

An Analysis of the Representation of the LGBTQIA+ Community in Brazilian Advertising Videos

Un análisis de la representación de la comunidad LGBTQIA+ en los vídeos publicitarios brasileños

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RESUMEN

El enfoque mediático en la comunidad LGBTQ+ y el Pink Money surge de su significativo poder adquisitivo y la creciente demanda de reconocimiento de los derechos LGBTQ+. Este estudio explora el contexto histórico de la comunidad LGBTQ+, esencial para analizar su representación moderna en la publicidad audiovisual. Académicos como Castañeda y Jenkins contribuyen a la base teórica. Utilizando el análisis de contenido, la investigación escudriña la representación LGBTQ+ en videos publicitarios de los meses del Orgullo (2017-2018). Una encuesta evalúa las respuestas sociales, mientras que las entrevistas con expertos siguen las metodologías de Bardin y Malhotra. El estudio revela una recepción generalmente positiva, aunque algunos la perciben como motivada económicamente (Pink Money). La noción de Bardin sobre el análisis de contenido como herramienta impregna el estudio, ofreciendo percepciones matizadas de las representaciones LGBTQ+.

Palabras clave: LGBTQIA+; medios; *pink money*; representación

ABSTRACT

The media's focus on the LGBTQIA+ community and Pink Money arises from their significant purchasing power and growing demand for LGBTQIA+ rights recognition. This study explores the historical context of the LGBTQIA+ community, essential for analyzing its modern representation in audiovisual advertising. Scholars like Castañeda and Jenkins contribute to the theoretical foundation. Employing content analysis, the research scrutinizes LGBTQIA+ representation in Pride month advertising videos (2017-2018). A survey gauges societal responses, while interviews with experts follow Bardin and Malhotra's methodologies. The study reveals generally positive reception, though some view it as economically motivated (Pink Money). Bardin's notion of content analysis as a tool permeates the study, offering nuanced insights into LGBTQIA+ portrayals.

Keywords: LGBTQIA+; media; pink money; representation

1. Introducción

The relationship between the media and the LGBTQIA+ community dates to the early 1970s, attributing two main factors to this relationship: the first to the liberation movement developed by the community that began with the *StoneWall* Riots and the second to the AIDS epidemic that occurred in the 1980s (Castaneda & Campbell, 2006, p. 38), which was in this period mostly attributed to the LGBTQIA+ community.

In order to understand how the media and the LGBTQIA+ community relate to each other; it is necessary to look at their history and analyze their relationship since the last century. In Brazilian television, the first appearance of an openly gay character in a soap opera occurred in 1970 in the production "Assim na Terra como no Céu", played by Ary Fontoura. In the period from 1970 to 2013, 126 characters who fit into the community appeared throughout 62 soap operas, which classifies a growth in the representation of LGBTQIA+ people in Brazilian telenovelas. However, it is possible to notice homosexual predominance, especially during the initial period, that is, only the acronyms G (gay) and L (lesbian) were being represented (Nascimento, 2015).

2. State of Knowledge

Even with greater representation in soap operas, the first homosexual kiss of Brazilian television occurred only in 2011, in the soap opera "Love and Revolution", SBT network. In 2005, during the exhibition of the soap opera "America", a kiss scene between two gay characters was recorded in seven different ways and announced to the public, but a few hours before going on air, the management of the network asked to remove the scene from the chapter of the soap opera. Only eight years later, in 2013, the network showed a gay kiss in the plot "Amor à Vida". After that, the soap opera "Babilônia" (2015) showed a lesbian kiss between two older women. A year later the plot "Freedom, Freedom" entered the history of the country as the first scene of a homosexual sexual act between two men (Testoni, 2018).

According to Rodrigues (2008, p. 145-147), it can be considered that the first commercial with sexual minorities in Brazil is from the perfume Rastro of 1978, which featured three couples: a heterosexual, a gay and a lesbian. This campaign was aired in print format in magazines in Brazil. However, the author's study focuses on the commercials aired on television. His research covers the years from 1979 to 2008, almost three decades, and in this period only 35 commercials that presented some LGBTQIA+ theme. Of these 35, 20 were aired between the years 2000 and 2008.

The data presented by Rodrigues (2008) show how the relationship between the media and the community has been complex over the years and only recently there has been an opening and narrowing of this connection. In particular of commercials due to the fear of brands losing their customers and suffering boycotts. The representation of the LGBTQIA+ community in commercials is a complex theme within companies. This can be analyzed by the numbers, considering that in Brazil thousands of commercials are aired every year and those that feature some sexual minority represent only 35 between the years of 1979 and 2008.

In 1994, *IKEA*, aiming to target the LGBTQIA+ market, launched a commercial featuring a gay couple shopping for furniture in their store. The commercial was shown on Swedish television channels. The company's intent was to attract this portion of the population, LGBTQIA+. However, a large portion of the Swedish population did not find the commercial attractive and did not like seeing a gay couple, which caused the company to no longer invest in this segment in *mainstream* media. It ended up focusing on the LGBTQIA+ market in a different way. They developed different campaigns in mainstream channels, but without community representation, and bet on campaigns with community representation only in LGBTQIA+ magazines (Oakenfull, 2008).

According to Gauntlett (2004, p. 55), with small but continuous growth, LGBTQIA+ characters started to appear more on television, and this connects directly with the discussion of the rights agenda of this part of the population, discriminated since forever. The delay in this representation had a lot to do with the complex relationship between the media and LGBTQIA+ people, since it was only over the years that society's tolerance began to increase, and soon the tolerance of the owners and producers of these media outlets, and so it became possible to insert the community in the media. This aspect is important because it brings notoriety to the cause, collaborating to put it on the agenda of popular culture and, consequently, demystifying and naturalizing the community before society.

In general, companies do not want to produce predictable commercials, those traditional ones, full of clichés and following the same old story. They want new and modern things. In addition, they do not want to alienate their audience, they want to show scenes that do not contain stereotypes, unless it is to laugh at the situation and show how ridiculous and unrealistic some contexts can be. This shows that companies want to use reality in their commercials; and reality is the increasingly evident presence of the LGBTQIA+ community in all spaces of society. Despite the companies' desire to want to modernize, there is still the encounter with the social structure - which is, yes, created by traditions, institutions and moral codes -, which can generate conflicts due to the maintenance of old habits. However, these are always changing, because when a part of the population begins to ignore certain standards, these end up being forgotten or reproduced in other ways (Gauntlett, 2004, p. 81-93).

The media has an impact on many aspects of the structure of social life as it is used to persuade people to vote for candidates, buy products, adopt healthy measures, consume certain services, or even donate to philanthropic causes (Perse, 2001). In this way, one can use the media to engage people in social causes, such as the acceptance of the LGBTQ+ community in the society. This can be done through commercials, programs, movies or series that seek to present the scenes of injustice and prejudice that the group may suffer, or also by just presenting them in a way to integrate into society.

Mass communication, operated by the media, has three functions, according to McCombs (2006, p. 134): "surveillance of the larger environment, achieving consensus among the segments of society, and transmission of the culture". The media is then responsible for transmitting a message that reflects on society, that is, its role is to perpetuate the culture present in these communities, but at the same time it seeks to observe the environment. It is at this point that the LGBTQIA+ community is represented, since in recent years there have been more and more people who have publicly stated about their sexuality, thus resulting in a need for representation of these members in the most diverse channels.

Since the media is present in the most diverse places and moments of everyday life, basically, all individuals interact and are shaped by what they consume from it. In such a way that, when representing minorities, such as the LGBTQIA+ community, these channels end up contributing to building social reality, that is, when members are represented in the media, there is a contribution to affirming the existence and belonging of this group within the so-called majority society. However, this image can influence, but is not the complete construction of an acceptance before society, since

people can be influenced by the media and its images, but there are other elements in society that can contribute in a contrary way when it comes to molding or changing thoughts, as an example, religion, each person's upbringing, their experiences and livings (Castañeda & Campbell, 2006, p. 38).

According to Gauntlett (2004, p. 248) modern media - Internet, social networks and digital media - have not allocated much time or been obedient to traditions. It has, rather, increasingly proposed to innovate, to bring new subjects to the media agenda, not only wanting to repeat what past generations did. In fact, it is helping to produce new ways of life and new paradigms. Such fact is important for the LGBTQIA+ community, since if the media is willing to innovate experiences, it can help to increase respect and acceptance of the community. This statement ends up validating the hypothesis of the power that the media exerts over society discussed in this subtopic. If the media's role is this of creating new livelihoods, it is shaping and forming society. How? By motivating new debates and thoughts on the subject. Despite its effects, the media has no way to change the entire thinking of a person, much less a society; the media collaborates, essentially, for the inclusion and construction of new images, in this case, of respect and equality by/of community members through representation (from news, fictionalized to advertising).

According to Perse (2001, p. 165), children adopt as examples of life the media characters: they want to dress, have the hair, clothes, postures, everything like these people. In this sense, it is possible to confirm the effects of the media on their audiences. Therefore, it is important that all kinds of people are represented there. In the case of children, they help them to feel included through representation, whether in news content, advertisements or fictionalized content. It is important that they have members of the LGBTQIA+ community represented in the media content they consume so that they grow up knowing that it is normal to be LGBTQIA+ and that it can be anywhere.

Some brands in Brazil that have chosen to embrace the cause, either for financial reasons or to support the cause are, among others, *O Boticario*, *BB Seguros*, *Sonho de Valsa*, *Motorola*, *Ben & Jerry's*, *Gol*. These brands often suffer online attacks for being "promoting" homosexuality; these are made by a portion of society that still has homophobia rooted. However, what has been seen by the responses on social networks and also by *feedback* from entrepreneurs, most of them support the representation, there are even some cases in which the pages got more engagement and *views* due to the campaign having a minority (Barifouse & Costas, 2015)¹.

Thus, it becomes evident the idea that the media, to some extent, exerts a power to build symbols, identities, figures, images and behaviors, which can be used to perpetuate standards or even break them. Media culture functions, then, as a varied guide of ideas that the receiver - in addition to consuming - adopts for his life. The constant exposure to these identities and behaviors acts as the lure for the consumer to want to adopt these patterns and create a sense of belonging (Kellner, 2001, p. 333). As argued earlier, the media ends up creating effects on individuals directly or indirectly through the endless stream of messages and signals it sends daily.

¹ Published in BBC News at 12/06/2015

https://www.bbc.com/portuguese/noticias/2015/06/150610_publicidade_lgbt_brasil_rb

According to Santos & Cândido (2017, p. 4):

the word Advertising derives from the Latin *publicus* and means the act of making something public, be it an idea or a fact, for example. Advertising is, basically, the dissemination of an idea that, through some means of communication, seeks to influence someone to buy some product or service, creating in this person the feeling of desire for what is announced. It can be defined as the promotion of ideas, products and/or services, announced by an identified being, with a defined target audience, and aiming at profit.

In this aspect, it is understood that advertising aims to transmit a message to a receiver who should exercise a function, whether to buy a product, change an idea, reflect on a cause or perform an activity. Therefore, one should think that the primordial of the act of advertising is to make something public in an ethical, inclusive and respectable way.

According to Rodrigues (2008, p. 15), "advertising suggests a potential consumer and, therefore, it is inserted in the context of the consumer society", being so, it can be considered that advertising has as its main role the execution of an action. In the aspect of LGBTQIA+ commercials, we can consider that advertising has as its purpose the sale of a product to a growing market that has a higher income than heterosexuals, however, it is also understood that it can play a role of social engagement, namely through a greater acceptance through the message of the advertising content.

The marketing of a service, merchandise or concept is one of the main goals of advertising and for this, this must represent the culture in which it is inserted, since the consumer must understand the message (Baggio, 2009, p. 1). However, advertising can also include new social aspects because its role is to represent society, that is, even if there is a predominant culture there are still minorities that are inserted there and need to be heard.

The increase of ads with LGBTQIA+ content in Brazil demonstrates, for Baggio (2009, p. 1), a "greater elasticity in social relations and less tolerance to prejudice, but also economic [goals]". However, one should be cautious when speaking that society is less prejudice because, while it shows signs of greater acceptance, there are still many obstacles in the life of an LGBTQIA+ person.

Also in the sense that advertising represents the culture in which it is inserted, Rodrigues & Carvalho (2015, p. 3-4), argue that "advertising acts as an instrument of transfer of meanings of the culturally constituted world for consumer goods". Thus, the purpose of a commercial is to sell, but intrinsically ends up building the imaginary in the mind of society, because there in the audiovisual is representing a world that often can be seen by consumers as real or ideal.

The media representation of the LGBTQIA+ community can still be considered small when compared to heterosexuals, but it is slowly becoming visible the growth of LGBTQIA+ members occupying spaces in soap operas, advertisements, film productions and other types of media content. Television has featured several members of the community in the last decade and naturalized the participation of members of the community, leaving aside certain stereotypes that will be addressed later. Even in its prime time there is representation that can collaborate towards better acceptance (Gauntlett, 2004, p. 253). The addition of LGBTQIA+ people in soap operas and any other form of media can mean a positive change for the image of a community that still has a very big stigma attached to it, that is, people who see the community as something

distant or negative may suffer a transformation when following these plots and seeing the development of the characters.

According to Castañeda & Campbell (2006, p. 38), the mass media has an important role in the construction of representation, especially with LGBTQIA+ people, because they are a marginalized portion of society. And, by being represented in the media, they create a social reality, that is, they build the image of the community and present it to their audience. Given the media power of reaching, somehow, this representation ends up collaborating in the construction and an image of normality and acceptable to society. Still, the authors state that this representation serves as an aid, but that alone it does not have enough power to build acceptance completely or destroy prejudice. However, as they reinforce, they end up collaborating to a greater acceptance of the common public. Castañeda and Campbell (2006, p. 257) argue that:

those who study the effects of television suggest that TV's representation of sexual minorities has undoubtedly influenced the way Americans have come to understand homosexuality and the way they respond, both socially and politically, to sexual minorities and the issues relevant to them (Gross, 2001; Hart, 2000; Signorile, 1993; Tropiano, 2002)

By using representation, the media also help in the construction of the identity of members of the LGBTQIA+ community, who, from then on, adopt several references of tastes, behaviors, ways of communicating, among other forms of identification. This is a method commonly used by media culture and, as stated by Douglas Kellner (2001, pg. 27),

the culture conveyed by the media has become a dominant form of socialization: its images and celebrities replace the family, the school and the Church as arbiters of taste, value and thought, producing new models of identification.

Today, then, it is noted that the identifications that the public creates through media products is as strong, if not stronger, than their personal relationships. Creating these positive models of identification helps mostly people who are still discovering themselves and are afraid of reprisal or, many times, don't have a clear vision about the community and hide because of the prejudiced view that part of the world still has about LGBTQIA+ people. Taking this into consideration, it is understood that representations need to be cautious and worked in the right way, since they are not yet widely spread in society and can serve as a kind of guide for the community to mirror. Therefore, they should contribute for everyone to understand who they are and understand what awaits them, that is, what are the challenges that life can provide for an LGBTQIA+ person (Waggoner, 2018, p.1880).

However, the community has been represented in the media mostly by gay men, white, muscled, or thin and middle-class, which ends up invisibilizing all other members, whether women, transsexuals, Afro-descendants, young, old, poor, workers and others. Although some Brazilian television productions, such as "Em Família" (2014) and "Babilônia" (2015), both from Rede Globo, have inserted lesbian couples - in the second production a couple of elderly women - the space is still smaller than that used for the representation of gay men in the productions. "A Força do Querer" (2017) entered the history of Brazilian television for inserting the first transgender man in a prominent role in a Brazilian telenovela. Although the first homosexual kiss on

Brazilian television happened in 1963 and between two women in the teletheater play "A Calúnia", from the now extinct TV Tupi, and has happened in other productions, such as the quick kiss between two women in "Mulheres Apaixonadas" (2002) and "Senhora do Destino" (2004/2005), and even in a version closer to reality in "Amor e Revolução" (2011), from SBT, before a kiss between two men, which only came to occur in 2014 in the soap opera "Amor à Vida", after an attempt vetoed in 2005 in the soap opera "América", both national and international productions focus on male representation within the standards described above. However, there are some exceptions such as the series *Looking* (HBO), which drew attention by representing a man outside the standards, although still white, and HIV positive in a relationship with one of the main characters of the series. In addition to this there is the 2019 production "Special", from the streaming service Netflix, shows the life of a young LGBTQIA+ adult who has cerebral palsy. Inspired by the 2015 book *I'm Special: And Other Lies We Tell Ourselves*, the series was created, produced, written and starred by author Ryan O'Connell, and both are based on his life as a gay man living with cerebral palsy. Also from Netflix, the animated "She-Ra" became the first animated production to depict a black gay couple.

The representation of the LGBTQIA+ community has gained new proportions in the last decade with the massification of the internet and online social network platforms, since it now becomes possible to use non-traditional media vehicles to expose their opinions, experiences, and create support networks and a new space for discussion and exposure of diversity, since anyone can create an online profile, a blog, or a YouTube channel. This technological advance represents not only an increase in representation in digital platforms, but also in conventional media formats, as media convergence occurs and transports elements from one media format to another. Jenkins frames this phenomenon:

By convergence, I refer to the flow of content across multiple media platforms, the cooperation between multiple media markets, and the migratory behavior of media audiences, who go almost anywhere in search of the entertainment experiences they desire (Jenkins, 2009, p. 29).

This convergence does not occur exclusively because of the Internet, since cultural products such as books and plays gain new proportions through television series and film productions, but one can say that the interest of the community for greater media representation expressed by the Internet is the great driver of this change: if nothing was mentioned or charged, there would be no change.

Unfortunately, the interests of the public and major production companies are not always the same, and often the inclusion of diverse characters in cultural products is only due to financial interest and not the company's desire to make a valid and respectful representation of the community. The *live-action remake* of "Beauty and the Beast" (2017) drew attention prior to its premiere for being heralded as the first Disney film production to put a gay character in the story. Despite being praised for the initiative prior to the film's premiere, the LGBTQIA+ community felt disrespected after discovering that such representation had not been as expected: the character LeFou, an ally of the villain Gaston, was constructed in a stereotypical way, feeling jealous of the women who came close to his boss and making no clear mention of his sexuality, only putting him to dance with another man in the film's final scene. In addition, they

criticized the choice of placing the first openly LGBTQIA+ character in a studio production as part of the villain team.

Recently, Marvel Studios, part of the Disney group, also made the same mistake by putting the first gay character in the Marvel Cinematic Universe² in "Avengers: Endgame". During the movie it is possible to see a supporting actor saying that he had a date with a man and that everything went well and soon after that no more mention is made of the character, who didn't even receive a name or be worked on in the previous movies or during the rest of the movie. Joe Russo, one of the directors of the film, besides being the actor to live this scene in the feature film gave an interview to *Deadline* talking about the importance of the scene:

was important to us since we've done four of those movies, we wanted a gay character somewhere in there [...]. It was perfect timing because one of the attractive things about the Marvel Universe from now on is the focus on diversity (Dommu, 2019a)³.

Although the studio has done a good job at black representation in "Black Panther" and female representation in "Captain Marvel," the studio has generated discomfort with LGBTQIA+ fans by boasting a shallow turnout and using it as a tool to entice the community to watch the film. Still, the studio revealed its interest in casting its first openly gay superhero in the as-yet-unnamed "The Eternals" production and casting a gay actor in the role (Dommu, 2019b)⁴.

Inserting these characters in fantastical universes that make a lot of money for the culture industry helps in the exposure and acceptance of LGBTQIA+ people in the family, work and social environment. Both the community and the rest of society eventually become invested in these fantastical stories and have a desire to follow and better understand the development of the plot and, consequently, understand the development of the characters throughout the productions. Given that when society watches such productions, it ends up prioritizing the perspectives developed by the media, since by following these narratives, viewers follow these stories as if they were their own and want to live all the experiences, making an emotional mechanism through the empathy created with the connection between audience and the stories narrated in the media (McLaughlin and Rodriguez 2016, pp. 1198-1199).

Despite an increase in representation over the past decade, a campaign marked by diversity made by Banco do Brasil was vetoed and taken out of circulation by current president Jair Bolsonaro⁵. The day after the ban, it was released that the president had vetoed LGBTQIA+ vocabulary expressions from state campaigns and that all advertising pieces produced now need to be evaluated by the Secretariat of Social Communication (SECOM), a practice considered unusual, since only the government's

² Name given to the universe of Marvel movies, in which they are all connected to each other.

³ Published in Out at 26/04/2019 <https://www.out.com/film/2019/4/26/avengers-endgame-features-marvels-first-gay-character>

⁴ Published in Out at 04/03/2019 <https://www.out.com/film/2019/3/04/marvel-searching-its-first-gay-superhero>

⁵ Published in O Globo at 25/04/2019 <https://oglobo.globo.com/brasil/bolsonaro-veta-campanha-do-banco-do-brasil-marcada-pela-diversidade-diretor-exonerado-23621741>

institutional campaigns are evaluated by the Planalto Palace's Communication Department⁶.

With the growing wave of conservatism not only in Brazil, but in much of the world, it serves as an argument to highlight the need for an ever-greater representation in all kinds of advertising pieces or cultural products, since they are an effective way to reach the population and help in the fight against the stigma associated with the LGBTQIA+ community.

The representation of LGBTQIA+ people in the media doesn't always happen in a positive way. As mentioned above, care must be taken in the construction of the narrative and in the approach used to represent the community, since the use of stereotypes may end up negatively affecting people's perception of the theme.

Defining stereotype as a simplistic representation that ends up denying the existence of any diversity among people of the same group, it can be said that such elements are perceived as limiting and negative (Perse, 2001, p. 165). Although the use of such clichés for the construction of characters is not an exclusivity for the LGBTQIA+ community, the representation given over the years ends up, many times, running away from reality and only reinforcing certain notions of behavior that, despite being reproduced by a part of the group, does not reflect it as a whole and reinforces a wrong perception of the common public, which ends up considering this representation the common behavior and, perhaps, not being interested in having more knowledge of the community and freeing themselves from their prejudices.

Media coverage of transgendered persons has tended toward the sensational. To those in the transgendered community, media coverage is often seen as insensitive and prejudicial. Although the media has slowly learned to cover gay men, lesbians, and even swingers in neutral terms, coverage of the transsexual and transgendered often remains a source of snide humor and sensationalism. (Castañeda & Campbell, 2006, p. 24)

These stereotypes, besides reinforcing an extremely strong social stigma, end up hindering the lives of people from the community, who face jokes, prejudice in the streets and end up losing job opportunities because of their sexual orientation, gender, color, religion, among others. The case of transgender people, specifically, can be seen as a clear example of social marginalization that occurs through the media. Represented mostly as sex workers, transgender visibility is, to this day, extremely limited and, in most cases, done in an inappropriate manner and without interest in representing the reality of transgender people.

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The stereotypical representation of these people ends up negatively affecting their lives and, in the case of a large part of the transgender population, their only means of support is through sex work, for being victims of this misrepresentation, which directly

⁶ Published in Out at 26/04/2019 <https://ultimosegundo.ig.com.br/politica/2019-04-26/bolsonaro-veta-palavras-do-vocabulario-lgbt-de-campanhas-estatais-diz-site.html>

affects their lives and opportunities in the world. Despite the growth in productions that are concerned with the correct representation of what it is to be an LGBTQIA+ person, there is still a long way to go to escape the perpetuation of such clichés. These stereotypes escape from behavioral issues and fit into physical characteristics and personal tastes. Phrases like "this person does not appear to be gay" or "I would never say it was transsexual" are still extremely common in everyday life and are given by the lack of a refined characterization of the media in many cases. Even though this is a conversation that is constantly being debated, it is understood that two conclusions can be reached about the insertion of LGBTQIA+ figures in the media context: it can be positive by exposing *queer figures* on television and help combat prejudice; and negative, by often representing caricatured figures that reinforce stereotypes. Despite being highly talked about and advocated for, inclusion does not always mean valid and real representation of the LGBTQIA+ community (McLaughlin and Rodriguez 2016, 1198).

The insertion of these figures, despite extremely successful and popular among the audience in several cases, does not escape eventual stereotypical representations throughout the development of the plot. For several times, these traits are part of the character's personality and have as motivation to be an important and discussed part of the plot. Popular characters like Jack from "Will & Grace" and Cameron from "Modern Family" exalt that they are effeminate, scandalous and not so smart. The tendency of actors, when playing a gay man, is to increase the pitch of their voice to sound more feminine (McLaughlin and Rodriguez 2016, 1200).

In the case of Brazil, popular characters like Crô, from the soap opera "Fina Estampa" (2011), aired by Rede Globo and played by actor Marcelo Serrado, became extremely popular among the viewers of the soap opera, despite his exaggerated manner, colorful clothes and obsession for being the faithful squire of the soap opera villain Tereza Cristina, played by Cristiane Torloni. The popularity of the character among the public earned him two. Despite being extremely popular among the public and having taken his audience to the cinema, "Crô: O Filme" was negatively received by critics, who pointed out the disrespect of the film in presenting the character in such a cartoonish and prejudiced way, making the stakes for laughter prejudiced and shallow (Milani, 2013)⁷. The film seemed to have no interest in portraying the figure of Crô as it could have done, using the platform of being the second Brazilian film with a homosexual protagonist, but delivered to the audience a version devoid of intelligent humor, using continuously exaggerated situations and offensive humor in the interest of showing Crô in the role of a "bad faggot", placing the character as shallow and devoid of empathy. The film, despite placing and advertising the character as gay and even placing him with a boyfriend or running after Baltazar, played by Alexandre Nero, doesn't even dare to insert a gay hug or kiss throughout the film, despite placing a scene with a gay wedding. Despite being harshly criticized, the film secured enough audience to guarantee a sequel, with release in 2018 and titled "Crô em Família".

Using media tools to reduce prejudice and legitimize LGBTQIA+ causes with adequate representations helps to fight against the generalizations made by the rest of society. It is understood that direct contact with the community instead of getting caught up in these

⁷ Published in Papo de Cinema at 06/05/2019 <https://www.papodecinema.com.br/filmes/cro-o-filme/>

stereotypes helps to understand the differences and create a series of positive attitudes. Although the relationship with television is indirect, its importance lies in the way the narrative is constructed, because it allows the viewer to watch the events passively and get involved in this story without being directly part of it, thus allowing more angles to be observed, because it is an observer of the situations. Even though these characters may represent negative stereotypes, this can help increase the level of acceptance of the LGBTQIA+ community, despite not deconstructing certain thoughts.

through identification, viewers of these stereotyped characters can experience increased conscious acceptance, while continuing to subconsciously hold negative (and sometimes positive) stereotypes about homosexuals. (McLaughlin and Rodriguez 2016, 1200).

Although the representation of stereotypes is very present in the media, the last years have proved to be essential for a change in the tone of productions. Although it can be considered a tool often used with the intention of profiting from a cause, recent cultural and advertising products have inserted non-stereotypical representations (Perse, 2001, p. 165), thus aiding in the process of demystifying the LGBTQIA+ figure. The importance of these figures serves as a way to demonstrate to the public the varied forms of expression of sexuality within the LGBTQIA+ community, which, despite having several common characteristics, also has enormous variations within the different letters present in the acronym, as well as diverse forms of manifestation from country to country. The struggle for acceptance is the same, but the characteristics, forms of expression and even certain common tastes change around the world, making it impossible to create a basic and depthless figure. The demonstration of gay characters usually includes sarcastic comments, extreme happiness and taste for fashion, but these behaviors are not always reproduced. Still, it can be argued that exposure to exaggerated and cartoonish figures can promote greater acceptance if adopted by the common audience. The popularity of these characters can promote public understanding, reinforcing the idea that certain behaviors are common.

Because identification requires emotional and cognitive commitment, identifying with a stereotype should serve to reaffirm rather than challenge a person's mental network, reassuring their mind that its assumptions are correct. (McLaughlin and Rodriguez 2016, 1200).

The insertion of such figures in the media needs to be increasingly discussed, since recent studies have not yet reached specific conclusions regarding the model that should be adopted. Not even if stereotypical representations, even if they do not deconstruct certain thoughts, have their valid and important bias in the stages of socialization and normalization of these figures. Today, we realize that there is room for both types of production and while some cliché representations may receive more attention, one cannot forget the social impact caused by the media. It is that these representations, despite promoting certain levels of acceptance, continue reinforcing stereotypes and hindering, in a certain way, the fight for LGBTQIA+ rights and the deconstruction of these ideas.

3. Methodology

The methodological approach applied to this work is qualitative, since it will be used content analysis on the representation of the LGBTQIA+ community in audiovisual content of advertising character, here called "commercials" or "advertising videos".

The problem raised by the research is about the representation of the LGBTQIA+ community, i.e., it seeks to understand how this representation is made in advertising videos, through content analysis in which one seeks to understand the message or messages embedded in a delimited sample of videos of advertising nature.

Content analysis will be used as a methodological approach, since its goal consists of categorizing and stratifying the analyzed advertising videos. This study serves to understand how minorities - included in the LGBTQIA+ community - are represented and what their biases are. This step is important starting from the idea according to which content analysis:

much more than locate, identify, organize and evaluate texts, sound and image, works as an effective expedient to contextualize facts, situations, moments. It can thus introduce new perspectives in other environments, while respecting the original substance of the documents (Duarte & Barros, 2006, p. 276).

Content analysis aims to analyze documents and simplify them, so that it becomes possible to create categories and establish elements that connect them, in order to have an overview of the analyzed material, that is, it analyzes the messages and transposes them in order to create a coexisting pattern among the materials used for the study (Bardin, 2016, pp. 51-52).

According to Chizzotti (2006, p. 98), "the purpose of content analysis is to critically understand the meaning of communications, their manifest or latent content, the explicit or hidden meanings". Thus, besides serving as a form of categorization and transmission of information in a simpler way, the content analysis can also be used to highlight new problems and situations to be explored by the research.

It can be said that there is some level of flexibility in content analysis, since there is no ready structure for analysis, but steps that must be worked. Thus, the author is in charge of creating the aspects and categories analyzed, since the materials are examined according to the path that the research follows. That is, it is analyzed the material/content and use only the relevant data to the questions raised by the researcher. In this way, it is expected to present the analysis in a systematic and catalogued way (Hansen, Cottle, Negrine & Newbold, 1998, pp. 91-123).

The content to be analyzed are ads in video format released in the LGBTQIA+ pride month, June, in the years 2017 and 2018, published in Brazil. The search for these videos was done online, through Google, YouTube and Facebook. It was not possible to find an article or proof of which commercials featured LGBTQIA+ members. We contacted entities linked to LGBTQIA+ activism in Brazil, Grupo Dignidade, ABGLT (Brazilian Association of Gays, Lesbians and Transgendered People) and GGB (Grupo Gay Bahia), to ask about studies of this genre. The Dignidade Group was the only one that returned and said it did not know of any studies of this kind. The other entities did not answer several emails and messages on social networks. Therefore, the material used in the content analysis is a sample from the author who conducted the search on

digital platforms, since it was not possible to find academic or journalistic material that had a listing of these videos.

To perform this analysis the following categories were created: message directed exclusively to the LGBTQIA+ audience or the general public, representation made in a stereotypical way or not, identification of the members present in the content, classification of positive and/or negative stories and the reactions that the videos had on their platforms, namely YouTube and Facebook.

3. Analysis

All of the campaigns analyzed are not directed exclusively to the LGBTQIA+ public, but to society in general, some with a bias of overcoming, others of empowerment and others of moving real stories. The representation done in these videos is done naturally, the elements that appear are mostly real people from the community. With the exception of the *Airbnb* ad, which features only lesbians, the others include various LGBTQIA+ members. The stories end up always being positive and beautiful, with the exception of the 2018 Ministry of Human Rights campaign.

In the sequence, each ad is explained and analyzed, but first to build a summary and simplify the data below a table with the data of each video advertisement is presented.

Brand	History	Reactions	Comments	Views
Skol 2017	Positive	580 likes / 250 dislikes	69	53.577
Doritos 2017	Positive	739 likes / 118 dislikes	120	27.640
Ministry of Human Rights 2017	Negative	40 likes / 3 dislikes	Deactivated	1.058
Netflix 2017	Positive	4.500 likes / 256 dislikes	351	37.093
Ministry of Labour 2018	Positive	38 likes / 30 dislikes	8	1.455
Doritos 2018	Positive	1000 likes / 606 dislikes	652	2.482.413
Avon 2018	Positive	341 likes / 219 dislikes	70	115.384
Airbnb 2018	Positive	363 likes / 216 loved / 4 wow / 3 Grr / 1 Hahaha	93	35000

Table 1 - Summary content analysis. Source: Author, 2019.

Skol - Pride Day - Hands - 2017



Figure 1 - Skol - Allies. Source: Youtube⁸.

The campaign of *Skol*, a Brazilian beer brand, does not show the actors' faces, only their hands that are colored with the colors of the LGBTQIA+ flag. The commercial focuses on stating that everyone can be an ally and help the cause, that it is not necessary to be a member of the community to give support. The video is on *Youtube* and that it has had over 53,000 views, 69 comments, 580 positive reactions and 250 negative reactions.

Doritos - Rainbow - 2017



Figure 2 - Doritos - Rainbow. Source: Youtube⁹.

Doritos used several actors and a famous Brazilian *Drag Queen* to represent the community, and also put phrases supporting the cause and launched its traditional product, tortilla chips, in the colors of the LGBTQIA+ flag. The message of this ad is to empower diversity. On *Youtube*, the video has over 27,000 views, 120 comments, 739 positive reactions and 118 negative reactions.

⁸ Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DmN2P5saYwc>

⁹ Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xN87V8-LZc0>

Ministry of Human Rights - Respect Difference – 2017

The Ministry of Human Rights presents several characters that may or may not be members of the LGBTQIA+ community, showing that everyone is equal and that one should respect the differences. The views of the video on *Youtube* are at almost 1,500, there are 8 comments, the positive reactions add up to 38, while the negative ones 30.



Figure 3 - Ministry of Human Rights - #RespectTheDifferences. Source: *Youtube*¹⁰.

Netflix - Be What You Stand For - 2017

Netflix's video exemplifies each member of the community with character from their series and movies, plus the company also shows the variation that exists within each acronym, showing that LGBTQIA+ diversity is huge. It is also shown that members are in many different types of places. The *streaming* platform wants you to be whoever you want, promoting the representation of equality and diversity. Views are at 37,000, there are 351 comments, positive reactions add up to 4,500 and negative reactions 256.



Figure 4 - *Netflix* - Be what represents you. Source: *Youtube*¹¹.

¹⁰ Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w9ehRv7S81E>

¹¹ Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z1v2nXxrbho>

Ministry of Human Rights - International LGBTQ Pride Day- 2018



Figure 5 - Ministry of Human Rights - International LGBTQ Pride Day. Source: *Youtube*¹².

The campaign of the Ministry of Human Rights brought a story of the real prejudice and what the community may suffer. The video seeks to be dramatic to demonstrate the importance of the issue and thus raise awareness about the differences that exist in the world. In addition, it informs the number of the service that gives support to those who suffer from LGBTQphobia. The video has 1,000 views, the comments are blocked, the positive reactions are 40 and the negative ones are 3.

Doritos - Rainbow - 2018

Once again, *Doritos* features several members of the LGBTQIA+ community in its campaign, this time with its own song that speaks of the members' struggle and also that everyone is different. The campaign seeks to invite society to expand what they know about the world. The views on their *Youtube* channel are over 2 million, there are 652 comments, the positive reactions are a thousand and the negative 606.



Figure 6 - *Doritos - Rainbow*. Source: *Youtube*¹³.

¹² Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mbIwLxR6wu8>

¹³ Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TFFv8EnGMyk>

Avon - It's Really to Look - 2018



Figure 7 - Avon – It’s Really to Look. Source: Youtube¹⁴.

Avon seeks to transform a prejudiced act into something empowering. In this specific case, it is the look that LGBTQIA+ people receive for being different. Many times people look at them strangely or look down on them for having characteristics that identify them as such. In this campaign, the cosmetics company tells people to really look because the community is beautiful, members are equal by right and are present everywhere. The ad has 115 thousand views on *Youtube*, 70 comments, 341 positive reactions and 219 negative.

Airbnb - Open Your Door to Diversity - 2018



Figure 8 - *Airbnb* - Open Your Door to Diversity. Source: *Facebook*¹⁵.

The *Airbnb* video features a lesbian couple traveling to Rio de Janeiro and telling their experience of what the city is like and also of staying in a house. The focus of the commercial is to talk about Rio and the feeling of staying in a house, not a hotel. The characters talk about being girlfriends and tell a bit of their story, but it is not the focus of the ad. On *Facebook* the video has 35,000 views, 93 comments and the reactions are: 363 likes, 216 loves, 4 wows, 3 grr and 1 hahaha.

¹⁴ Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1SbSANxv5DQ>

¹⁵ Available at <https://www.facebook.com/AirbnbBrasil/videos/955178224644291/>

Conclusion

Based on the data collected it is noticeable that the representation of the LGBTQIA+ community is still precarious, there aren't as many commercials as those with heterosexuals. On the other hand, the representation that companies have worked on in their advertising videos is positive, they show good examples and don't present them in a stereotypical way. However, here one should think about the validation that these commercials can bring. Most of them treat the LGBTQIA+ issue as something beautiful, empowering and that everything is okay. This representation is somewhat utopic, since there is still a lot of violence against members of the community and against their rights as well.

It is thought that the increasing number of commercials with representation may be evidence that companies actually want inclusion, or just want to profit from the community's money, as an LGBTQIA+ couple earns, on average and proportionately, more than a heterosexual one and often has fewer mandatory expenses.

Media, communication and publicity can be used as a platform to conquer little by little the rights that the LGBTQIA+ community longs for. The role of communication in transforming or implementing new concepts in society is defended by authors as seen in the state of the art. Allying with representation to conquer rights is something beneficial to the community.

The decision to represent an LGBTQIA+ person in their commercials can be problematic for companies, since there is a lot of prejudice in society; however, in most of the cases seen, there are more positive reactions than negative ones. Still, companies should be ready for questioning from prejudiced people and also from members of the community.

Therefore, representation has several sides that can be explored, which can be positive or negative, whether for heterosexuals or LGBTQIA+ people, due to the questions that these can raise. However, the cause that representation brings to society is, based on these commercials, of an egalitarian world, where people do not want to be better than others, just respected, without fear of leaving home.

The main result perceived through this study is that advertising is slowly moving towards a world of representation. And representations that are not stereotypical, but real, with members of the community. However, the messages are, in general, utopian, as they represent LGBTQ+ members always well and happy, ending up hiding the brutal reality that the community faces on a daily basis. Anyway, representation in media spaces contributes to advancing the agendas of equal rights for all, so they are still valid.

Media studies, representation and stereotypes serve as a basis to understand and analyze the context in which advertising videos are inserted, that is, to understand what the role of media and communication is first to know what effects representation can bring. The representation and stereotypes to be possible to analyze how campaigns that include members of the LGBTQIA+ community are elaborated. With the state of the art we can conclude that representation can be done in a real way and that it is possible to transmit the community's desires and also that the power of the media over society is existing, but not supreme, exposing the members of the community can help in the acceptance

and understanding that they deserve their rights, but it is not only with the media that this will change.

Throughout this work it's noticed that there aren't many studies yet on the representation of the LGBTQIA+ community in the media, so a future line of research could be to analyze a longer period, 10 years, to realize how campaigns have been transforming over the years and how the first representations were made. In addition, one could also think of studying the representation made outside the field of advertising, such as films, series and soap operas, as, incidentally, we touched on in this study.

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