistline, conveying meanings of close social distance and impersonality, visual modality is realized by color saturation which is low in modality. The pale colors used in the entire picture lowers modality even more. The blurred background of an office (man in his workplace) is in consonance

with a context of unpleasantness, in contrast with the context of the product and its logo which shows pleasure and emotion by means of full color saturation and brightness. Power of the RP is high if added to the fact that the angle is vertical and low.

In terms of emotional behavior, we can see that the gaze of offer of ideal equality lowers the RP's power in contrast to the resources used to convey visual modality. His face is shifted a little because his arms are up like those of a winner, giving him power. His clothes are work-related and his eyes are raised, distancing him from the viewer and raising his power. His smile is that of a winner ensuring his position of power but at the same time suggesting the discourse of money and power different from the other participants portrayed in the 2008 adverts. As for composition, the RP is in a central position of total power.

As we have already pointed out, in the 2008 ads, changes become more evident and 'the new man' is portrayed at a moment of separation from hegemonic masculinity in which meanings of resignation and submission are conjugated with the production of contact, intimacy and emotions. In this context, two characteristics are markedly revealed: the capacity to be expressive and to tell the truth, especially about having feelings, being sensitive, having an aesthetic sense and being strong but with style.

#### **4. Conclusion**

Analysing the texts produced in *Veja* magazine allowed us to understand the semiotic construction of masculinity based on multimodal discursive choices and to question which points could be considered to be new representations of gender identity and which ones were still articulated with the system of hegemonic masculinity.

It became clear that masculinity is culturally and socially constructed and related to political, economical and physical strength. Observing masculinity from the point of view of emotions, a realm considered exclusive to femininity has allowed us to detect a few of the changes that are taking place in our society and in our culture in relation to the embodiment of cultural norms.

The selected issue of the Brazilian magazine *Veja* 2003 came out with the assumption that ‘The New Man – A man in new skin’ was being born. However, what was actually being revealed was a masculine incursion into the feminine universe and the preservation of masculine hegemonic identity projects. That was our starting/ departure point.

The adverts of the 2005 magazines made evident that masculine emotions are to be hidden in favor of a hegemonic position of masculine power, as previously discussed. The winner in the workplace was depicted in most of the images. Only in very few pictures were emotions and affect constructed.

Finally, the 2008 adverts point to changes in the representation of men and the portrayal of their emotions. In contrast with the adverts of 2005 the new men depicted in the article of 2003 is presented to us in the 2008 data. Smiles, colors, looks with demand and offer, as well as the choice of clothes and position on the page convey meanings of pleasure and affect. The choices made in text 7 were rare in the corpus. They show that assumptions are still related to economic power and winning. The previous choice of colors and clothes which revealed the masculine, hegemonic project of power is replaced by a masculinity that expects a strong, self-assured, competitive man but also a man that is portrayed as having emotions, pleasure not only related to money, position and success, but also affect, sensitivity, mildness and joy.

Our research has displayed that by means of multimodal and social semiotic analyses we detain powerful and useful instruments to unveil signifiers and signifieds, resources and meanings of masculine emotions. By means of the observation of interactive meanings (1) social distance which can be intimate/personal, social or impersonal (2) visual modality which can be low, medium or high according to angle and perspective (3) emotional behaviour which encompasses smile, gaze, colour, clothes, and (4) composition the position of the participant in the images evinces how the construction of masculinity identity takes place in advertisements.

### Notes

1. The examples used in this article are part of a research project named "Masculinity and Emotions", wherein all of the adverts displaying men as participants in the 2005 and 2008 editions of *Veja* magazine were analysed.
2. We are in a process of doing further research on behavior since we believe it to be one of the most important aspects of visual interaction and have decided to name it emotional behaviour.
3. The authors use Text and not Figure, in accordance with the theoretical background adopted. All Texts can be visualized in the Appendix [Editors' note].

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# APPENDIX



Text 1: The new man



Text 2: The man in a new skin





Text 3: Boy portrayed as an engineer



Text 4:Itau private bank ad



Text 5:Tim ad



Text 6: Claro ad

ter idéias vencedoras  
ter casa na praia  
equilibrar a alimentação  
vitamina B  
cromo

**Você ainda tem muitas coisas a conquistar na vida.  
E outras a manter,  
como a ENERGIA\*.**

**SOB MEDIDA**  
600 mg de zinco  
com 50 mg de selênio

**Centrum SILVER**  
vitaminas e minerais  
para quem tem 50 anos ou mais

**Para você que tem 50 anos ou mais e uma rotina que nem sempre permite uma dieta equilibrada, Centrum SILVER é feito sob medida: tem doses balanceadas de vitaminas do complexo B, que estão envolvidas no processo de obtenção de energia a partir dos alimentos, além do cromo, que tem papel importante no metabolismo do açúcar. Mais um motivo por que Centrum SILVER é completo de A a Zinco. Então cuide de sua saúde. Porque você ainda tem muito o que viver pela frente.**

**80000 17593**

**A PERSISTIR EM OS SINTOMAS, O MÉDICO DEVERÁ SER CONSULTADO.**

Text 7: Centrum vitamin ad