

Gender pluralism and sexual diversity in the Chilean television¹

Pluralismo de género y diversidad sexual en la televisión chilena

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ABSTRACT

This paper collects the results of a research conducted for the Chilean National Television Council on respect for gender equity and diversity in Chilean television programs. We implemented a device to identify, on a sample of 167 TV person/characters, the recurrence of stereotypes, which confirmed the persistence of inequalities and gender representational biases. The research concludes that the representations and stereotypes present in the corpus, far from being limited to reproducing images and common meanings circulating in society, produce meanings that are contradictory with the advances of the social discussion about this topic.

Keywords: television; pluralism; stereotypes; gender; diversity.

RESUMEN

Este artículo recoge los resultados de una investigación realizada para el Consejo Nacional de Televisión de Chile sobre el respeto a la equidad y diversidad de género en programas de televisión chilenos. Se implementó un dispositivo para identificar las recurrencias de estereotipos en una muestra de 167 personas/personajes televisivos, que constató la persistencia de inequidades y sesgos representacionales de género. Se concluye que las representaciones y estereotipos de género presentes en el corpus, lejos de limitarse a reproducir imágenes y sentidos comunes circulantes en la sociedad, producen significaciones que resultan contradictorias con los avances de la discusión social al respecto.

Palabras clave: televisión; pluralismo; estereotipos; género; diversidad.

RESUMO

Este artigo apresenta os resultados de uma pesquisa para o Conselho Nacional de Televisão do Chile, sobre o respeito a equidade e diversidade de gênero nos programas de televisão chilenos. Em uma amostra de 167 pessoas e personagens de TV, um dispositivo foi implementado para identificar a recorrência de estereótipos. Este estudo confirmou a persistência de desigualdades de gênero e viés de representação. A pesquisa conclui que as representações e os estereótipos presentes no corpus não apenas reproduzem imagens e sentidos comuns que circulam na sociedade, mas também produzem significados opostos ao progresso da discussão social sobre esse tema.

Palavras-chave: televisão; pluralismo; estereótipos; gênero; diversidade.

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INTRODUCTION

The existence of regulatory bodies of television in Chile, and in many countries of the world, is an important indicator of how much relevance—as well as social, political and cultural influence—the States grant to this means of communication. According to Van Cuilenburg and McQuail (2003), the media regulation public policies vary consistently with the transformations of society, representing the balance of political and economic interests involved in the media system, as well as the cultural practices of production, distribution and consumption.

In the case of Chile, Law No.17,377, which created the National Television Council (CNTV) in 1970, sought to guarantee political diversity on the screens, in a country that was experiencing an incipient massification of access to television. However, the CNTV was not effectively constituted until 1989, when Law No.18,838 was passed, in the context of the end of the military dictatorship. The main mission of this legal body was to regulate the dissemination of electoral propaganda after sixteen years of absence of political debate in a television system that, at that point, was already fully consolidated. After several modifications and adjustments of the regulation during the first two decades after the return to democracy—and within the framework of important technological changes in the media sphere, such as the massification of the Internet, the media-technology convergence and the consequent advent of digital terrestrial television—Law No. 20,750 was enacted in 2014. With this regulation's change, the State sought to update the legislation, considering the emerging technological context, and include the new debates present in Chilean society. One of its most important aspects is the redefinition of the concept of pluralism, previously associated almost exclusively with the field of political, ideological, moral and religious discussion. In its article 1, third paragraph, the current law understands pluralism as “respect for social, cultural, ethnic, political, religious, gender, sexual orientation and gender identity diversity” (Biblioteca del Congreso Nacional, 2014).

The concepts of cultural, ethnic and gender diversity, as well as sexual orientation and gender identity incorporated in the text of the law are relevant issues in the current public discussion of our country. Among these, the television image of women is one of the concepts most addressed by specialized research: there is an extensive bibliographical production that accounts for the persistence of biases and stereotypes in their

representation. On the contrary, there are not many studies that focus on the problem of the presence and forms of representation of sexual and gender diversity, in a country where the subject is increasingly present in the public debate.

Considering the above, this article presents the results of a study—requested by the CNTV—on respect for equity, diversity and gender identity in television programs. The research focuses on the character acquired by the symbolic constructions produced by television regarding assigned roles, explicit and implicit valuations, attributed hierarchies, common senses and norms of action, all condensed in the gender stereotypes present in society and represented on television screens.

From the methodological point of view and the definition of the sample, we sought to build a homogeneous corpus, analyzable with the same conceptual instruments. Given that the enunciative positioning is completely different in the fiction and non-fiction programs and, therefore, the theoretical and methodological starting points for their analysis are also different (Jost, 2001; Amigo, Bravo, & Osorio, 2014; Marcos, 2014), we decided to focus the work on non-fiction programs.

Additionally, the purpose of this work was to provide methodological and conceptual elements that help to design public policies and contribute to a social discussion tending to a better, more just, dignified and respectful representation of sexual and gender diversity and identity in television, consistent with the advances and cultural transformations in this issue.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

CONCEPTUALIZATIONS AROUND GENDER: FROM THE SITUATION OF WOMEN TOWARDS SEXUAL DIVERSITY

Gender is a category of analysis built based on sex. The famous phrase of Simone de Beauvoir (2003) one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman, is a precedent of how the biological body and procreation are socially molded. The sex/gender system is understood as a primary form of power and domination relations that patriarchy exercises over women (Scott, 1996). In addition, from a situated perspective, it allows to understand the subordination of women and the sexual division of labor that the various societies have in their different historical moments (Rubin, 1986).

Considering the social and cultural aspects, the sex/gender system corresponds to the set of “practices,

symbols, representations, norms and social values that societies elaborate from the anatomical-physiological sexual difference” (de Barbieri, 1993, p. 149). This system articulates and legitimizes a binary and hierarchical gender model, of dissimilar qualities, spaces and prescriptions between men and women. However, the author maintains that it is necessary to deconstruct it, recognizing the multiple ways of being a woman and a man, in intersection with the generation, the ethnic-cultural aspect and the social class. Without mentioning the sex/gender system, but pointing to this reality, Bourdieu (2000) thematizes male domination: a social world based on principles of vision and sexual division from opposite and hierarchical pairs that organize perception and concrete organization and symbolic of life.

The concept of gender, coined to analyze the situation of oppression of women as opposed to men in binary terms, has acquired different nuances and incorporated other subjects who are also affected by these social relations of male domination, such as people of the LGBTBI collective (lesbian, gay, transgender, bisexual and intersex). The recognition of the sexual and reproductive rights of women and of sexual diversity is part of a constant demand to achieve a horizon of equality in society and in its institutions. Homosexuality is no longer seen as an illness or as a degeneration of a criminal person who transgresses a moral norm (Falcofí, 2016); nowadays, the gay identity is part of public debates on filiation, rights and equality that mobilize a normalization of genders previously excluded from the public sphere (Butler, 2010; Brown, 2006; Bersani, 1998). In recent decades, there has been a displacement of groups of sexual diversity from the margins of representation to the current legitimization of a “national homosexuality” (Puar, 2007) that is part of the agendas of progressive governments (Cabello, 2015; Galindo, 2017). Sexual diversity entails epistemological challenges, because it involves questioning a binary vision of gender that does not reduce to two sexes (man / woman), but assumes the existence of other genders, such as transgender (Fraise, 2016, p. 54). Nowadays, the idea that the body (biological), the gender (sociocultural) and the sexual identity (individual subjectivity) are not necessarily in agreement with the predominant western model of dichotomous identities –in which roles, spaces, stereotypes and different and hierarchical values are established between genders (Mora, Fritz, & Valdés, 2006)– is more and more accepted. Rather, there is a reconnaissance that there is a multiplicity

of identities in men and women, as there are multiple ways of being feminine or masculine (Lamas, 2000; Halberstam, 2013; Tron & Flores, 2013). In its January 2017 edition, National Geographic magazine published a special issue entitled “Gender Revolution”; on its cover appeared young and adolescent bi-gender, intersex, non-binary, transgender and androgynous, who pose new ways of understanding gender and sexuality globally. The equality of sexes is in constant evolution and in the XXI century “dualities and the binary are what is put into question because they are considered by the new researchers as multiple and mobile” (Fraise, 2016, p. 75).

Gender identity “is the internal and individual experience of gender as each person experiences it” (Oficina del Alto Comisionado de las Naciones Unidas para los Derechos Humanos, 2013); however, there is not always a correspondence between the identity and the body of birth. People who do not identify with a binary gender, i.e., who exceed the categories of gay, lesbian or trans, have been categorized as queer (Butler, 2001; Córdoba, Sáez, & Vidarte, 2005).

Sexual orientation, sometimes called sexual identity (Mora, Fritz, & Valdés, 2006), corresponds, on the other hand, to the capacity of a person to be emotionally, sexually and affectively attracted by other people, regardless of their sex and their identity. We can distinguish three types: heterosexuality (when it is towards a gender different from our own), homosexuality (towards the same gender) and bisexuality (to more than one gender) (Castelo, 2015; Oficina del Alto Comisionado de las Naciones Unidas para los Derechos Humanos, 2013).

From this perspective, gender “is the system of social attribution of hierarchical and excluding identities, meanings, powers, functions and prestige referring to the body, to desire and to reproduction” (Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo [PNUD], 2010, p. 28).

STUDIES ON MEDIA AND GENDER

The intersection between gender studies and communication studies has been fruitful, generating a vast field of research and critical reflection that has “illuminated certain dimensions of reality that cannot be identified from other interpretative frameworks” (Cobo, 2009, p. 37).

Tuchman (1978) coined the term symbolic annihilation to refer to deferred representation in terms of appearance and content that primarily affects

women. Mattelart (1982) argued that the media appeal and disseminate feminine values such as passivity and dependence, thus establishing a stereotyped image of women. Linked to the above, Wood (2005) has systematized various results of North American research on gender perspectives in different media, including television. In general terms, men appear as active, adventurous, powerful, sexually aggressive and widely involved in social relations. On the contrary, women appear as sexual objects, young, beautiful, thin, passive, dependent and often incompetent.

On women, the author argues that the media have created two stereotyped images: “good women and bad women” (Wood, 2005, p. 33). The first are beautiful, condescending, careful of their home, family and other people. Subordinated to men, they are usually chaste and are represented as victims, angels, martyrs, faithful wives and good companions. Within the latter, we find witches, prostitutes, and all those “non-women”, who are strong, cold and aggressive, all that a good woman should not be (Wood, 2005, p. 33). Moreover, compared to men, women, appear in different degrees of nudity, vulnerability and submission; men remain in control and are those who, finally, hold authority (Menéndez, 2008).

Another group of research on gender and communication analyzes entertainment characters in the media, demonstrating how traditional representations of gender in media culture reproduce normative roles, stereotypes and inequalities between men and women (Belmonte & Guillamón, 2008; Tortajada & Araña, 2014; Barthes, 2017). Television programs offer images and stories about sexual identities that become very real and compete with the experience of viewers (Press, 1991; Núñez, 2005). From another side, queer studies have contributed to questioning the heterosexual paradigm that governs many stories of fiction and other audiovisual productions. It is the contribution that analytical perspectives have made on the representation of gender diversities in television or cinema. More recently, queer studies have also analyzed the domination of heterosexist ideology, i.e., the imprint of heteronormativity or the social mandate of the sex-affective complementarity of men and women with reproductive purposes (Warner, 2012). Edelman (2014) analyzes the family discourses that are part of Walt Disney’s children’s films, where the queer is represented as the infertile enemy. Also, it is established that these representations of gender do not harm only women, but “devalue everything coded as female” (Fraser, 2008,

p. 92). In this regard, sexual diversities are also at risk of being depreciated, excluded or marginalized of the spheres of society, for example through trivializing, objectifying and stereotyped representations present in the media (Instituto Nacional de Derechos Humanos [INDH], 2016).

Diverse investigations give account of this *genderization* of the mediatic representation. Women appear in the domestic space, associated with the care of dependent persons and the health-beauty sphere, while in men, remunerated work and individualization in professional and political contexts are reinforced (Gallego, 2013; Marco, 1996; Rojas, 2014; Rovetto & Simelio, 2012). Other feminist studies on the media analyze more empowered female characters, who act from the sexed agency of their bodies and appear no longer as victims, but as women who transgress monogamic and maternal norms. The images of empowered women, in some cases, appear through actions that characterize them as aggressive and harsh in different television series, movies and videogames (Tortajada & Araña, 2014).

With a different logic, the Catalan Women’s Institute (ICD) analyzed the positive representations of women between 2005 and 2007. Television obtained the highest constructive evaluation (44.8%) when female representation is plural, stays away from stereotypes and shows women’s subjectivation, evidencing their capacity for acting and their own identity. The authors stress that it is important that the media shows a social recognition of the contributions of women in the various professional-labor spaces (science, economics, culture, competitive sports, management, among others) (García & Martínez, 2009).

In Chile, Antezana (2011) studied the sexual roles present in the most watched programs of Chilean open television. Although she recognizes an advance in the representation of women in political and institutional power in fiction programs (professional role and liberal woman), she points out that female subordination is reproduced from traditional roles (mother woman, sensual woman) in the reality programs, predominant over those of fiction.

A recent study on the consumption of television programs by adolescents in Spain revealed the persistence of a stereotype that “links girls with the world of gossip and the realm of personal life, and boys with the world of sports and culture” (Masanet, 2016, p. 45). In other words, the programs most consumed by adolescents reinforce the conception that the feminine

revolves around the aspects of private life, while the masculine, around the world that surrounds us.

In another study, Mateos-Pérez and Ochoa (2016) analyzed the representation of gender in three fictional Chilean television series that had high audience levels and generated social debate in the last decade. Their results indicate that, at the beginning, there was an update of the traditional representations of gender in the characters and the contents addressed: the rupture of a heterosexual couple, the political imprint of a young professional and independent woman and diverse masculinities. However, they identify a turn towards gender stereotypes, resuming conventional narratives that, in addition, decreased the audience numbers.

The CNTV studies also account for these tensions in Chilean television. Women tend to have a secondary position in politics, conversation and debate programs. In fiction programs, stereotypes and conflicting relationships of disqualification and competition between them prevent mutual recognition. However, in some series there are advances in representation, emphasizing work and professional life and showing more diverse roles of women. These gender representations are important for the dissemination of norms, behaviors and values and for the configuration of individual and social identities (CNTV, 2013a; CNTV, 2013b).

In a study on sexual diversity and its representation in telenovelas, Amigo, Bravo and Osorio (2014) analyzed the change in the forms of representation of gay characters in Chilean telenovelas between 1981 and 2009. At first, their appearance was scarce and highly stereotyped (feminized and isolated), but there were gradual advances in their representation (as a couple and in community). The authors conclude that this transition from a very traditional paradigm to a more progressive one, in almost two decades, is not due to an anticipation by television, but, on the contrary, to its adaptation to the transformations of subjectivities, highly linked to the social discussions and the struggles for LGBTI rights.

According to the National Institute of Human Rights (INDH, 2016, p. 38), negative stereotypes against sexual diversity are common in the media, in which offensive and denigrating content is divulged against non-heterosexual persons. In the Chilean media scene there are cases of homophobic productions—in the press and on television—that emphasize humor to refer to sexual diversity.

In short, media representations of gender are important for the dissemination of norms, behaviors

and values, as well as for the configuration of individual and social identities (CNTV, 2013a; CNTV, 2013b). Television, as a mean of mass communication, is a socializing agent with a crucial role in the process of construction of meanings and social roles linked to gender relations.

METHODOLOGY

Considering the variables of equality, diversity and gender identity, and to describe and characterize the stereotypes contained in a corpus of non-fiction programs of Chilean open television, we implemented a quantitative methodological device. Its objective was to establish the regularities of gender and sex stereotypes inscribed in persons or characters of the television programs of the corpus, as well as the dimensions through which these stereotypes are produced and reproduced. We also sought to measure and describe the levels of presence/absence of gender and sexual diversity in the sample of people/characters. To do so, we built a code-sheet of observation analysis, focused on the construction of the people or characters of each program. The investigation was not experimental, since it did not contemplate the control of variables or the manipulation of the information produced by the television programs. On the contrary, we only worked on the audiovisual and textual information offered in these communication supports.

CORPUS SELECTION AND SAMPLE CONSTRUCTION

The units of analysis were the representations of people and characters, not the television programs. To do so, we made a distinction between the corpus—constituted by the broadcasts—and the sample, made up of people or characters. For the definition of the corpus of broadcasts, we used as a control criterion of respect for gender and sexual diversity the variable of programs reported and not reported to the CNTV. Thus, we selected an intentional sample of seven non-fiction programs reported to the CNTV for reasons related to gender issues (discrimination, gender violence, inappropriate language, etc.) and another random sample of nine non-fiction programs, not reported in any cause. These broadcasts correspond to four television genres: *talk shows* (studio interviews programs); *miscellaneous* (broadcasts that combine conversation in a study, reportages, on-field interviews, information, discussion panel, among others); *reportage* (journalistic analysis and research programs); *reality TV*

(productions destined to document the reality through its staging and explicit intervention). These productions were broadcasted between January 2014 and January 2016 in Chilean open television channels. Each one has a variable duration but, for the purposes of this study, we analyzed approximately one hour of recording.

The programs from which the sample was extracted were seven of the year 2014: *Intrusos* (miscellaneous program of La Red), *La mañana de Chilevisión* –two broadcasts– (miscellaneous program of Chilevisión), *SQP* (miscellaneous program of Chilevisión), *Mentiras Verdaderas* (talk show of La Red), *En la Mira* (reportage program of Chilevisión) and *En su Propia Trampa* (reality show of Canal 13). Eight 2015 programs were also analyzed: *Mujeres Glam* (talk show of La Red), *Solteros en busca del amor* (reality show of Canal 13), *Y tú, ¿qué harías?* (reality show of TVN), *En su propia trampa* –two broadcasts– (reality show of Canal 13), *Informe Especial* (reportage program of TVN), *Mentiras Verdaderas* (talk show of La Red), *Intrusos* (miscellaneous program of La Red), as well as a program of January 2016, *TOC show* (talk show of UCV).

From the corpus we extracted an exhaustive sample, constituted by 167 people/characters participating in the already defined programs. The main criterion for their selection was that said subjects talked, were the object of the television enunciation or their image appeared repeatedly in the program.

PRODUCTION AND ANALYSIS OF INFORMATION

To analyze the selected audiovisual material, we built a quantitative code-sheet, focused on the description of the social, behavioral and representational attributes of the subjects of the sample.

The application of the code-sheet considered both objective morphological and physical aspects as well as those derived from socially inscribed cultural knowledge (shared intersubjective common sense). We elaborated a code manual, combining the objective and intersubjective evaluation criteria, tested a sub-sample and made corrections to the code-sheet and the manual.

DIMENSIONS FOR THE ANALYSIS OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF STEREOTYPES OF PEOPLE/ CHARACTERS

We defined six dimensions for the characterization of the representation of the people/characters in the sample, each of which was disaggregated into specific subdimensions.

1. **Dimension of biological representation:** the perception of the morphological characteristics of the subjects represented: biological sex, age, height, size, and ethnic appearance attributed or observed.
2. **Dimension of socio-cultural representation:** the recognizable or attributable features regarding the socioeconomic level and cultural niche of the subjects represented from indicators of social class, forms of expression, clothing, profession or activity, place of residence, among the most important.
3. **Dimension of identity representation:** the ways in which people or characters are associated, by the television story or by their own characteristics, to reference groups and specific identities that give them material and symbolic roots. In this case, identity stereotypes are condensed in the ascription to a sexual, gender, cultural or national identity.
4. **Dimension of psychological representation:** the ways in which the subjects behave or the way in which the television story attributes a behavior to them. Focusing on the objectives of the study, we defined two subdimensions: one relating to the personality traits of the subjects represented and another regarding their attitude.
5. **Dimension of the actantial representation:** the roles assigned by the television story to the people/ characters. In this case, we used the canonical actantial categories, simplified as follows: hero; villain; coadjuvant; antagonist; neutral; narrator; victim (Amigo, Bravo, Sécaïl, Lefébure, & Borrell, 2016).
6. **Dimension of normative representation:** social norms constitute the materialization of the hegemonic consensus in society. In this regard, normative frameworks that address gender issues become normative systems of values, ethics and morals regarding this subject.

RESULTS

In this section, we present the main results of our research. Given the large number of dimensions and subdimensions addressed, we have selected only

those where the relationship between television representation, pluralism and gender diversity is more evident. It is important to point out that these results correspond to the whole sample of 167 people/characters, extracted from the corpus, since the differences between the data that arise from the reported and not reported programs were not significant for the purposes of this study. In this regard, the difference between both sub-samples (reported and not reported) is related more to the intensity of the abuse or transgression in the media treatment than to the presence, absence and recurrence of stereotyped elements in television representation.

BIOLOGICAL REPRESENTATION

Regarding this dimension of the corpus, the following could be established:

- **Biological sex:** there is a 53% of women and a 47% of men. That is, the presence of women as opposed to men is not significantly higher regarding the composition of Chilean society.
- **Size:** 62% of the people/characters represented have a *Thin*, *Very Thin* or *Athletic* size, while 34% correspond to a *Medium* size. In this sense, it seems reasonable to conclude that the discourses, images and television stories of the programs of the corpus privilege the representation of bodies adjusted to the hegemonic aesthetic norm.
- **Ethnic appearance:** 66% of the subjects represented in the sample are *Whites* (Nordic or Caucasian), an issue that differs with the mestizo supremacy of the Chilean population (Vanegas, Villalón, & Valenzuela, 2008; Fuentes et al., 2014). Only 28% of the people/characters in the sample were identified as *Mestizos*. Given that there are no reasons to think that the corpus of programs and the sample of people/characters may be subject to a bias about the ethnic aspect, it is possible to construct the hypothesis that discourses, images and television stories prefer to represent subjects of ethnic characteristics adjusted to the dominant aesthetic and social norm.

SOCIOCULTURAL REPRESENTATION

Social class appearance: it could be established that, unlike what happens in Chilean society, where the upper class corresponds, approximately, to the richest

10% of the population, the persons and characters represented as belonging to said social group have a presence of 54% in the sample. The persons/characters identified as belonging to the middle class are underrepresented, with 32%, despite the fact that they constitute the larger social group in the Chilean population (Barozet & Fierro, 2014).

IDENTITY REPRESENTATION

Sexual and gender identity: 94% of the subjects in the sample have a heterosexual identity. This allows us to affirm that the reference world to which the persons/characters of the sample are assigned is not comparable with the sexual and gender diversity present in the Chilean reality. Except for the presence of ten non-heterosexual subjects, the rest of the people are constructed and understood within that identity. Sexual and gender diversity is expressed in very few cases: eight homosexual people (seven gays and one lesbian) and two transgender people, who represent only 6% of the total. Within this context of relative absence of diversity, the minimal representation of lesbian sexual identity is relevant.

SYNTHESIS

Regarding the general aspects of the analysis of the representation of the set of people/characters in the sample, it is possible to verify the following:

- The subjects represented are preferably males and females from the upper class, white, thin, young or young adults and almost exclusively heterosexual.

COMPARATIVE REPRESENTATION

Along with the above, and given the enormous predominance of heterosexual identities in the sample, we were interested in investigating the imbalances that arise in the representation of men and women. These differences could be observed, preferably, in the dimensions of psychological representation, actantial representation and normative representation.

- **Psychological representation:** from the point of view of the personality trait (*Authoritarian*, *Symmetrical* or *Submissive*), although 55% of women and 54% of men are represented as symmetrical, it is possible to see a representation of men being more authoritarian (40% against 19%) and much less submissive than women (6% vs. 26%). In most of the *talk shows* and *miscellaneous* shows, men are

the main anchorpersons. They are the ones who manage the parole and ask the questions. They are the ones who judge and give opinions. That is, they have a space of power (although this is limited to the actions indicated) that women have in a smaller proportion. Regarding sociability, most of the men and women in the sample are represented with a *Peaceful* personality (men: 72%, women: 67%). However, women appear slightly more belligerent and less peaceful than men. For example, a predominant feature in the *miscellaneous* programs, where discussions take place between the panelists, is that women in the panel adopt, more often than men, a problematic and questioning role, being protagonists of more aggressive discussions and having more controversial opinions.

- **Body attitude:** other results refer to the use and representation of the body. In this indicator, three attitudinal modes were found: *Erotic*, *Neutral* and *Chaste*. 95% of the male subjects represented in the sample can be classified within the *Neutral* range of corporal attitude. However, in the case of women, 28% were perceived as *Erotic*, while only 2% of men were represented with this indicator. In some of the nocturnal talk shows of the sample, some women are wearing only underwear, an issue that does not occur in any case for the representation of male figures. Unlike the televisual representation of men, the body of women is much more objectualized, reproducing the heteronorm that defines not only the differentiated roles of men and women, but also the ideal of female bodies to be exposed and desired.
- **Actancial representation:** although the behavior of the representation regarding the actancial roles is relatively similar in men and women, the former are distinguished by playing more the *Hero*, the one oriented to solve the problems and restore order (27% against 6% in women), coinciding with the patriarchal bias that places man as an active and powerful subject, as opposed to a passive, submissive and weak woman. As for the role of *Villain*, the difference is only 4% (16% women, 12% men).
- **Television role:** in this dimension we sought to determine the status of subjects according

to their relevance in television discourse and not necessarily in their role in the story. The indicated categories correspond to *Lead* (leading role), *Secondary* (subordinate role), *Tertiary* (supplementary role) and *Generic* (incidental role). Of the total men in the sample, 63% assumed a leading role, 28% a secondary role and 9% a tertiary role. In the case of women, the main and secondary roles were distributed in a very similar way: 43% and 45%, respectively. Women in the tertiary role reached 11% and in the generic one, 1%. Just as in society, where men persistently occupy the main roles in the most diverse dimensions of power, the television representation of the subjects of the sample tends to place men more in the main roles and women, more in the secondary roles. There seems to be no other reason for this imbalance in the assignment of roles than a reproduction, on television screens, of the gender inequalities present in society.

NORMATIVE REPRESENTATION OF THE PERSON-CHARACTER

- **Moral assessment:** another aspect of the representation of people/characters in the sample is related to the assessment of behavior based on what is considered normal. In this case, the focus was on the assessment that the television discourse builds regarding behaviors at the *Inoffensive*, *Dangerous* and *Pathological* levels. The *Inoffensive* level corresponds to the appropriate and desirable social norm of behavior, while the *Dangerous* level represents its transgression. The *Pathological* level, unlike the *Dangerous*, entails an ontological discrediting of behavior, not regulated by logic and common sense. Although 79% of women and 87% of men are represented as having peaceful behavior, there is a slight tendency to represent women exercising behaviors that make them more dangerous: 17% of women, versus 10% of men. These behaviors are expressed, for example, in the treatment given by a reportage of the program *La Mañana de Chilevisión* to a group of female sex workers, pointing them out as the problem, without mentioning their clients as part of it. The tendency is to represent women, more than men, exceeded and problematic, and the male characters characterizing, preferably, normality.

SYNTHESIS

Regarding the comparative representation of men and women in the sample, it is possible to verify the following:

- The stereotype of men represents them as simpler, with more leadership, more sane and serene, more suited to the social norm, less associated with negative values and much more homogeneous, safe and reliable than women.
- On the other hand, the stereotype that emerges from the analysis represents women as more erotic, more conflictive and confronted with norms, mostly in subordinate roles, more associated with negative values and much more problematized, complex and subject to judgment than men.

CONCLUSIONS

A HETEROSEXUAL WORLD BY DEFAULT

The logics of symbolic functioning of the set of people and characters analyzed construct a reference world where heterosexuality is understood as natural and given by default, despite being a social construction (Butler, 2003). Of the 167 people/characters analyzed, only 10 escape the heterosexual norm (6%). The absence of sexual diversity in the sample, versus a de facto heterosexuality, reproduces the logic and interactions of what Sedgwick calls a "closet": a small space that omits the experience of many LGBTI people in society and reduces the possibilities of gays and lesbians of speaking publicly (Sedgwick, 1998). According to the author, the closet legitimizes an unequal social order between heterosexual identity and homosexual identity. Gays and lesbians are suggested not to speak, not to publicly expose their sexuality and to keep in modesty their diverse expressions of gender and desire. The closet is expressed in the regulations on ways of communicating homosexual identity with heteronormative biases, and would explain the silence and the reduced participation in the public space of sexual diversities. The closet isolates and silences homosexual speech, since being "publicly known as a homosexual is never the same as being publicly known as heterosexual" (Warner, 2012, p. 58). Thus, the risk of recognizing oneself publicly as a homosexual means assuming, in some cases, pathological stigmas and being the object of ridicule and violence.

On the other hand, heterosexual predominance seems to be associated with other inequalities. We

verified the existence of dimensions in which the recurrences and divergences did not obey to a gender distinction, but to those of social class, sociocultural origin and physical appearance. Men and women are represented mostly as belonging to the upper class, mainly of white complexion, residents in the capital, with thin bodies, young and heterosexual. This intersectionality is consistent with the characteristics of the dominant cultural hegemony, which operates under the rule of white aesthetics, the social norm of class privilege, the political norm of power and the patriarchal heterosexual norm (Amigo et al., 2016).

GENDER BINARISM AND DEVALUATION OF THE FEMININE

When deepening into the psychological, actantial and value dimensions (behavioral sphere), differences and inequalities arise between the masculine and the feminine. According to the results, discourses and stereotypes about the masculine show men as safer and more reliable than females, more adapted to the norm and, therefore, simpler in their behavioral constitution. Men are shown as having greater leadership, engaged in more important tasks and less associated with negative values, in charge of conducting programs and moderating the discussions, as in the case of the programs *En su propia trampa* (Canal 13) and *SQP* (Chilevisión). Gender differences between male characters and female characters are exalted; thus, television is a reference that still produces sexist stereotypes that hinder women's access to equality and gender equality and, conversely, maintain men in a position of authority. Gender inequality is clearly expressed in the sexualization of the female body in entertainment programs, which places women at a disadvantage compared to male characters who are not forced to show their bodies to get positions of power in the programs. The eroticization of the female body—in *miscellaneous* afternoon programs—is expressed through the exhibition of underwear, necklines and swimsuits by female models, dancers or strippers with very thin bodies, which emphasize a masculine look that objectifies women's bodies. Eroticism and the creation of relationships marked by sensuality between men and women is a characteristic of some entertainment programs on television (Moreno-Díaz & Medina, 2017). On the other hand, the women in the sample are more problematized, complex and subject to observation, preferably occupying subordinate roles, more confronted with the social

norm and, therefore, mostly questioned. Unlike the bodily attitude of men, almost exclusively neutral, the stereotype built for 28% of the women in the sample represents them eroticized. In a small proportion, only women are represented in underwear or half-naked in the sample, which is consistent with the statements of Wood (2005).

Some researches warn about gender violence that is legitimated due to the exhibition of the woman's body as a sexual object on the screen, images that trade with sex and normalize stereotypes of female beauty characterized by extreme thinness and some type of nudity, reducing any type of communication with a gender rights perspective (Jeffreys, 2011; INDH, 2016).

EXTENDED HETEROSEXUALITY AND ABSENT GENDERS

As we have pointed out, the construction of gender stereotypes in the corpus indicates a marked tendency that privileges the representation of heterosexual subjects. However, there is a small proportion of other gender identities present in the sample. Ten people/characters do not respond to heteronorm or gender ideology: seven gay, one lesbian and two transgenders. However, it is interesting to note that, despite the reduced representation of these ten non-heterosexual identities, the discursive and symbolic forms through which they are represented differ significantly.

In one of the cases of gay representation, there seems to be a positive value and behavioral norm. This is a panelist of the entertainment show *Intrusos*, represented in a manner equivalent to most of the heterosexual subjects who meet the condition of high class and white ethnic socioeconomic representation.

In another six cases of gay representation, the norm of value and behavior is also positive. However, it differs from the previous one regarding the comic character assigned to the behavior of these subjects (transvestites), who do not meet the condition of upper socioeconomic class or white ethnic representation. On some occasions, negative homophobic stereotypes confirm that sexual diversity is an input for humor in the media (INDH, 2016). In this regard, when in the media sexual diversity is presented in situations of "mockery", many times these are based on stereotyped representations that naturalize the processes of discrimination towards the different sexual and gender groups (Martínez, Mier, Guerrero, Vizuet, & Díaz, 2016, p. 22).

In the case of the representations of the two transgender subjects present in the corpus, a differentiating norm

also seems to operate, in which the social class defines its positive or negative character. In the case of the interview to an Afro-Caribbean transvestite and immigrant who practices sex work –exposed in Chilevisión's morning program– a symbolic context is constructed that represents her under the negative and dangerous valuation and behavioral norms, such as women that deviate from the heterosexual female hegemonic norm. Another case is that of Caitlyn Jenner, an American star-system transgender, ex-athlete, whose television representation in the talk show *Toc Show* focuses on highlighting her beauty and feminine appeal. In this case, the transsexual American women conform to the heteronormative aesthetic canons of the feminine and her acceptance depends on their implicit socioeconomic condition of upper class and white ethnic; thus, the norm of her representation is positive, since she constitutes a successful and idealized example of the gender transition of an entertainment character in the United States.

From this, it is possible to think that an *expanded heterosexuality* could be operating, which, in certain cases, accepts different identities insofar as these conform to the norms of social class, class origin or physical appearance but, for above all, to those of the female/male model, as do the gay subjects and one transgender of the sample; however, it rejects, makes invisible or punishes those who do not comply with it, as is the case with the transgender who practices sex work. Another element that could reaffirm this hypothesis of heteronormative inclusion/exclusion is the fact that, of the set of 167 people/characters present in the sample, only one corresponds to a lesbian gender identity (0.6%). This is the testimony presented in a news reportage from *Informe Especial* (TVN) of a young lesbian girl who was assaulted by a taxi driver in the Bellavista neighborhood. As Bourdieu (2000) would say, symbolic domination is not only linked to sexual signs, but also to sexual practice.

PLURALISM IN SOCIETY, PLURALISM IN TELEVISION PROGRAMS?

The analysis conducted on the data generated by the research shows that television representations regarding gender in the corpus programs are not a reflection of what happens in society. There are many facts that lead us to recognize that, in Chile, we are still a long way from overcoming discrimination, biases, prejudices, symbolic and material aggressions against different individuals and social groups that do not

fit the heterosexual norm or who, like women, are subordinated to dominant masculinity.

However, if we consider the secondary data provided by surveys and opinion studies, Chilean society seems to move faster than television representations and discourses in terms of equality and respect for gender identity, both in the public as in the private debate (Amigo et al., 2014). Regarding the above, the results of the weekly survey CADEM of September 2017 indicate that 63% of people agree that gay couples have the right to marry, a percentage that has been increasing since 2014, when the number of respondents who approved was of 50% (CADEM, 2017). According to what has been pointed out in this paper, the gender stereotypes present in the programs of the corpus do not correspond

to the images and common senses that circulate in society regarding gender diversity, with non-fiction television performances being more conservative than those present in Chilean society.

The absence of gender and sexual diversity that can be observed from the results and the analysis made in this work is contradictory with the growing public and private acceptance that exists in Chilean society regarding these issues. The contrast between the reality of the television representation of gender and the social reality that can be observed in this specific work makes it possible to show the imbalances between one and the other and to point out the great challenges faced by the regulation of a medium of so much social and cultural relevance as television.

NOTAS

1. This paper collects some results of the research *Análisis de pantalla sobre el respeto a la equidad, diversidad e identidad de género en programas de televisión* [Analysis of equality, diversity and gender identity in television programs], requested by the Department of Studies and International Relations of the Chilean National Television Council, an institution to which we thank for all the support they provided us.

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