

UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE SANTA CATARINA
POS-GRADUAÇÃO EM INGLÊS E LITERATURA CORRESPONDENTE

THE USE AND ABUSE OF YOUR SEXUAL POWER:
COSMOPOLITAN/NOVA AND THE CREATION/MAINTENANCE
OF A CONSERVATIVE VIEW OF FEMALE SEXUALITY

por

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Dissertação submetida à Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina
para obtenção do grau de MESTRE EM LETRAS

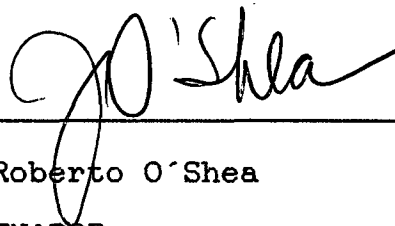
FLORIANOPOLIS

Agosto de 1995

Esta dissertação foi julgada adequada e aprovada em sua forma final pelo Programa de Pós-Graduação em Inglês para a obtenção do grau de

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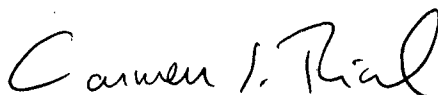
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Florianópolis, 23 de agosto de 1995.

I dedicate this dissertation to all the women (mother, sisters, friends, teachers, colleagues) who, by sharing their lives with me, give me valuable and daily insights on what it means to be born and to live as a woman.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Several people and institutions have helped me to make this project possible. I would like to offer my special thanks to the following: CAPES, which provided me with a scholarship that allowed me to dedicate myself entirely to the research; the members of the staff of the Department of Post-Graduation in English at UFSC, especially the teachers, for their invaluable help during the course; my boyfriend and my family, for their confidence and support. Finally, I'd also like to thank my supervisor, Carmen Rosa Caldas-Coulthard, for having trusted and encouraged me all along.

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ABSTRACT

The present work uses the British theories of Critical Discourse Analysis in order to carry out a linguistic examination of 11 texts collected from the British and the Brazilian Cosmopolitan magazine. The aim of this work is to demonstrate that Cosmopolitan, an apparently bold and progressive woman's magazine, helps to create and reinforce a sexist, prescriptive and conservative view of gender relations and sexuality. Three categories of linguistic elements have been analysed: vocabulary (representations); modality; and hortatory/procedural discourse. The analysis of these linguistic features help to demonstrate that the discourses used in Cosmopolitan, though apparently friendly and informal, hide relations of power and control between magazine producers and magazine consumers, and between men and women. This study hopes to demystify the image of Cosmopolitan as a bold magazine for young women, and to show that it works to promote and defend a judgemental, male-oriented view of the world. In pedagogical terms, the results of this work might help increase consciousness and encourage critical readings in the ELT classroom. Critical discourse analysis can help students realize that the language used in the press is a carrier of ideological and manipulative messages.

No de paginas: 137

No de palavras: 28222 (aproximadamente)

*O USO E O ABUSO DE SEU PODER SEXUAL:
COSMOPOLITAN/NOVA E A CRIAÇÃO/MANUTENÇÃO DE UMA
VISÃO CONSERVADORA DA SEXUALIDADE FEMININA*

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RESUMO

O presente trabalho utiliza as teorias britânicas da Análise Crítica do Discurso para desenvolver uma análise lingüística de 11 textos coletados da revista Cosmopolitan inglesa e da revista brasileira Nova. O objetivo deste trabalho é demonstrar que a revista Cosmopolitan, aparentemente ousada e progressista, ajuda a criar e reforçar uma visão sexista, prescritiva e conservadora das relações de gênero e da sexualidade. Para tanto, foram analisadas três categorias de elementos lingüísticos: vocabulário (representações); modalidade; e discurso hortatório. O exame desses elementos lingüísticos ajudou a demonstrar que os discursos usados na revista Cosmopolitan, embora aparentemente amigáveis e informais, escondem relações de poder e controle entre produtores e consumidores de revistas, e entre homens e mulheres. Esse estudo procura desmistificar a imagem de revista feminina ousada transmitida pela Cosmopolitan, e procura mostrar que a revista em questão promove uma visão de mundo discriminatória e sexista. Em termos pedagógicos, os resultados dessa pesquisa podem ser utilizados em aulas de inglês como língua estrangeira para estimular a conscientização e a leitura crítica. A análise crítica do discurso pode ajudar os/as alunos/as a perceber que a linguagem usada na imprensa é um veículo de mensagens ideológicas e manipulativas.

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CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

The Key to It All

Existe um milhão de tabelas, dados estatísticos e cálculos que se pode levar em conta na hora de decidir onde aplicar sua verba publicitária. Mas nenhum desses métodos consegue medir a *relação especial que o consumidor tem com a revista* e que, com certeza, tem muita influência na eficiência de um anúncio. Anunciando em revista, mais do que estar falando com o consumidor que pode comprar seu produto, você vai estar falando com ele através de um *meio de onde ele tira opiniões e comportamentos, em que ele se inspira para se vestir, para o qual ele escreve e fala o que sente. Essa intimidade, essa proximidade com o consumidor, só a revista consegue.* Se você também quer que o consumidor tenha tanta intimidade com o seu produto, renda-se: anuncie em revista.

The extract above (my emphasis) is part of an advertisement published by ANER (Associação Nacional dos Editores de Revistas) in the Brazilian magazine Audio News (Ano III - No 31). Most of us have felt (and probably still feel) attracted to popular magazines. We see and read them in all sorts of places, from our houses to waiting rooms to our work places. Given their widespread presence, it is not difficult to see that popular magazines play an important role in our lives, be it as a source of information, services, entertainment or pleasure.

But no magazine is just an innocent source of information or pleasure, as the advertisement above states openly. Popular

magazines serve the social function of helping to shape the way we see ourselves, the world and other people, as well as helping to influence the way we act and behave. Women's magazines (maybe the most numerous in terms of titles and sales), for instance, have helped to define femininity from as early as the eighteenth century. Their importance in the formation of a feminine social identity is undeniable, as Ferguson (1983:1) points out:

Alongside other social institutions such as the family, the school, the church and other media, [women's magazines] contribute to the wider social processes which define the position of women in a given society at a given point in time. In their exchange with the wider social structure, with processes of social change and social continuity, these journals help to shape both a woman's view of herself, and society's view of her.

Nevertheless, women's magazines remain one of the least studied social institutions of our times, especially in Brazil. Starting in the 1980s some Anglo-American researchers have begun to look at these magazines from a sociological and semiological perspective (Winship, McRobbie, Hebron, Ballester, McCracken, Ferguson, etc). Very little has been done so far in linguistic terms.

The present work uses the theories of Critical Language Awareness (or Critical Discourse Analysis) in order to carry out a linguistic analysis of a series of texts collected from one specific women's magazine, Cosmopolitan. According to Fairclough (1989:5), the term *critical* is used here to

indicate that this approach to language aims at revealing the hidden connections between language, power and ideology. Critical linguists analyse texts (written or spoken) to show how social structures and social practices determine the choice of linguistic elements, and the effects these choices have on social structures and social practices (bi-directional nature of discourse).

CDA follows the work of M.A.K. Halliday, who claims that the functions of linguistic structures are based on social structures. Therefore, CDA includes social meanings and their textual realizations in the scope of grammatical description (Fowler et al. 1979:187).

The object of this study, Cosmopolitan, is a magazine addressed to young, single women, and since its first appearance in America in the 1960s it has tried to build up the image of a transgressive, bold and progressive magazine. Heterosexual sex and relationships have been one of its most recurrent topics, and articles about sexuality have become one of Cosmo's hallmarks. Based on that I decided to analyse texts that dealt either with sex or with relationships, in order to see how they help to shape the social concept of female sexuality and gender relations.

In this dissertation I analyse texts from the British Cosmopolitan and from the Brazilian Nova (both titles represent the same transnational magazine). From the very first reading I noticed that there was more in those articles

than met the eye. They looked provocative enough, but I felt that they hid between the lines a very conservative trend. Therefore, my aim is to try to demonstrate that the discourses of Cosmopolitan/Nova help propagate a certain model of female sexuality. This model determines what is considered 'normal', 'correct', 'perverted', 'abnormal', 'acceptable/allowed' for women in sexual terms. Cosmo's texts offer the readers the pleasures of voyeurism, transgression, fantasy, escapism and consumerism, while creating and reinforcing sexist, prescriptive and conservative notions of genders relations and sexuality.

1.1 - Methodology

According to Fairclough, a text is a product of the *process of production* and a resource in the *process of interpretation*. For CDA (Critical Discourse Analysis), the formal properties of a text are on one hand *traces* of the productive process, and on the other hand *cues* in the process of interpretation (1989:24). I will concentrate, therefore, on some formal properties to arrive at a critical interpretation of the texts under analysis.

Work previously done on women's magazines has used three points of reference: the text itself, a theoretical framework and methodology, and the critic's analytic reading (Ballester et al. 1991:39). I intend to follow the same points of

reference. The 11 texts I will work with come from a corpus of 10 issues of Cosmopolitan/Nova, including Brazilian and British issues, published between February 1993 and June 1994. All the texts can be found in the appendix.

As far as the methodology is concerned, I will look at three categories of linguistic elements: *vocabulary*; *modality* (Halliday 1985); and *hortatory/procedural discourse* (Longacre 1983/1992). I concentrated on these three categories because they helped me to demonstrate that the discourses of Cosmo, though apparently friendly and transgressive, hide relations of power and control between magazine producers and magazine consumers, and between men and women.

1.2 - Purpose of the Analysis

This study has three main purposes. The first, and more immediate, is to make use of linguistic analyses to demystify, or deconstruct, the image of Cosmopolitan/Nova as a magazine which discusses transgressive topics, and to show how it works to promote and defend a male-oriented view of the world.

The second purpose is academic. As I said before, there is still a fairly small literature dealing with women's magazines, and the existing books and articles carry out sociological or semiological analyses, not linguistic ones. Therefore, this dissertation can contribute to a field of research that is as yet very limited, and it can also pave the

way to future research in the area.

The third purpose, and maybe the most important one, is political. According to Fowler et al. (1979:174), the structure of the media is a reflection of the structure of society, and the worst effects of "media distortion" is on "political thinking". It is extremely important, therefore, to approach the media with critical eyes, and it is here that CDA can play an important role.

Fowler et al. say that "the language used in newspapers [and in magazines] expresses a lot more than is consciously grasped when it is read simply for information or comment" (1979:156). Therefore, CDA can be a first step in an emancipatory process since it increases consciousness of how language contributes to the domination of some people by others. We can only resist and change a system of oppression and domination that operates through language by being aware of the common-sensical assumptions that lie behind language (Fairclough 1989:1/4).

One form of resistance concerns social positions. If social positions, such as that of writer and reader, are passively occupied, the social relations that determine them are maintained. In short, this study hopes to assess the ideological purposes of a commercial magazine to encourage a critical reading. Through it we can acquire the necessary tools to resist the reading (and social) positions imposed on us, and to reconstruct the texts we consume to our advantage.

1.3 - Organization of the Dissertation

Chapter 2 presents the theoretical background of the study. It starts by building up a profile of Cosmopolitan: its origins, where it is published today, its main characteristics, etc. In the first section I try to problematize Cosmo's view of the world, especially of female sexuality, from the perspective of gender studies.

I then move on to discuss the connections between language, ideology and power, especially in terms of the discourses used in women's magazines. In this second section I discuss several topics: the educational and entertaining character of women's magazines; their role in the creation of gender identities; the formation of 'communities' of readers; the establishment of a 'correct' reading; and the influence of women's magazines on beliefs and values about sex. I close this first chapter by commenting on female sexuality, sexual changes, sexual crisis and sexual control.

In Chapter 3 I discuss how language and vocabulary help to organize and divide the world in categories, and I argue that these categories are evaluative and discriminatory. I analyse the representations of sex and relationship found in the data, and show that these representations, by establishing 'proper' and 'improper' modes of female sexual behaviour, help to create and maintain an imbalance in gender relations.

Chapter 4 deals with modality, i.e., the part of

discourse that indicates the writer/institution's position towards herself/himself/itself, the world and the readers. This chapter is divided in two sections: the first deals with the writer's position in relation to the truth or likelihood of her/his propositions, and the second deals with the obligations the writer establishes for, and the permissions the writer grants to, the reader. The aim of this chapter is to demonstrate how modality is used to hide an asymmetrical power relation between writer/institution and reader.

Chapter 5 applies the concepts of hortatory and procedural discourses to the language found in Cosmo's texts. Here, I try to show that the texts analysed aim at prescribing and commanding modes of behaviour, values and beliefs for the readers, sometimes in more authoritarian and emphatic ways, sometimes through socially mitigated forms.

The last chapter discusses the conservative and sexist messages presented by a so-called 'progressive' women's magazine, and how this magazine, as a social institution, is used to reinforce and maintain gender relations unchanged. I'd also like to point out that the words in italics in the title of the dissertation and in the titles of the chapters have been taken from different texts published in the issues of Cosmopolitan used for this research.

As a last remark, I would like to say that this study has been deeply influenced by my social and political stands, and by the fact that I am a woman, therefore personally interested

in seeing women in command of their histories, lives and bodies. I cannot and do not want to hide the subjectivity of this research; I would rather have it spelled out clearly, as Fairclough advocates (1989:5):

It is widely understood that people researching and writing about social matters are inevitably influenced in the way they perceive them, by their own social experiences and values and political commitments. I think it is important not only to acknowledge these influences rather than affecting a spurious neutrality about social issues, but also to be open with one's readers about where one stands.

CHAPTER 2

There's More to It Than Sex: Women's Magazines and Feminine Identity

In this chapter I present the theoretical background for this research study. My aim here is to contextualize my analysis of the linguistic construction of female sexuality in Cosmopolitan, basing it on three points: first, a general description of Cosmopolitan and the social role it plays; second, a discussion of how women's magazines in general serve as a stage for cultural, ideological and political processes; and third, an overview of the history of female sexuality, the changes it is presently undergoing, and the crisis these changes have brought about.

2.1 - Cosmopolitan/Nova

Published in more than seventeen countries, including the USA, Europe, Australia and South America, Cosmopolitan sells the image of a woman (also known as the *Cosmo-girl*) who is internationally portrayed like the cover model: a "glamorous and feminine woman out to lure her men with all the Cosmo-style seduction she can muster" (Winship 1987:99/100).

According to Winship (ibid:100/1), one of the reasons for Cosmo's commercial success is its apparently contradictory

pluralism of opinions, some of them mutually exclusive, on the subject of women. It is a magazine that relies less on its fashion pages and more on its profuse advertising, with all the associations of female desire, pleasure and fantasy. McCracken describes Cosmo's recipe for success as a combination of "pseudo-sexual liberation, opportunities for exotic voyeurism, the appearance of culture and sophistication, and the promise of love and winning the man of one's dreams" (1993:162).

Articles in Cosmo tend to follow a set structural pattern. First they describe a personal problem (potentially, if not already, the reader's), sometimes a general one, sometimes the author's own problem. Then they present the knowledge of experts (psychologists, lawyers, doctors, writers, etc) about it, and personal testimonies, sometimes including the author's own. Finally, through a hortatory discourse (a type of discourse that aims at influencing conduct), they suggest a number of strategies of action. Cosmo's articles, as Winship says, "are therefore reflective, analytic and opinionated but within a pragmatic framework" (1987:103/4).

Cosmo's implied reader is pictured as a 'special', 'exceptional' woman, different from the average female in the sense that she is more sexually liberated and professionally and emotionally successful. Winship says that "Cosmo manifestly subscribes to an ideology of competitiveness and

individual success, and to (...) an aspirational feminism" (1987:106). The magazine encourages individual success and self-assertiveness and, in a society based on competitive individualism, this politic has popular appeal (ibid:106) ¹. Winship argues that initially it was through sexual assertiveness that Cosmopolitan became famous, and that in the 1980s [and 1990s] this sexual profile still had [and has] a central place in the ideological shaping of the magazine (ibid:106).

Cosmopolitan appeared in the 1960s in America under the editorship of Helen Gurley Brown, the author of Sex and the Single Girl, a bestseller in 1963 (Winship 1987:106), and from then on kept its sexual profile and its celebration of being single. The magazine was introduced in Great Britain in 1972 (in Brazil it was introduced a year later, in September 1973), presenting a nude male centerfold that enhanced Cosmo's sexual reputation. The nude photos only lasted a couple of years, but Cosmo continued to invest on its sexual profile. Female sexuality was and still is described as heterosexual and active. Cosmo gives high priority to sexual attraction and its achievement, and this explains the proliferation of articles on what makes a woman sexy, from a male point of view ².

According to DINAP (Distribuidora Nacional de Publicações), 86% of Nova's target audience is made of women, and 14% of men. The intended reader is between 20 and 29 years old, has a secondary degree, and may hold several different

kinds of jobs. Still according to the same source, 23 per cent of the readers come from the upper class, 34 per cent from the middle class and 30 per cent from the lower class.

Winship argues that Cosmo has claimed, from its beginning, that women could combine progressive and more traditional aspects of femininity, such as brains and beauty, but never considered any problems arising from this combination. Cosmo shared (and still does) with Playboy a sexual liberation ideology made accessible to women by the 'sexual revolution' of the 1960s, and it can be said that the magazine has made a certain social contribution by exposing female sexuality. Cosmo claimed that sex was a woman's right too, and encouraged women to know and talk about it (Winship 1987:110).

Cosmo always has a new angle on sex and relationships, and has elevated sex "to the prime place in social life" (Winship *ibid*:112). The limitations of this 'talking sex therapy' is that it claims a woman can find herself through sex, but tends to isolate sexuality from other spheres of social life. In the pages of Cosmo sexual differences and sexual conflicts are acknowledged, but the solution offered to women is to understand them and to compromise.

Sexual assertiveness for women is advised as long as it does not become *aggression*. Sexually liberated women, according to the Cosmo credo, have to be careful about men. The magazine displaces the tensions between femininity and

masculinity to an insistent attention to sexual relationships. As Winship says, "it is as though personally solving sexual problems provided the panacea to women's equality" (1987:114).

Cosmopolitan, like some other women's magazines which have tried to break with the traditions of the domestic magazine, has not contributed much to traditional views of femininity. As other magazines have done since the beginning of the women's magazines industry, it still places women mainly in the private world. Since it pays little attention to housekeeping and child-rearing in its articles and features, the magazine concentrates on the romantic and sexual lives of women. The *Cosmo-girl* works out and is a salary-earner, but her main focus of interest is either her relationship with her partner, or the search for a partner. The public world is still very much left out of the pages of the magazine.

The magazine tried to break away not only from the model of the domestic woman, but also from the woman who had her sexuality tied to family responsibilities instead of personal pleasure. Nevertheless, Cosmo works on the traditional assumption that relationships are women's responsibility and part of female work. The questionnaires for readers on their sexual performances picture femininity as a goal to be worked on and women as objects of male desire. In the words of Ballester et al. (1991:124):

The discourses of sexual liberation which magazines like Cosmopolitan have made their own not only draw on the male-dominated sex manuals of the 1960s, they relate to the older

tradition of magazines as work-manuals. The tangled relations of work and pleasure which characterised the domestic magazine re-emerges in the pages of Cosmopolitan in the 1970s recast into the sphere of sexuality.

2.2 - Language, ideology and power

In this section I discuss the connections between language and processes of power and social control, and how the discourses used by women's magazines help shape and limit the way women view themselves and the world. According to CDA (Critical Discourse Analysis), the language we use and interact with represents specific views or theories of reality. Language is not just a product of social structures and social practices, it is part of social processes. Language articulates social meanings, and the production of language in its turn affects the situations and relationships that formed these meanings in the first place. Nevertheless, this bi-directional relationship between language and society does not necessarily produce social change. Very often, it reaffirms and reinforces existing social structures (Fowler et al, 1979:1/2).

The mass media, as Kress points out, have an educational purpose in the sense that they "... are instruments of cultural reproduction" (1985:2). Popular culture, which can be constructed through the media (e.g. popular magazines), is also imperative and didactic (in Ballester et al., 1991:32).

Women's magazines are examples of both the mass media and popular culture, and serve therefore a dual function: to provide entertainment and instruction for their readers.

The educational purpose of these magazines is eminently ideological. As every social institution, they help to establish, maintain and reinforce social ideologies (Kress 1985:2). The term "ideology" is being used here as a "coherent and systematic body or set of ideas about the social world and social relations" (Ballester et al., 1991:19).

According to Fairclough (1989:2), ideologies are closely linked to power. The ideological assumptions that pervade discourse depend on power relations; on top of that ideology is a means of legitimizing existing social relations and differences of power through familiar ways of behaving. Ideologies are also closely linked to language because language is the commonest form of social behaviour, the one that relies most on 'common-sense' assumptions.

Fairclough (1989:3/4) points out that power is exercised through *coercion* of various sorts (including physical violence), or through the manufacture of *consent* to or at least acquiescence to it. Power relations depend both on coercion and consent to varying extents. Ideology is the primary means of achieving consent, and the favoured vehicle of ideology is discourse. In the context of this study, 'discourses' are (Kress 1985:6/7):

systematically-organised sets of statements which give expression to the meanings and values of an

institution. Beyond that, they define, describe and delimit what it is possible to say and not possible to say (and by extension - what it is possible to do or not to do) with respect to the area of concern of that institution, whether marginally or centrally.

The texts present in women's magazines are the result of several ideological discourses, which work towards the creation of consent (or acquiescence) among women, facilitating the construction/maintenance of specific descriptions of reality. Through the creation of consent, people (or, in the case of women's magazines, readers) are integrated into apparatuses of control and made to feel part of them (Fairclough, 1989:33/34/36).

Of the two forms of exercising power mentioned before (coercion and consent), consent is less risky because it can be produced by hiding power behind an apparently democratic and friendly discourse. That is why women's magazines simulate a relationship of egalitarianism with their readers, removing from their texts, as much as possible, surface markers of authority and power. These magazines adopt a friendly, intimate, informal tone that apparently bridges the gap between text producers and text consumers.

2.2.1 - The shaping of gender identities

The discourses of women's magazines (progressive, conservative, transgressive, sexist, etc) play an important role in the acquisition of gender identities and in the

shaping of models of femininity and sexuality. But how exactly do they do that? According to Kress, every discourse "naturalises" its account of reality, i.e., the facts/ideas narrated by a discourse eventually become "natural", "common sense" (1985:10).

Social conventions, on which every discourse draws upon, represent ideological assumptions which are seen as 'common sense' (women as romantic and emotional; men as strong and rational; the search for a partner as women's main goal in life; etc), and which contribute to existing power relations. These 'common sense' assumptions are meanings shared by most or all members of a social group or institution, and they represent the ideologies of the powerful. Ideologies become common sense when the discourse types that represent them (e.g. sexist, scientific, conservative, etc) become naturalized (Fairclough 1989:88/92).

The naturalization of a discourse type leads to an apparent loss of its ideological character. Learning a dominant discourse (such as the sexist discourse) comes to be seen as merely learning the necessary skills to operate in society. The sexist discourse, for example, "specifies what men and women may be, how they are to think of themselves and to interrelate with the other gender" (Kress, 1985:21).

Sexist and conservative discourses propagate gender definitions and models of sexuality which cannot be challenged because they are presented as "natural". This apparent

emptying of the ideological content of discourses is in itself an ideological effect: as Fairclough says, "ideology works through disguising its nature, pretending to be what it isn't" (1989:92).

2.2.2 - The multiple discourses of women's magazines and their function

The sexist discourse is not the only one present in women magazines. A single social institution, such as a popular magazine, can make use of various kinds of discourses. One ideological position may involve more than one discourse, and one discourse type can be contained by another. In the following extract, for instance, we can see the appropriation of a mildly feminist discourse by the generally conservative discourse of Cosmopolitan (Flirt Like a Grown-Up, December 1993 - in appendix; my emphasis):

Grinning at sexist jokes, laughing when he puts another woman down, never venturing an opinion, flattering a man just because he's a man - those are the sins. *Remember, not flirting at all just conforms to an unpleasant stereotype: that feminists hate all men.*

No matter how rigid power relations may be, they have to renew themselves to keep up with a constantly changing world. Therefore, dominant social groups, such as the producers of women's magazines, have to transform their discourses (even if slightly) to keep their position. This could account for the

presence of apparently progressive discourses in the women's magazines of the 1980s and 1990s.

However, Ballester et al. contend that the multiplicity of discourses in women's magazines actually reinforces male dominance or women's oppression. They argue that the hegemonic position these magazines hold in many women's lives is a direct result of their "mobility and complexity". As they say, the different discourses that pervade women's magazines help construct and maintain "an ideology of femininity that, contradictory as it is, confirms relations of gender and class dominance in the social reality we inhabit" (1991:26).

2.2.3 - The creation of "communities" of readers

Women's magazines create for their readers a sense of community, of belonging to a 'woman's world'. The ideological common sense assumptions I mentioned above, which readers have to draw upon in order to make sense of a text, help create this 'feminine world', and also help to determine the readership of each magazine. They provide a dividing line for magazine readers, i.e., which common sense assumptions the readers must share in order to achieve the interpretation desired by the magazine.

Women's magazines claim to address a community of female readers. However, many women are not 'invited' into this private club: the implied reader (or the common-sensical

assumptions) of most women's magazines is white, middle-class, young, beautiful and heterosexual; therefore black, lesbian, older and poor women, among others, are left outside (Winship, 1987:67).

Despite the fact that women's magazines address these fictional collectivities of women, women's problems are depicted in their pages as private, individual, not as belonging to the whole class of women, and therefore requiring individual solutions. As Winship says, the readers of women's magazines "are caught in an ideology which regards self-help and self-transformation as the key to both a personal and a social happiness" (1987:70). Readers, she continues, are not encouraged to see their problems arising as much from their social as from their personal histories. To Winship, this emphasis on " `you` to solve `your` problem" can only lead to intimidation or to frustrated solutions. Individuals cannot on their own solve social problems that go beyond the scope of their limitations, especially, as Winship reminds us, if these individuals are women (ibid:71-80).

Fairclough argues that here again we can see the ideological work of common sense assumptions. According to him, magazine articles, or the `problem` pages, can provide a common-sensical framework and procedure for treating *social* problems in an *individual* way. This avoids any questioning of or challenge to relations of power, and prevents readers from seeing that social problems have social causes and social

remedies (1989:85).

2.2.4 - The establishment of a 'correct' reading

As Kress (1985:35) argues, many modern women's magazines work on the assumption that readers are familiar with the feminist critiques of sexist discourse, and identify with these critiques. However, to interpret the texts 'correctly', readers of women's magazines have to be primarily worried about men and their relationship with them. Referring to the ideal reader constructed by women's magazines, Kress says that she "... is a complex [reader], one who has to be able to negotiate the contradictions and tensions between a traditional sexist discourse and its values, and a feminist discourse which is present in the text and acts in a mildly subversive fashion" (1985:35).

According to Kress, readers are recruited and coerced by the texts in the magazine to become ideal readers and to fit into a specific reading position (1985:36). He points out that this dominant reading not only teaches the reader how to read texts, but also, in the long run, how to behave, take stands, "conform or adapt". He argues that the constant reinforcement of a particular reading position implies the creation of a particular subject position, one that will determine how the individual must behave, think and live in accordance with the discourses that have created that reading position (1985:37).

The fact that magazines convey a dominant reading does not, however, necessarily mean that readers are brainwashed. Readers might question the definitions of femininity offered by the discourses of women's magazines, but the terms of their criticism are generally determined by the discourses used in the magazine itself. Therefore, this questioning represents mere reactions to the definitions put forward, not an effort to change or destroy them (Ballester et al., 1991:131).

2.2.5 - Women's magazines: entertainment and pleasure

Women's magazines do not function only as instruction in the acquisition of gender identities. They also represent entertainment and pleasure for their readers. Several kinds of pleasure can be derived from them, such as: the pleasure of heterogeneity (different genres, formats, voices); the pleasure of open-endedness (continuing series of features); the pleasure of consumption; the pleasure of escapism; the pleasure of voyeurism; the pleasure of transgression; and visual pleasures (pictures, photos, etc). As Ballester et al. say, "any cultural form is both pleasurable and ideological..." (1991:162). The pleasures offered by women's magazines are rather complex. Some of them are liberating while others are repressive, but all of them contribute to the reproduction of cultural definitions (Ballester et al., *ibid*:36).

One of the sources of pleasure in women's magazines are the images they present. Even though these magazines are addressed to women, it is important to ask whose gaze shapes their images. Observation, in western culture, has historically represented a form of power, and in terms of gender divisions men have traditionally been the observers while women have been the objects of the gaze (Ballester et al., 1991:36).

The mass media are full of images of women, especially in advertisements (of almost any product). One of the possible explanations for this is that women symbolize men's leisure. Winship says that "women personify eroticism, leisure and pleasure. They are, in most men's imagination, the ultimate commodity to be 'enjoyed', the 'commodity' which is so often sold in ads" (1987:54).

Ballester et al. suggest that women can never escape the gaze, the object position (1991:37). How can women, then, assume the position of observers as readers of magazines? As John Berger claims, they imaginatively take a male position and look at themselves as men would do (in Ballester et al., 1991:37). Winship argues that the gaze of the cover model, for example, establishes an interaction with the female reader: the two of them relate to each other through an absent male observer (1987:11).

2.2.6 - The creation of female sexuality

Women's magazines help create and maintain gender subjectivities, and consequently models of sexuality. Winship says that "sexuality is as culturally constructed and learnt as is the language we speak" (1987:113). Several discourses construct sexuality in women's magazines: the Christian ascetic discourse of fear and distaste which describes it as dangerous; the sexist discourse, which represents man as the dominant partner and woman as the diplomatic one; a pseudo-feminist discourse, which proposes cosmetic changes in women's sexual behaviour but still depicts the search of a partner as women's main goal in life; and an apparently transgressive discourse, which touches on "taboo" topics without really encouraging any changes in terms of gender relations.

Ballester et al. claim that conflicting discourses on sexuality exist harmoniously side by side in women's magazines. Readers can consume what they agree with and reject what they do not. The choice of which magazine to buy, or which sections/articles to read is a choice of social identity (1991:163).

2.3 - Sexuality

Since this study is probing the influence of a popular magazine on the construction of a certain model of sexuality, I believe it is important to make some general comments on female sexuality. This section owes a lot to the work of the

British sociologist Anthony Giddens. He argues that nowadays sexuality has been rediscovered and revealed, and that it has contributed to the development of different lifestyles. In his view sexuality has come to be seen as something flexible, not anymore as part of biological determinism. It has become a meeting point between body, self-identity and social norms (1993:25).

This flexibility was in part the result of the advent of easily accessible contraceptive methods, which have freed women (and sexuality) from a chronic circle of pregnancy and birth. As long as sexual behaviour was linked to reproduction, "sexuality" as we now know it had no independent existence. Sexual activity was oriented either towards reproduction or towards *ars erotica*, the same division that separated pure from impure women (Giddens, 1993:193). After the introduction of contraceptive methods, sexuality became negotiable, especially for women, and it became, at least ideally, possible to experience it under several forms (ibid:37).

Nevertheless, we should keep in mind that sexuality is also a social construct which operates in a system of power relations, and not only a set of biological stimuli that can be liberated or repressed at will. Here again we can see the bi-directional relationship between discourse and social practices. Foucault argues that, as far as sexuality is concerned, discourse has become essential to the social reality it portrays, i.e., on the one hand there is a new

terminology to understand sexuality, and on the other hand the ideas, concepts and theories expressed by this terminology invade social life and help organize it (in Giddens, *ibid*:39).

Giddens believes that nowadays the self (which includes sexuality) is a reflective project, a continuous questioning of the past, present and future. This project is aided by several reflective tools: therapy and self-help manuals, television programmes and magazine articles. This description of the construction of the self raises two questions, though. First, to what extent can we really think about our identities, and pick and choose among several social options (including sexual options), since we are so much constrained by the discourses which are available to us and to which we have access? And second, isn't the idea of reflecting individually about the self and looking for guidance in a medium such as women's magazines exactly what Fairclough calls "individual solutions to social problems"? There is, as I argued before, the strong possibility that these magazines (as well as self-help manuals, TV programmes, therapy, etc) help construct the self in prescriptive, conservative ways, since they use the discourses of a powerful elite (white, middle/upper class and male), not leaving much room for real flexible options.

However, it is undeniable that sexuality, as a discursive phenomenon, has penetrated areas of society where it had never been discussed a few decades ago. Giddens argues that this

trend is at least partly the result of a social struggle which shows emancipatory elements. He says that today there is a much more open dialogue about sexuality, involving a much larger share of the population, than it was thought possible in previous generations (ibid:190). But there is also evidence that the discourses of the media can appropriate this openness, and use it to disguise very conservative tendencies.

Here we should consider the link between sexuality and power.³ For Foucault, sexuality, as many other aspects of private life, has been completely captured, and reorganized, in the expansion of systems of power. However, Giddens believes that any society where there is a high degree of institutional reflection will give rise to forms of personal and collective behaviour that will change considerably a system of sexual domination (1993:191/2). Since powerful groups will not relinquish their power easily, we can understand their need to create arenas (e.g. women's magazines) where these challenges to power relations can be met and checked.

2.3.1 - Female sexuality

The model of femininity that we now know was profoundly influenced by changes that affected women from the end of the eighteenth century on, such as the creation of the home, the modification of the relationship between parents and children,

and the "invention of motherhood" (Giddens, *ibid*:53/4).

The notion of romantic love (another concept that greatly influenced femininity) also started to appear at the end of the eighteenth century, and it was essentially a feminine kind of love. Since then, the promotion of love became predominantly a female task, and the ideas behind romantic love were clearly associated with women's subordination and their relative isolation from the outside world (Giddens, 1993:54). For men, on the other hand, there was a clear division between romantic love, limited to the domestic environment, and what Giddens calls *amour passion*, connected to the sexuality of the mistress or the prostitute (*ibid*:54).

According to the ideals of romantic love, female sexuality had to be limited to marriage in order to separate "respectable" women from "lost" women. Men could thus distance themselves from the realm of intimacy, and the maintenance of marriage was the primary aim of women (Giddens, 1993:58). Today we can see in the pages of women's magazines that, sometimes openly, sometimes disguised under new forms, some of the old ideals of romantic love are still disseminated and reinforced. Women are still depicted as naturally non-promiscuous (or are warned against the dangers of promiscuity), as responsible for the success of a relationship, and as engaged in an incessant search for a partner.

Despite this, Giddens believes that women are the great

revolutionaries of private life. Women are more able to eroticise their whole bodies, and to integrate genital sensations with other experiences and relations, i.e, they tend to consider sexual activities as not totally fulfilling if devoid of these broader relations (1993:145). Giddens argues that women see sexuality as a means of communication and self-knowledge, and sexual pleasure as an emancipatory element, essential for the transformation of intimacy in modern societies. For men, he argues, sexuality and pleasure traditionally lack these political shades, and are usually isolated from the profound changes taking place in intimacy.

2.3.2 - Sex and crisis

Since the 1960s, with the sexual revolution, men and women have experienced and witnessed many changes and challenges to their traditional notions of gender relations and sexuality. Several notions that had until then been naturalized and considered 'common sense' started to be deconstructed, such as: 1. male dominance in the public world; 2. the double standard; 3. the division of women in pure (daughters, sisters, wives, mothers) and impure (seductresses, prostitutes, mistresses, etc); 4. the notion of sexual difference arising from God, nature or Biology; 5. the transformation of women in 'problems', due to the stupidity or irrationality of their desires and actions; 6. the sexual

division of labour (Giddens 1993:125/6).

These changes have given rise to a social and ideological crisis, for which women's magazines serve as an arena. Giddens says that today "personal life has become an open project, creating new demands and anxieties" (1993:18). He believes that in a world where sexual equality is rising (even though it is far from complete), men and women are forced to question and modify their points of view towards one another (ibid:16).

Male sexuality, which was historically considered free of problems, was problematized due to all these changes. While the traditional model of sexuality was the norm, male anxiety concerning sexuality remained covered up. Now that this traditional model is under attack, all these anxieties and crises have become more visible.

Giddens believes that women are *de facto* responsible for the transformation of intimacy launched by modernity. In his opinion the system of institutional repression was, from its beginning, open to tensions due to the exclusion of women from the public world. He argues that the democratization of public life was initially a male project, and only recently women have started to take part in it. On the other hand, the democratization of personal life is a project in which women have been the major actors, and as I shall argue below, this is another threat to the maintenance of a male system of power relations.

2.3.3 - The emancipatory powers of sexuality and the mechanisms to control it

Giddens believes that the changes that intimacy and sexuality are going through are very deep and essentially revolutionary. He argues that if we consider intimacy as a transactional negotiation of personal links among equals, it then implicates in the complete democratization of interpersonal relationships, in a way which is fully compatible with the democratization of public life. In this way, the transformation of intimacy and sexuality could have a subversive influence over modern institutions in general (1993:11). Changes in intimacy and sexuality would pave the way to broader social changes, thus posing a threat to the present social order.⁴

The effects of the transformation of intimacy and sexuality can disrupt relations of power and reach public institutions. Male power-holders are not prepared to give up their power easily. Bearing these two assertions in mind, it is not surprising that many media vehicles, such as women's magazines, should try to maintain and reinforce conservative models of relationship and sexuality.

According to Ballester et al., sexuality and feminism are potentially threatening to the male social order women's magazines represent. They argue that (1991:6):

The oppositions of masculine and feminine,
public and private, production and consumption,

continue to structure the magazine text: sexuality and feminism continue to trouble the smooth surface of its ideological surety.

One way of avoiding the emancipatory powers of a free sexuality is the transformation of sexuality in a commodity, where eroticism is completely eliminated. In the pages of Cosmopolitan and other pseudo-transgressive women's magazines, we can see the new 'free' female sexuality of the 1990s is depicted not as a 'quality of the self', but as a commodity that women are taught to trade, in the oldest possible way, in exchange for the attention of potential male partners.

In the following chapter I will analyse the representations of sex and relationships built linguistically in Cosmo's articles. I will try to show that these representations are prescriptive, conservative and sexist, and work towards the maintenance of traditional gender stereotypes and gender relations. They are used as a mechanism of defense against the potentially subversive changes taking place in sexuality.

NOTES

1 - Winship is especially critical of this tendency of Cosmopolitan to encourage individual solutions to social problems. She believes that, by sustaining that individuals can win and by affirming individual success, the magazine disregards the workings of a class society we live in, and the fact that for every winner there are many losers. Cosmo claims that power is individual, not social, and that failures are due to personal and not structural problems. The magazine's aspirational feminism, according to her, works within, not against, the establishment (1987:120).

2 - In the interests of a good relationship between men and women, Cosmopolitan gives unusual prominence to men's views,

having articles written by men in every issue.

3 - Concerning the power relations that are implicit in sexuality, Kaplan says that "dominance-submission patterns are apparently a crucial part of both male and female sexuality as constructed in western capitalism" (1983:318). About the same subject, Giddens argues that the desire to be dominated, for men and women, is a powerful residue of the repressed consciousness of the initial influence of the mother over the child (1993:142).

4 - According to Giddens, historically men have been the revolutionaries of public life, and women the revolutionaries of intimacy. However, the same degree of progressive changes operated by men on public life, as a movement coming from the outside, has not reached the centre, i.e., private life. The transformation of intimacy, on the other hand, as a movement operating from the centre to the outside, can potentially spread itself to public institutions. Giddens argues that sexual emancipation can work as a way of achieving a broader reorganization of social life. This democratization of personal life would bring about changes not only in sexuality, but on all kinds of relationships, such as between friends, relatives, and parents and children (1993:200).

CHAPTER 3

The Feminisation of Sexuality: A New Name for an Old Idea

Cosmo bases its articles about sex and male-female relationships on certain representations of 'proper' and 'improper' sexual roles and modes of sexual behaviour for women. In the light of that, my purpose in this chapter is twofold: first, to expose the ideological messages behind these representations, showing how prescriptive, limited and conservative they are. Second, to demonstrate that the use of these representations aims at maintaining gender relations unaltered. They function as a strategy to help prevent the emancipatory and democratic changes in sexuality and intimacy (discussed in Chapter 1) from reaching broader social relations and public institutions.

Based on the examination of the data, I argue here that Cosmo presents a conservative view of gender relations and sexuality to its readers. The word 'conservative' may have different meanings, according to the ideological, cultural and political stances of the social group which is using it; therefore, it is important to define it clearly in the context of my work. Since this study is influenced by theories of language and gender (Cameron 1985; Coates 1986), I use 'conservative' to refer to a deliberate effort to maintain a traditional and asymmetrical power relation between women and

men, representing men as the dominant partners in male/female relationships.

3.1 - Categorization, evaluation and discrimination

According to Fowler, human communication is pervaded by systems of beliefs and systems of categories which provide the representation of the world required by the needs of each society. In this way, language conveys representations of experiences and values, and ideas are stored in our mental dictionary (lexicon) in sets based on relationships of oppositeness, complementarity, inclusion, equivalence, etc (1991:54).

Our vocabulary arranges ideas and concepts according to categories, and in this way fields of experience and of activity are kept stable from one generation to the next. In order to keep these meaning systems alive and familiar, they have to be used regularly in appropriate contexts (Fowler 1991:54).

Fowler says that "the validity of the system of nomenclature is constantly reaffirmed by usage" (1991:56). However, the items of a system are not handled isolatedly in usage; the whole system comes into play, relationships are mentioned, the structure of the system is constantly checked, and the user's knowledge adjusted and systematized (Fowler *ibid*:56).

Vocabulary can be seen as the representation of the world to a culture, according to the ideological needs of that culture. Fowler (1991:82) describes well this process of representation through vocabulary:

It works first by segmentation: by partitioning the material continuum of nature and the undifferentiated flux of thought into slices which answer to the interests of the community (...) Use of each term crystallizes and normalizes the essentially artificial slices which are cut out of the cake of the world.

Fowler points out that it is important to notice which terms occur most often, and what segments of society are constantly on focus. As he says, "clusters of related terms are found to mark out distinct kinds of preoccupation and topic" (1991:82). That is what we see in many of Cosmo's texts, where several related words are used to construct a prescriptive representation of sexuality, as I will discuss below.

Vocabulary organizes experience in categories, and it also helps make distinctions between classes of concepts, in what Fowler calls *structural opposition*. In the texts that will be analysed in this chapter, a good example of structural opposition as a way to organize reality is the division of female sexual behaviour in 'proper' x 'improper', 'healthy' x 'unhealthy', one being the opposite of the other. Categorization is also used by the press to reproduce ideologies (such as the division of women in 'good girls' and 'sluts'). Categorization is the basis of discriminatory

practices against groups such as women, blacks, gays, ethnic minorities, etc.

The use of different classification schemes indicates evaluation, since these schemes are in part systems of evaluation (Fairclough, 1989:119). The representations constructed in Cosmo's texts presuppose that the reader shares the same values and systems of classification of the institution. The classification schemes necessary for the reader to process the text the way intended by the magazine might not be explicit in the article (such as the structural opposition between 'good' and 'bad' women mentioned above). The 'correct' interpretation of the text depends on the reader's background knowledge, and on common-sensical assumptions about women. To achieve the interpretation desired by the institution, the reader must fit into the subject position of an 'ideal reader', rather than oppose it.

Fowler argues that the 'groups' created by systems of classification, such as 'good' and 'bad' women, are imaginary, no more than a social construct. In real life the members of these groups might not even display social solidarity or associate with one another. According to Fowler, "group is an instrument for handling discrimination, for sorting unequally, and it acquires much of its apparent solidity by being traded in discourse" (1991:94).

3.2 - Voyeurism, Sex, Truth and Confession

One of the pleasures derived from reading women's magazines is the pleasure of voyeurism, or the sense of vicarious participation in the life of others. This pleasure comes from the opportunity to see the "truth" of someone else's life (through letters, interviews, narratives, life stories, etc). This truth is always related to the personal, as women are historically related to the private world. As Ballester et al. say, "the implicit argument is that the real self is the self revealed in personal intimacy, increasingly in the modern women's magazines understood as sexual behaviour" (1991:120).¹ According to Giddens (1993:30), in modern societies texts about sexuality are seen as a form of access to "the truth". He argues that sexuality is essential to the "regime of truth" characteristic of modern societies.

This is related to what Foucault refers to as the need of western man to confess, especially concerning his sexuality. According Foucault, in modern societies confession is a "ritual of discourse", almost a genre. Confession as a discursive phenomenon involves a power relationship between the parts involved (in Fairclough 1992a:53):

One does not confess without the presence (or virtual presence) of a partner who is not simply the interlocutor but the authority who requires the confession, prescribes and appreciates it, and intervenes in order to judge, forgive, console and reconcile.

In Cosmo, the confessor is the writer/institution, and the ones who confess are the people whose stories are being told in the article, as illustration. The reader can share the positions of either confessor or confessing, depending on whom she identifies more with (the institution or the person whose sexual story is being told). By choosing between the subject positions of confessor or confessing, the reader is also engaging in a power relation. Fairclough points out that the apparent liberating effect of confession is an illusion: "confession draws more of the person into the domain of power" (1992a:53).

3.3 - Data

The analyses of the data indicates that Cosmo uses a restricted number of representations to describe sex and relationships. Some of these representations are concentrated in one or two of the texts, while others are recurrent in many or all of the texts.

Eight texts have been analysed in this chapter:

- 1 - The Use and Abuse of Your Sexual Power (June 94)
- 2 - Let's Get Down to Oral Sex (February 93)
- 3 - Flirt Like a Grown-Up (December 93)
- 4 - 100 Coisas que os Homens Amam e Odeiam nas Mulheres (November 93)
- 5 - Divã do Analista (January 94)
- 6 - Guia de Nova para quem Está de Namorado Novo (January 94)
- 7 - A Brief History of Sex (November 93)
- 8 - The Lure of the Sexually Aggressive Woman (February 94)

Three main representations and one metaphor have been found in these texts; two of the representations have been subdivided into secondary ones. It is important to say that there is a great amount of overlap among the representations mentioned here. They are intimately linked, and sometimes it is difficult to say where one stops and the next begins. The divisions used here, as in other chapters of this study, are for organizational purposes mainly. The four representations and the metaphor are:

1. Sex as power for women

- a - The power of sex
- b - Women as seductresses
- c - Men as prey/victims of women

2. Instrumental role of sex

- 3. Sex as game/hunt (metaphor)**
- 4. Sex and control**

- a - Good/Normal x Bad/Abnormal Sex or Sexual Behaviour
- b - Consequences of Improper Female Sexual Behaviour

3.4 - Analyses

3.4.1 - Sex as power for women

3.4.1a - The power of sex

According to Kristeva (in Fairclough 1992a:190), there are multiple ways of 'signifying' - "giving meaning to" - particular areas of experience, each one leading to a particular way of 'interpreting', from a particular

theoretical, cultural or ideological perspective. Fairclough claims that "different perspectives on domains of experience entail different ways of wording them" (ibid:191). Cosmo's ideological perspective on female sexuality is that sex is something women should use cleverly in order to have some power in private life, without posing any threats to traditional gender relations (man as the dominant partner in a male/female relationship).

Thus, through the representation of sex as power, which is openly present in at least five of the texts analysed,² women, usually powerless in the public life and even in many areas of the private life, get a compensation in their sexual lives, where they are described as all-powerful. This constitutes what Fowler et al. (1979:180) call an "ideological inversion", i.e., a version of reality which is different from people's everyday experiences (women being more powerful than men). As this ideological inversion is constructed with terms borrowed from the sexist discourse used in the magazine, it represents a mere reaction to the power imbalance between men and women, not an effort to change it.

Another part of this representation is the illusion that through sex women can take a kind of revenge on men (they become the victims of our power). This avenging pleasure can work indirectly, i.e., even if the reader is a traditional, conservative woman, controlled sexually and otherwise by the men in her life (father, boyfriend, lover, husband), she can

still feel happy and vindicated knowing that there are women who use sex to control and manipulate men; she might even fantasize herself in that powerful position.

In the following extract fellatio is described as power for women since, according to Cosmo, it can help them control their partners (Let's Get Down to Oral Sex - lines 147 to 158):

There are many women who like oral sex because they **feel in charge**. Jennifer, a musician, says, "You have much more **control** than you do in vaginal sex. He's in your mouth, after all. You can start, stop, **control** his thrusting, turn him to putty".

Another text, A Brief History of Sex, also mentions the power women can get from giving men oral sex:

Line 238: as [the women interviewed] warmed up ... they spoke more passionately about how **powerful** they felt when performing fellatio. "It's the **ultimate power**".

Line 245: "It's the only time I'm with him that I feel **totally in control** of things".

There are some important comments to be made about this description of oral sex as power for women. First of all, none of the texts mentioned above included the possibility of women receiving, instead of giving, oral sex. Fellatio is portrayed as a form of physical pleasure *for men*; it only becomes pleasurable for women in the sense that it gives them control over men. Apart from that, it is very disheartening to see a cultural vehicle such as a popular magazine describing oral sex as way to manipulate men,³ maybe *the only* time women can

have some control over their sexual encounters.

In The Lure of the Sexually Aggressive Woman it is sexual assertiveness that becomes the source of power: "a refusal to live by the new traditionalism can help fuel a woman's desire for **sexual control**. As she sees it, being the aggressor is **empowering**" (line 128). So, female sexual assertiveness is no more an achievement produced by thirty years of sexual revolution, but a mechanism for women to gain some power in their relationships.

In The Use and Abuse of Your Sexual Power it is sex itself that confers women power in private life. Sex becomes the stepping stone to achieve a powerful position, and women are taught and encouraged to use it in ways that will guarantee them rewards and control:

Lines 8 to 15: Nowadays we know it by its real name, and we're not afraid to say it: **sexual power**, the most immediate, the most basic and the rawest source of power the world has ever known. In a world dominated by men, this has been the one **area in which women have reigned supreme**.

Lines 33 to 37: **Sexually powerful women** have had a colossal impact on history; often they seem to have been the only women in history, because **sex** was the only **power** they had.

Line 280: Certainly, [**sexual power**] has to be something which will **give control**.

Even though sexual power is described in this text as women's most valuable asset, it is never clearly defined, and the concept of sexual power is surrounded by several contradictions. In line 87 the author claims that "sexual

power is an inner attribute, an inherent sense of strength and confidence in yourself as a woman, a personal feel-good factor", and in line 296 she says that "we all have it, so you'll have as much as the next female, maybe more". So, according to these assertions every woman, regardless of age, looks, social-class, race, sexual orientation, has sexual power. However, on line 215 the writer says that:

Every woman inevitably loses this particular power as she gets older. The middle years should be the time when we compensate for the loss of our looks by growing in strength, authority, wisdom and womanhood.

Here the writer contradicts her former assertions, claiming that sexual power is dependent on good looks and on youth, which automatically excludes older, fat, ugly and physically disabled women. This contradiction serves as further evidence that Cosmo's intended audience includes only young, beautiful, white, middle-class women.

Another text (Flirt Like a Grown-Up) describes power as a way a woman can become more attractive to a man. Here, differently from the other examples of the power of sex, the positions are inverted: the suggestion is not to use sex to get power, but to be powerful in order to attract a man, and therefore get sex. Power becomes a kind of bait for men: "power and confidence must be infinitely sexier than that tired waiting game, old-fashioned female passivity" (line 150).

In short, by constructing sex as power for women (maybe

the only power women can have) Cosmo offers its readers fantasy, escapism and the illusion of transgression, while at the same time preserving and protecting the conservative institutional voice it represents.

3.4.1b - Women as seductresses/temptresses

A common way to represent women in women's magazines is in the role of seductresses or temptresses. These subject positions are established at first by the magazine cover and by the photos that usually accompany the magazine features and the advertisements. In these pictures, beautiful women are usually shown in tempting, seductive poses, distinctly from a male point of view, and in an obvious attempt to attract the male gaze, as discussed in Chapter 1.

This representation of women as seductresses and temptresses is then further reinforced by the texts we find in the magazine. In The Lure of the Sexually Aggressive Woman, for instance, the reader is encouraged to combine sexual assertiveness and seduction in the search for a male partner:

Third

subheading: How she woos them.

Line 154: For centuries, **sexy dress and coy flirtation** have been our gender's most powerful weapon in **the game of seduction.**

Line 157: The aggressive woman also displays her body in **alluring attire.**

Line 174: "I do rely on **feminine wiles** to attract a

man".

In The Use and Abuse of Your Sexual Power, the image of the tempting and seductive woman is also present. According to the article, it is through sexual power that women become attractive and interesting in the eyes of men:

Line 5: [Clara Bow] **enslaved** millions of men.

Line 28: A great many women have laid end to end a **succession of men**.

Line 71: The **sex goddesses** of today - Pfeiffer, Scacchi, Stone and others - protest that they don't think they're **sexy**.

Line 79: The power to **charm** men.

Line 145: The power we have over men ... the capacity to **distract, bedazzle, bewitch**.

Even though the ability to tempt and seduce men is depicted in Cosmo as a way women can achieve power over them, the subject positions of seductress and temptress offer no real threat to the male establishment. They are restricted to the private world and conform to a traditional feminine gender role for: women should do their utmost, which includes using their bodies, to get a partner. Apart from that, the roles of seductress and temptress are related to the notion of female purity and impurity. The seductress and the temptress have been portrayed historically as 'lost' women, and the use of these images help reinforce a double standard of sexual behaviour. These two subject positions give only an illusion of power for women; by adopting them, women help maintain

gender relations exactly as they are.

3.4.1c - Men as prey/victims of women

In one of the texts analysed, The Use and Abuse of Your Sexual Power, men are represented as victims of women. The frailty of men is depicted as one of the consequences (maybe also an advantage) of female sexual power. The narratives about real men who have been harmed or destroyed by the sexual power of their women (the Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreu; Edward VIII; Mark Antony; etc) serve as evidence for the readers of the explosive force that might be at their disposal, reinforcing the ideology of transgression preached by Cosmo:

- Line 22: Man after man falls prey to [the] primal force [of sex].
- Line 37: Think of Delilah, who subjugated Samson. Think of Helen of Troy ... Or take Cleopatra ... or Anne Boleyn.
- Line 51: And think of the men who have succumbed to the sexual power of women throughout history, from Edward VIII to John F. Kennedy. In thrall to a woman, a man may lose his job, his mind, his home, his wife, his seat in government, his future, when he feels that power.
- Line 231: Who's who of the weaker sex - the men who've fallen prey to women's sexual power:
 - Mark Antony, whose love for Cleopatra caused the disastrous war with Caesar. Following Antony's defeat, they both committed suicide.
 - The 19th century Irish politician Charles Stewart Parnell ... who destroyed his career through his passion for a married woman, Kitty

O'Shea.

- Conservative Party Chairman Cecil Parkinson resigned over his affair with Sara Keays.

All the words highlighted above have a negative connotation (subjugate, succumb, lose, fall prey to, disastrous, war, defeat, suicide, destroy, resign) and thus help emphasize the harmful effects of women's sexual power on men. This is a good example of *overlexicalization*, or the dense wording of a domain. Fairclough points out that *overlexicalization*, or *overwording*, is "a sign of intense preoccupation pointing to peculiarities in the ideology of the group responsible for it" (1992a:193).

The representation of men as victims of women serves as a kind of consolation. It shows that even though we have little or no political or social power, no financial or emotional independence, some women have been able to destroy men through their sexual power. In our small, individual ways, we can use sex to manipulate our partners. Nothing changes in terms of power relations, but we may fantasize that we have had our vengeance.

3.4.2 - Instrumental Role of Sex

In many of the texts analysed, women are encouraged to see sex as a way to get somewhere, a means of achieving something, a strategy to get what they want. This representation of sex is intimately linked to the previous

one, sex as power; according to Cosmo, it is precisely by using sex as a means to an end that women can get what and where they want and become powerful.

Cosmo preaches that the aim of this instrumental use of sex is not only to achieve emotional power and control, but especially material and financial security. Women are still taught to objectify their bodies and to trade them to succeed, as we can see in these examples from The Use and Abuse of Your Sexual Power:

- Line 19: A woman's sexuality ... was her **passport to the top. Trading sex for self-advancement** when women had so few opportunities was a **strictly practical thing to do.**
- Line 104: Some women **use it to get husbands, jobs, big houses: it is this which makes a chalet girl mistress of the manor.**
- Line 273: Women like Elizabeth Taylor have gained status by deploying their sexual power and then skillfully parlaying it into something else. Something of a **financial or business nature, as a general rule.**
- Line 337: **Harness [your sexual power] to help you get your own way** in a difficult situation.

In Flirt Like a Grown-Up it is not exactly sex, but flirtation, that becomes an instrument (line 91):

After all, most **powerful women** know that flirting is a **tremendously useful tool.** Even Margaret Thatcher, according to her cabinet ministers, **was not above using flirting to get what she wanted.**

Again, by describing sex for women as a means to an end, Cosmo eliminates its potentially emancipatory shades and helps

keep female sexuality inside the limits of traditional gender and power relations.

3.4.3 - Sex as game/hunt

The metaphorical description of sex as a game or a hunt, and of women as players/hunters and men as prey, is linked to all the other representations. This metaphor is also more recurrent in the texts analysed than some of the other representations, which makes it somewhat stronger.

Metaphors can be found in all kinds of discourse. Fairclough argues that they are revealing because the description of a thing or an event through one metaphor rather than another indicates that one world view rather than another is being privileged. He says that "metaphors structure the way we think and the way we act, and our systems of knowledge and belief, in a pervasive and fundamental way" (1992a:194). Some metaphors are so naturalized that it is very difficult for us to think and to express ourselves in discourse or action without them. The description of male/female relationships as a game or a war is one of them.

In Flirt Like a Grown-Up the search for a partner is described as a hunt, through the metaphor of fishing:

Line 81: **[Fishing] teaches you the art of the chase. It teaches you seductiveness, because only through the selection of the correct lure or fly can you appeal to a fish's predatory nature. A good fisherman uses a fish's own nature against him - not a bad technique**

to use.

Line 194: True flirting is charming, not predatory - the ability to make your target feel like they're the most important thing in your world.

In the other examples I show in this section, sex is depicted as a game. In The Use and Abuse of Your Sexual Power, the 'players' are described as 'winners' or 'losers', depending on how much they follow the advice given by Cosmo. The text also presents, as a finishing touch, a list of famous women who are either 'winners' or 'losers' of the sexual game:

Line 268: Any fleeting survey will show clear winners and clear losers among the players of this game. Winners are those who know what they have, and what they are dealing with as well.

Line 282: If you rely on your sexual power alone, you'll be a loser. If you rely on getting control, you'll win, win, win.

Line 331: Plan when, where and how to deploy [your sexual power] - this is a game of skill, not a mortar attack.

In The Lure of the Sexually Aggressive Woman (line 264), sexual aggressiveness is described as a something that can help women score more points:

So don't believe that putting his needs first makes you a better lover - lustily pursuing your own satisfaction rates higher.

In Let's Get Down to Oral Sex, oral sex is described not as a game or a hunt, but as a technique bordering on the artistic, something women should master in order to please men:

- Line 43: So how do women learn the technique? Some say they learn from reading, films and videos.
- Line 138: When asked what a partner could do to **make them more excited**, 34 per cent of men said, "Be more active during sex", and 23 per cent of them said, "Give more oral sex".

According to these examples it seems that nowadays, for the Cosmo woman, having sex is not enough to keep her partner. She has to be an expert in sex, almost a professional, and has to give her man the best sex he can get in order to secure the relationship (either by flirting well, by giving him oral sex, by being more aggressive, etc), and not to be beaten in this game. Sex is reduced to a set of rules and techniques women have to master in order to be good performers and 'winners'.

3.4.4 - Sex and control

The changes in female sexual behaviour that have been taking place in the past thirty years (sex before marriage, use of contraceptive methods, increase in the number of partners along a woman's sexual life, abortion, casual sex, alternative forms of relationship, etc) present a great threat to the traditional power relations between men and women. In the pages of Cosmo we can find many traces of this crisis, in which the magazine takes the side of the male establishment and, under the guise of giving women suggestions on how to improve their relationships, tries to maintain men

in their position of dominant sexual partners.

Cosmo functions as a vehicle to shape femininity and sexuality from a male point of view: its texts define and prescribe what is considered 'good' and 'bad' sex, and 'good' and 'bad' sexual behaviour for women. These representations of proper and improper sexual behaviour are the most recurrent ones in all the texts analysed, which is further proof of their prescriptive nature, discussed in Chapter 4.

3.4.4a - 'Good/normal' x 'bad/abnormal' sex or sexual behaviour

In the texts analysed, it is clearly visible that some forms of sexual behaviour are considered 'good' or 'normal', while others are described as 'bad' or 'abnormal'. The examples collected have been divided according to the different aspects of sexual behaviour mentioned in them, which basically are: *vulgarity/promiscuity; casual sex; sexual assertiveness; normality x transgression; oral sex; female diplomacy; and seduction/'feminised' sex.*

In the pages of Cosmo, vulgarity and promiscuity are still two of the greatest taboos in terms of female sexual behaviour. It is important to keep in mind that, in spite of being a women's magazine, the concepts of vulgarity and promiscuity that Cosmo works with represent the male point of view (a 'vulgar' woman is the one who does not behave in a

'ladylike' fashion; a 'promiscuous' woman is the one who has had several partners or who enjoys casual sex). In A Brief History of Sex, for instance, the Sixties, with its sexual liberation, is described as a very promiscuous and hectic time for women:

Line 114: Although the sexual revolution of the Sixties allowed women the freedom to say yes, it also disabled them from saying no. For some time, therefore, sexual freedom lived side by side with sexual exploitation.

Line 250: Among the pioneers of the sexual revolution, it became important to show a woman could "fuck like a man" - the only model of sexual freedom around at the time.

After all, according to Cosmo, being "too easy" was never a good way to attract a man. In Guia de Nova Para Quem Está de Namorado Novo (line 188), there is a clear warning against 'going too fast':

Recusar [sexo] não é sinônimo de caretice ou de perder o futuro parceiro. Os homens, aliás, preferem que o sexo venha depois de um contato maior, um pouco mais de intimidade entre os dois.

Another thing that the magazine discourages women from doing, and which is linked to the male notion of female promiscuity or vulgarity, is showing sexual experience. The warnings against the danger of this behaviour are present in several texts:

A Brief History of Sex (line 1):

"I sometimes think what men really want is a sexually experienced virgin ... They want you to know the tricks, but they don't

like to think you've used them with anyone else."

100 Coisas que os Homens Amam e Odeiam nas Mulheres (lines 96 and 129):

Homens amam: mulheres que não têm vergonha na cama.

Homens odeiam: mulheres que não têm vergonha de contar o que fazem na cama.

Guia de Nova para quem Está de Namorado Novo (line 255):

É bem verdade que alguns homens têm medo de ficar em desvantagem, por isso preferem mulheres menos inteligentes e familiarizadas com a arte do amor ... Apenas tenha jogo de cintura para não parecer uma professora de educação sexual, leve seu namorado com jeitinho. Quanto aos seus conhecimentos em outros terrenos, fale de um em especial que ele pouco domina - sentimentos - e vai admirá-la mais ainda.

Faced with fact that men fear women who are sexually experienced, women are not encouraged by Cosmo to negotiate with their partners in an equal footing and try to establish a democratic interaction; they are rather encouraged to pretend to be coy and pure, and to remain in the realm of feelings (the private world), the proper place for women.

The second great taboo for women, according to Cosmo, is to have casual sex. This *faux pas* is mentioned in A Brief History of Sex:

Line 83: The **impersonal sex** that flourished in the singles bars of the Seventies was the byword of the age.

Line 254: [in the first years of the sexual revolution] women were free at last to try out the **one-night stands; the conquests; the high-sensation, low-emotion sex.**

The implied message is that sex for women has to be

necessarily linked with the idea of romance, love, and the search for a permanent partner. Women who behave differently run the risk of being labeled as 'sluts' and therefore of decreasing their chances of getting a partner.

Sexual assertiveness is a form of sexual behaviour that was still inaccessible for women not so long ago. Today, in the pages of Cosmo, female sexual assertiveness is described both as a positive behaviour and as a potentially dangerous one. In The Lure of the Sexually Aggressive Woman (line 249), sexual assertiveness is depicted as positive in the sense that it helps attract and please men:

And while her more passive sisters may fault her for being unladylike, men are turned on by her unbridled passion. "Men have a much better time in bed when a woman lets herself go".

However, Cosmo claims that sexual assertiveness is in fact a two-edged knife: men can also feel very threatened by it, which could lead to a woman losing her partner:

The Lure of the Sexually Aggressive Woman:

Line 208: Few men will take instructions from a drill sergeant.

Line 268: Some men are scared off by women who take charge; other men may welcome an assertive stance - but only after they're well past the initial stages of courtship.

100 Coisas que os Homens Amam e Odeiam nas Mulheres:

Line 28: Homens amam: mulheres que tomam a iniciativa.

Line 61: Homens odeiam: Mulheres que parecem locomotivas.

Guia de Nova para quem Esta de Namorado Novo:

Line 56: A passividade leva ao desencontro na cama. Você tem que dar pistas para ele seguir. Mas com sutileza, porque homem detesta receber ordens na cama. A habilidade feminina conta muito.

So, according to Cosmo, neither passivity nor assertiveness are features of a woman's sexual self, but techniques she should use to please and keep her men.

As we can see, the texts analysed are extremely prescriptive in terms of female sexual behaviour. The magazine seems to feel entitled to determine what is 'normal' and what is 'transgressive' concerning sex. The words *normal*, *abnormal*, *deviant*, *health*, *healthy*, *sick* appear several times in the texts, indicating what features of sexual behaviour should or should not be seen as part of the code of 'proper' sexual behaviour. In Divã do Analista, the words above refer to a *ménage a trois*:

Line 9: Sempre tive uma fantasia secreta: transar a três. E acabou acontecendo. Foi a noite mais excitante da minha vida ... Estou feliz e confusa. Será que sou **normal**?

Line 81: É a coisa **mais normal** do mundo [duas mulheres] sentirem prazer numa relação sexual. Contudo, se esta é a única forma de obter orgasmo, já entra no **desvio**.

Line 94: A pergunta é: [transar a três] é **normal**? Bem, **depende**. Quando acontece eventualmente, **não há problema**. Mas quando isso se torna essencial para que a relação aconteça, é sinal de que **alguma coisa não está funcionando bem**.

In Let's Get Down to Oral Sex, the word *abnormal* refers

to oral sex, when a woman questions herself for not liking this practice: "Am I abnormal [for disliking oral sex]? How can I get to like it?" (line 255). Since the text encourages oral sex as something very pleasurable for men, the woman mentioned above is implicitly described as abnormal for not trying to satisfy her partner.

The possibility of social and sexual transgression is one of the illusions offered by Cosmo to its readers. Most of Cosmo's texts that discuss sex present elements of this fictitious transgression: The Lure of the Sexually Aggressive Woman, where sex is described as hot, aggressive and wild; Let's Get Down to Oral Sex, where there is a glorification of oral sex; and religious women are encouraged to use it as a way to keep their virginity; The Use and Abuse of Your Sexual Power, where we read about famous men who have been destroyed by their mistresses or lovers.

However, the magazine clearly draws the line that separates 'acceptable' from 'unacceptable' forms of transgression. 'Transgressive' sexual practices (oral sex, *ménage a trois*, sexual aggressiveness, etc) are only discussed within certain limits. They are generally described as an extra, a spice women can add, *in very small doses*, to their relationships. Crossing the barriers of sexual normality means being deviant, abnormal, unhealthy and sick.

In order to be seductive, sexy, mildly transgressive and aggressive without scaring men away, the Cosmo reader is

taught to be very diplomatic. There is a folk notion that women are 'naturally' more diplomatic and patient than men; Cosmo follows this notion and encourages its readers to be especially diplomatic in bed. The texts analysed advise women to plan ahead, to compromise, to care for men's sensibility, and eventually to give in to avoid risking the relationship. In Guia de Nova para quem Está de Namorado Novo, the reader is advised to be especially careful at the beginning of a new relationship:

Line 85: E se na hora H ele se recusar a usar camisinha? (...) É **sábio** ir com **calma** nesse **momento delicado** e até **concordar** com o parceiro - afinal, **ele tem razão** quando acha desagradável fazer amor usando preservativo. Só que *tem* que usar ... Desarme-o com **descontração**.

Line 202: Pega bem convidá-lo para sair se realmente gostar dele? (...) Se ele também estiver atraído por você, o **mais natural** é que tome a iniciativa de convidá-la - até **prefere** que seja assim. **Não estamos defendendo a passividade**, mas, às vezes, é **mais inteligente** e menos desgastante **nadar em direção da maré**.

If being undiplomatic, 'easy', 'promiscuous' or 'vulgar' is taboo for women, what is Cosmo's suggestion for the proper female sexual behaviour? The Cosmo woman should be 'hot' in bed (but not to the point of scaring her partner), romantic, seductive, apparently prudish and coy, and especially deferent to her man. One of the texts analysed (A Brief History of Sex) calls this formula 'feminised sexuality', the kind of sexuality we should all try to emulate:

Line 86: Now, as we approach the mid-Nineties, some-

thing else is beginning to happen. **Romance** is back in style. **Seduction** once more plays a central role in the sexual drama between woman and men.

Line 121: [Today] many women feel freer to make their own choices, to say no as well as yes, or even to choose whether they'll enter into sex at all.

Line 282: Thus, what may look like a **remake of the old sexual conservatism** is at least partly the consequence of women **coming to terms with their sexuality** in ways that are quite new.

Line 292: What is this if not a movement towards the **feminisation of sexuality?**

A Brief History of Sex, and most of the other texts analysed, discourages sex as a "mere meeting of the genitals" (line 278), not on the grounds that human beings should not accept sex devoid of broader relations with their partners and the world, but because 'promiscuous', aggressive, unromantic women are bound to be discriminated against by society and to end up alone.

Being non-promiscuous, sweet and shy, in Cosmo's evaluation, is a defense mechanism for women, a way of guaranteeing a place in society as a 'good girl'. To convey this sexist message, the writer and the institution cleverly coins a new term, *feminised sexuality*. Fowler et al. (1979:33) argue that the creation of new lexical items to represent reality (*relexicalization*) helps control people since it is more difficult to evade the authority exercised through new terminology. Some readers could resist a direct criticism of casual sex or sexual liberation based solely on the need to

keep an image of purity to attract men; but they might feel attracted to this 'modern' form of sexuality advocated by Cosmo, and in doing so fail to see the conservative trend it hides.

3.4.4b - Consequences of 'improper' female sexual behaviour

Cosmo sells the image of a progressive, modern women's magazine, one that is willing to discuss taboo topics and present transgressive views of the world. The 'liberated' lifestyle proposed by Cosmo for women presents no risks, though: the reader is given the illusion of sexual transgression through the fictional escapades and 'unconventional' sexual behaviour discussed in the magazine, but this fictitious transgression results in no social punishment.

On the other hand, Cosmo's articles also serve as a warning about the real dangers and the real punishment that can befall women who do not play by the rules, who try to break the power relations and gender stereotypes established by society (the 'good girl', the non-promiscuous woman, the diplomatic woman, the non-aggressive woman, the sexy woman, etc). The consequences of 'bad' sexual behaviour correspond basically to the 'improper' forms of female sexual behaviour discussed in the previous section.

Being sexually experienced, or showing their sexual

experience, is one of the things that, according to Cosmo, harms women: "ser experiente é uma coisa que realmente deixa as mulheres confusas, principalmente no campo sexual" (Guia de Nova para quem Está de Namorado Novo, line 253). Therefore, the readers are constantly advised to hide their past sexual lives from their partners.

This has to do with the concept of female promiscuity adopted by the magazine. If a woman shows her sexual experience, she is indicating to her partner that he is not the first, and this is also very dangerous, as we can see in A Brief History of Sex:

Lines 125 to 138: It's true that women today have a sense of entitlement about their sexuality that spares them much of the **conflict, guilt and confusion** of the past. At the same time, the mixed messages take their toll, sometimes even affecting a **woman's very sense of herself**. Sara, a 20-year-old secretary, spoke of both **shame and anger** - shame because she has had **sex with more than 50 men**; anger because **she must hide this aspect of her life or risk being judged harshly**.

Lines 149 to 155: In one questionnaire survey that I distributed, well over half the men (university students) who replied said that they wouldn't want a woman who **"had been around the block too many times"**; that a woman who did was **"a slut"**.

Being 'easy' or 'going too fast' are also considered dangerous forms of sexual behaviour for women, as in this example from Guia de Nova para quem Está de Namorado Novo (line 212):

Se ele está louco por mim, continuo devagar ou deixo acontecer? Não dá para agir o tempo todo com a razão se você está gostando dele. Mas ... e se for apenas atração física? Se não conse-

guir perceber a diferença, corre um enorme risco de se frustrar ao se entregar de corpo e alma.

The possibility that women too might enjoy casual sex does not seem to be contemplated by Cosmo. In the few instances where casual sex for women is discussed it is presented as negative, as in this narrative from A Brief History of Sex (lines 256 to 272):

There was a lot of very, very good sex in terms of orgasmic sexuality [in the Sixties and Seventies]. But after a while I found out that there is nothing **more intensely lonely** than the first 10 or 15 seconds after an orgasm when you're not in an **emotional relationship**. That kind of thing, when you experience it often enough, is something you don't want to repeat unless you're a total **masochist**.

In Cosmo's view, another form of sexual behaviour that can cause women serious problems is sexual aggressiveness. In The Lure of the Sexually Aggressive Woman, the dangers of 'too much' aggression vary from the loss of a partner to physical or psychological side effects:

- Line 236: Being forceful can **backfire** if a man senses **anger**.
- Line 283: Even when a man seems unthreatened by boldness, he may later reveal himself to be **less than comfortable**.
- Line 54: Not all [sexually aggressive women] are acting out of **healthy desire**. Some are motivated by a deep-rooted **hostility** towards men.
- Line 95: **Healthily** aggressive women act from libido, not from **neurosis**.
- Line 218: Angry demands may even result in your partner suffering from **impotence or premature ejaculation**.

Line 237: Scaring men out of bed finally got me into therapy.

Line 296: Performance anxiety may also set in when a woman takes the lead.

According to A Brief History of Sex (line 49), promiscuous sexual behaviour can also lead women to emotional/psychological harm: "Guilt and anxiety often accompanied this new sexual behaviour" [the liberated sexual behaviour of some women from the Sixties on].

As we can see, in the examples shown above there are a lot of words related to *disease* or *sickness*: healthy/healthily; hostility; anger; neurosis, impotence; premature ejaculation; therapy; performance anxiety; shame; guilt.

According to Fairclough, the presence in a text of many words related to a certain aspect of reality (in this case, female sexuality) is an indication that this aspect of reality is a focus of ideological struggle (1989:115). Cosmo seems to build up a metaphor of female sexuality as a kind of *social disease*: there is a *benign* type (healthy, normal, non-aggressive, non-promiscuous), which does not jeopardize male-female relationships; but there is also a *malignant* type, which leads women to disregard their social role and behave 'improperly' (aggressively, promiscuously, unromantically). About disease metaphors, Fairclough says that their ideological significance is that (ibid:120):

They tend to take dominant interests to be the interests of society as a whole, and construe expressions of non-dominant interest [women having casual sex, being too aggressive, etc] as undermining (the health of) society *per se*.

3.5 - Concluding Remarks

According to Fairclough (1989:170), text producers are motivated by a desire to solve different kinds of problems in their relationship with the world and with others. When there is some discrepancy between the writer's (or the institution's) view of the world and the world itself, the position of the writer (or institution) is problematized. This may happen because of changes in the world, as seems to be the case in Cosmo, where the institution's conservative views on sexuality clash with the changes in sexual behaviour that are taking place in modernity.

New social attitudes which challenge traditionally accepted ones are reinterpreted (or metaphorized) in the media to fit the established social order. Fairclough (1992a:197) says that "the ways in which events which disturb relative social equilibrium are metaphorized in the media and elsewhere provide a good insight into the values and preoccupations of a culture". The topic sex is explored in the pages of Cosmo as a way to increase sales. The sexual liberation of women and the new forms of experiencing and expressing sexuality are appropriated, criticized and

trivialized.

In all the texts analysed in this chapter relationships, sexuality and sexual behaviour are described in conservative, sexist and prescriptive ways. Nevertheless, this attempt to check and restrain female sexuality is disguised, as the magazine proposes to address a 'modern woman' of the Nineties, independent and sexually liberated.

Cosmo's texts show a general tendency towards the glorification of sex; sex is described as a variety of things, from a way to attract and keep a partner to a source of power to a medicine (e.g. Sexo é o Melhor Remédio - November 93). Sex is also depicted as a new area of excellence for women; Cosmo is constantly teaching the women readers new methods and techniques, and encouraging them to become experts in the 'art of sex'.

To sum up, by representing sex either as a bait women should use in the search for a partner or as an instrument to manipulate and keep men at their side, Cosmo disregards the emancipatory and democratic connotations of the changes taking place in intimacy. On top of that, by describing sexuality in prescriptive and conservative ways Cosmo helps keep discriminatory and evaluative meaning systems alive ('healthy' x 'unhealthy' sexual behaviour, 'pure' x 'lost' women, 'winners' x 'losers', etc). In different features and different issues the magazine organizes and presents sexuality to the reader in male-oriented, restrictive classification

systems. Thus, the articles and the issues work as a whole, rather than isolatedly, in the formation and maintenance of a limited view of the world and of sex.

In the next chapter I will work with the concept of *modality*, i.e., the part of discourse that indicates the speakers/writers' position towards their topic, themselves and their hearers/readers. Through this analysis I intend to develop the ideas about language and power presented in Chapter 1.

NOTES

1 - According to DINAP (Distribuidora Nacional de Publicações), the editorial content of Nova is based on four main topics: romantic relationship (sex); psychology (self-knowledge); career (money, personal realization); and beauty (health, well-being). It is obvious, therefore, that in the view of the magazine relationships and sex are almost synonyms, and the articles that deal with relationships necessarily discuss sex and sexuality.

2 - Sex is described openly as power in these texts; in the remaining ones this is done indirectly, i.e., women are encouraged to use sex either as a bait or a tool to get, keep and control men.

3 - This manipulation conforms to the folk notion of the diplomatic woman: she does not manipulate men openly. Her style of manipulation is subtle: it comes through the giving of pleasure. In Let's Get Down to Oral Sex, line 164 (see appendix) this is openly stated: "the giving of pleasure is a powerful position".

CHAPTER 4

We cannot deny our gender - who wants to, anyway?

Having discussed in the previous chapter the representations of sex and relationships presented by Cosmo, in this chapter I intend to assess how the magazine positions itself towards its version of truth and reality, and what social relations it establishes with the readers.

In the battle for social control, different groups (such as the press) try to impose their own version of 'reality' and 'truth'. The result, in Hodge and Kress' words, is that "terms like 'truth' and 'reality' have come to acquire a tarnished and dubious air; they are not objective absolutes to which anyone can appeal but premises created and exploited by specific competing groups" (1988:121).

Truth, in Hodge and Kress' view, is the result of the social acceptance of the same classification system, and it comes into being when social participants see the terms of the system as 'secure'. Reality refers to the part of the system which is "at play in the interaction" (Hodge and Kress 1988:122). Cosmo's articles about sexuality (like other articles in most women's magazines) naturalizes its version of truth by presenting it as 'common sense'. The result of this naturalization, according to Hodge and Kress (ibid:122), is that:

at the time when participants are prepared to invoke the term 'truth', there seems to be a perfect fit between the system of classification and the objects which that system describes: a relation which seems at once transparent, natural and inevitable.

Women's magazines, as vehicles of cultural reproduction, present the view of the world of the establishment in an unproblematic, naturalized form, i.e., they present the existence of asymmetrical power relations between the genders as common sense and facts of life, beyond the reach of questioning, criticism or change. In order not to sound too powerful themselves, women's magazines construct their version of reality through an informal, conversational discourse. The lighter, softer dressing given to their view of the world is often obtained by modalizing the propositions presented.

Modality is a part of discourse which indicates the writer/institution's position in relation to her/his/its version of truth and reality, and in relation to the readers. Most modality studies are based on Halliday's approach, in which modality "refers to the area of meaning that lies between yes and no - the intermediate ground between positive and negative polarity" (Halliday 1985:335). The objective of analysing modality in a text is to determine degrees of affinity between the writer and the propositions, as well as assessing how modality influences social relations in the discourse and control representations of reality (Fairclough, 1992a:236)

It is important to mention here the constructive nature of discourse. Fairclough (1992a:64-5) argues that discourse helps create the social identities and subject positions available for us in society, and that it also helps establish social relations among people. These two effects of discourse correspond, in his view, to the 'identity' and 'relational' functions of language, which are grouped together by Halliday (1985) in the interpersonal function.

According to Halliday (*ibid*), modality is the dimension of grammar that corresponds to the interpersonal function of language (and to the social domain) because it involves the relations between the participants of a verbal interaction. The interpersonal function of language indicates the mediation of subject positions and social relations and, informally, it represents the writer's 'comments' or 'attitudes' (Fowler 1991:85).

In Halliday's systemic approach to grammar (followed by critical linguists), modality is expressed not only through *modal auxiliary verbs* (must, may, could, can, etc), but also through *tense*, *modal adverbs* (probably, possibly, certainly, maybe, etc) and their *adjectives* (likely, possible, probable), *modal metaphors* (it's obvious that, everyone knows that, it stands to reason that, etc), and through many other ways such as *hedges*, *intonation patterns*, *hesitation*, etc (Fairclough 1992a:159). In this chapter I will look mainly at *modal verbs*, *adverbs*, *adjectives* and *modal metaphors*

Halliday distinguishes between two types of modality: subjective and objective. In the first type the subjective position of the writer in relation to the proposition is made clear through comments such as "I think/believe/doubt that ...". In the second type the subjective position of the writer towards the proposition is left implicit: "(something/someone) may be/probably is/should be".

Fairclough (1992a:159) points out that, while in the case of subjective modality the writer indicates openly her/his degree of affinity with the proposition, in the case of objective modality we do not know if the writer is putting forward a personal opinion disguised as a general one, or if she/he is presenting the position of another individual or group (in the present case, maybe the position of the magazine as an institution).

The use of modality, especially of the objective type, implies relations of power, and at the same time it can be a device used to hide these relations. The degree of modality used in a text, thus, is very revealing because "it suggests the presence of an individual subjectivity behind the printed text, who is qualified with the knowledge required to pass judgement, the status to grant leave or assign responsibility" (Fowler 1991:64).

Hodge and Kress argue that "all utterances are modalized" (1988:123). Nevertheless, modality can be differently used to reinforce versions of truth and reality, or to question these

versions. Modality expresses the participant's affinity with their propositions and interlocutors; propositions which are more mitigated by the use of modality indicate lower affinity of the participants with the system (and with each other), and propositions which are less mitigated indicate higher affinity of the participants with the system (and with each other) (Hodge and Kress 1988;123).

Cosmo's texts seem to resort to a modality of lower affinity with the propositions presented, not because the magazine wishes to challenge the socially accepted view of the world, but to hide relations of power and maintain its informal tone. Cosmo's version of reality and truth is usually given to the readers in the form of friendly advice, not open commands. However, commands do appear in the form of imperatives (see Chapter 4).

Cosmo's use of modality has to do with what Collins (1994:4) calls **bonding**. She argues that through bonding, the speaker/writer wishes "to get the audience on his [sic] side, to neutralize matters of hierarchy, to remove - or disguise - power". Bonding involves the choices made by the writer in order to establish a relation of solidarity with her/his audience. The mitigated propositions found in the pages of Cosmo can thus be seen as an attempt to strengthen the magazine's bonding with its audience.

4.1 - Data

Of the 11 texts selected for this dissertation study, six have been analysed in terms of modality:

- 1 - The Use and Abuse of Your Sexual Power (June 94)
- 2 - A Brief History of Sex (November 93)
- 3 - Let's Get Down to Oral Sex (February 93)
- 4 - (Practically) Everything You Need to Know in Life (March 93)
- 5 - Why Beautiful Women Make Lousy Lovers (October 93)
- 6 - The Lure of the Sexually Aggressive Woman (February 94)

The texts will be referred to in the analysis by their respective numbers.

Fairclough distinguishes between two dimensions of modality: *relational* and *expressive*. Relational modality indicates the authority of the writer in relation to the readers (in Cosmo's texts, the writer, as a more experienced friend, has the right to indicate certain modes of behaviour to the reader); expressive modality indicates the writer's evaluation of the version of truth and reality that is being presented (1989:126-7).

Expressive modality has to do with the part of modality that Halliday (1985) calls *modalization*: probability, usuality and potentiality, and that corresponds to the first category discussed in this analysis: *truth/likelihood*. Relational modality, on the other hand, has to do with *modulation*: obligation, inclination, permission, and that corresponds to the second category presented here: *obligation/permission*.

It is important to point out that these two dimensions of modality (expressive and relational) are present concurrently in language, and their boundaries are not impermeable: a proposition about the validity or probability of the world view presented in a text also expresses the writer's social relations with the reader, and vice-versa. About the divisions of modal meanings, Collins says that they "are necessarily fuzzy because they constitute and are constituted by interpersonal meanings, which, in turn, are socially, contextually constructed" (1994:4).

The examples analysed in this chapter have been divided into these two categories for organizational purposes; they sometimes overlap and there is an amount of ambiguity involving some examples, as will be shown below. The first category refers to the *truth* and *likelihood* of the propositions presented in the texts; the second refers to the *obligations* and *permissions* the texts establish or grant to the readers.

A third group of examples, which I am calling *modal metaphors*, is also presented here. It does not constitute a separate category, but is rather a sub-division of the first category since the examples collected also refer to the truth/likelihood of the propositions presented in the texts. Halliday (1985:334) does not use the term modal metaphor, but he talks about the "metaphorical representation of modality". According to him, speakers can use expressions which

dissimulate the fact that they are conveying personal opinions, but which nevertheless mean 'I believe' (it's obvious that/everyone admits that/it's true that/etc).

Analyses

4.2 - Truth/Likelihood

A writer has to indicate her/his commitment to the truth or falsehood of her/his propositions, and to the degree of likelihood of an event which is happening now or will happen in the future. Therefore, as Fowler (1991:211) points out, truth/probability modality varies according to a continuum which goes from absolute certainty (will/certainly/etc) to lesser degrees of certainty (could/might/unlikely/uncertain, impossible/etc).

The degree of truth and likelihood of the versions of reality presented in the articles analysed varies considerably from text to text, sometimes even from example to example inside the same text. Nevertheless, the use of modal markers to mitigate and soften the propositions is a recurrent device that can be seen throughout the texts.

4.2.1 - Lesser degrees of certainty/Lower affinity with the propositions

Texts 2 and 6 are the ones where the propositions are the most mitigated by the use of modal markers. In text 2 (A Brief History of Sex), the modalizing force rests as much on modal auxiliary verbs as on *modal adjuncts* (e.g. **probably/ never/ completely/ quite/ etc**) (Halliday 1985:51/83) and *modal metaphors* (**everyone knows that/ it's obvious that/ etc**).

With the help of these modal markers, the author (a woman) constructs her version of the history of female sexuality from the 60s until today. She starts the text by using modal metaphors which hide the subjectivity of her views and present them as generally accepted values and beliefs. In line 11, she says that "**it's certainly true** that most men no longer dream of virgins", but she adds that "**it's equally true** that the alternatives are troubling to them" (line 13), thus presenting the liberated sexual behaviour of modern women as problematic to men in general.

In the author's view, the new sexual liberation started in the 60s was wrongly based on the idea that women needed as much sex as men: "**the assumption was** that women **wanted** sex as much as men did" (line 41). However, she does not state this as a personal opinion, but modalizes it. The word **assumption** questions the validity of the proposition; **was** and **wanted** indicate tentativeness, since what feels less certain, less

actual, is presented in the past tense. Through these modalizing devices she implicitly says that such an assumption was obviously wrong.

Other instances of criticism against the liberated female sexual behaviour are also mitigated and softened by the use of modal markers:

Line 49: Guilt and anxiety **often** accompanied this new sexual behaviour.

Line 129: The mixed messages [about female sexual behaviour] take their toll, **sometimes even** affecting a woman's very sense of herself.

Again hiding her personal opinion behind a modal metaphor, the author says that "it's **hardly news** that the double standard is alive and kicking" (line 173).

Therefore, women in the 90s have learned that it is wiser to 'slow down':

Line 121: Many women **feel** freer to make their own choices, to say no as well as yes, or **even** to choose **whether** they'll enter into sex at all.

Line 259: [Women] began to redefine sexual freedom (...) and to **understand** that the way to achieve it **did** not lie **simply** in emulating men.

In this last example the author resorts to several modal markers, which soften the proposition rather than presenting it as an unmitigated fact: the modal adjunct **simply**, a mental process verb (**understand**) and the use of a past tense. The use of the past in itself indicates less certainty. When the past is added to a modal verb or to a verb with a modal meaning

(ex:understand), the mitigating effect is even stronger (Kress and Hodge 1979:90).

The author does not address the readers directly in text 2 (she does not use the pronoun *you*); her pieces of advice are implicit and indirect, but nevertheless present, as can be seen in the examples above. Her propositions about the dangers of 'excessive' sexual liberation and the advantages of a 'feminised' (or controlled) sexual behaviour are apparently mitigated by the use of modality, but their final effect is to reinforce her message of sexual conservatism:

Line 282: What **may** look like a remake of the old sexual conservatism is **at least partly** the consequence of women coming to terms with their sexuality in ways which are **quite** new.

Line 292: What is this **if not** a movement towards the feminisation of sexuality (...)?

Text 6 (The Lure of the Sexually Aggressive Woman) is another example of a modality of low affinity, in an attempt to be more friendly and less forceful with the readers. The text discusses the aggressive sexual behaviour shown by modern women, and at first it seems to depict female sexual aggressiveness as an interesting asset. However, the modalized sentences shown here represent warnings to the readers about the dangers of 'excessive' sexual assertion. These warnings are not presented as obligations or commands, but are given in the form of friendly pieces of advice. The propositions they put forward are weakened by modal markers:

Line 210: Telling him to "give it to me like a man" **may immediately** kill desire.

- Line 218: (...) Angry demands **may even** result in your partner suffering from impotence or premature ejaculation.
- Line 236: Being forceful **can** backfire if a man senses anger.
- Line 270: Other men **may** welcome an assertive stance - **but only** after they're well past the initial stages of courtship.
- Line 273: And since nobody **likes** rejection, you're **probably** better off playing by the old rules of seduction - **at least** until your romance develops.
- Line 283: **Even when** a man **seems** unthreatened by boldness, he **may** later reveal himself to be less than comfortable.

Line 268 presents another friendly warning: "it's true that **some** men are scared off by women who like to take charge". The presence of a modal metaphor hides the author's personal opinion (as does the use of *objective modality* in all the other examples) and obscures the source of authority. This helps to save the author's face and protect her against possible readers who might feel threatened or offended by the statement. It also helps the author/institution to stay in good terms with all kinds of readers.

Still in text 6 (The Lure of the Sexually Aggressive Woman), the use of **willing** in lines 172 ("loath to scare away any potential partners, [women] are **willing** to conceal their fierce drive for a time") and 280 ("to salvage my ego ... I'm **willing** to go along with the [old-fashioned seduction] game"), naturalises and mitigates these implicit warnings. The message

is that women hide their sexual drive not because a coy sexual behaviour is a social imposition, but of their own free will.

4.2.2 - Intermediate degrees of certainty/ Intermediate affinity with the propositions

Texts 1 and 4 represent an intermediate position in terms of modality, where some propositions are more mitigated (lower affinity) while others are less so (higher affinity). In text 1 (The Use and Abuse of Your Sexual Power), the author argues that women's greatest strength is their sexual power, which should be used to their advantage. When the author is introducing the topic and presenting the advantages and disadvantages of female sexual power, she uses the third person pronouns **she**, **he** and **they**:

Line 34: **Often** they [sexually powerful women] **seem** to have been the only women in history.

Line 54: In thrall to a woman, a man **may** lose his job, his mind, his home, his wife, his seat in government, his future, when he **feels** that power.

Line 99: The women who **can** [make her sexual power work for them] **will** have the world at their feet.

Line 114: [Sexual power] **may** be a woman's greatest strength.

In these first modalized sentences the author talks about women in general, unknown women, and she weakens or mitigates the truth and the degree of likelihood of her propositions becoming reality. Here the author is preparing the way to her

subsequent comments, and she starts by weakening her propositions so as not to sound too forceful from the very beginning of the text.

However, when she starts addressing her readers directly she switches to the pronouns **you** and **we** (including herself), and assumes more openly the role of adviser on the topic she is discussing. From this subject position she gives strength to her version of the truth and to the degree of likelihood of her propositions, either by switching from **may** to **can**, or by resorting to a modality of categorical certainty, i.e., **will** (**will** is a potentially weak bonding-promoting modal marker (Collins 1994:12):

Line 226: [Women who depend exclusively on their sexual power] **will** be in terrible trouble later on.

Line 291: If you rely on your sexual power alone, you'll be a loser. If you rely on getting control, you'll win, win, win.

Line 351: We **cannot** deny our gender - who wants to, anyway?

Line 362: **Only** by [being aware of our sexual power] **can** we learn to develop into something more.

Line 371: With that, **even when** we have lost the power to turn heads, we will always be able to rule hearts and minds.

Text 4 (practically Everything You Need to Know in Life) is entirely made of pieces of advice (euphemistically called 'thoughts') on different topics. The examples presented here were taken from the topics Loving Men and Living with Men. The article, as the title itself indicates, aims at telling the

readers important things about their lives. Consequently, the magazine positions itself as an authority who can advise the readers on important everyday matters, such as work, love and relationships (there is no indication of who wrote the article, so the magazine as an institution is openly given voice, as can be seen in the first line of the text: "Cosmo has been around for 21 years this month").

Because the text is overtly offering the readers 'tips' on how to live their lives, the tone is more categorical and emphatic than in the previous texts analysed. Concerning the truth and likelihood of the propositions, some of them are mitigated by the use of modal markers:

- Tip 32: If he tells you he loves you before sex, he **may well** not mean it. If he tells you he loves you during sex, he **might** mean it. If he tells you he loves you after sex, he **probably does** mean it. And if he tells you he loves you at breakfast, he **definitely** means it.
- Tip 38: Don't kid yourself about how you feel about him physically. If you **honestly** don't fancy him at the beginning, it's **probably** not going to change.
- Tip 40: It's **possible** to find yourself **suddenly** attracted to a man who is doing what he does **extremely** well.

There are also many instances of the use of the simple present, which represents certainty (Fowler et al. 1979:207):

- Tip 35: Women need to respect their lovers; men **don't**. It's **enough just** to love them.
- Tip 46: It **isn't** a date if there's no **possibility** of sex between you at some time in the future.

Tip 62: Never play mummy to a grown up man. Men don't have sex with their mothers.

Tip 47: Men don't suffer agonies if you say no to sex, even though some men do imply that they are in great pain.

Nevertheless, even when the categorical simple present is used it is sometimes softened by the addition of modal markers (if, possibility, even though, some, just), which again indicates the general tendency of the magazine towards a friendly and not too forceful discourse.

4.2.3 - Absolute certainty/higher affinity with propositions

Texts 3 (Let's Get Down to Oral Sex) and 5 (Why Beautiful Women Make Lousy Lovers), both of them written by men, are the less mitigated ones in terms of the truth and probability of the propositions. In text 3, which encourages women to give men oral sex, the author introduces the topic with a modality of low affinity with the propositions, which once again serves to mitigate his statements and give the impression that the propositions presented are not being forced on the reader:

Line 73: Here are some things you **might** want to know about oral sex.

Line 239: A woman who has opposed oral sex **might** decide to try it if she knows that's the **only** way her partner can have an orgasm.

Line 257: If your lover **wants** oral sex and you **don't** like it, you (...) **might** explore the reasons why or seek the help of a sex

therapist.

However, the use of modality varies along the text, from these initial low affinity, more mitigated and distant examples, to gradually higher degrees of certainty, usuality and intensity, and therefore higher affinity. In line 88, referring to women, the author uses two modal adjuncts of usuality, which make the proposition stronger: "**sometimes** women object to [oral sex], but **often** they request it". In line 281, still referring to women, he uses an even stronger modal adjunct of degree: "Recent research reveal that two-thirds of young women have experienced oral sex and **most of them** did not feel in any way guilty about it".

With the help of these modal glosses he pictures oral sex as a healthy and pleasant practice; it is interesting to notice, however, that the text refers *only* to oral sex from a woman to a man. There is no mention of women getting oral sex from men, as if the subject were taboo or not worth mentioning.

In lines 383 and 385 the author's degree of certainty increases and he switches to **cannot** (higher certainty) and **won't** (absolute certainty):

Line 383: A man **won't** mind showing off for you.

Line 385: Anything that comes from a healthy penis **cannot** hurt you.

It seems that he is saying: "I'm a man - I know what I'm talking about." The use of the modal adjunct **always** in line 4

("[oral sex is] one thing [men] always want more of") also bears witness to the fact that, as a man, he seems to feel entitled to talk about what men like. It is curious that when he is talking about men in general he does not use the pronoun we, and hence does not include himself in the group he is referring to, like most of Cosmo's women writers do; the use of the inclusive we by the Cosmo's female writers is another indicator of the wish to establish a relation of solidarity and friendliness between author and reader, since they are both women.

In text 5 (Why Beautiful Women Make Lousy Lovers), the author claims that beautiful women are 'lousy lovers' because, having so many men at their feet, they do not have to make an effort to show a good performance in bed. The propositions about the truth and likelihood of his theory are presented in the present tense, "which signals certainty, unquestionableness, continuity, universality" (Fowler et al. 1979: 207). Nevertheless, the writer also makes use of modal glosses, sometimes to emphasize his propositions, sometimes to mitigate them.

In line 28 ("beautiful women are never good in bed because they are so used to being admired. Sex is merely an extension of the admiration they have received all their lives"), the modal adjuncts **never** and **merely** both emphasize his assertion and make it stronger. The same applies to the use of the expression **a great deal** in line 144, which serves

as a modal gloss on the proposition: "Life is a **great deal** easier for the beautiful".

In lines 139 and 197, on the other hand, the modal adjuncts **extremely**, **frequently** and **gradually**, plus the phrase **of course**, all mitigate and weaken the propositions:

Line 139: It's not beauty that **is** the problem,
but the admiration it inspires. This, **of course**,
is extremely difficult to avoid.

Line 197: Sex appeal **is frequently** a hidden quality
which **is gradually** revealed.

In line 146 ("[beautiful women's] personalities **never quite** develop the features that make people profoundly attractive"), the modal glosses used have opposing forces: the use of the modal adjunct **never** makes the proposition stronger, but the addition of the word **quite** mitigates it, indicating uncertainty about its extent.

The two texts in this section (Let's Get Down to Oral Sex and Why Beautiful Women Make Lousy Lovers) are the less mitigated, more forceful ones among the articles analysed. It is interesting to notice that both of them have been written by men, which might indicate a difference in style between male and female writers in Cosmo. It might be that, by being men, the writers of the two texts mentioned above were able to express more openly the male view of the world put forward by Cosmo. Apart from that, their more categorical style of presenting their propositions, and therefore their higher affinity with them, seems to reproduce the traditional

interaction style observed in social groups, with men sounding more categorical and less apologetic, and women sounding more solidary and co-operative.

In relation to the two other sections presented in this category (Lesser degrees of certainty/Intermediate degrees of certainty), the use of a modality of lesser affinity may be due to the fact that, many times, the writer wishes to avoid picturing herself as "the authority". Therefore, the apparent low affinity with the system indicated by the use of modalizing elements does not represent a challenge to the version of reality and truth Cosmo is constructing, but an attempt to express solidarity to the readers. The implicit message is : "I, writer/institution, as a friend and advisor, believe the world is like this, and hope that you, reader, will agree with me and heed my advice".

4.3 - Obligation/Permission

In this category, the writer stipulates degrees of obligation to the reader, or grants the reader permission to do something. The use of modality to hide relations of power and to maintain a discourse of friendliness and informality is also a device that the texts analysed have resorted to. Here, the use of modality also varies from more to less mitigated obligations and permissions, even though all the texts try to preserve an informal and friendly tone.

This informality and friendliness seems to be maintained through a balance in the use of modality, i.e., if the truth and likelihood of the version of reality presented by the text was less mitigated and more authoritative, then the obligations and permissions are presented in a milder, more mitigated form. That is what happens in texts 1, 4 and 5 where categorical assertions are compensated by weaker obligations.

4.3.1 - More mitigated obligations/permissions

In text 1 (The Use and Abuse of Your Sexual Power) the author either addresses the reader directly (through the use of the pronoun **you**), or she places herself and the reader in the same group (by using the inclusive **we**). In these examples, she avoids the use of **must** or **have to** when expressing obligations for the reader, opting for the more mitigated verbs **need** and **should**:

Line 180: With your sexual power, you have your own of strength, one you **should never** let anyone else take away.

Line 217: The middle years **should** be the time when we compensate for the loss of our looks by growing in strength, authority, wisdom and womanhood.

Line 298: We all **need** guidance about how to acknowledge [our sexual power] and, more importantly, how and when we **should** make it work for us.

Line 357: Each of us **needs to do** what it takes to succeed.

In line 231 ("[sexual power skillfully used] certainly ... has to be something which will give control") the author resorts to a stronger modal marker of obligation (has to) because she is not addressing the reader directly, but is referring to sexual power. Because it represents an outside element, apart from herself and the reader, she can use a modality of categorical certainty (certainly/will) without putting her bonding with the reader at risk.

In text 5 (Why Beautiful Women Make Lousy Lovers) the obligations the author establishes for the reader are all mitigated, as the use of the modal auxiliary verb **should** indicates (the use of a modal verb in the past form expresses more uncertainty and tentativeness (Kress and Hodge 1979:126):

- Line 67: Beautiful women **never have to** try to get men into bed and so do not learn that, once there, they **should** give as much as they receive.
- Line 122: Good sex requires that the relationship **should** be equal.
- Line 149: All beautiful women **should** memorize the first lines of Shakespeare's second sonnet to remind themselves that they **should** rely more on their character and less on their looks.
- Line 181: Women who blossom in adulthood are the ones we **should** envy, as they have all the advantages of good looks but are rarely spoilt.

The overall tone is one of caution, even in the instances when the author (a man) is more forceful. Through the use of a modal verb he shows less affinity with his comments, but tries to keep the balance of friendliness and solidarity with the

readers.

In text 4 ((Practically) Everything You Need to Know in Life), many tips given to the readers are mitigated by the use of modal markers. In tips 30, 33 and 39 the text uses the expressions *it's okay/ it's better* to express mitigated permission, conveying the meaning "you can do something". The title itself indicates mitigated obligation: the modal adjunct *practically*, added to the verb *need*, both soften the proposition; the message is that the text is presenting *many* (but not all) things you *need* (not *must* or *have to*) to know in life. The use of the mental process verb *know* also adds indirectness and distance to the proposition, since it implies that the reader needs to know these things, not necessarily to apply them to her life.

The use of the verb *need* in the title and in tip 35 ("women *need* to respect their lovers") produces an ambiguous effect: does it refer to a necessity or to a mitigated obligation? I will comment on the implications of this ambiguity in more detail later on.

4.3.2 - Less Mitigated Obligations/Permissions

Text 3 (Let's Get Down to Oral Sex) is the less mitigated one, both concerning the truth and likelihood of its propositions and the obligations and permissions it establishes for the readers. This may be due to the fact that

this text, like text 5, was written by a male writer, therefore he did not have to try to preserve the solidarity characteristic of women's interaction, leaving the relations of power between him (as a man and as a writer) and the reader (as a woman) more visible.

The writer/institution's authority over the reader is evident in the following examples:

Line 263: You **must** decide what's right for you.

Line 335: You **have** to know what you're inhibited about.

Line 373: You **can** tell a man you don't want him to come in your mouth without offending him.

Line 395: If you're both healthy and eager, you **can** share one of the truly great joys of intimacy.

In the last two examples, the author uses the modal verb **can**, indicating that the reader is allowed to do something. These examples are yet other instances of ambiguity since it is difficult to say if the verb used (**can**) indicates *likelihood* or *permission*. The ambiguity of the form is connected with power and knowledge. Different scholars have different views about the relations between power and knowledge. Some believe that power is the result of knowledge, while others claim that what the powerful say becomes knowledge on account of their power.

This ambiguous attitude to the relation between knowledge and power is reflected in the modal system. Modality indicates, among other things, the degree of certainty and

authority of an utterance, but the use of certain modal auxiliary verbs expresses an intrinsic ambiguity: is this authority based on knowledge (I know something about the proposition) or on power (I allow something to happen)? Kress and Hodge believe that the ambiguity of the form has an important function in social interaction, since it can hide coercion under "surface forms of rationality" (1979:123).

Going back to the examples shown above, in the first two the author chooses the unmitigated modal verbs **have to** and **must**, indicating inescapable obligations. However, he does not say that these obligations spring from him, but leave the source of authority unclear, and therefore more difficult to combat.

4.3.3 - Absence of modal markers of obligation/permission

Text 2 (A Brief History of Sex) has no modal markers of obligation or permission. This is probably due to the fact that, of the six texts analysed, this was the most indirect one. It does not follow the usual Cosmo pattern, i.e., a general description of a situation or problem, the view of experts and personal testimonies about the topic, and finally suggestions on how to deal with it (see p. Chapter 1). This article describes female sexuality from the 60s until today in general terms, and does not address the readers personally (the pronoun **you** is not used), therefore prescribing

'acceptable' forms of sexual behaviour subtly and implicitly.

Text 6 does not present modal markers of obligation or permission either, but it has a final section with advice for the reader where most of the verbs used are in the imperative. Text 1 (The Use and Abuse of Your Sexual Power) also presents a similar advisory section where the imperative predominates (about the implications of the use of the imperative, see Chapter 2). It is important to say, however, that in both texts the imperative is restricted to that final section; only at the end of the text does the author/institution assume openly the subject position of commander, preserving the friendly tone in all the other parts.

4.4 - Concluding Remarks

Relations of power can be expressed in the press through a modality of high or low affinity with the view of the world presented. In the first case (modality of high affinity), the "more powerful may have been successful in enforcing their classifications on the less powerful" (Hodge and Kress 1988:123). They are able, therefore, to express their propositions in a more categorical way. In the second case (modality of low affinity), as in Cosmo's articles, the powerful present their world view in a mitigated form so as not to sound too 'top-down'.

However, the facts, truth and matters of knowledge that

the press claims to deal with are generally "no more than interpretations of complex and confusing sets of events" (Fairclough 1992a:160). The difference between a more categorical medium (such as newspapers) and women's magazines is that in the latter, reality and truth are not always presented through categorical propositions, and more modalizing elements are used. That, however, does not render their propositions less prescriptive or ideological.

Modality may indicate not real uncertainty and tentativeness about the status of the propositions presented in a text, but a wish to produce an appearance of symmetrical relations; in other words, by using modality women's magazines try to hide their powerful position and try to become "a reader's friend". The use of modality may express "a half-apologetic gesture, a cover for the naked exercise of power" (Fowler et al. 1979:68).

This effect of the use of modalizing elements is related to two modern discursive phenomena described by Fairclough: the apparent *democratization of discourse* and *synthetic personalization*. The former is evidenced by the reduction of overt markers of power relations (which can be aided by the use of modal markers). The latter is defined as the deliberate use of an informal, face-to-face discourse, typical of the private world, in institutional domains (print, radio, television, etc) (1992a:98).

Both phenomena are linked to the invasion of

conversational discourse into public discourse. Fairclough (ibid:99) also suggests a very interesting link between the above tendencies and consumerism, which is the leading discourse of all commercial magazines. He argues that synthetic personalization and a fictitious democratization of discourse are connected with the marketization phenomenon, and also with the apparent shift of power from producers to consumers which is associated with consumerism.

Through its texts, Cosmo works very hard to present itself as an advisor, an older or more experienced friend to the readers, and not as a commander. This may be due to the fact that Cosmo is a women's magazine, written mainly by women and for women, and one of the characteristics of women's interactions is co-operativeness and supportiveness (Coates 1986:11). Coates observes that women, when engaged in friendly interaction with other women, modalize statements that in other situations would be treated as facts (in Hunston 1991:8). Therefore, even though the magazine's view of the world is typically male, its producers/writers try to preserve a feminine style of interaction in the texts.

In the texts analysed this more co-operative, supportive and less categorical style of interaction was dropped only in the two texts written by male writers (Let's Get Down to Oral Sex and Why Beautiful Women Make Lousy Lovers) (see Section 3.1.3). This seems to indicate that Cosmo owes some of its friendly, informal style to the presence of many female

writers in its staff. Nevertheless, the magazine generally has at least a couple of articles written by men in each of its issues, which is another indication that its institutional orientation is male.

I have argued in this chapter that the use of modality is a strategy to hide relations of power between magazine producers and magazine consumers. But how exactly does it work? To start with, the use of objective modality hides the source of authority. In the texts I have analysed, all the examples collected are of the objective type of modality; in fact, there were few, almost no examples of the subjective type. The use of objective modality indicates the presence of ideological processes. According to Fairclough, "it's precisely implicit authority claims and implicit power relations ... that make relational modality a matter of ideological interest" (1989:127).

Secondly, modality is used to mitigate the magazine's responsibility towards its propositions. Things might or might not happen, and if they happen that is just the way the world is. These naturalised social processes are presented as if the magazine did not endorse them. Third, the use of modality protects the magazine's propositions from criticism. And fourth, modality helps simulate relations among equals (*democratization of discourse*).

In the next chapter I will continue the discussion and investigation of the links between Cosmo's discourse and power

relations. I will explore further the prescriptive and authoritarian tone of Cosmo's texts, and how this is used to influence the reader's beliefs, values and behaviour.

CHAPTER 5

*Almost All You Need to Know About Men, Work, Money, Love,
Courage, Men, SEX, Housekeeping and - er - Men*

In this chapter I continue to explore the subject positions Cosmo builds for itself and for its readers, in order to investigate to what extent the discourse types used by the magazine help transmit and reinforce the prescriptive and conservative views of sexuality discussed in chapter 2. I will discuss, hence, the different types of discourse and the specific intent of each one of them.

Longacre (1983/1992) divides monologue discourse into four basic types: narrative, procedural, behavioural and expository discourse. Each one of these types of discourse can be divided into different subtypes (Longacre 1983:5); this chapter will deal mainly with hortatory discourse, which is a subtype of behavioural discourse, and procedural discourse.

The intent of the discourse type may be expressed through performative verbs which underlie the discourse. The performative verb for procedural discourse is I **prescribe**. For hortatory discourse it is I **propose**, i.e., **suggest**, **urge**, **command** (1983:12).

Longacre defines hortatory discourse as the one that (1992:109):

aims at influencing conduct, that is, getting

the receivers of the text to do something they are not currently doing, to discontinue doing something they are doing, to continue doing something they are already doing, to expend greater effort in an activity already embarked on, to modify the nature of their effort, and so on.

Procedural discourse is simply defined as how-to-do discourse. A fourth discourse type mentioned by Longacre, and which is peripherally present in the texts which will be analysed in this chapter, is **persuasive discourse**, which is primarily aimed at influencing not conduct, but beliefs and values (Longacre 1992:109).

Longacre also claims that there are two basic parameters to classify all possible discourses: **contingent temporal succession** and **agent orientation**. Contingent succession refers to a framework of temporal succession in which each event in discourse is dependent on previous ones. Agent orientation indicates that the identity of the agent is important, and this identity is referred to (at least partially) throughout the discourse (1983:3).

Procedural discourse is plus in terms of contingent succession (the steps of the procedure are ordered), but less in terms of agent orientation (what matters is what is done, not who does it). Behavioural discourse, on the other hand, is minus in terms of contingent succession but plus in terms of agent orientation (it is related to how people behaved or should behave) (Longacre 1983:3).

Longacre mentions several characteristics of both

procedural and hortatory discourse. **Procedural discourse** (how-to-do discourse) generally appears in the present or in the imperative in most languages. The use of the pronoun **you** is another of its characteristics. **Hortatory discourse** generally appears in the imperative or "some socially mitigated substitute for an imperative" (1983:7), such as modalized sentences (see Chapter 3). In the texts that will be presented here, both the present and the imperative are used, as well as the pronoun **you**.

In terms of vividness, Longacre classifies narrative as the second most vivid kind of discourse after drama. Hortatory discourse, on the other hand, is possibly the least vivid of all discourse types (1983:11). However, a monologue text is not necessarily composed of a single discourse type. A hortatory text can be illustrated with narratives (as is the case in the present analysis), and it can also be presented side by side with expository discourse, probably because the explanation of a topic can lead to a desire to urge a change of conduct in the hearer/reader. As Longacre points out, hortatory discourse can also co-exist with persuasive discourse, especially if the persuasive discourse is used to supply motivation to the hortatory schema (Longacre 1992:111). He calls this mixture of discourse types **compound discourse**(1983:14).

According to Longacre, in any discourse there is a main line of development and other elements that support/complement

this main line. He says that "in hortatory text there is a line of exhortation carried by imperative or modal forms which command, suggest, urge some action. Everything else in the hortatory text supplements or supports the line of exhortation" (1992:127). While the main line of the hortatory discourse is the imperative, in procedural discourse it is the use of present or future tenses (1983:14).

Another classification made by Longacre and which will be very useful for the present analysis is that of the typical moves of hortatory and procedural discourse (1992:110/1). According to him, the typical moves of a hortatory text are:

- 1) establishment of the authority/credibility of the text producer
- 2) presentation of a problem/situation
- 3) issuing of one or more commands, which can be mitigated to suggestions of varying urgency
- 4) resort to motivation (essentially threats with predictions of undesirable results, and promises along with predictions of desirable results).

As to the typical moves of a procedural text, they are:

- 1) problem/need
- 2) preparatory procedures
- 3) the main, efficient procedures
- 4) concluding (often utilization) procedures.

As I will try to show, the texts which will be analysed here follow very well the typical moves of hortatory texts in

terms of surface structure, even though in intent they also present characteristics of procedural discourse.

5.1 - Data

Seven texts will be analysed in this chapter. The texts have been divided into two groups, according to their structure. The first group, called here Type 1 Texts, includes four articles:

- 1 - The Use and Abuse of Your Sexual Power (June 1994)
- 2 - Ele Pode, Sim, Ser Mais Romântico (February 1993)
- 3 - The Lure of the Sexually Aggressive Woman (February 1994)
- 4 - Flirt Like a Grown-Up (December 1993)

The second group, entitled Type 2 Texts, includes three articles:

- 5 - 100 Coisas que os Homens Amam e Odeiam nas Mulheres (November 1993)
- 6 - Guia de Nova para Quem Está de Namorado Novo (January 1994)
- 7 - (Practically) Everything You Need to Know in Life (March 1993).

During the analyses, the texts will be referred to by their numbers. The differences and similarities between the two groups of texts will be shown below.

5.2 - Analyses

5.2.1 - Type 1 Texts (Narrative/Expository/Hortatory)

According to Longacre, a typical hortatory text starts with narrative and expository material, moves to an appeal through mitigated command elements (such as modalized sentences), and finally becomes an open appeal or command (1992:124). Type 1 texts, discussed below, follow this pattern very closely. In these texts, the subject is generally introduced by a short narrative (sometimes one of the writer's personal experiences, sometimes someone else's experience/s), which serves to illustrate the topic. From this initial narrative(s), the text moves to an exposition of the topic, many times presenting the opinion of experts (doctors, psychologists, famous writers, etc) as further illustration. Finally, the article becomes openly hortatory, presenting a series of imperatives telling the reader how to behave concerning the subject under discussion.¹

This does not mean, however, that no commands or suggestions are presented anywhere in the texts except in this final part. The expository parts and even the narratives help establish modes of behaviour for the reader, but there the commands are presented in the form of suggestions, i.e., they are mitigated. Concerning the typical moves of the hortatory text established by Longacre (see above), most of them are

clearly distinguishable in Type 1 texts, as can be seen below.

In text 1 (The Use and Abuse of Your Sexual Power), the problem or situation (move 2 of the typical hortatory text) is presented at the very beginning of the article, immediately after the title: "sex is power. Women use it to get on, while man after man falls prey to its primal force. **Don't apologize for it. Let your strongest asset work for you**" (line 21). Notice that the imperative can be used as early on as the opening of the text, as in this case. We then have an exposition of the subject, illustrated by short narratives of real women who used their sexual power successfully.

The issuing of open or mitigated forms of command (move 3) starts to appear from the middle of the text on. On line 282, there is a clear suggestion on how the readers should use their sexual power: "to be a winner, you needn't have to have hung on to your man, just as long as you come out of it keeping what you value - your independence, your freedom, and all your life-support systems, like your cash and your credibility".

From lines 325 to 344 we have a list of commands in the form of imperatives, which characterize hortatory discourse (Longacre 1983):

- **be aware** that...
- **think** carefully before...
- **plan** when, where and how...
- **use** it to make an impact
- **allow** it to position you as a force to be reckoned with
- **harness** it to help you get your own way in a difficult situation

- don't rely in it as a substitute ...
- don't be too blatant about it
- don't assume you can...
- don't be a bad loser if...
- don't think it will last forever

The last move (resort to motivation) is presented at the end of the text, after the list of imperatives, both through threats with predictions of undesirable results and promises of desirable results:

Line 289: If you rely on your sexual power alone, you'll be a loser [undesirable result]. If you rely on getting control, you'll win, win, win [desirable result].

Line 362: Only by doing this can we learn to develop into something more, to experience the human power of personal authority, the intelligence, style, savvy and charm of a woman at ease with herself and with the world at large.

Line 370: With that, even when we have lost the power to turn heads, we will always be able to rule hearts and minds - most important of all, our own.

In text 2 (Ele Pode. Sim. Ser Mais Romântico), the problem/situation (move 2) is also presented at the very beginning of the text, in line 9: "talvez o homem da sua vida não seja dos mais românticos. Tudo bem. Mas isso pode mudar - ou pelo menos melhorar muito!" This sentence by itself indicates the procedural/hortatory nature of the text: it claims that it is possible for the readers to change one aspect of their relationships provided that they follow the indications (or the recipe) offered by the magazine. The text is hortatory in the sense that it aims at changing the reader's behaviour; but it is also procedural, in the sense

that it establishes the steps the reader has to follow to accomplish this change.

Here, move 3 of the hortatory discourse (issuing of commands/suggestions) is spread through the text. The suggestions appear more to the middle of the article:

Line 93: O primeiro passo é dizer o que está sentindo e não o que está pensando. Acusações, queixas e cobranças não ajudam a transformar uma situação. Muito pelo contrário, elas encerram a questão.

Line 113: Também não adianta dizer para ele: *você não é romântico*. Equivale a provar que ele está errado, deixando-o sem saída ... Em vez de contrapor, que tal ouvir, fazer perguntas, pedir mais detalhes?

The open commands (imperatives), similarly to text 1, appear at the very end of the text (lines 205 to 231):

- não critique o gosto dele
- não adianta querer que ele...
- se você gosta, faça
- vamos esquecer os modelos
- não deixe o momento passar

The sentences that indicate motivation (move 4) appear throughout the text, some in the middle, some more towards the end, and some at the very end:

Line 98: Se você vira para ele e diz *você não me ama*, ele pode até chegar a conclusão de que não ama, pois você está provando que ele não faz as coisas que uma pessoa que ama faz [**undesirable result**]. Agora, se disser *não me sinto amada*, estará mostrando um sentimento seu e isso sim pode abrir um canal de comunicação entre os dois [**desirable result**].

Line 195: Roberta não desistiu e, com o tempo, conseguiu quebrar a resistência dele a qualquer prova de amor mais explícita. Ele se acostumou a receber sem a paranóia de ter que retribuir na mesma

moeda.

Line 288: Não deixe o momento passar despercebido: essa é uma grande oportunidade de fazê-lo sentir-se cada vez mais estimulado a dar lindas provas de amor.

Notice that in line 195, a narrative is used as a hortatory device, helping to make a point. Longacre points out that the stories, or narratives, we find in behavioural or procedural discourse are there to explain to us some difficult point or to influence our conduct (1983:11). So their use adds vividness to the text and helps influence behaviour.

Text 3 (The Lure of the Sexually Aggressive Woman) also fits well into this first group of texts. The article is also introduced by some narratives, which help present the problem/situation:

Line 46: The sexually aggressive woman has no ... such inhibitions: she propositions men as easily as most of us play coy, never hesitates to tell her partner what she needs.

Line 54: Not all such women are acting out of healthy desire. Some are motivated by a deep-rooted hostility towards men.

In text 3 there is a balance between the use of suggestions (mitigated commands) and imperatives (open commands), which comprise the third move of the hortatory text. Both suggestions and commands appear at the end of the article, after the topic has been developed and exposed, illustrated by several personal narratives. Similarly to texts 1 and 2, the imperatives are presented in a list that closes

the article:

- Line 274: You're better off playing by the old rules of seduction - at least until your romance develops.
- Line 304: Letting your partner orchestrate your first encounters doesn't mean you can't gain more control later.
- Line 307: Just remember that it's best to hold off until he trusts you. When you are sure that he feels safe, uncage the tigress!

Imperatives (lines 313 to 331)

- understand that ...
- be as demanding as you can ...
- don't wait for him to offer
- respond lavishly
- don't be timid about ...
- toss out notions of...
- stay playful

Here I would like to make some brief comments about the denials present in the list of imperatives above (these comments also apply to other examples of denial extracted from the texts analysed in this chapter). According to Pagano (1994:250), denials can negate explicit or implicit assertions; these assertions are assumptions the writer makes in relation to her/his reader's beliefs and expectations (ibid:252). Pagano goes on to say that denials of implicit assertions (which is the case here) bring to light aspects of discourse which are not explicit or, according to Critical Linguistics, ideological aspects of discourse.

The assumptions denied in the two examples above are that women usually wait for men to take the initiative when sex is

concerned (*don't wait for him to offer...*), and that women are naturally shy, especially regarding sex (*don't be timid about ...*). Fairclough says that apart from simply presupposing that the readers hold certain beliefs and ideas, writers can also contest or challenge these ideas through negation. He argues that, "as with presuppositions, negation can be sincere, manipulative or ideological" (1989:154-5).

Getting back to the moves of the typical hortatory text, Text 3 is also balanced concerning move 4 (resort to motivation), with an equal number of threats of undesirable results and promises of desirable ones:

Line 252: Men have a much better time in bed when the woman lets herself go.

Line 128: Don't believe that putting his needs first makes you a better lover - lustily pursuing your own satisfaction rates higher.

Line 210: Telling him to "give it to me like a man" may immediately kill desire.

Line 218: Angry demands may even result in your partner suffering from impotence or premature ejaculation.

Up to here, all the moves of the hortatory text proposed by Longacre are clearly distinguishable and seem to have an equal weight and to play an equal role in the overall structure of the text. It is important to point out, however, that in these first three texts move 1 (establishment of the authority/credibility of the text producer) is absent. Even though the articles are signed, there is no formal indication of the author's presence in the text (the pronoun I is not

used referring to the writer), and there is equally no indication of the author's source of authority (she does not present herself either as an expert in the area or as a person who has experienced that particular situation). In the last text in this category, though, we can detect some changes.

In text 4 (Flirt Like a Grown-Up), the writer refers to herself through the use of the first person pronoun in the very first lines: "I used to be an expert flirt. Confident, a bit of an ingénue, practically a professional eyelash-flutterer, world-class flatterer, but quite smart with it ... for my age". Here both the writer's identity and her credibility as an expert in the field are established. She reinforces her identity by presenting herself as a grown-up person and a feminist in line 37: "how do you flirt with a man when you're a) grown-up and b) a feminist?"

The other typical moves of the hortatory text are also present and clearly recognizable. In line 45 the problem/situation is presented, in the form of a question:

How do you flirt without having to resort to demure little-girl tactics? How to you make a man realize you could be interested in him without losing your dignity and control? It's possible - here's how.

The procedural/hortatory nature of the text is made obvious by the use of this introductory question, accompanied by the assertion that the text is going to offer a recipe for dignified, feminist flirting. What follows is a series of steps where this adequate, modern flirting style is

established.

In text 4, move 3 (issuing of commands/suggestions) gains prominence, both in length and in importance, which, according to Longacre, is typical of the hortatory text. The number of commands marked by the use of the imperative increases considerably in comparison with the first three texts. Here are some examples:

- flirt with the right person (51)
- choose carefully (64)
- don't feel you have to play dumb (89)
- never look shifty ... only turn away when ... (112)
- smile. Make him feel good. Laugh. Relax. Flick your shoe (117)
- remember (126)
- tease (130)
- learn the art of the funny put-down (135)
- initiate (140)
- touch (154)
- hold back (173)
- practice. Flirt gently with everyone (186)

Differently from the first three texts, the imperatives used in text 4 are spread along the eleven steps prescribing the proper flirting style; they are not concentrated in a list presented at the end of the article.

As to move 4 (resort to motivation), it appears right at the end of the text: "[flirting] is also enjoyable and guaranteed to add spice to every gathering. If you take control and flirt like a real grown-up, you'll rarely have a boring evening again" (line 201).

For the reasons mentioned above, text 4 (Flirt Like a Grown-up) occupies an intermediate position between Type 1 and Type 2 texts, which I will discuss in the next section. In

text 4, the typical moves of the hortatory text are still distinguishable, but move 4 (commands/suggestions) visibly dominates the text, making it much more forceful and emphatic, i.e., its hortatory nature is less mitigated than in the other texts in the same group.

Even though text 4 presents some differences from the other three, it is still possible to list some common characteristics of this first group of texts: to start with, move 1 of the typical hortatory text (establishment of the authority/credibility of the text producer) is generally absent (except in text 4), in spite of the fact that all the texts present the writer's name. The other three moves, on the other hand, are all present and clearly recognizable. Second, the texts are always introduced by narrative(s), which might be one of the author's personal experiences, or someone else's personal experience; after that, the text becomes expository (the exposition is sometimes aided by the help of further narratives), and then it establishes for the reader a certain mode of behaviour or a certain course of action. Third, the motivation offered to encourage the readers to follow the conduct prescribed by the text is always general, referring to the topic as a whole and not to any specific step(s) mentioned in the article. Finally, this last move (resort to motivation), along with the suggestions offered in move 3, represent the most mitigated parts of the text, and consequently of the hortatory discourse used.

5.2.2 - Type 2 texts (Openly/Totally Hortatory/Procedural)

This second group of texts presents some differences from the group discussed above, even though its hortatory/procedural nature remains the same. The main difference is that in this group the texts are almost exclusively hortatory, presenting very little else besides suggestions and commands referring to a certain topic (almost the whole body of the article is occupied by a list of steps or procedures that the reader is encouraged to follow). In Type 2 texts, commands and suggestions dominate the discourse more openly than in Type 1 texts, making the hortatory nature of these texts even more visible.

In text 5 (100 Coisas que os Homens Amam e Odeiam Nas Mulheres), the topic is introduced by a short narrative which serves multiple functions: moves 1, 2 and 4 of the hortatory text are all comprised in this small part of the text, while all the rest is just a list of things that, as the title says, men love and hate in women.

The text was written by a man. The author's authority and credibility is established from the very beginning, since the initial narrative is one of his personal experiences. He begins the text with the first person pronoun: "Outro dia marquei um encontro com uma colega de trabalho" (line 1). After describing his date, in line 15 the writer establishes his credibility as an expert who can determine what is right

and wrong in terms of dating ("em resumo, [ela] fez tudo errado"), and in line 19 he reinforces his credibility and expertise with the fact that, as a man, he knows what he is talking about: "por isso, decidi fazer esta lista de 50 coisas que adoramos e 50 coisas que odiamos. Você pode até ignorá-la, mas fique certa de que a maioria dos homens pensa como eu". Notice that he not only speaks for himself, but claims to represent his fellow male friends. He also addresses the reader directly, making his authority even stronger.

This initial narrative also serves to introduce the problem/situation, marking move 2: "sei que sou meio chato, mas se as mulheres soubessem o que realmente agrada a um homem as coisas poderiam ser bem mais fáceis. Por isso decidi fazer esta lista de 50 coisas que adoramos e 50 coisas que odiamos" (line 16).

The remaining of the text is wholly comprised by the list of 100 things men love and hate in women. It is interesting to notice that no imperatives (and no verbs indicating suggestion) are used in this list. Nevertheless, the covert prescriptive tone is very strong, especially since the author indicates from the beginning that women should know what men like and dislike, obviously to act according to that knowledge. Here are some of the examples taken from the list:

Homens amam

- mulheres que tomam a

Homens odeiam

- mulheres que parecem

iniciativa
 - paquera e olhares insinuantes
 - lingerie de seda

 - sensualidade
 - mulheres que não têm vergonha na cama

 - saber o que as mulheres pensam

 - transar enlouquecidamente

 - mulher que se dá bem com nossos amigos

locomotivas
 - desespero de causa
 - fantasias de dançarina de cabaré
 - vulgaridade
 - mulheres que não têm vergonha de contar o que fazem na cama
 - ouvir o que as mulheres pensam
 - ter que transar enlouquecidamente
 - mulher que dá para os nossos amigos

The introductory paragraph also includes move 4 (resort to motivation): "se as mulheres soubessem o que realmente agrada a um homem, as coisas poderiam ser bem mais fáceis" (line 17). This promise of a desirable result springing from the proposed behaviour is counterbalanced by the initial narrative, where the author describes the 'wrong' behaviour of one of his dates. His narrative serves as illustration and as negative motivation (with its obvious indication of undesirable results), since it teaches women what they should not do when out on a date with a man.

The procedural/hortatory nature of the following text in this group, text 6 (Guia de Nova Para Quem Está de Namorado Novo), is made evident by the use of the word *guide* in the title, and also by the format of the article (questions and answers), which constructs the reader as advice-seeking, and the institution/writer as advice-giving. The text is entirely composed of questions and answers which establish how the reader should behave when starting a new relationship.

The writer presents herself through the use of the first person pronoun and also through the description of situations experienced by herself and by her personal friends, thus establishing her identity/credibility (move 1):

Line 31: **Tenho** uma amiga que fez esse teste e, horas depois, recebeu em troca o tão esperado telefonema.

Line 55: Quando um namorado novo ameaçou dizer não [à camisinha], **tirei** da bolsa as últimas novidades que **tinha trazido** de uma viagem; ele, curioso, topou experimentá-las.

The presentation of the problem/situation (move 2) is not part of the body of the text (the questions and the answers), but is included in a short introductory paragraph which accompanies a photograph: "até a mais brilhante, bem-sucedida e superatraente das mulheres já se sentiu como uma garotinha ao começar um novo relacionamento" (line 37).

In view of that problem, the text, which depicts itself as a guide, offers several suggestions and commands concerning the proper female behaviour in a new relationship. Again, as in the other texts in this group, the number of imperatives and suggestions is much higher, and much less mitigated, than in Type 1 texts:

Line 56: A passividade leva ao desencontro na cama. Você tem que dar pistas para ele seguir. Mas com sutileza, porque homem detesta receber ordens na cama.

Line 85: É sábio ir com calma nesse momento tão delicado e até concordar com o parceiro - afinal, ele tem razão quando acha desagradável fazer amor usando preservativo.

Line 187: Recusar não é sinônimo de caretice ou de perder

o futuro parceiro. Os homens, alias, preferem que o sexo venha depois de um contato maior, um pouco mais de intimidade entre os dois.

Line 254: Ser experiente é uma qualidade que deixa as mulheres realmente confusas, principalmente no campo sexual. É bem verdade que alguns homens têm medo de ficar em desvantagem, por isso preferem mulheres menos inteligentes e menos familiarizadas com a arte do amor.

Imperatives

- não espere para dizer o que quer (55)
- desperte o desejo dele (59)
- encare os fatos (63)
- nem pense (78)
- proponha que você coloque a camisinha nele (90)
- dispense mais tempo (93)
- desarme-o com descontração (94)
- nem tente perder a noção do perigo (195)
- só faça sexo quando estiver preparada (197)
- apenas tenha jogo de cintura para não parecer uma professora de educação sexual, leve seu namorado com jeitinho (260)

As far as the last move (resort to motivation) is concerned, text 6 presents one general promise of good results in line 46 ("aqui está um guia que vai ajudá-la a manter os pés no chão, fazer a coisa certa e até descobrir se vale a pena investir nesse romance"), but many more instances of motivation referring to specific courses of action indicated in the article. Here are just two examples:

Line 103: Se fizer jogo duro e fingir que não está dando bola, ele vai até tentar, com empenho, conquistá-la. Só que está preparando uma armadilha para si própria - quem garante que não irá se tornar apenas um objeto do desejo e não a mulher amada?

Line 262: Quanto aos seus conhecimentos em outros terrenos, fale de um em especial que ele pouco domina - sentimentos - e vai admirá-la muito mais.

As in the last example above, motivation and command can appear together in the same sentence, the former counterbalancing the latter.

Text 7 (Practically Everything You Need to Know in Life) presents some slight differences from the other two in this group. To start with, no narrative (either the author's or someone else's) is used in the text. The article is not signed, and therefore the text establishes not the author's credibility/authority (move 1), but the magazine's authority: "Cosmo has been around for 21 years this month. We've all learned a thing or two..." (opening paragraph). Notice that, even though the first person pronoun is not used to identify the writer, she/he uses the exclusive we to describe herself/himself and the institution.

The differences between text 7 and texts 5 and 6, though, go no further. Similarly to the other two texts in this group, the opening paragraph in text 7 has multiple functions, presenting moves 1 and 2 of the typical hortatory text. The title itself (Practically Everything You Need to Know in Life) serves to introduce the problem/situation: the article proposes to tell the readers useful things about their everyday lives. Also in the first paragraph there is a further indication of the problem/situation: "we've all learned a thing or two about love, relationships, careers, men, mothers, exercise, friends, sex, rejection, courage, money and lipstick ... Here are some thoughts we're passing on as

Cosmopolitan comes of age".

In this case, as in text 6, the procedural/hortatory nature of the text is also evidenced by the fact that the article itself aims at giving the readers suggestions and commands in order to make their lives better/easier. This helps construct the institution as an authority and the reader as inexperienced, besides indicating the asymmetrical power relation between the two parts in this interaction. The commands passed on by the text, however, are called 'thoughts', in an effort to mitigate the power difference between magazine and reader.

Once again, the number of commands/suggestions (move 3) is much higher in this text than in the ones in group 1, since the whole article is made of 'tips' concerning different aspects of the readers' lives. Here are some examples:

- Tip 36: The difference between nurturing a man and choking him is less than a spoonful.
- Tip 43: Men may respond to you loving them. But they'll very rarely respond to you needing them.
- Tip 44: Men can smell desperation at 50 paces.
- Tip 55: A man's nightmare woman is a whore in the kitchen, a cook in the drawing room and a princess in bed.
- Tip 56: Men like lipstick less than you think.

Imperatives

- **choose** men (22)
- **never date** ... (34)
- **don't kid** yourself (38)
- **never flirt** with another man to make him jealous (53)
- **don't play** manipulative doll (60)
- **never play** mummy to a grown-up man (62)

- don't expect ... (65)
- rethink domestic work (68)

The sentences that motivate the reader to follow these suggestions and commands (move 4) all refer to specific tips presented by the text; there is no sentence that offers general motivation. Here are some examples:

- Tip 60: Don't play manipulative doll. It irritates the hell out of most men. [**promise of undesirable result**]
- Tip 62: Never play mummy to a grown-up man. Men don't have sex with their mothers. [**negative result**]
- Tip 45: Flirting is an excellent idea when you don't really mean it. [**positive result**]

The tips offered by text 7 were divided into four subheadings, entitled *Work*, *Loving Men*, *Living with Men* and *Life*. The examples presented above were taken only from the subheadings *Loving Men* and *Living with Men*, since these two included tips on sex, which is the scope of interest of this study. It is interesting, however, that the use of the imperative (which openly indicates the hortatory nature of the discourse) is much stronger in the subheadings *Work* and *Life*.

The use of modalization, however, is much stronger in the subheadings *Loving Men* and *Living with Men*, probably because, as these two subheading deal with delicate areas of the private life, the writer/institution felt the need to be more careful, less authoritative. However, that does not mean that hortatory discourse is not used in the two subheadings just mentioned; it is simply used in a modalized version, which is

also a characteristic of hortatory texts. The meanings I prescribe and I command are very much present between the lines even in the modalized sentences, as discussed in Chapter 4.

After analysing Type 2 texts, it is possible to point out their common characteristics. First, the use of narratives to illustrate the articles is less important; the narratives decrease in number, and in text 7 are wholly absent. Therefore, Type 2 texts make use of a less vivid type of discourse.

Second, the typical moves of the hortatory text are much more difficult to distinguish, except for move 3 (commands/suggestions), which gains prominence in terms of size and importance, and dominates the whole text. Moves 1, 2 and 4 are generally presented by the same opening paragraph, which plays multiple functions.

Third, differently from Group 1, move 2 (establishment of the author's identity/credibility) is always present. And finally, the motivation offered for the readers (move 4) is always specific, referring to certain courses of action or modes of behaviour suggested by the texts.

5.3 - Concluding Remarks

Even though the texts analysed in this chapter were divided into two groups, their differences were more formal than notional. All the texts were clearly examples of hortatory discourse, that is, they all aimed at influencing the readers' conduct. What differentiates Type 1 from Type 2 texts is that the former are more vivid (due to the use of narratives) and present their commands and suggestions in a softer, more modalized way, while the latter are more imperative and direct in their commands.

This indicates that Cosmopolitan, as a cultural institution, has some flexibility in its role of transmitter/reinforcer of modes of behaviour, values and beliefs. The magazine can be more or less authoritarian and emphatic in its commands. The use of socially mitigated forms of commands is probably due to the fact that people generally do not like to be urged to change their conducts. The use of mitigated commands, however, does not weaken Cosmo's authority or power; as Longacre says, "the disguising of the underlying motive can make the presentation all the more effective" (1983:12).

In every text analysed, the writer/institution is always depicted as more experienced and more knowledgeable than the reader, and so in a position to urge a change or the maintenance of certain beliefs and forms of behaviour concerning sexuality and relationships between men and women. And hortatory discourse seems to be very useful for creating

and strengthening this relationship between advisor/advised, commander/commanded. As Longacre (1983:10) points out, advice and social control can be linked:

it would appear that hortatory discourse is a cultural universal. We can scarcely conceive of a culture where somebody does not give advice to somebody else orally or urge on him a change of conduct. The very idea of social control seems to imply it.

In general, the texts analysed in this chapter look more hortatory than procedural: they do not require that their commands and suggestions should be followed in a certain order; the agent to whom they are addressed, on the other hand, is clearly a female reader, who is described by Cosmo as young, white, middle-class and heterosexual.

The examples presented here, however, go beyond the use of hortatory discourse, resorting many times to other types of discourse (*compound discourse*), such as narrative, expository and even persuasive discourse. Procedural discourse is also present in these texts, not so much in the surface form, but in their notional structure. Even though they clearly issue commands and suggestions concerning the readers' sexual conduct, the texts analysed can also be interpreted as a kind of recipe of sexual and romantic behaviour, and in that sense they are procedural.

Cosmo's articles command and suggest, but they also prescribe courses of action as a way to achieve certain goals. The lists of imperatives present in many articles look like

steps to be followed in a recipe, even though the order of these steps is not as important as the agent, i.e., the female reader. So, it is possible to say that these texts are hortatory in form, but in intent they are both hortatory and procedural: they urge a certain sexual behaviour, but they also determine what the reader should do to achieve it.

NOTES

1 - Type 1 texts fit very well the formula for Cosmo's articles mentioned by Winship (1987:103/4): the description of a personal problem, the knowledge of experts, and a list of strategies of action. For further comments, see Chapter 2, p. 11.

CHAPTER 6

Can You Be a Feminist and Still Be Attractive to Men?

In this work I showed that Cosmopolitan/Nova, apparently bold and modern, works to reinforce and disseminate, through language, a prescriptive, limited and conservative view of gender relations, gender identities and sexuality.

I started by building up a profile of Cosmopolitan, in order to give an idea of the image the magazine tries to convey, and what is behind this image. I then moved on to presenting an outline of the theoretical and methodological background for this study, i.e, the area of Critical Discourse Analysis and the work of some social researchers on women's magazines. I also included in this stage some comments on the changes taking place in sexuality today. This formed the foundation for my critical reading of Cosmo's texts.

After that, I moved on to the analysis itself. I started by investigating the way Cosmo categorized and represented modes of sexual behaviour in the data collected. My aim at that stage was to demonstrate that the use of set categories and representations to describe the world is discriminatory, evaluative and limiting.

Following this, I analysed the use of modality. My intention was twofold: to assess Cosmo's positions towards its view of sex and towards its readers, and to demonstrate how

the use of modality contributed to the creation of the friendly, informal discourse that characterizes women's magazines in general.

Finally, I compared the description of different types of discourse with the texts collected from Cosmo. In this discussion I hope to have made clear that Cosmo's discourses aim at influencing the readers' conduct, and also serve as a guide of 'how to behave properly'.

In the following section, I will present the general conclusions of my analyses, as well as some suggestions for further research in the area.

6.1 - Final Remarks

Women's magazines display a multiplicity of discourses (such as the feminist, the sexist, the conservative, the transgressive) which apparently look very contradictory. The ideology of modernity that pervades these magazines reveals one of these contradictions. According to Mattelart (in McCracken 1982:37), this ideology tries to depict mass culture as something in permanent "movement, progression and change", while hiding the fact that the social structures that create mass culture remain static and unchanged. The contradiction, as McCracken points out, lies exactly in the fact that "modernity hides a system of domination: under the guise of disdaining the past, it paradoxically praises tradition and

accepted values" (ibid).

Discourses and social practices produce and are produced by social structures. Fairclough calls this process *reproduction*. Similarly to what Mattelart and McCracken say about the ideology of modernity, he says that the process of reproduction may be basically conservative, reproducing structures with virtually no change, or in slightly modified forms (1989:39).

Cosmopolitan is living proof of the process of reproduction of social practices and social structures. It intends to cater for the needs of the modern female reader of the 1990s, a woman who is described as young, independent, sexually liberated and in charge of her sexuality. However, as this study indicated, the view of gender identities, gender relations and sexuality presented by Cosmo does not challenge the traditional position of men as the dominant partners in male-female relationships. Instead of encouraging women to have more control over their minds and bodies, and to negotiate freely their interactions with their partners and the world, Cosmo works to reinforce the male establishment.

Cosmo's voice, in that sense, is definitely male. No wonder, therefore, that its view of sex is manipulative and instrumental: Cosmo teaches and encourages women, from a male point of view, to use sex to please and keep their men. This conforms to the common notion that finding and maintaining a partner is a woman's ultimate goal in life, thus her

willingness to do 'whatever it takes' to achieve it.

The way sex is described in Cosmo's texts deprives it of any possible links with self-knowledge, power or emancipation: sex for women is either depicted as a way to manipulate their partners (through seduction or temptation), as a bait, a game or a hunt. The advantages of looking at sex from this point of view, as Cosmo indicates, is the certainty that a woman will find and keep a partner.

As Winship points out, the emphasis given by the magazine to sex transformed it into another area of personal work for women, such as 'domestic work', 'beauty work' and now 'sex work'. Sex is described in the pages of Cosmo as a new area of excellence for the Cosmo-girl; it is not depicted as a 'quality of the self', using Giddens' (1992) words, but as a way of making women better partners for men. According to Allan Moore (in McCracken 1993:162), "sex for the Cosmo-girl is attainment of desirability, not through the quality of her existence as a woman, but through collecting the symbols of sex: perfumes, clothes, figure, atmosphere". McCracken (ibid) argues that Cosmo's messages of sexual power and liberation disguise women's lack of power in contemporary societies.

The apparent image of transgression presented by the magazine is another illusion. There is evidence that the transgression obtained from Cosmo remains at the level of reading. In a reception study carried out by McCracken, the comments of Cosmo's readers indicated that the pleasures

derived from the temporary transgression of dominant values did not, in fact, endanger these values. According to McCracken, "readers are allowed the pleasure of temporary encounters with the forbidden in exchange for reaffirming their belief in dominant values and allowing these values to regulate their behaviour" (1993:6).

Under the cover of transgressive, provocative topics, the texts analysed in this study suggested some 'cosmetic' changes in the sexual behaviour of women, without really subverting the power relations between the genders. Modern times have brought little change in terms of sexual behaviour. Time has passed but ideas have remained the same. As Suplicy (1986:33) argues, the 'modern' woman, as we can see in the pages of Cosmo, is :

uma versão modernosa [da antiga]. Enquanto uma se 'submete' para segurar o homem, da mesma forma que fazia tortas de abacaxi para segurá-lo, essa segunda se transforma na própria torta. Ela troca a imagem de mulher quituteira que segurava o homem pelo estômago, pela mulher boa de cama. Entretanto, nada muda em termos de postura perante a vida. A ideologia continua a mesma velha de sempre: segure o seu homem!

But Cosmo is not only pseudo-transgressive; it is also extremely prescriptive, establishing modes of 'proper' and 'improper' female sexual behaviour through the division of sex into monolithic categories and classification systems. The magazine makes it clear for the readers that the consequences of behaving 'improperly' (being 'easy', 'promiscuous', unromantic, unladylike, aggressive), are terrible: neurosis,

frustration, therapy, sickness, discrimination and, worse of all, the loss of real or potential partners.

In order to transform sex into something mechanical and instrumental, Cosmo limits it only to what goes on in the bedroom when, as Winship points out, sex may very well depend on our more mundane social and political stands. According to Winship, we drag with us into bed our cultural and social biographies, and the asymmetrical power relations that support masculine sexuality (1987:113). If power relations between the genders are not challenged, questioned and subverted, women stand little chance of forging for themselves new sexual roles and sexual identities, let alone of experiencing sexuality under new, more democratic forms.

In order to impose and reinforce its traditional view of sex and gender relations, Cosmo uses a very friendly and apparently democratic discourse. Its propositions about sexual behaviour are generally mitigated, not to question what is being said, but to soften the powerful position of the magazine producers in relation to the readers.

This asymmetrical relation between producers and consumers of texts is due to the fact that in discourse, powerful participants control the contributions of non-powerful participants. In the case of women's magazines, this constraint happens in *contents* (which topics are addressed in the magazines, and how they are addressed); *relations* (the social relations established between text producers and text

consumers); and *subjects* (what subject positions readers can occupy) (Fairclough 1989:46).

Cosmo makes use of an apparently informal and intimate discourse in order to hide the powerful subject positions it establishes for itself, and the powerless ones it establishes for the readers: *commander x commanded, confessor x confessing, advisor x advised, knowledgeable x inexperienced*. One of the strategies used to produce this friendly discourse is the imitation of female speech characteristics: co-operativeness, supportiveness, etc.

However, the prescriptive and imperative character of Cosmo's discourse is not easily hidden. As the analyses of the data demonstrated, Cosmo positions itself in the role of transmitter/reinforcer of modes of behaviour, values and beliefs. The analyses also showed that the magazine, besides working to influence conduct, establishes for the readers the steps to be followed in order to achieve the 'correct' form of female sexual behaviour. In short, Cosmo contributes not only to keeping gender relations unchanged, but also to maintaining the imbalance of power between readers and the press in general.

Cosmo (and most other women's magazines) presents a characteristic much criticized by social scholars: the fact that it encourages women to look at their problems as if they were always individual, and never social. Women are taught to feel entirely responsible for the success or the failure of

their relationships. If both or one of the partners is sexually discontent, women are led to believe that they are the ones who should change their sexual behaviour, if necessary, to improve the relationship (such as by being more active in bed, by mastering new techniques, by being more deferent, etc).

The encouragement of individual solutions for social problems eliminates the political connotations of our everyday interactions, and makes the possibility of reaching real solutions (through the negotiation and democratization of relationships) even more remote.

Cosmo teaches women to see men as the dominant partners, and themselves as the powerless, or at least the less powerful, ones. According to Coates (1986), members of an inferior social group (such as women) can either accept or reject their inferior position in society. She says that "if they accept it, they will try to achieve self-esteem and a positive self-image by operating as individuals, not as a group" (ibid:8). In this case, the members of the inferior group will either compare themselves with others in the same group (not with members of the superior group), or they will try individually to join the superior group.

Coates argues that the women's magazine industry is characterized by intra-group comparison; however, it also portrays women who try individually to abandon the women's group and join the male one. Such was the case, for instance,

in the article entitled The Lure of the Sexually Attractive Woman (in appendix), in which we find narratives about women who adopted a male style of sexual interaction, i.e. sexual aggressiveness (lines 159 to 169 - my emphasis):

When it comes to behaviour, however, [the sexually aggressive woman] is *just like a man - utterly straightforward*. "I shouldn't have to act subservient to get sex", says Karen. "I am fiercely independent, proud of being a female. But the ways women typically attract men make no sense to me. I can't flick my hair around and play hard to get. And I never say no when I mean yes."

Even though the article mentioned above seems to encourage female aggressiveness, its general feel is that sexually assertive women are a dangerous and deviant species (Figueiredo, in press). Nevertheless, it seems to encourage women to adopt, to a certain extent, a male characteristic (aggressiveness) in order to be better accepted by the male group. Coates calls this attempt to adopt features of a superior social group *tokenism*. She criticizes it because of its lack of political impact: "this is a strategy that can achieve nothing for the group as a whole, but only for the individual" (1986:9).

6.2 - Suggestions for Further Research

This work is by no means exhaustive; it represents merely one way of looking at some aspects of the linguistic construction of the world in a famous women's magazine. There

are many other linguistic and social aspects worthy of investigation in this area, and a lot remains to be done. In this section I offer some suggestions for research in areas which are probably very interesting and revealing, and as yet little explored in terms of women's magazines. Some of them are:

1 - The use of the Hallidayan category of *transitivity* (Halliday 1985). In Halliday's words, transitivity indicates the options taken by the writer to "encode his experience of the process of the external world, and of the internal world of his own consciousness, together with the participants in these processes and their attendant circumstances ... " (in de Joia and Stenton, 1980:55).

2 - An analysis of the linguistic markers of informal discourse (vocabulary, slang, text structure, etc), which is one of the characteristics of women's magazines. This investigation, maybe covering different types of magazine (teenage magazines, family magazines, service magazines, etc), could indicate to what extent the informal discourse is present in each of them.

3 - A comparative study of the view of sex portrayed by Cosmopolitan, for instance, and the one conveyed by other kinds of magazines (men's magazines, teenage magazines, family

magazines, etc). This study could indicate if Cosmo is in fact as modern and bold as it claims to be.

4 - A reception study with readers of women's magazines to see how they react to and interact with the texts they consume. This study could indicate in which ways critical discourse analysis could help readers uncover the cultural and ideological processes behind the women's magazine industry.

As a final comment, I want to point out that, in carrying out this critical analysis of Cosmopolitan, I am not saying that the authors (writers/journalists) of the texts analysed have deliberately used language in a conscious conspiracy to manipulate the readers. As Fowler et al. argue, people may not be conscious of the purposes they encode in language: "social structures provide the resources, individuals mediate their realization" (1979:196). The critique proposed by critical linguistics is not of language itself or of language users, but of social structures that impregnate language with their ideologies.

Sexist discourse, for instance, realizes one of the ideologies found in women's magazines. It creates subject positions for men and women, determining how they must think and behave. This, as Kress points out, will delimit the kind of discourses men and women have access to. Eventually, sexist modes of speaking/writing/thinking about the genders become

"natural", and new speakers/writers/thinkers are socialized into these modes. Thus, individuals can act as "social agents in time", but with their actions conditioned by social practices (1985:94). It is a sad vicious circle: social practices and social ideologies create certain discourses, genres and texts, as the ones we find in Cosmo; these discourses, genres and texts, on their turn, help maintain unchanged the social practices and ideologies that gave rise to them.

It is here that critical discourse analysis can play an important role. Only by learning and being encouraged to read and think critically can we challenge the social relations and subject positions imposed on us by the discourses which surround us (especially in the media). This is the first step to achieve some degree of change in our social practices and in the language we use with others and which is used with us.

let's get down to Oral sex

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1 Men are dominated by visual
stimulation, so the sheer physical sensation, combined
with the excitement they feel while being able to
watch their partner perform it, makes this one thing
5 they always want more of. **By Walter Meade.**

Back in 1972, when *The Joy of Sex* was first published in a flurry of publicity, oral sex wasn't even in the index and appeared in the contents under "mouth music". In the new Kinsey Report it is termed "oral sex" which is closer to what most people say than that good old Latin standby "fellatio". But call it what you will, this intense erotic experience is here to stay.

Anne, 22, has had three lovers and now lives with Donald. Although she performs oral sex two or three times a week, they have never had sexual intercourse. Before you jump to the wrong conclusion, he likes to please her too, but we are talking about women giving oral sex. The point of Anne's situation is that in all three relationships, oral sex was an intimacy that was shared before, instead of after, sexual intercourse. Experts say that this development in intimacy is now common, and one of the more significant changes in sexual behaviour in the Nineties.

American psychologist Elizabeth Rice Algeier says, "Research conducted in the Sixties showed consistently that people experienced vaginal intercourse before oral sex. Data in the Nineties, as well as my own research,

has shown a reversal. Now a greater percentage of young women have experienced oral sex without having experienced vaginal sex."

So how do women learn the "technique"? Some say they learn from reading, films and videos. But women didn't always have such a range of readily accessible information. The suggestion that even married love might include such a diversion didn't appear in marriage manuals until about 1930. Then, in *Ideal Marriage*, Theodoor Van de Velde, speaking of oral sex, wrote, "The utmost delicacy and discretion must be used in order not to cross that delicate frontier between supreme beauty and base ugliness." I think he meant not to carry on to the point of ejaculation, which was then considered a no-no except in the usual place.

In contrast, Lonnie Barbach in *Erotic Interludes* says, "Like a ballet, our movements are slow and graceful, as I swing around to kiss his hard flat stomach, run my tongue over the tiny crater of his navel and bury my nose in the fine, curly, light fuzz that covers his crotch . . . he groans in rapture." You bet he does. How did oral sex, once so naughty, the province of prostitutes and the

LET'S GET DOWN TO ORAL SEX

88 ◀ French, become the simple pleasure it is today? Here are some things you might want to know about oral sex – with some surprising answers.

WHY DO MEN LIKE IT?

There are many reasons. First, men like to watch – they are dominated by both aural and visual stimulation, whereas women are more responsive to touch. Dr Jean Quarton, a clinical psychologist who specialises in sexual issues, says, "There is no question that the pathway to male arousal is visual. Men like to come on a woman's face; they like to see their penis work."

Sometimes women object to this particular practice, but often they request it. Sex therapists say that this aspect of oral sex – getting semen on your face no matter how good it's supposed to be for the skin – is often considered unpleasant and messy. "It's a turn-off for a lot of women, though I only have one client who won't let her husband come in her mouth," says one therapist.

Men like their penis. They look at it when they masturbate and give it names like Proud Pete, Big Bad John and Willie Winkie. They write songs about it (listen to the words of *Little Red Rooster* some time). And they like a woman who likes what they like. So oral sex, because of its strong visual component, is a powerful stimulant to male arousal.

Another reason why men like this gentle intimacy is simply because it feels so good. It feels good because the erect penis fills with blood that excites the nerve endings there, and because the skin of the penis is very thin.

This physical sensitivity is just as crucial to a man's pleasure as his sexual imagination. The old idea that sex for a man is all in the head just isn't true. Dr Robert L Rowan says in *Men and Their Sex*, "It is the penis that gets fondled, not the brain, and almost any adolescent boy can tell you that his penis is extremely sensitive to the touch. The skin of the penis is thin and loose, which allows it to expand to its erect state and explains why it can be so sensitive." All of the above, combined with

the pleasure that men derive from their penis and the excitement they feel while watching their lover make love to them, makes the joy they find in oral sex easy to understand. It is one of the things men always want more of. When asked what a partner could do to make them more excited, 34 per cent of men said, "Be more active during sex," and 23 per cent of them said, "Give more oral sex."

DO WOMEN ENJOY ORAL SEX?

According to the latest Kinsey data, at best 65 per cent of women like giving oral sex, but for different reasons

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here are many women who like oral sex because they feel in charge. Jennifer, a musician, says, "You have much more control than you do in vaginal sex. He's in your mouth, after all. You can start, stop, control his thrusting, turn him to putty."

to men. In John D'Emilio's *Intimate Matters*, one woman says, "I like oral sex because it's extremely intimate and I'm moved by it as an act of intimacy." Another said, "I'm exerting power, I'm rewarding him. The giving of pleasure is a powerful position to be in and the giving of oral sex is a real gift of pleasure."

Many women say they like the feeling of control oral sex gives them. Jennifer, a musician, says, "You have so much more control than you do

in vaginal sex. He's in your mouth, after all. You can start, stop, control his thrusting, turn him to putty."

You may also find oral sex more appropriate at times, either because you're menstruating or because you just don't feel like the intense intimacy or the exercise that intercourse can involve. Or maybe you're not on the Pill or have no condoms. Another reason women say they like it is because they can make themselves come by masturbating while they're satisfying their lover. That way they have control, not only of him, but of their own experience too. This is a definite turn-on for many women.

SOME WOMEN WOULD RATHER NOT KNOW

According to the Kinsey Institute, "Although various studies show that 50 to 80 per cent of women perform fellatio, only 35 to 65 per cent of them find it pleasurable. The rest are indifferent (i.e. they can take it or leave it) or don't enjoy it."

Dr Anthony Peitropinto says most women's objections "stem either from viewing the penis as a dirty, excretory organ or from an actual fear of it. In a man who is circumcised, or who has a retractable foreskin, the penis can be scrubbed as clean as a finger. Urine, though an excretory product, is normally free of bacteria, whereas the mouth is loaded with them. So even as a urinary organ, the penis is one of the cleanest parts of the male anatomy."

Many women object to the "messiness" of sperm that isn't swallowed. One woman told Kinsey researchers, "My response to a picture of a woman who has an ecstatic look on her face, semen in her eyelashes and running down her face, is repugnance. I've been told it's men's favourite thing (and I have enough imagination to see why), but I can't develop the right attitude towards it. Am I abnormal? How can I get to like it? What does it do for women?"

Dr June Reinisch, director of the institute, replies, "People make their decisions about sexual behaviour based on her/his own values, past experiences, knowledge or lack of

knowledge. No one should be forced into doing anything that she or he opposes, but people sometimes change their views if they find they have been given inaccurate information, or when partners or personal circumstances change.

"For example, a woman who has been opposed to oral sex might decide to try it if she knows that's the only way her partner can have an erection or orgasm. It would not be unusual or abnormal for her then to report that she enjoyed it. One of the most important aspects of sex is sharing. The feeling of enhancing a partner's pleasure often increases one's own pleasure. A counsellor can help you examine why you feel as strongly as you do. She can also explain that, even within the context of a loving relationship, some women do not like this or that, and support your decisions with regard to certain sexual activities."

If your lover wants oral sex and you don't like it, you might, as Dr Reinisch suggests, explore the reasons why or seek the help of a sex therapist. But if you have tried to make this experience a part of your lovemaking and failed, you must decide what's right for you. Don't feel pressured about it.

WHO'S DOING IT?

In *Everything You Always Wanted to Know about Sex but Were Afraid to Ask*, Dr David Rueben said, "Sexual liberation thus means the right to enjoy all the parts of the body, the right to employ caresses previously forbidden by civil or religious edict and social tradition and the right to be sensuous and exuberant rather than perfunctory and solemn." Although the realities of life since the onset of AIDS have dampened some of our exuberance, we no longer feel so guilty about our love lives.

Recent research reveals that two-thirds of young women have experienced oral sex and most of them did not feel in any way guilty about it. Thirty nine per cent did it from one to three times a week. Twenty six per cent of virgin females had performed fellatio, while 87 per cent of non-virgins had done so.

If you're religious you're much more likely to have oral sex than full sexual intercourse. If vaginal virginity is your prime concern, then you

are not as apt to feel guilty about oral sex as you are about intercourse.

HOW DO YOU LEARN?

Ever since Kinsey first recorded our sexual activities, film has proved a powerful instrument for teaching us not to be afraid of ourselves or our desires. Psychologist Jean Quarton says, "More and more people are now watching explicit sexual films at home. These films generate conversations between partners and make for a willingness to explore."

Since most of these films are made for men, and men like to get straight to the action, such videos tend to be short on romance and feeble in the story line.

Karen, a lawyer who recently performed oral sex for the first time, says, "I think you're either an oral person or you're not. There's not much to learn for those of us who had dummies for 18 months when we were small children."

Jennifer disagrees. "If you enjoy being in control, as I do, then there is plenty you have to know. You have to know how to slow him down, how to keep him from going at it too hard. Some men just like to pound away and you have to convince them not to do that if you want to have a nice time. And you have to be uninhibited enough to have your orgasm close to his. Otherwise forget it. Once it's over for him, it's over. And you need to be straight with yourself about whether you really want his semen in your mouth. Nothing turns a man off as fast as a woman whose inhibitions are showing. You have to know what you're inhibited about and just not do it. I know women who think that sperm is yukky."

ORAL SEX OR INTERCOURSE?

Which do men prefer? Sex therapists report that eagerness (lack of inhibition) and variety are the two most important things you can bring to a relationship.

As Dr Quarton says, "If a couple has not had oral sex for a while they can become very keen to have it. If, for some reason, they have been relying on oral sex for stimulation, then intercourse is wonderful. Towards the end of pregnancy for instance, when vaginal sex can become uncomfortable, a couple may rely exclusively on oral sex. Then they can hardly

wait to have full intercourse as soon as they can after the baby is born."

Variety is crucial to almost everyone's sexual happiness, but there is no difference in the quality of orgasm produced by oral versus vaginal sex. That is, one is not physically better than the other.

Says Dr Quarton, "The response of a person having an orgasm doesn't vary according to how the orgasm has been brought about, although people experience different qualities of orgasm at different times."

BEDROOM BEHAVIOUR

If you have any doubts about how far you want to go with oral sex, it's best



to discuss them with your partner before you start. You can tell a man you don't want him to come in your mouth without offending him. Remember he is a visual creature and likes to watch himself anyway. To men, there are two important things about their penis. One is how large it is and the other is how far it can propel. Little boys very often have contests to demonstrate both these achievements, so a man won't mind showing off for you.

Anything that comes from a healthy penis cannot hurt you. But if you do end up with something in your mouth that you don't particularly want to be there, have a tissue handy. There is no greater turn-off for a man than to have a woman who has just been intimate with his body run to the bathroom to gargle as though she hated his very essence.

However, if you are both healthy and eager, you can share one of the truly great joys of intimacy any time, almost anywhere, you feel like it. ☑

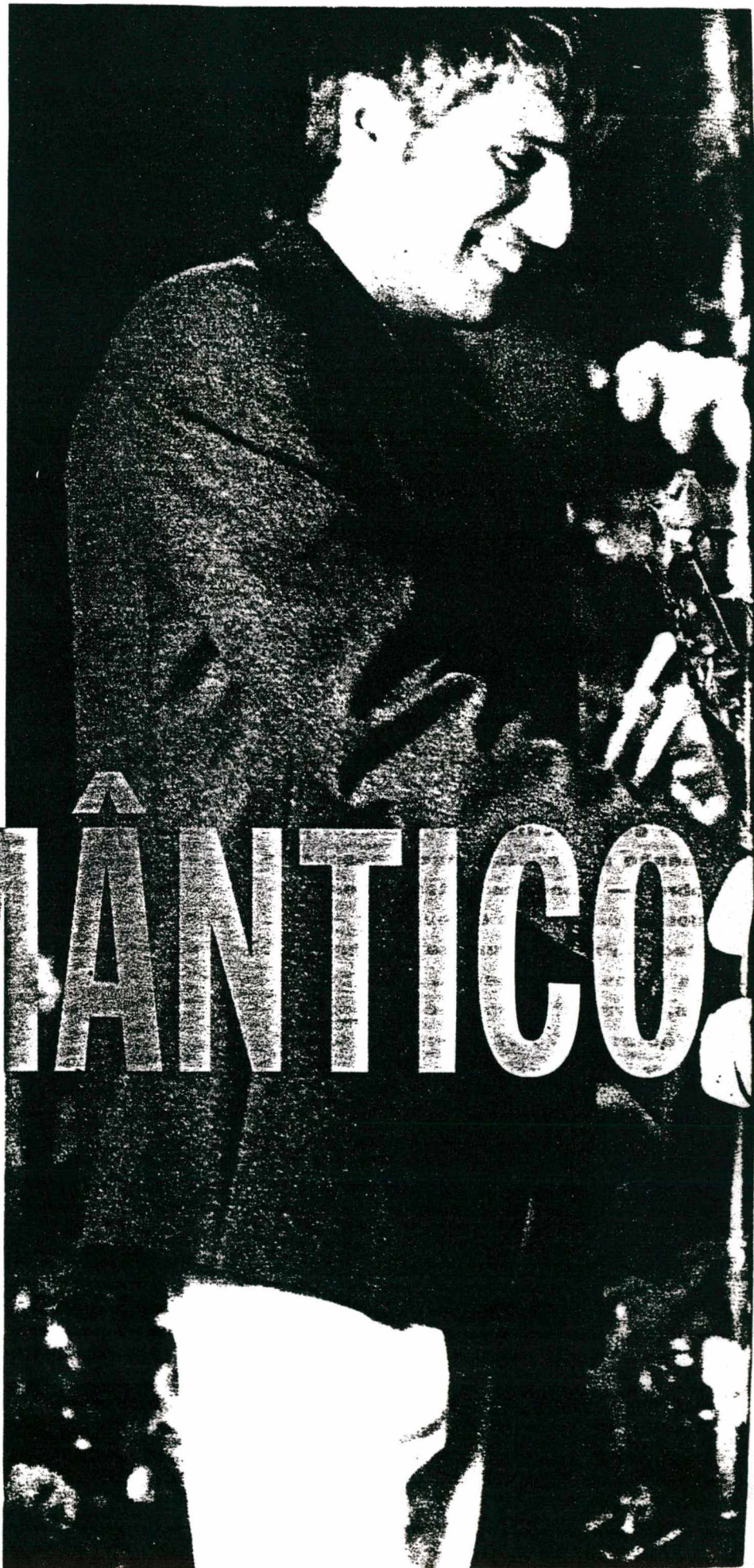
ELE PODE, SIM, SER MAIS ROMÂNTICOS

FEBRUARY 93

- 1 **Você sonha em receber bombons na cama. Ele a surpreende com uma calculadora.**
- 5 **Você quer um jantar à luz de velas. Ele sugere uma pizza.**
- 10 **Talvez o homem da sua vida não seja dos mais românticos. Tudo bem. Mas isso pode mudar — ou pelo menos melhorar muito!**

FOTO FABIO CORREA

MARINA DIAS



ra o seu primeiro aniversário de casamento. Neide chegou cedo do trabalho. Comprou 75 flores no caminho e um vinho francês. Em casa arrumou a mesa com esmero. Fez arranjo 20 com as flores e colocou as velas nos castiçais. A empregada tinha deixado o jantar pronto: suflê de camarão e arroz com passas. A sobre- 80 mesa, ela mesma preparou: mousse de maracujá. Depois relaxou num banho de artista de 25 cinema. Escolheu o tubo preto colado ao corpo. Perfumou-se e ficou esperando Rodrigo. Esperou, esperou e nada. Era uma quinta- 85 feira. Dia de futebol com os amigos. Ele esqueceu o aniversário! Ela esqueceu o jogo! 50 Lavou o rosto, pôs a camisola e dormiu. Melhor esquecer.

Mas a verdade é que não conseguiu es- 90 quecer. Neide reconhece mil outras qualidades em Rodrigo, mas definitivamente ele não decora datas 35 e nem se preocupa com certos detalhes, como se desculpar mandando um presente no dia seguinte. Mesmo assim, ela gostaria muito que ele fosse um pouco mais romântico no 55 dia-a-dia, mas isso parece não fazer parte da sua personalidade. Uma vez, comentando com amigas, Neide descobriu, 40 para seu grande espanto, que a reclamação dela era a mesma da maioria: por que alguns homens não são mais românticos?

Pode parecer pouco importante no contexto de um re- 100 lacionamento, mas a ausência de pequenos gestos é capaz de gerar atritos entre o casal sobretudo porque a mulher 45 tende a decodificar a falta de romantismo como falta de amor. Ela tem um modelo a que ele não corresponde. Mas o principal é que alguma coisa está faltando nesse ho- 105 mem, alguma coisa de que ela precisa.

Ele não é romântico, mas vale a pena fazer uma distinção 50 bem clara entre aquele que resiste a atitudes românticas por ser hostil a mulheres (ou a uma mulher especificamente) e o que está apenas se comportando como um "legítimo" macho. Este 10 é atencioso, embora não se lembre de fazer os agrados que encantariam a sua cara-metade: esquece de mandar flores no 55 dia dos namorados e não faz a menor idéia de que música estava tocando quando se conheceram. Mas isso é perdoável, uma vez que ele não ignora outras necessidades femininas como carinho, atenção, respeito...

Grave é o que alguns homens de negócios fazem: pedem 115 para a secretária comprar presentes de aniversário e Natal para a mulher. E, na maior cara de pau, chegam em casa com um pacote na mão, sem a menor idéia do que estão carregando. Esse homem, além de não ser romântico, não considera sua 60 companheira importante o suficiente para gastar seu tempo procurando um presente para ela. Já aquele que esquece o 65 dia do aniversário pode amar profundamente a mulher que está com ele apesar de não ser muito bom em demonstrações 20 de afeto (além da pouca memória).

"Os homens têm, culturalmente, mais dificuldades de ex- 70 pressar suas emoções", diz o psicólogo clínico e terapeuta de casais Rui Barbosa. "Exige-se do menino uma maior rigidez de sentimentos. Ele não pode chorar, não deve ser 'molóide' e 125 cresce sabendo que terá de sustentar a família, tomar decisões

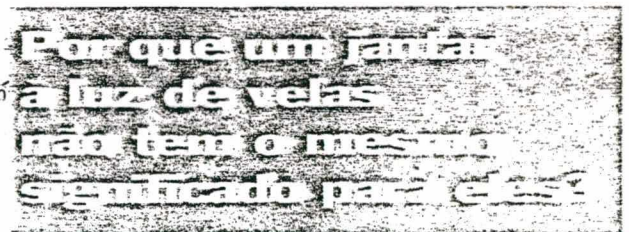
e agüentar a dor sem gemer. Talvez esse homem tenha uma sensibilidade muito grande, só que não sabe expressar. Ele assimilou o hábito de ser durão. Em verdade, está pouco preparado para um relacionamento amoroso."

"Ele nunca diz que me ama", reclama Marcia, 34 anos, casada com um homem que não prima pelo romantismo. No seu último aniversário, ele lhe deu uma calculadora e ainda trouxe o vídeo *Máquina Mortífera 3* para assistirem juntos. "Tive um ataque, caí em prantos e ele não entendeu nada. Tal- 15 vez eu tenha estourado por pouco mas não adianta só saber que ele me ama. Eu quero ouvir isso dele, quero que demonstre."

"Uma pessoa com dificuldade de entrega certamente tem uma história que justifica", explica Rui Barbosa. "É alguém que foi muito manipulado, traído ou que sofreu desilu- 20 sões. Um menino cujos sentimentos não foram muito valorizados pela mãe começa a engolir seus sentimentos e endurece. Torna-se incapaz de gestos amorosos porque tem medo de ser rejeitado. Então não se entrega. Com tato, esse ciclo vicioso pode ser interrompido."

O primeiro passo é dizer o que está sentindo e não o que está pensando. Acusações, queixas ou cobranças não ajudam 25 a transformar uma situação. Muito pelo contrário, elas encerram a questão. "O homem que tem dificuldade de externar seus sentimentos na maioria das vezes não tem consciência disso", explica o psicólogo. "Então, se você vira para ele e diz *você não me ama*, ele pode até chegar à conclusão de 30 que não ama, pois você está provando que ele não faz as coisas que uma pessoa que ama faz. Agora, se disser *não me sinto amada*, estará mostrando um sentimento seu e isso sim pode abrir um canal de comunicação entre os dois."

Também não adianta dizer para ele: *você não é romântico*. Equivale a provar que ele está errado, deixando-o sem saída, uma vez que faz assim por causa da sua história, por não saber agir diferente. Mas se ele souber o que você está sentindo, aí sim, poderá mudar. Para que esse canal se abra realmente, é importante também que você saiba ouvir os 35 sentimentos dele sem tentar resolver ou opinar em cima do que está dizendo. Em vez de contrapor, que tal ouvir, fazer perguntas, pedir mais detalhes? Com um volume maior de informações, você poderá entendê-lo melhor.



ACHAM FRESCURA

Tem um tipo de homem que reage aos desejos românticos da 40 mulher da mesma forma que obedecia à mãe quando ela pedia que se vestisse direito para o jantar. Acha que é um comportamento artificial e exclusivamente feminino. Ele só entra nesse 45 jogo quando quer conquistar a mulher. Depois relaxa.

Quando Lúcia e Roberto foram morar juntos, eles passa- 50 vam o domingo na cama, fazendo amor antes e depois do café da manhã cheio de pãezinhos, *petit-fours*, frutas e suco.

Hoje, um ano e meio depois, já casados, essa rotina mudou completamente. Aliás, logo que chegaram da lua-de-mel, Roberto pegou a bandeja do café da manhã e pediu a Lúcia que fossem tomá-lo na sala. Explicou por quê: "Tenho horror a farelos na cama!" Ela se sentiu absolutamente traída, ao que ele respondeu: "Mas, querida, nós vamos acordar um ao lado do outro pelo resto de nossas vidas..."

Eles realmente não entendem o desejo feminino de manter acesa a chama do romantismo. É como se o tempo os liberasse de certas atenções. Uma situação típica é quando você se arruma toda, faz cabelo, maquiagem, põe roupa nova e chega pronta até ele, esperando algum comentário. Tudo que ele consegue dizer é: "Ah, já está pronta?" E sai para pegar a chave do carro. Você insiste. "Que tal estou?" "Bonita." É tudo que consegue arrancar dele. Então reclama: "Nossa, me arrumei toda para você e isso é tudo que tem a dizer?" Ele, muito espantado, responde: "Mas eu disse que você está bonita... Que mais posso dizer?" Talvez tivesse sido mais sábio da parte dela não perguntar nada porque, quando pressionados a fazer demonstrações, os homens se fecham mais ainda e fazem questão de não dizer o que queremos ouvir.

ACHAM QUE NUNCA VÃO ACERTAR NO AGRADO

Alguns homens evitam tomar atitudes românticas por medo de fazer papel de bobo. Como não estão acostumados a demonstrar seus sentimentos, ficam inseguros e preferem não mudar o comportamento reservado. Quando Luís pediu Joana em casamento, ela quase perdeu a chance de aceitar por não ouvir direito a proposta. Eles estavam num ginásio, assistindo a uma barulhenta partida de vôlei. "Acho que já está na hora de a gente legalizar a nossa situação", disse ele por entre gritos e xingamentos das torcidas. Joana levou tamanho susto que não respondeu na mesma hora. Pediu licença para lavar o rosto no banheiro. Quando voltou, chamou Luís para ir até o bar. "Eu peço você em casamento e a primeira coisa que faz é me deixar sozinho...", resmungou. "Fiquei tão chocada com a falta de poesia do lugar e do momento que não sabia o que fazer!" Isso não impossibilitou que se casassem mas, depois, Luís contou que tinha pensado em comprar um anel e sorrateiramente colocá-lo no dedo de Joana, mas teve medo de que ela não gostasse do modelo ou ficasse chateada com um pedido tão lugar-comum. Ela entendeu a mensagem e foram juntos escolher as alianças. Pode ter sido pouco romântico, mas foi igualmente emocionante. As mulheres têm uma expectativa muito clara em cima de situações-chave e comportamentos românticos. Desde pequenas sonham viver certas 'cenas' como aquelas que leram ou assistiram nos filmes, enquanto os homens querem resolver a questão.

ELES NÃO GOSTAM DE SE SENTIR COBRADOS

Você faz alguma coisa romântica para o seu amado e, em vez de emocionado, ele se sente perseguido, achando que vai ter de fazer algo semelhante para agradá-la. Então, por não saber como demonstrar seu afeto, prefere dizer que não gostou. Assim não fica em débito. Laura organizou um "piquenique" surpresa para Carlos. Embrulhou sanduíches de salmão, pas-

teizinhos de queijo, empadinhas de palmito e bolo de chocolate para comerem à beira-mar, com uma champanha bem gelada. Colocou tudo numa cesta e deixou um bilhete dizendo que estava na praia — em frente à casa que alugaram — esperando-o para comemorarem juntos o começo das férias. Carlos chegou e quando viu a festa armada foi logo reclamando: "Vai ser impossível comer com toda essa areia..." Esse tipo de homem não gosta de demonstrações de carinho por temer não saber retribuir à altura. Então age como um desmancha-prazeres. A primeira vez que Roberta fez um jantar à luz de velas para seu atual marido, ele chegou, apagou todas as velas e declarou: "Gosto de ver o que vou comer". Apesar do susto, Roberta não desistiu e, com o tempo, conseguiu quebrar a resistência dele a qualquer prova de amor mais explícita. Ele se acostumou a receber sem a paranóia de ter que retribuir na mesma moeda. ★

Como incentivá-lo a ser mais romântico

Você sabe que ele tem todas as dificuldades do mundo para demonstrar seus sentimentos. Então, para que não desista de tentar ser romântico antes mesmo de começar...

■ Não critique o gosto dele só porque não é igual ao seu. Está certo que uma calculadora é um presente muito pouco romântico, mas nem pense em sugerir que ele fique com ela e lhe dê uma lingerie no lugar. Ele vai se decepcionar e pode até desistir de tentar agradá-la.

■ Não adianta querer que ele leia os seus pensamentos. Amanhã é o seu aniversário. Então, que tal ir logo avisando que quer uma surpresa? Pode ser também um jantar à luz de velas. Dez dúzias de rosas vermelhas ou uma valsa ao ar livre. Sugestões não ofendem muito pelo contrário. Ajudam. No meio de tantas ideias, ele vai ter um vasto leque de opções.

■ Se você gosta, faça. Não importa que ele não participe entusiasmado. Flores pela casa, bombons na cama, incenso no ar. Se faz isso para se agradar, seu companheiro vai perceber e, quase inconscientemente, acabará contribuindo do jeito dele, sem se sentir cobrado.

■ Vamos esquecer os modelos. Um pedido de casamento no meio da torcida do Corinthians é tão romântico quanto se fosse no salão nobre de um palácio, se você sabe que aquele homem a ama muito.

■ Quando ele lhe fizer um agradinho, arriscando os primeiros passos românticos de sua vida, é hora de você demonstrar seu contentamento. Não deixe o momento passar despercebido: essa é uma grande oportunidade para fazê-lo sentir-se cada vez mais estimulado a dar lindas provas de amor.



Cosmo has been around for 21 years this month. We've all learned a thing or two about love and relationships, careers, men, mothers, exercise, friends, sex, rejection, courage, money and lipstick . . . Here are the thoughts we're passing on as Cosmopolitan comes of age.



MARCH 93

(practically) everything to know



Work

- 1 **Persevere.** Press on. Don't quit. Never be afraid of sticking your neck out. Don't let them hold you down just because you're female.
- 2 **Sometimes you simply** have to tell yourself that a week is seven days and not five days with two off at the weekend.
- 3 **Don't wait** for it to be your turn to speak, interrupt!
- 4 **The very first step** to being taken seriously is to take yourself seriously.
- 5 **Don't raise problems** without offering possible solutions.
- 6 **The harder** you try, the luckier you will get.
- 7 **Network,** network, network!
- 8 **Cheerfulness** will carry you a long way to success.
- 9 **Always take** the credit for what you've achieved.
- 10 **Observe male strengths** at work and then try to emulate them. Observe male weaknesses and vow never to fall into the same trap.
- 11 **Never give up work** – scale it up or down as your life dictates.
- 12 **A big part** of being professional is looking and sounding professional.
- 13 **You are better** than you think (and better than a lot of other people will ever tell you).
- 14 **You can always** do more.



- 15 **It's possible** to have a sense of career failure before you've even had a career.
- 16 **Others don't always** love your success, even your nearest and dearest. Allow for the envy factor.
- 17 **Don't let rejection** or criticism destroy you. It's not personal. The best people have been rejected and the *very* best people learn from constructive criticism.

you need
in life!

- 18 **No one else** really cares if you develop your potential (a lot of people would prefer you didn't). So stop waiting for approval, go ahead and do it!

- 19 **Think big**, aim high, work as hard as you can.

- 20 **Love is** a risk.

- 21 **It's better** to be cynical than gullible.

- 22 **Choose men** who are keen, clean and not mean with their money.

- 23 **If he tells** you you're very special, he doesn't love you - well not yet.

loving
men

- 24 **With great sex** between consenting adults there is no such thing as being too deprived.

- 25 **You're never** more alone than when you're trapped in an unhappy, dead-end relationship.

- 26 **A man who** refuses point-blank to use a condom is not worth thinking about, let alone sleeping with. ▶

the key to it all!



46 **It isn't a date** if there is no possibility of sex between you at some time in the future. It's just an evening out with a man.

47 **Most women fake it** at one time or another. It's not just you.

48 **Men sometimes fake** it too.

49 **Just because men** don't say things, it doesn't mean that they don't feel them.

50 **There's no point** in getting married if the relationship isn't good. There's no point in having a baby if the marriage isn't good. Lots of people still seem to ignore this.

27 **Men aren't** just divided into attractive bastards or boring nerds. There are other options. Lots and lots of them.

36 **The difference between** nurturing a man and choking him is less than a spoonful.

28 **Men often wake up** in the morning with erections. It's not your devastating a.m. sex appeal (sorry to have to break this news to you).

37 **You're not imagining** it if you think you're being badly treated.

38 **Don't kid yourself** about how you feel about him physically. If you honestly don't fancy him at the beginning, it is probably not going to improve at all.

51 **Two people** don't love each other equally. As the French say, there is one who kisses and one who offers the cheek.

52 **Foreplay should start** the week before (half an hour before doesn't count).

29 **Men don't suffer** agonies if you say no to sex, even though some men do imply that they are in great pain.

39 **It is better** to have loved and lost, even though it can hurt like hell at the time.

53 **Never flirt** with another man in order to make him jealous.

30 **It's okay** for a man to carry your suitcase and open the door for you (in fact it's really nice).

40 **It's possible** to find yourself suddenly very attracted to a man who is doing what he does extremely well.

54 **The road** to indifference begins with love at first sight.

31 **If you want** to take him on simply to change him, don't take him on.

41 **Sex is a hurdle** over which you will have to somersault in order to get to know somebody intimately. Sometimes you can fall at the very first fence.

32 **If he tells you** that he loves you before sex, he may well not mean it. If he tells you he loves you during sex, he might mean it. If he tells you he loves you after sex, he probably does mean it. And if he tells you he loves you at breakfast, he definitely means it.

42 **If he asks,** "How was it for you?" resist the urge to ask, "How was what for me?"

33 **It's better** to tell a man that you're not attracted to him than to keep him hanging on in vain hope.

43 **Men may** respond to you loving them. But they'll very rarely respond to you needing them.

34 **Never date men** who wear grey shoes.

35 **Women need** to respect their lovers; men don't. It's enough just to love them.

44 **Men can smell** desperation at 50 paces.

58 **You don't** have to wait until the bitter end.

59 **Love is** a good thing to fall into.

45 **Flirting is** an excellent idea especially when you don't really mean it.

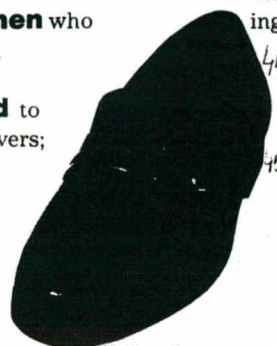
60 **Don't play manipulative doll.** It irritates the hell out of most men (and most women).



55 **A man's nightmare** woman is a whore in the kitchen, a cook in the drawing room and a princess in bed.

56 **Men like lipstick** less than you think.

57 **The bedroom** is no place for visio-spatial sarcasm. Phrases like "If that's eight inches, I'm the Wizard of Oz" are out.



the key to it all!

living with men



61 You are not responsible for his happiness.

62 Never play mummy to a grown-up man. Men don't have sex with their mothers.

63 Children aren't compulsory, nor is marriage.

64 Prepare for life beyond motherhood.

65 Don't expect any man to be responsible for your personal happiness.

66 Having it all doesn't mean doing it all.

67 If you're both out working all day, you have to make sure your partner does his share of the domestic load. Half and half.

68 Rethink domestic work. It's more important to have a conversation with him and relax with him than to start Hoovering the flat. You should both do it as you go along or pay someone else a fair wage to do it.

69 Don't do anything he won't do. Just leave it. Allow him to make mistakes and don't be too critical.

70 As soon as you can afford it, buy a washer/dryer and dishwasher.

71 The lavatory is the ultimate test. Why is it always you, then, who cleans it? He uses it too.

72 Just because your mother or his mother did something is no reason for you to do it.

73 Men who love cooking are gems to be treasured.

74 If he ever hits you, leave. At once. It doesn't get better.

75 Two people rolling over and having sex do not two parents make.

76 Planned pregnancies are best. Sometimes unplanned pregnancies are wonderful. But don't bank on it.

77 In times of crises, treat yourself to sexy new underwear.

78 Each decade of your life so you're not stranded. Ready?

79 There are no perfect parents. Parents aren't responsible for everything lousy that happens to you in life. Stop blaming them. Start understanding them. Grow up.

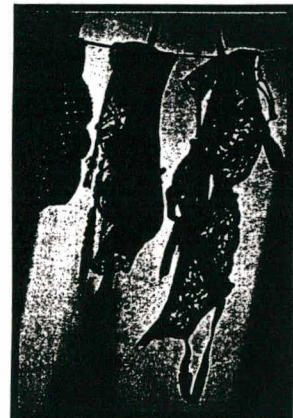
80 Always consider the worst case scenario. Never believe it can't happen. Usually it doesn't but, if it does, at least it won't come as a shock.

81 Always say thank you the day after. Write that letter, make that telephone call - just do it!

82 Falling in love doesn't solve your problems. It's not life insurance.

83 Never blindly trust professional advice. Listen to it. Ask questions and, if you can, get a second opinion.

84 If you're ever unconfident, lacking in assurance and worried what people will think, just imagine that you're white, middle class and male. Still think you can't do it?



life



85 Never say no and mean yes, never say yes and mean no.

86 Friends are what families used to be.

87 Do trust your instincts.

88 Friends last longer than lovers. Choose them very carefully and treat them wonderfully.

89 Friendship is about history, shared memories, love and loyalty. It is not about people you bump into in wine bars and parties. Nor is it about people you see often but who don't care about you and vice versa. ▶

the
key
to it
all!



50 **Everything** (that includes you) looks worse when you're overtired. A good night's sleep is one of the best treats a woman can have.

51 **Your twenties** are your time of greatest misery and self-doubt.

52 **Your twenties** are one of the most exciting and challenging decades of your life.

53 **Don't put down** other women.

54 **Be understanding** of the woman who chooses to stay at home and bring up children. Don't judge the woman who decides not to have children. Encourage the woman who tries to juggle family and career. Support the woman who wants to get to the top, even though you might not want to get there yourself.

55 **Don't even think** about compromise in your twenties.

56 **Deceive people** if you must, but never, ever deceive yourself.

57 **Try not to bear a grudge.** But never forget either.

58 **Some people,** rightly or wrongly, judge you by the books on your bookshelves.

59 **It's the things** you don't do in life that you will regret.

100 **Stay curious.**

101 **Be kind** to your body. It's hard to succeed in life unless you are strong and healthy.

102 **Sometimes there doesn't** have to be a point.

103 **Be prepared.** Always expect the unexpected.

104 **If you can** do only one thing before a date, wash your hair.

105 **You can still** have a rich, full life and amazing sex even if you do have fine, flyaway hair.

106 **Get up early** when you can. It gives you an edge. You can create an hour or two to work, exercise, read, prepare for the day ahead.

107 **Being well dressed** is not a serious crime.

108 **Being honest** is simpler in the long run.

109 **Never lend money** (except in illness) that you can't afford to give.

110 **Forgive yourself** your mistakes. You haven't lived if you haven't made any at all.

111 **Moisturise, moisturise,** moisturise.

112 **Mascara** helps enormously.

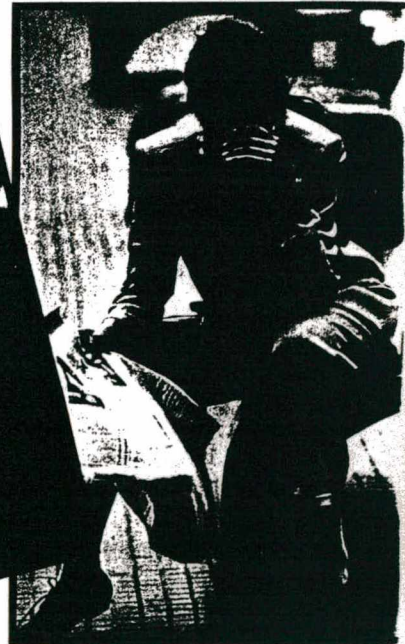
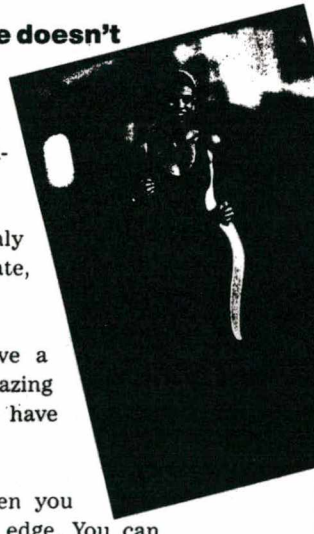
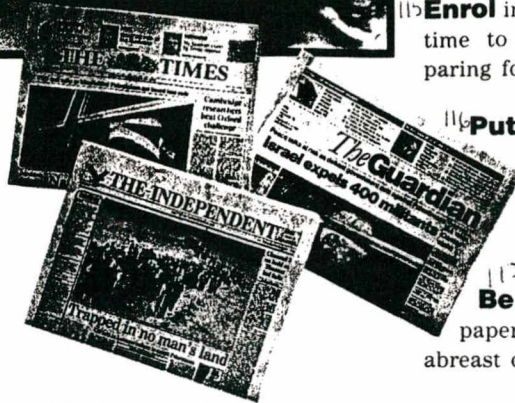
113 **Early to bed** and early to rise means you never get to meet any interesting people.

114 **Security** is having a separate bank account.

115 **Enrol** in a pension fund. Now is the time to start thinking about preparing for your future.

116 **Put off living** together for as long as you can. Independence is a commodity you should never give up lightly.

117 **Be informed.** Read the newspapers. Listen to Radio 4. Keep abreast of news and current affairs.



118 **Learn at least** one other language. It will help immensely to improve your job prospects.

119 **It's possible to laugh** as much and love as much when you're poor as when you are rich. Come to think of it, the rich don't get many laughs, although they do get their pictures in *Hello!* magazine.

OCTOBER 53

Why beautiful women make lousy lovers

I once had a friend called Hal who was very good-looking in a sleepy sort of way. We christened him Hal 90 after the computer in *The Year 2001*—

5 not because of his super-human intelligence but rather his announcement, one morning in the café where he used to have breakfast that he had just slept with his 90th woman.

It seemed unimaginable: how could anyone sleep with 90 women before their 25th birthday?

10 Still, we believed him because Hal, while not beyond keeping score, would never have fabricated it. Besides, his special talent was for a languorous and dogged pursuit. No challenge was too great for him: no woman was too sophisticated, too beautiful, too married, too rich or too remote. Sooner or later each one yielded to his invitation as naturally as accepting a glass of water.

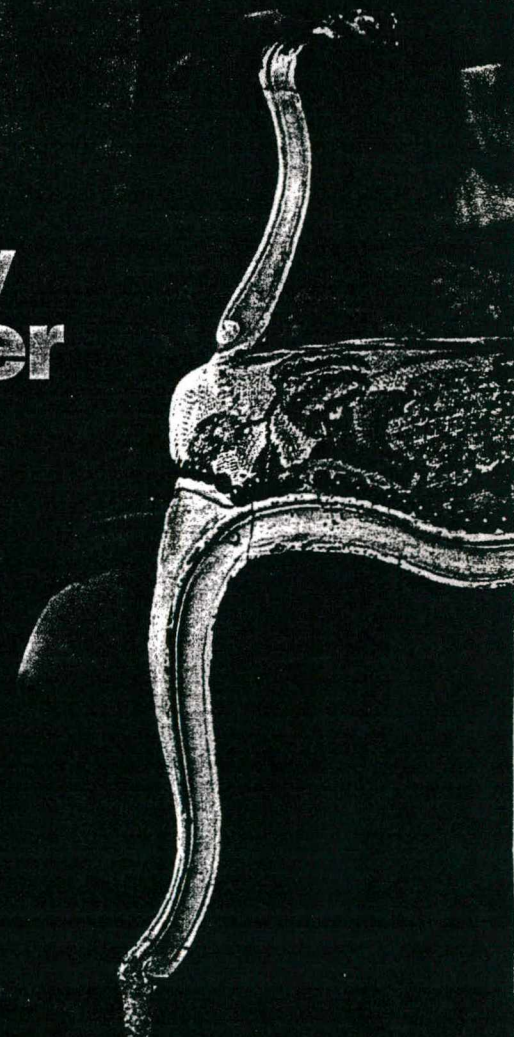
15 In a small way Hal was a legend, but he took no joy in it because he was a disappointed man. He could never understand why his conquests were so unsatisfying and why he often felt an indefinable bleakness as he went through the elaborate motions of his lovemaking. It took the wise counsel of a friend to analyse the difficulty. "Your problem is quite simply that all of your women are too good-looking," Hal was informed.

20 "What do you mean too good-looking? There's no such thing as too good-looking," Hal said.

25 His friend explained. "Beautiful women are never good in bed because they are so used to being admired. Sex is merely an extension of the admiration they have received all their lives. In their heart of hearts, every beautiful woman believes that it's enough just to let a man near the adored form of her body; beyond that, they think they have no responsibility."

30 As Hal listened, one could see his world collapsing before him. He could not conceive of any other way of life, yet he knew that what he was being told was true. ▶ 284

by **henry
porter**



WHY BEAUTIFUL WOMEN MAKE LOUSY LOVERS

175 ◀ He confessed that only a few weeks before, he'd seduced a beautiful model whose behaviour had borne out all his friend was saying. While he was making love to her, she angled her body so that she could watch herself in the bedroom mirror. Just as Hal was building to the crescendo of his performance she craned her neck, went rigid and squeezed the flesh around her hips, asking him if he thought she had put on any weight.

It seemed to Hal that the only enjoyment she derived from him were his tireless reassurances as to her superb looks. He recalled the questions she would ask during their nights together. "How much did you want me when you first saw me?" "Which part of me do you like best?" "Am I the most beautiful woman you have ever slept with?"

I don't know what happened to Hal 90, or whether he truly understood the connection between beauty and passivity in bed. But that conversation stayed with me because it seemed to contain a fundamental truth. Beautiful women never have to try to get men into bed and so do not learn that, once there, they should give as much as they receive. In bed, their behaviour resembles that of an artist's model and they become the inert subjects of loving scrutiny.

At its crudest this is about performance, but there is much more to it than who does what to whom. It is about an attitude and a certain humility. I have always been moved by John Ford's play *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, in which a brother risks all by declaring his love for his sister. The theme of his speech is about the terrible illegitimacy of his affection, but also about his own unworthiness. Ford understood the agonising contrast between the strength of the desire in someone who falls in love and the equal and opposite sense of their own unworthiness. To feel unworthy and yet be accepted as a lover is far more thrilling than the effortless collision of beautiful people.

A fascinating combination is the relationship between an ugly man and a beautiful woman. It is a sort of collaboration which suits both parties, but it's especially telling about beautiful women. What a woman

gained from association with someone like the late Cyril Connolly, a strikingly plain man who seduced many of the beauties of his time, was amusement, intellectual cachet and a devotion made eloquent by an awareness of his own looks. A pretty woman I know who'd once slept with a famously unattractive journalist whose work she admired expressed it thus: "I'll fuck anything that writes and talks well."

But it's the obvious contrast between their looks which provides the most satisfaction. The woman's beauty becomes that much more obvious beside her companion. This is a form of narcissism in which the woman looks into the face of her partner and sees in his adoring eyes the effect of her own looks. It goes without saying that these are hardly the optimum conditions for lovemaking, because good sex requires that the relationship should be equal: equal in desire and affection and without the complications that exist in the association between mistress and slave. I do not know what goes on in bed between mistress and slave, but I would suspect that the woman affectionately tolerates a hurried fumble for which the slave exhibits a pathetic gratitude.

It is widely believed that beauty is a handicap in women, but this is a misunderstanding. Just as someone who is charming becomes less so the moment that he or she is aware of their charm, so beauty is damaged by self-consciousness. It's not beauty that is the problem, but the admiration it inspires. This, of course, is extremely difficult to avoid because the world craves beauty, and heaps praise on those blessed with it. Life is a great deal easier for the beautiful, which means that their personalities never quite develop the features that makes people profoundly attractive.

All beautiful women should memorise the first lines of Shakespeare's second sonnet to remind themselves that they should rely more on their character than on their looks:

*When forty winters shall besiege thy brow/
And dig deep trenches in thy beauty's field/
Thy youth's proud livery,
so gaz'd on now/
Will be a tattered weed of small worth held.*

Some interesting research has been

carried out in American colleges, where it has been discovered that women who are widely accepted to be good-looking by their peers sometimes despise the attention they get. Researchers say that there are two reasons for this. First, it reminded them of the early affection of their fathers and subsequent male admiration carried with it an uncomfortable resonance: they were confused as to how they should respond – as children or women. The second, perhaps more convincing reason, is that good-looking women often mistrust affection, believing people never appreciate them for themselves.

It is female beauty in childhood and adolescence that's the curse. To adapt a famous phrase of Connolly's, "Those whom the gods wish to destroy, they first call beautiful." Women who blossom in adulthood are the ones we should envy, as they have all the advantages of good looks but are rarely spoilt. Moreover, they do not regard going to bed with somebody as a big favour.

Since the days when I listened to Hal 90 reviewing the previous evening's performance, I've come to realise that men are mostly to blame for this state of affairs. They will never understand that obvious good looks do not equal sex appeal, and that the pursuit of standard beauty and proportions lead to inevitable disappointment. The point is, sex appeal is frequently a hidden quality which is gradually revealed by conversation or by understanding how women have become what they are.

I once wrote that sex appeal is like a scented invitation slipped underneath the door while your attention is turned elsewhere. To understand somebody's sexuality you must listen as well as look.

Hal 90 represents failure of imagination and also of patience. He could never see that the young art students who hung out in the same café as he did, though less glamorous, were far more promising than the trail of blasé models and hard-faced aristocrats he bedded. If he had simply taken the trouble to talk to them he would have found everything he'd been looking for right under his nose. Still, for one reason or another, which I won't go into here, I'm glad he didn't. ☐

NOVEMBER 93

1 "I sometimes think what men really want now is a sexually experienced virgin,"

5 says Clare, a 21-year-old student, as she fairly jumps out of her chair and begins to pace the room. "They want you to know the tricks, but they don't like to think you've used them with
10 anyone else."

It's certainly true that most men no longer dream of virgins in their bed. But it's equally true that the alternatives are troubling to them. Consequently, the messages women now
15 get about acceptable sexual behaviour are wildly mixed. Women over 35, the generation that created the sexual revolution of the Sixties, challenged both the social norms that
20 had for so long served to repress their sexuality and the internalised expression of those norms.

Speaking of the past, Elizabeth,
25 48, a WPC recalled her school days. "I can remember being horny as hell when I was out with some guy that I liked, but you had to play hard to get." No girl wanted to be called "easy".

30 For those were the days when only in the marriage bed was the expression of a woman's sexuality socially acceptable. At mid-century, it still took an elaborate seduction scenario
35 to get a "good" girl into bed.

Then came the Sixties' sexual revolution. Seduction was often bypassed altogether, as women, reveling in their new-found liberation,
40 sought the sexual freedom that had for so long been "for men only". The assumption was that women wanted sex as much as men did, the only question being whether they wanted
45 to do it with each other. It was a funny time. There was this odd combination of being angry at men while still being involved with them.

Guilt and anxiety often accompanied this new sexual behaviour.
50 "There was more guilt around than most of us were willing to admit. I was so caught up in it. I just didn't realise I was having trouble with
55 all that sleeping around. I thought I was simply doing what I wanted to," muses Lisa, a 40-year-old solicitor. "And in many ways I was. But ► 272

BY LILLIAN B RUBIN

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Off sex

90s

HISTORY OF SEX

165 ◀ you can't put your past behind
60 you that easily."

By 1970, many of the pioneers of
the sexual revolution had finally
taken stock of their relationships
with men, sexual and otherwise, de-
65 cided they didn't like what they saw
and defected to the Women's Move-
ment. In consciousness-raising group
sessions across Britain and the US,
they talked about men and sex, com-
70 pared notes, asked questions and
analysed their behaviour. A few of
these women forswore men alto-
gether, most continued to relate to
them, but all began to assert their
75 needs and demand greater sensi-
tivity from men, whether in a casual
encounter or a relationship.

as this vanguard of women
began to resist the more
80 exploitative aspects of
their sexual interactions
with men, the sexual revolution was
heating up. The impersonal sex that
flourished in the singles bars of the
85 Seventies became the byword of the
age. Now, as we approach the middle
Nineties, something else is begin-
ning to happen. Romance is back in
style. Seduction once more plays a
90 central role in the sexual drama be-
tween women and men, and the scene
plays for much longer. We're seeing
a new conservatism, the pundits say,
owing to AIDS. But, as is so often the
95 case, they grasp at the obvious and
take it for the total reality.

Certainly the spectre of sexually
transmitted diseases has affected
our sexual behaviour. Both women
100 and men are now more likely than
they were a decade ago to choose
their partners with care. But to say
this indicates a return to the past
is to misinterpret the meaning of
105 such changes in the sexual lives of
women today. After two years spent
interviewing 300 women and men,
aged 18 to 48, about their sexual his-
tory, it seems to me that the spread
110 of AIDS has allowed women an op-
portunity to redefine the dance with
men in ways that are more satisfact-
ory to them.

Although the sexual revolution of
115 the Sixties allowed women the free-
dom to say yes, it also disabled them
from saying no. For some time, there-
fore, sexual freedom lived side by side
with sexual exploitation and, while

120 this has not been banished from the
heterosexual scene, many women feel
freer to make their own choices, to
say no as well as yes, or even choose
whether they'll enter into sex at all.

125 It's true that women today have
a sense of entitlement about their
sexuality that spares them much of
the conflict, guilt and confusion of
the past. At the same time, the mixed
130 messages take their toll, sometimes
even affecting a woman's very sense
of herself. Sara, a 20-year-old sec-
retary, spoke of both shame and
anger – shame because she has had
135 sex with more than 50 men; anger
because she must hide this aspect of
her life or risk being judged harsh-
ly. "Nobody knows – you're the only
person I've ever told this to. I know I
140 feel this way because society tells
me to feel bad about it, and people
would think I was awful if they knew.
Dammit, it makes me mad as hell. I
enjoy sex, I have a right to it. But I

145 also know what my boyfriend, whom
I adore, would do if he knew. It would
be the end of the relationship; he'd
150 think I was a sleaze, a slut."

In one questionnaire survey that
I distributed, well over half the men
(university students) who replied said
that they wouldn't want a woman
155 who "had been around the block too
many times"; that a woman who did
was "a slut". The word "slut" carries
the same meaning it has for most
of this century – a woman whose
160 sexual activity is no more, most like-
ly far less, than a man's.

165 Small wonder, then, that almost
40 per cent of women who respond-
ed to the questionnaire (most of them
far less experienced than Sara) said
that, when asked, they usually under-
170 state their sexual experience because
"My boyfriend wouldn't like it if he
knew"; "People wouldn't understand";
"I don't want him to think I'm a slut".
Some were very angry indeed about
175 this need to dissemble; others ac-
cepted it without reaction, as one of
the necessities of life.

It's hardly news that the double
standard is alive and kicking, that
180 notions of "good girl" and "bad girl"
still exist to bedevil young women,
and that society has a deep, powerful
commitment to containing and con-
straining women's sexual expression.

185 What is news, however, is that, des-
pite all the efforts at repression, not
only do most of the gains of these

last decades remain with us, but new
ones have been made, consolidated
185 and internalised.

The message that women are now
responsible for their own sexual be-
haviour has been heard by women
of all ages, in all walks of life. Con-
190 sequently faking orgasm, a relatively
common practice as recently as the
early Seventies, when I was doing re-
search for an earlier book, is much
rarer today. Then, more than 70 per
195 cent of the women I spoke with said
they faked orgasm at least some of
the time. Now, the exact same pro-
portion reply, "Never." Most women
expect to have orgasms and, once
they have had some sexual experi-
200 ence, they feel easy about letting
their partner know how he can help
make it happen. Therefore, when they
are in a relationship, many are orgas-
mic all or most of the time. And when
they're not, they feel no compulsion
to put on an act.

In the early Seventies, most of the
married women I spoke to expressed
at least some hesitancy about oral
sex, whether fellatio or cunnilingus.
Working-class women, on the whole,
205 called the practice "disgusting" and
few willingly engaged in it. Among
the university-educated middle class,
women were generally more likely to
participate in oral sex, but most did
so only to please their partner. Now,
all surveys show that both attitudes
210 and behaviour have shifted markedly
and oral sex is widely practised, not
just among women who are married,
but also among those still single.

from my own research, I found
that of all the possibilities
in heterosexual sex the two
ways women said they most
easily come to orgasm are
215 with cunnilingus or when she is on
top. As for fellatio, the responses
ranged from "No problem" and "It's
fine" to "I love it" – the last most
common among the 18 to 34-year-olds.
When the women who responded most
220 enthusiastically were then asked to
elaborate, they usually spoke first
of the joy of giving a man pleasure.
But as they warmed to their theme,
they spoke more passionately about
225 how powerful they felt when perform-
ing fellatio. "It's the ultimate power,"
said Linda, a 30-year-old school-
teacher. "He's just lying there getting
more and more excited, praying I
230 won't stop. It's the one time I'm with

FOR LIPSTICK TO LAST, LIPCOTE.

him that I feel totally in control of things." These along with a number of other changes in sexual attitudes, however, are only the surface manifestations of underlying shifts that have led to the changing sexual scene. Among the pioneers of the sexual revolution, it became important to show that a woman could "fuck like a man" – the only model of sexual freedom around at the time.

Women were free at last to try out the one-night stands; the conquests; the high sensation, low emotion sex that until then had been the prerogatives of men alone. But even as they pushed back the boundaries and tested the limits of female sexuality in this culture, they began to redefine sexual freedom for women and to understand that the way to achieve it did not lie simply in emulating men.

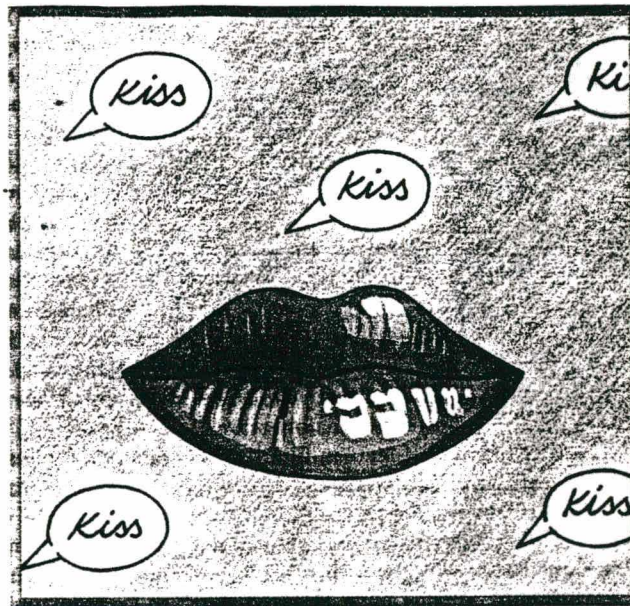
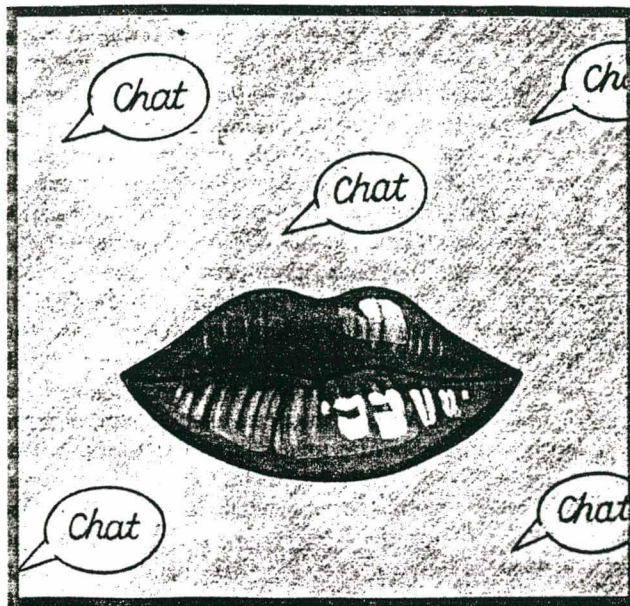
"I was out to experiment with life in all directions, to find out what the natural limits were," reflected Joyce, a 42-year-old television producer. "There was a lot of very, very good sex in terms of orgasmic sexuality. But after a while I found out that there is nothing more intensely lonely than the first 10 or 15 seconds after an orgasm when you're not in an emotional relationship. That kind of thing, when you experience it often enough, is something you don't want to repeat unless you're a total masochist."

Twenty years later, women know that they would like a man to "make love like a woman". No longer do women accept the standard of sexuality traditionally set by male needs and desires. Sex as little more than a meeting of the genitals is out. Nowadays, women expect, even if they don't always get, something more, and they're very open about making their wishes and needs known.

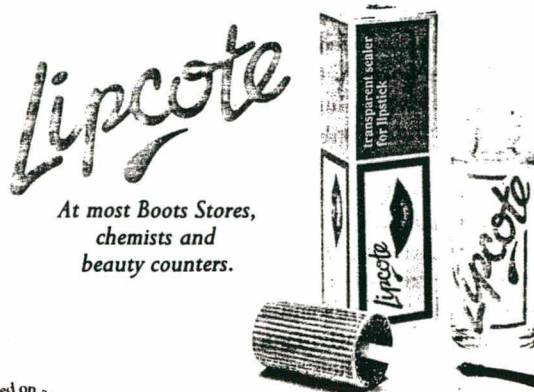
Thus, what may look like a remake of the old sexual conservatism is at least partly the consequence of women coming to terms with their sexuality in ways that are quite new. This shift is reflected in the exhortations of sex therapists, marriage counsellors, sexologists and other health professionals. Why else do they urge men towards a sexuality that is less genitally focused on the relationship – sex that honours a human connection even if the man and woman are only transiently involved? What is this if not a movement towards the feminisation of sexuality, towards sexual norms that are more like a woman's ideal of sexuality than a man's?

It is a fledgling movement, to be sure. And one with an uncertain future, since it exists in the context of a society in which a profound social conservatism has been the companion of the conservative politics of our age.

Moreover, so long as the feminisation of sexuality endeavours to go forward in a society dominated by male structures, needs and beliefs, there undoubtedly will be difficulties. But all the evidence of my research suggests that women today are prepared for this next step towards a fuller, freer, more wholesome relationship to their sexuality, and to insist that men join them in their pursuit.



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 chemists and
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100 coisas que os homens

NOVEMBER 93

1 Outro dia marquei um encontro com uma colega de trabalho. Bonita e charmosa, ela sempre me atraíu por sua maneira natural e displicente de ser sensual. De repente, ela aparece num vestido curtíssimo, mais pintada que um personagem do Teatro Kabuki, com um colar dourado que devia pesar mais que as correntes do meu portão. Falou a

noite inteira sobre a *sua* vida, o *seu* trabalho, o *seu* filho. No fim da noite, quase pulou no meu pescoço. E, ainda por cima, insisti em saber quando sairíamos novamente. Em resumo, fez tudo errado. Todo o interesse que eu tinha por ela acabou naquela noite. Sei que sou meio chato, mas se as mulheres soubessem o que realmente agrada a um homem as coisas poderiam ser mais fáceis. Por isso, decidi fazer esta lista de 50 coisas que adoramos e 50 coisas que odiamos. Você pode até ignorá-la, mas fique certa de que a maioria dos homens pensa como eu.

homens amam

- Intimidade
- "Fiz um jantar especial para nós"
- 25 ● Mulheres de corpo bonito
- Carnes firmes



- Mulheres que gostam de animais
- 40 ● Mulheres que resolvem os problemas sozinhas
- Liberdade
- Paquera e olhares insinuantes



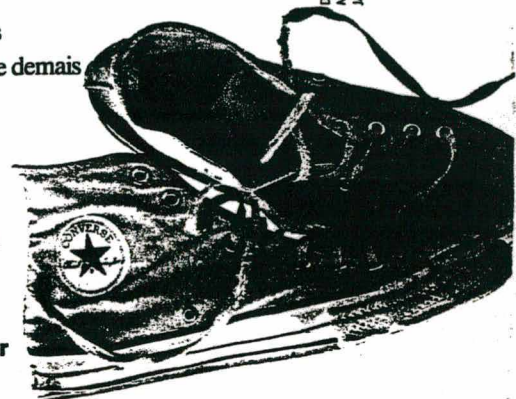
- Personalidade forte
- Conversar
- Mulheres que tomam a iniciativa
- 30 ● Executivas bem-sucedidas
- Profissionais com uma postura séria
- Comer pizza
- 35 ● Mulheres que sabem beber
- Pontualidade
- Roupas que marcam as formas do corpo
- 45 ● Jeans e camiseta
- Perfume de mulher
- Olhos claros, ou escuros
- Salto alto
- 50 ● Lingerie de seda
- Confiança
- Mulheres difíceis de conquistar

homens odeiam

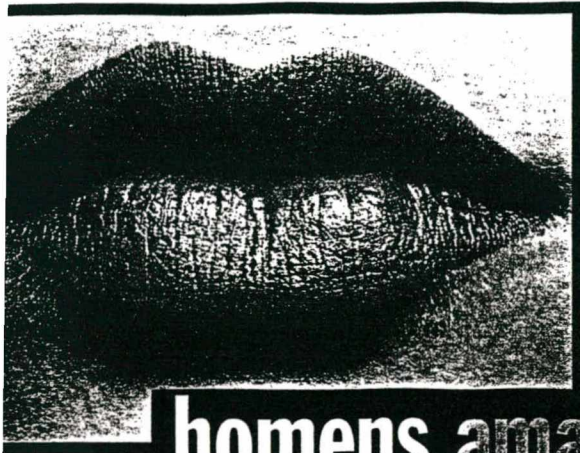
- 55 ● Invasão de privacidade
- "Agora você lava a louça"
- Mulheres que vivem de dieta
- Músculos de halterofilista
- Histeria
- 60 ● Discutir a relação
- Mulheres que parecem uma locomotiva
- Namoradas que estão sempre ocupadas
- 65 ● Paranóicas que acham que um "bom dia" é uma cantada
- Jantar num restaurante de pratos light e preços pesados
- Mulheres que não sabem parar de beber
- 70 ● Cobrança de horário
- Dormir cercados por seis gatos e três cachorros
- Supermulheres
- Pouco caso
- 75 ● Desespero de causa
- Vestidos que marcam os quilinhos a mais
- Tênis espalhafatosos
- Mulher com perfume demais
- 80 ● Lentes de contato coloridas
- Coturnos
- Fantasias de dançarina de cabaré
- 85 ● Submissão
- Mulheres muito difíceis de conquistar



DE CIMA PARA BAIXO FOTOS
MAURICIO NUNES / RAU CONTINASTY /
JACEK KROPIENSKI / LUIS GOMES



homens amam e odeiam nas mulheres



homens amam

- Pernas sombreadas por meias finas
- Sensualidade
- 30 ● Lábios bem desenhados
- Mulheres que valorizam a nossa força

- Senso de humor
- Pele bronzeada
- Mulheres que
- 95 vestem a nossa camisa

- Mulheres que não têm vergonha na cama

- Amantes do cinema
- Unhas bem-feitas
- 100 ● Saber o que as mulheres pensam

- Mulheres animadas
- Opinião própria
- Telefonemas inesperados

- 105 ● Pernas depiladas
- Mulheres arrumadas
- Colar de pérolas
- Inteligência
- Ser mimados

- 110 ● Entrega
- Admiração
- Sexo sem compromisso
- Cabelos

compridos e macios

- 115 ● Transar enlouquecidamente
- Mulher que se dá bem com os nossos amigos
- Rostos
- 120 com pele macia



homens odeiam

- Meias difíceis de tirar
- Vulgaridade
- Beijar lábios pintados
- Mulheres que esperam por um super-homem

- 125 ● Excesso de humor

- Pele ressecada
- Mulheres que querem o carro emprestado

- Mulheres que não têm vergonha de contar o que fazem na cama

- 130 ● Fanáticas por atores de cinema
- Unhas dos pés pintadas de vermelho
- Ouvir o que as mulheres pensam

- 135 ● Arroz-de-festa

- Cabeça-dura
- Telefonemas desconfiados
- Encontrar o barbeador usado
- Esperar até elas se arrumarem

- 140 ● Pagar pelo colar de pérolas

- Complexo de superioridade
- Ser mimados em público
- Pressão
- Intromissão

- 145 ● Compromisso sem sexo

- Passar a mão numa escultura de gel
- Ter de transar enlouquecidamente
- 150 ● Mulher que dá para os nossos amigos
- Máscaras de beleza





I used to be an expert flirt. Confident, a bit of an ingénue, practically a professional eyelash-flutterer, world-class flatterer, but

quite smart with it . . . for my age. But, oops. That was the problem. The whole thing takes so little effort when you're just 16 years old.

To flirt, according to the Collins English Dictionary, is "to behave or act amorously, without emotional commitment, to toy or play with other's affections, to deal playfully or carelessly".

Toy? Play? Careless? That stuff is all second nature when you're a girl. It's easy to flirt with a man when you're young enough *not* to be a woman. In those days Jackie was our bible. "Get interested in his hobbies," advised the agony aunts Cathy & Claire, "listen to him and pretend. He'll definitely ask you out again." And so we did and, of course, it worked.

It was so simple. Youngish girls learned to be ace listeners and silent experts on subjects as diverse and genuinely *fascinating* as Arsenal's chances in the FA Cup Final, Aston Martins *v* MGs (and are Aston Martins worth the extra money?), executive stress, his boss's career

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDREW DUNN. Black and gold knit polo-neck top, Freemans; earrings, Butler & Wilson; ring, Oasis. White cotton shirts, Paul Smith.

flirt like a grown-up

prospects, British Airways Business Class *v* Virgin Upper Class, golf (yawn), how impressed his golf pro was with his improved swing and his work, his work, his work.

We were all young enough to be thrilled. It was sufficient that a man had chosen us, we didn't pause to consider just what he had chosen us *for*. Or whether we, given the choice, would have chosen *him*. Men were a mystery and dates with them an adventure.

Then we all grew up. We spent too many Saturday nights listening to bores. And mindlessly twinkling and sparkling and giggling. I grew up. I read books that made me think, and worked rather hard and discovered an opinion or two of my own. Suddenly flirting, as I'd known it, wasn't straightforward any more. How do you ▶ 218

BY VANESSA RAPHAELY



FLIRT LIKE A GROWN-UP

150 ◀ flirt with a man when you're
a) grown-up and b) a feminist? You
40 won't follow the coy Victorian method:
eyes lowered modestly, sheltering
behind a fan. You can't drop a lace
handkerchief or follow the teenage
model, dammit. It's boring and un-
45 dignified! So how do you flirt without
having to resort to demure little-girl
tactics? How do you make a man
realise you could be interested in him
without losing your dignity and con-
50 trol? It's possible – here's how.

Flirt with the right person. Real men
don't require you to be breathless,
passive or overly impressed by them
and their achievements. Interesting
55 men want to listen to what women
have to say. And it's easier to look
fascinated if you really are. One of

WORLD-CLASS FLIRTS

Margaret Thatcher • The Princess
of Wales • Mariella Frostrup •
Paula Yates • Mae West • Selina
Scott • Julie Burchill • Tania Bryer
• Gaby Roslin • Cilla Black •
Jerry Hall • Marie Helvin • Fiona
Fullerton • Joan Collins • Sue
Lawley • Eve Pollard • Catherine
Zeta-Jones • Patsy Kensit •
Greta Scacchi • Katie Puckrick.

the great things about age/experi-
ence is that you learn how to spot
60 a bore, and a chauvinist. Quickly. You
discover that it's far better to stay
in with a good book than waste an
evening flirting with a boring man.

Choose carefully. My father (who is
65 wiser in some areas than others) tells
every single woman he meets to "fish
in the right pools". This will ensure
that you never waste time flirting
with unworthies.

70 Giving your victim your undivided
attention is an essential part of flirt-
ing. If you have to fake it, you'd be
better off at home.

Think about fishing again. Norman
75 Schwarzkopf shared his wisdom on
the subject with the (male) readers
of American *Esquire*. In an article
entitled *How to charm*, he said, "A
man needs to know how to fish . . .
80 (it teaches you) a multitude of skills
like patience and compassion. It teach-
es you the art of the chase. It teach-
es you seductiveness, because only

through the selection of the correct
145 lure or fly can you appeal to a fish's
predatory nature. A good fisherman
uses a fish's own nature against him
– not a bad technique to use."

Don't feel you have to play dumb.

150 Use your brain as an erogenous zone.
After all, the most powerful women
know that flirting is a tremendously
useful tool. Even Margaret Thatcher,
according to her cabinet ministers,
155 was not above flirting to get what
she wanted. (And Maggie got what she
wanted for a very long time.) See Ken
and Em as Benedick and Beatrice in
Much Ado About Nothing, and notice
160 that they are *witty* sparring partners.

Hire *Woman Of The Year* on video and
witness Spencer Tracy and Katharine
Hepburn as sparring partners; ditto
Bogie and Bacall in *anything*. These
165 classy couples make the plunge neck-
line school of attention-seeking
look slightly . . . unintelligent.

Amend the traditional. The secret,
as any accomplished flirt will tell
170 you, is definitely in the eyes. You've
got to look at a man *one* beat longer
than is necessary. And hold it. Never
look shifty when your eyes meet, don't
look embarrassed. Only turn away
175 when you're certain you've caught
his attention.

Smile. Make him feel good. Laugh. Re-
lax. Flick your shoe off your heel.
You can still do all these things if
180 you are a grown-up and smart. They
are not a sin.

Grinning at sexist jokes, laughing
when he puts another woman down,
never venturing an opinion, flatter-
185 ing a man just because he's a man
– those are the sins. Remember, not
flirting at all just conforms to an un-
pleasant stereotype: that feminists
hate all men.

Tease. A man with a good sense of
humour will enjoy it, and as an ex-
perienced woman you'll have gather-
ed plenty of ammunition over the
years. Gently puncture his pomposity
190 (most men have *some*). Learn the art
of the funny put-down (men adored
Mae West) they are excellent for grab-
bing male attention. Always accept
being teased in return.

Initiate. You can make the first move
(or even phone call). This is an im-
portant and rarely mentioned bonus
which results from 25 years of
women's liberation. Most liberated
205

men love an assertive woman, too.

Worthier and combative women have
fought major political battles for
equality – it's a responsibility for *all*
women to behave as men's equals,
150 even when flirting. Power and con-
fidence must be infinitely sexier than
that tired waiting game, old-fashion-
ed female passivity.

Touch. Removing an eyelash from
his cheek is tender and intimate and
will knock him off balance. Flicking
dandruff off his shoulders will not
work at all. If you touch the *right*
body part, his hand, his knee . . . it
could be interpreted as easy and con-
fident friendliness – or is it? Subtle-
ty will keep him guessing.

Whisper. Create an intimacy between
the two of you. Whispering some-
thing mischievous (either sexually or
not) in public might not be good
manners, but it's an excellent flirting
tactic. The same might be said for low-
ering your voice, as it will impel him
190 to lean towards you. And once he's in
that close you can capture his atten-
tion. That power is very, very sexy.

Hold back. You don't need to be coy.
But you do need to maintain control
and dignity. The cleverest flirt knows
that a man must *suspect* that she's
interested, be almost sure that she's
interested – but not quite. Once a
man has realised your intentions the
195 whole game of flirting is over any-
way. Complete disclosure while flirt-
ing is *never* a good idea and is not
sexy. Subjects to avoid when flirting
include any diseases, ex-lovers, in-
200 securities, problems at work.

Practise. Flirt gently with everyone:
the man who sells you newspapers,
a waiter, your oldest male friend,
women. For two reasons: a) people
205 respond well to a clever flirt – it's
attractive and makes them feel good;
b) it makes you realise that flirting
doesn't always have to have a sexual
intent. True flirting is charming, not
210 predatory – the ability to make your
target feel like they are the most
important thing in your world, even
if for a moment.

Flirting is *supposed* to be without
200 commitment, the dictionary says so.
It's also enjoyable and guaranteed
to add spice to every gathering. If
you take control and flirt like a real
grown-up, you'll rarely have a boring
205 evening again. ☑

JANUARY 84

DIVÃ DO ANALISTA



DR. PAULO GAUDÊNCIO
PSIQUIATRA

1 **Sempre tive uma fantasia**
secreta: transar a três. E a-
cabou acontecendo. Foi a
noite mais excitante da mi-
 5 **nha vida. Adorei tocar no cor-**
po de uma mulher e ver meu
namorado fazendo sexo
com outra. Estou feliz e con-
fusa. Será que sou normal?

10 **N**o primeiro encontro,
 ele a amarrou na cama.
 Depois, vendou seus ol-
 hos e pôs alimentos variados em
 sua boca. Outro dia, transaram nu-
 15 ma viela. A próxima escolha foi a
 torre de uma igreja com os sinos to-
 cando. Até que ele contratou uma
 prostituta para uma relação a três e
 tiveram uma briga. Essas situações
 20 mostradas no filme *9 1/2 Semanas*
de Amor encantaram muita gente.
 As pessoas achavam aquilo o máxi-
 mo. O rapaz só conseguia manter
 uma relação sexual em circunstân-
 25 cias dolorosas e perigosas. Embora
 achasse gostoso, a moça não preci-
 sava daquilo. Chegou uma hora em
 que preferiu ir embora para não
 correr o risco de entrar na neurose
 30 dele. Foi, então, que vibrei.

Imagine que existe nas pessoas um
núcleo de sexualidade sob uma ca-
mada de repressão. Se esta camada

for muito densa, um estímulo nor-
 mal não vai conseguir atravessá-la e

atingir o núcleo. No caso do ho-
 mem, tal estímulo seria uma mu-
 lher bonita ou inteligente que o ex-
 cite; para a mulher, um homem in-
 40 teressante. Quem não consegue
 chegar a esse núcleo normalmente,
 precisa do auxílio de uma "sonda".
 Esta, para mim, é a explicação para
 o sadismo e o masoquismo — uma
 45 vez que as sondas mais eficientes
 são duas emoções muito intensas: a
 dor e o medo.

Conheci um casal que tinha his-
tórias incríveis. O motor de arran-
que para seu relacionamento se-
xual era o medo. Uma vez, nus em

cima de uma moto, passaram na
 frente do prédio onde moravam a
 100 quilômetros por hora. Outro ca-
 50 sal gostava de se masturbar no trân-
 sito. Há, também, mulheres ciu-
 mentas que fantasiam seu compa-
 nheiro com outra, e a dor provoca-
 da por essa imagem as deixa exci-
 60 tadíssimas e cheias de desejo.

E tem ainda um outro lado: anos a-
 trás, tive uma paciente que, durante
 uma viagem de trabalho ao exte-
 rior, foi matar a curiosidade e co-
 65 nhecer uma boate de lésbicas. Lá,
 foi tirada para dançar e ficou bas-
 tante excitada. Voltou "lésbica",
 sem entender o que estava aconte-
 cendo com ela e, transtornada, foi
 70 me procurar para uma consulta.

O fato é que sei o que dá prazer pa-
 ra mim, logo tenho referência do
 que é prazeroso para pessoas do
 mesmo sexo. Já com o sexo oposto
 75 tenho que adivinhar, aprender. Às
 vezes o ritmo não é aquele que i-

maginei. O outro tenta orientar, me
 levar ao ponto erótico. Já duas mu-
 lheres sabem exatamente o tipo de
 carinho de que precisam para che-
 gar ao êxtase. Por isso, é a coisa
 mais normal do mundo elas senti-
 rem prazer numa relação sexual.
 Contudo, se esta é a única forma de
 80 obter orgasmo, já entra no desvio.

No exemplo da carta, essas duas
 condições se associam. De repente,
 uma fantasia virou realidade, atin-
 giu o núcleo de sexualidade. Para
 90 completar, as pessoas envolvidas
 sabiam o caminho infalível para o
 prazer. Não é de estranhar que a
 experiência tenha sido maravilhosa.
 A pergunta é: isso é normal? Bem,
 depende. Quando acontece even-
 tualmente, não há problema. É um
 tempero para o sexo. Acontece vez
 por outra, dá prazer. Que bom!
 Mas quando isso se torna essencial
 100 para que a relação aconteça, é sinal
 de que alguma coisa não está fun-
 cionando bem. O rapaz do filme só
 se excitava em situações de medo
 ou de dor porque era um doente.
 105 Por isso, me senti aliviado quando a
 moça foi embora. Ela gostava das
 "ousadias" mas não precisava delas
 para sentir prazer.

No seu caso, o importante é avaliar
 110 a quantas anda a sua repressão se-
 xual e responder à seguinte pergun-
 ta: a fantasia funciona como um
 tempero ou é um recurso indispen-
 115 sável para o prazer? ★

O dr. Paulo Gaudêncio comenta os seus proble-
 mas apenas nesta coluna. Cartas para Revista
 NOVA. Rua Geraldo Flausingo Gomes, 61, 6º
 andar, CEP 04573-060, São Paulo, SP.

GRANDE NOVA PARA QUEM ESTÁ DE

JANUARY 94

NAMORADO NOVO

1 **O que vestir na primeira vez que sair com ele? Ser ou não ser... sexy?**

Roupas justas e sensuais, só se você costuma usá-las e se sente à vontade nelas — ou se estava vestida assim quando o conheceu. Caso contrário, não use. Vista-se do jeito que se sente bem. A expert em etiqueta Danuza Leão lembra que nada impede fazer um pequeno esforço para estar elegante, bem “apresentada”, como se dizia antigamente, pois é uma maneira de homenagear a pessoa que se vai encontrar.

10 **Aonde ir se ele pedir para que eu escolha? E quanto à conta, devo dividir?**

Na primeira vez peça a ele três opções: aí você escolhe uma delas. Quando a conta chegar, tenha em mente que a coisa funciona assim: quem convida deve estar preparado para pagar; quem foi convidado para dividir. Proponha, então, pagar a metade — a partir da reação do homem, você insiste ou deixa para lá. E nada de aproveitar a ocasião para fazer um discurso sobre igualdade de sexos...

20 **Telefone para dizer que gostei muito de ter saído com ele?**

Muitas mulheres telefonam na esperança de que sua voz desperte nele o desejo de revê-las — e correm o risco de parecerem desesperadas por uma segunda chance. Por isso, se você agradeceu o convite quando se despediram, não precisa repetir a dose. Agora, se estiver mesmo decidida a telefonar, saiba que ligar no dia seguinte é sinônimo de precipitação; um ou dois dias depois é o ideal, e mais de uma semana depois soa como negligência.

30 **O que posso fazer para agradá-lo sem forçar a barra... nem constrangê-lo?**

No jogo da conquista, criatividade é sempre bem-vinda. Os homens, por exemplo, adoram receber flores. Tenho uma amiga que fez esse teste e, horas depois, recebeu em troca o tão esperado telefonema de alguém surpreso e superfeliz, dizendo que ela era incrível e, a melhor recompensa, que queria vê-la. Mandar entregar uma cesta de café da manhã também é uma idéia simples e tentadora.



Até a mais brilhante,
bem-sucedida e
das

40 mulheres já se
sentiu como uma
garotinha ao
começar um

45 Se você já viu esse
filme, aqui está
um guia que vai
ajudá-la a manter os
, fazer

50 a coisa certa e
até descobrir se
investir
nesse romance.

55 Quanto tempo preciso esperar para dizer que quero mais do sexo?

Não espere nada para dizer o que quer. A passividade leva ao desencanto na cama. Você tem de dar pistas para ele seguir. Mas com sutileza, porque homem detesta receber ordens na cama. A habilidade feminina conta muito. Desperte o desejo dele acariciando todo o seu corpo, lentamente. Sabendo o que você quer, ele se sentirá mais másculo ao satisfazê-la.

60 O que devo contar sobre mim mesma no primeiro encontro?

Encare os fatos: você estará sendo julgada e não custa segurar a vontade de se abrir totalmente em algumas horas. Ele não precisa saber, de cara, que você já experimentou umas trezentas dietas ou que tem insônia. Descobrirá *sozinho* suas facetas menos atraentes. Além disso, especialistas em comportamento sabem que aquele que mais fala é o mais propenso a se apaixonar e também a desencorajar o orador menos convicto.

70 Qual é a hora certa de falar sobre AIDS e o passado sexual de cada um?

É fundamental discutir esses assuntos, mesmo que ambos não pertençam a um grupo de risco. Uma mulher inteligente sempre dá um jeitinho de puxar a conversa nos primeiros encontros para saber o quanto ele está consciente de que, mesmo sendo heterossexual, não está imune à doença. E, mesmo que ele jure ter tido poucos e longos relacionamentos, nem pense em querer dispensar o único cuidado possível contra a AIDS.

80 E se na hora H ele se recusar a usar camisinha?

Interpretações não faltam para a recusa dele: pode ser que não se importe de verdade com você, talvez esteja pensando em *se* satisfazer, é um incoseqüente, não usou camisinha com outras também, está constrangido de colocá-la, teme não conseguir manter a ereção... É sábio ir com calma nesse momento delicado e até concordar com o parceiro — afinal, ele tem razão quando acha desagradável fazer amor usando preservativo. Só que *tem* de usar. Então é melhor fazer a coisa da forma mais gostosa possível. Como? Por exemplo, proponha que você coloque a camisinha nele (sem interromper as carícias, o contato da mão, os movimentos lentos e excitantes, tudo vai funcionar como parte da relação sexual), dispense mais tempo ou até dias apenas explorando seus corpos para aumentar a intimidade, desarme-o com descontração (quando um namorado novo ameaçou dizer *não*, tirei da bolsa as últimas novidades que tinha trazido de uma viagem; ele, curioso, topou experimentá-las).

90 Bancar a difícil, mantê-lo na corda bamba, é uma boa estratégia?

Se ser difícil é não sufocá-lo, ter vida própria e não estar sempre à disposição dele, então vá em frente. Deve ser gentil e carinhosa, sem abrir mão da sua independência e dos seus interesses pessoais. Se fizer jogo duro e fingir que não está dando bola, ele até vai tentar, com empenho, conquistá-la. Só que estará preparando uma armadilha para si própria — quem garante que não irá se tornar apenas um objeto do desejo e não a mulher amada?

Se ele acaba de sair de um amor, como sei se não vai voltar para a ex?

É natural sentir-se assim, já que os homens geralmente não se preocupam em “dar um tempo” entre um envolvimento e outro. Vão logo procurando uma nova companhia para não dar o braço a torcer que se sentem solitários. Se voltam para a ex, é uma grande incógnita — inclusive para eles. Sendo assim, antes que enlouqueça por conta do fantasma da ex, comece a dizer a si mesma que ele vai sair perdendo se trocá-la por ela, ignore a competição e leve a relação adiante, aproveitando o que ela tem de bom. Também observe como ele se comporta, para perceber se não está saindo com você apenas por causa do sexo nem está a fim só de um namorico *light*, embora seja atencioso e bom de cama.

Descobrir afinidade no sexo é garantia de que a relação vai decolar?

Se você é do tipo que, na manhã seguinte a uma deliciosa noitada, já começa a sonhar com uma vida inteira de felicidade, ponha os pés no chão. Por mais espetacular que tenha sido, não é garantia de um bom relacionamento. O sexo é uma habilidade que se aprende. Em outras palavras: o fato de um homem dominar esta arte não significa que se importa com você como pessoa.

E se ele nunca falar o que faz quando não estão juntos?

Uma coisa é manter a privacidade — não abrir mão de ter vida própria, passeios, amigos, cooper, hobbies, o que for. Outra é manter uma vida secreta. Trocando em miúdos, os homens que valem a pena, amigos e bons amantes, conversam naturalmente sobre a própria vida e sobre esses prazeres pessoais aos quais todos nós temos direito. Os que fazem segredo sobre isso via de regra estão escondendo alguma coisa (quem sabe uma outra mulher). Caso perceba alguma tensão no ar ou se sinta pouco à vontade e insegura, deve estar metida com o homem errado.

O que fazer se me atrapalhar e o primeiro encontro for um desastre?

Depois de algum tempo sozinha, é natural a gente perder um pouco a flexibilidade que todo início de romance exige. Coisas do tipo: ele ir abrir a porta do carro e você já estar na calçada, passar por cima dele como um trator e decidir sozinho o pedido no restaurante... são, de certa forma, irrelevantes. Se não perder o rebolado, dão até um charme e quebram o gelo. Isso não vai impedi-lo de se apaixonar por você. Caso a relação decole, vocês dois vão rir disso um dia.

Como saber se estou diante de um conquistador barato?

É muito bom ouvir palavras de amor, todas nós sabemos disso. Mas o que vale é o comportamento dele. Como ele a trata? Telefona todas as vezes que promete e atende (sem pressa) quando você liga? O rosto dele se ilumina quando a vê? Reserva tempo para a relação? Você acha que está no alto (ou quase lá) da lista de prioridades dele? Sintonize seu radar anticonquistadores: afinal, sentimos quando alguém se preocupa conosco, não é necessário questioná-lo a esse respeito.

160 Se apresentá-lo aos meus pais, ele vai se sentir pressionado?

Um amigo diz que fica mais constrangido quando ela quer conhecer os pais *dele*. Relaxe. Numa pesquisa de NOVA, 85% dos homens res-ponderam que encaram a apresentação aos pais como uma forma de aprofundar a relação, não mais como uma indireta para comprar as alianças. Assim como nós, eles também viraram gatos escaldados; e apostam que conhecendo a família vão saber um pouco mais sobre com quem estão se relacionando.

170 Como segurar a ansiedade se não paro de fantasiar o nosso futuro juntos?

Um pouco de entusiasmo tem o seu charme, mas pode assustá-lo quando passa das medidas. Não é novidade que os homens foram ensinados a lutar por aquilo que querem. Se a gente dá tudo de mão beijada, não sobra nada para alcançarem. Por isso, não transforme-o no sr. Confiança. Um certo tato, uma pitadinha de mistério sobre os seus sentimentos são mil vezes mais eficientes. Depois, pode ser que ele seja o homem mais maravilhoso do mundo e dê tudo certo. Mas talvez nada disso aconteça. Não jogue no escuro, vá com calma.

Se perguntar quando vamos nos ver de novo, respondo "Que tal amanhã?"

Você pode olhar bem dentro dos olhos dele e responder: "Quando você quiser". Mas isso só se estiver cem por cento segura de que ele vai procurá-la. Se não, na semana que vem é uma boa resposta.

Como não tomar decisões precipitadas com relação ao sexo?

Recusar não é sinônimo de caretice ou de perder o futuro parceiro. Os homens, aliás, preferem que o sexo venha depois de um contato maior, um pouco mais de intimidade entre os dois. Por que, então, usam todo o seu charme para tentar nos convencer do contrário? Fizemos esta pergunta a trinta homens e percebemos que é pressão social, desencargo de consciência... No fundo, esperam que você responda *não*. Sendo assim, se não quiser se arrepender, nem tente perder a noção do perigo naqueles momentos mágicos em que a química entre vocês assume o comando. Só faça sexo quando estiver preparada.

Pega bem convidá-lo para sair se realmente gostar dele?

Vamos definir o que é "sair". É passar algumas horas juntos e envolve a possibilidade de, mais cedo ou mais tarde, acontecer algo mais entre vocês. Se ele também estiver atraído por você, o mais natural é que tome a iniciativa de convidá-la — até prefere que seja assim. Não estamos defendendo a passividade, mas, às vezes, é mais inteligente e menos desgastante nadar na direção da maré. Mesmo assim, se está louca para sair com esse felizardo e não tem paciência de esperar o telefone tocar, lembre-se de que o homem só precisa de um sinal muito sutil para ligar as antenas do desejo. Uma lição básica é não demonstrar segundas intenções e transmitir confiança em si mesma no seu convite. Esse é o começo de tudo.

Se ele também estiver louco por mim, continuo devagar ou deixo acontecer?

Não dá para agir o tempo todo com a razão se você está gostando dele. Mas... e se for apenas atração física? Se não conseguir perceber a diferença, corre um enorme risco de se frustrar ao se entregar de corpo e alma. E será mais uma a ficar sem entender por que muitos homens caem fora depois de uma ou duas semanas, apesar de terem murmurado *eu te amo* na segunda vez que fizeram sexo. Pelo sim e pelo não, convém caminhar num ritmo mais lento, o que não impede que você seja carinhosa, gentil, alegre e demonstre interesse.

Acredito se, no segundo encontro, ele disser que está apaixonado?

Apenas sorria. Não é novidade que alguns homens usam essa expressão mágica porque acham que assim será mais fácil levar uma mulher para a cama. Outros, quando acham uma mulher incrivelmente atraente, no fundo, não sabem como expressar o que sentem. Não interprete a paixão a que ele se refere no segundo encontro como um convite para conhecer a família dele ou uma jura de amor eterno. Dê tempo ao tempo para descobrir o real significado das palavras.

O que respondo se ele só me procurar durante a semana? Topo sair?

Tudo bem se você não tiver outro compromisso e lhe convier. Isso porque se for encontrá-lo somente nos dias convenientes para ele, vai acabar fazendo com que sua vida gire em torno da sua disponibilidade. Além disso, analise o quanto você é importante para este homem. Se nunca pode vê-la às sextas e aos sábados, tem alguma coisa errada nesta história. A não ser que ele seja piloto de avião, dono de restaurante...

Como fico mais segura de que desta vez é para valer?

É sorte, é mágica, é quando de repente tudo se encaixa e as coisas fluem com facilidade. Alguém já disse que: "O amor pela pessoa certa é como água — ela acha sozinha seu caminho". Não tem nada a ver com um relacionamento truncado, com grandes impedimentos, desencontros e frustrações. Se ele for o companheiro certo, não pode acontecer de você querer vê-lo todos os dias e ele preferir reservar só uma noite por semana para o namoro.

Mostrar que sei coisas que ele não sabe assusta?

Ser experiente é uma qualidade que deixa as mulheres realmente confusas, principalmente no campo sexual. É bem verdade que alguns homens têm medo de ficar em desvantagem, por isso preferem mulheres menos inteligentes e menos familiarizadas com a arte do amor (os mais machistas logo deduzem que você dormiu com um batalhão). Isso não significa abrir mão de sua autenticidade. Apenas tenha jogo de cintura para não parecer uma professora de educação sexual, leve seu novo namorado com jeitinho. Quanto aos seus conhecimentos em outros terrenos, fale de um em especial que ele pouco domina — sentimentos — e vai admirá-la muito mais. ★

FEBRUARY 34

Catherine made dancing look like foreplay. Her black leather miniskirt slithered up and down her hips as she slowly gyrated her pelvis. When she raised her arms over her head, her breasts nearly slipped free from her low-cut,

clingy black top. Quite clearly, she wasn't wearing a bra. Even more obvious that night was Catherine's goal: she intended to seduce her dance partner. The two were on their second date. Earlier in the day, she'd told a co-worker that she hoped the evening would end in bed. And if her companion's bedazzled countenance was anything to go by, Catherine would get what she wanted.

Back at their table, Catherine frequently touched him — but not in any of the ways women typically use to express their affection in public. No proprietary straightening of the tie, no hand casually placed upon his leg. Her moves were much bolder: a finger twisting between the buttons of his shirt, or stroking his wrist, right up under the shirt cuff.

"You could almost see the steam coming off his face," reports Catherine's friend, Jenny, who was there that evening. "And, apparently, it was the beginning of something wonderful. They've been seeing each other for months now, and Catherine wouldn't be with him if he didn't satisfy her sexually.

"I wish I could be more like her, but I don't have the nerve. I'm too afraid of rejection. It takes me a long time to reach the point in a relationship when I can initiate sex. I could never come on to a man on our first date."

The sexually aggressive woman has no such inhibitions: she propositions men as easily as most of us play coy, never hesitates to tell her partner what she needs. If he can't handle her directness, she dismisses him, reasoning that she's better off with a man who lets her take the lead.

driven by anger

Not all such women are acting out of healthy desire. Some are motivated by a deep-rooted hostility towards men. Take 27-year-old Jocelyn, for

example. When she focuses on a man she wants, she positively radiates energy — flirting, cajoling and exhorting. But, beneath that unabashedly hungry façade of hers, anger seethes, eventually surfacing like five extra pounds on a dieter who has secretly been snacking on junk food. Ultimately, all of her playfulness is replaced by the hard edge of contempt.

Not surprisingly, Jocelyn prefers

the lure of the sexually

timid sorts. Flattered by the initial attention, they're receptive to her touch at first. As her tone harshens, however, most begin to pull back. A few will ignore the danger signs and fall into her bed, but they inevitably flee after one night. "I was too much for him," Jocelyn later confides to friends. "He just couldn't deal with a woman who took charge."

So why bother with shy types in the first place? Women like Jocelyn want to be rejected, says therapist Judith Wood. "They're actually using aggression to distance themselves from men, subconsciously counting on scaring a man away. Usually, they do so before the seduction, and even, sometimes, during the initial encounter. They're afraid of intimacy or are worried about being

abandoned. And by intimidating a man sexually, they effectively emasculate him, so rendering him completely harmless.

"Healthily aggressive women act from libido, not from neurosis," continues Wood. "They are simply more confident about pursuing a man than the average woman. If they do get rebuffed, they don't dwell on it — their self-regard is too high."

what makes desire healthy?

We still forget how long the female sex drive was misunderstood. Only when Masters and Johnson presented their ground-breaking work in the Sixties did anyone begin to grasp the importance of the clitoris. And it wasn't until the 1976 publication of Shere Hite's *The Hite Report* that we had the first real mandate for equal sexual pleasure.

The healthy aggressor has always

known that good sex is her due. This sense of entitlement, however, may be threatening — especially now, during all the recent anti-feminist backlash. "We're living through another period of repression," says Georgia, 44, who came of age in the midst of the sexual revolution. "Once again, women are embarrassed, ashamed to admit to lust. It's okay to talk about wanting love and marriage and kids these days, but not about craving sex. I'll tell you something, though: what I need most is satisfaction."

And a refusal to live by the new traditionalism can help to fuel a woman's desire for sexual control. As she sees it, being the aggressor is empowering. "Getting a man to want me is very exhilarating," confesses Danielle, 22. "Especially if ▶ 146

BY SUSAN CRAIN BAKOS

DOESN'T EVERYONE HAVE THE RIGHT TO FEEL GOOD ABOUT THEMSELVES?

CELLULITE.

The unfairness of it. Why is it that only women have to suffer? What causes cellulite and the embarrassment of the so-called "orange-peel" effect?

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SEXUALLY AGGRESSIVE

96 ◀ I wanted him first. And it's also exciting to make a man do things that he wouldn't normally do with a woman. Two of my lovers have told
140 me that they had never performed cunnilingus before they started going out with me. I just go right ahead and *demand* it."

Lack of inhibition doesn't make
145 these take-charge women promiscuous. "I do have a strong libido," admits Barbara, who's just turned 27. "I am multiple orgasmic – and I *need* those orgasms. But I don't have -a
150 history of jumping from one bed to another. When I'm with a man – and I'm always with a man – I'm strictly monogamous."

how she woos them

For centuries, sexy dress and coy
155 flirtation have been our gender's most powerful weapons in the game of seduction. The aggressive woman also displays her body in alluring attire (but never looks tarty). When it
160 comes to behaviour, however, she is just like a man – utterly straightforward. "I shouldn't have to act subservient to get sex," says Karen. "I am fiercely independent, proud of
165 being female. But the ways women typically attract men make no sense to me. I can't flick my hair around and play hard to get. And I never say no when I mean yes."

170 Some aggressors do play by the rules – at least in the beginning. Loath to scare away any potential partners, they're willing to conceal their fierce drive for a time. "I do rely
175 on feminine wiles to attract a man," confesses Deborah. "But when we finally do begin sleeping together,
180 I completely let loose, initiating sex, introducing the toys, orchestrating the games. Some of my friends complain about being bored, but they won't take it upon themselves to create the excitement."

Frequently, talk becomes an outlet
185 for women with an up-front style. "I find a way to introduce sex into conversation," says Meg. "I called my current boyfriend after meeting him at a party and told him I wanted to
190 have an affair with him. He suggested we have dinner first!"

Touching is another way that these women communicate interest. "When I'm with a man I want as a lover, I'll

135 put my hand on his thigh before he has made any move on me," says Carolyn. "But I won't get that bold unless I've seen desire in his eyes."

200 And the healthy aggressor never hesitates to articulate her needs, as Mary, 27, reveals. Writhing under her lover's touch, she gasps urgent, heated instructions: "Yes, please – just there. No! Yes, yes! Now, *harder*." And the sound of her voice, she says, excites him almost as much as her touch. Few men will take instructions from a drill sergeant, however. Telling him to "give it to me like a man," warns Gale Greene, author of *Delicious Sex* (Futura, \$4.99) may immediately kill desire. "To talk like that is actually misplaced aggression," says Greene, who goes on to warn that such angry demands may even result in your partner suffering from impotence or premature ejaculation.

220 Asking nicely doesn't mean you can't be graphic. "My friends constantly complain that they don't get enough oral sex," says Sara. "Well, I tell my lover that I need that kind of stimulation. And I tell him specifically how I want it. Men respond to hot and dirty talk." Physical guidance is also helpful. "Dave says that I'm all over the bed in taking my pleasure," continues Sara. "It's true. I know I need clitoral stimulation to come, so I'll get on top of him – the best position for me."

235 Being forceful can backfire if a man senses anger. "Scaring men out of bed finally got me into therapy," confesses Lisa. "My pattern? I would fake orgasm and pretend to be quite thrilled with their lovemaking. But, eventually, I'd get so frustrated that I'd admit to putting on an act. By then I'd be so mad, I'd become really, nasty." Such hostility, she realises now, was rooted mainly in her own fears of physical intimacy.

unbridled passion

250 For the healthy aggressor, sex is a joyful activity. And while her more passive sisters may fault her for being unladylike, men are turned on by her unbridled passion. "Men have a much better time in bed when a woman lets herself go," insists Joyce, 29. "My lovers have always said I'm

better than anyone else they've been with. Maybe their other girlfriends tried harder to please than me. I go after my own pleasure."

In fact, a woman's selfish enjoyment comes as a tremendous relief to her partner: when she goes after her



own orgasm, he feels less pressure to perform. So don't believe that putting his needs first makes you a better lover – lustily pursuing your own satisfaction rates higher.

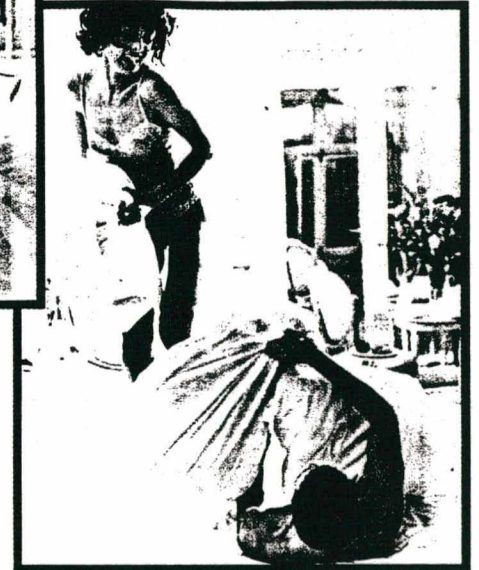
how to take control

It's true that some men are scared off by women who like to take charge; other men may welcome an assertive stance – but only after they're well past the initial stages of courtship. And since nobody likes rejection, you're probably better off playing by the old rules of seduction – at least until your romance develops. "I don't like being turned down," says Ellen, 24, bluntly. "Men often want the first time to be their idea. To salvage my ego – and to ensure I get the sex I want – I'm willing to go along with the game."

Even when a man seems unthreatened by boldness, he may later reveal himself to be less than comfortable. "I called someone I had been dating casually and told him that I wanted to sleep with him," recalls Janet, 19. "He eagerly accepted, so we met round at his place. But then I noticed how he suddenly became

very domineering. He held my arms at my sides while he performed cunnilingus and when I tried to get on top afterwards, he wouldn't let me."

Performance anxiety may also set in when a woman takes the lead. "I worked up considerable courage to seduce one man," says Linda, 37. "He seemed willing – until we got into bed and he lost his erection. He said it was my fault for being too pushy." Letting a partner orchestrate your first few encounters doesn't mean you can't gain more control later. Just remember that it's best to hold off until he trusts you. When you are sure that he feels safe, uncage the tigress! ☑



call of the wild

• Understand that the real issue is not what he's doing wrong, but how you can ensure your own satisfaction.

• Be as demanding as you can without barking orders. If you feel shy about speaking up, read aloud from an erotic book that excites you.

• Don't wait for him to offer what you crave. Good manners are for the table, not your bedroom.

• Respond lavishly when he touches you the way you wish to be touched. "I want more of that" is always well received.

• Don't be timid about initiating sex once you sense he might be comfortable.

• Toss out notions of fairness. If you need more oral stimulation than he does, feeling guilty is pointless and will only dampen desire.

• Stay playful! After all, good loving should never get too serious.

JUNE 24

WOMEN
on top



AVA GARDNER



the use and abuse of your

1 In the old days, they used to call it "It".
 Silent movie star Clara Bow was the
 original "It" girl, and with it she built
 a great career, made some tidy money
 5 and enslaved millions of men. Those were
 the days when nice girls had never even
 heard the S-word, let alone the P-word.
 Nowadays we know it by its real name,
 and we're not afraid to say it: sexual
 10 power, the most immediate, the most
 basic and the rawest source of power
 the world has ever known.

In a world dominated by men, this has
 been the one area in which women have
 15 reigned supreme, the one function no
 man could usurp, one attribute available
 to every female without respect of birth,
 social position, wealth or upbringing.

A woman's sexuality, like a poor boy's
 20 skill with his fists or his feet, was

21 Sex is power. Women use it to get on,
 while man after man falls prey to its
 primal force. Don't apologise for it. Let
 your strongest asset work for you.

By Isobel Morgan.



RITA HAYWORTH

sexual power

25 her passport to the top. Trading sex for self-advancement when women had so few other opportunities was a strictly practical thing to do. And a great many women have laid end to end a suc-
30 cession of men who made King Kong look like Daniel Day-Lewis, just to get on, get up and get out.

Sexually powerful women have had a colossal impact on history: often they
35 seem to have been the *only* women in history, because sex was the only power women had. Think of Delilah, who subjugated Samson. Think of Helen of Troy: it wasn't just a pretty face that launched
40 those thousand ships. Or take Cleopatra, Shakespeare's "serpent of old Nile", or Anne Boleyn, without whom the Church



45 **NO FOOL LIKE AN OLD FOOL.** Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou fell for former air stewardess Dmitria Liki (above) and left his wife. Following public outrage, a wedding was arranged in order not to put his election campaign in jeopardy. He lost.

of England would never have existed,
50 and many, many more.

And think of the men who have suc-
cumbed to the sexual power of women throughout history, from Edward VIII to John F Kennedy. In thrall to a woman,
55 a man may lose his job, his mind, his home, his wife, his seat in government, his future, when he feels that power. Yet, although men may seem to be the arbiters of sexual power, it is not theirs
60 to bestow. Because there is a world of difference between sex appeal and sexual power: the one lies in what men think of you, the other in what you think of *yourself*. Sex appeal is in the
65 eye of the beholder: sexual power is yours, to do with as you will.

Sexual power is not bestowed by men telling you that you turn them on: that is a projection of their feelings which
70 can arise without your knowledge or consent. When the sex goddesses of today — Pfeiffer, Scacchi, Stone and others ►

women on top

◀ - protest that they don't think they're sexy, they tell the truth: because even having worldwide sex appeal for others will not necessarily confer sexual power on the woman herself.

So it's not the power to charm men that we're talking about, although this may be a by-product of possessing it. Neither are we talking cute and cuddly, nor silk and satin underwear, nor even black stockings and suspenders, however good they may make men feel. Sexual power is an inner attribute, an inherent sense of strength and confidence in yourself as a woman, a personal feel-good factor that you carry about with you even if there isn't a man around for miles. True sexual power is high-octane stuff, and it gives you the oomph to deal with the world. That's why we need to acknowledge it, understand it, make it work for us



DON'T CRY FOR HER. Eva Perón, one-time porn starlet and radio actress who became the mistress, and later wife, of the military dictator of the Argentine, Juan Perón. As his wife, she virtually co-governed the country. She had a huge following and was the unofficial ruler until her death from cancer at 33.

strength, but it's also the reason why women are not reaching the top in the numbers that they deserve. It is an eternal paradox that the very organs which give women this unique power in the private world - breasts, uterus, vagina, even kissable lips or long hair - simultaneously disqualify her from holding or demon-

from time immemorial: whore, witch, harpy, virago, harridan, scold, shrew, slag, bag, pig, cow, dog, bitch.

Do anything to show your power, this means, and they'll have a bad word to lay on you for it: pushy, bossy, difficult, demanding, nannyish, nagging, hysterical. The tragedy is that this so often works to undermine women. Even confident, bright, strong women can come to believe the negative propaganda instead of their own inner voice urging them on. So you may have the power, and not feel it. Or you may know it's there if you want it, but life seems so impossible and you seem to be paying for it all the time.

Yet no one can make you pay if you won't accept the bill. With sexual power, you have your own source of strength, one you should never let anyone else take away. The only losers are those who make the mistake of believing that they don't require anything else: that this one thing will carry them through life without work or effort, without commitment and without cost. This is it, they crow to themselves as soon as they feel they've hit it. Look at me, I've arrived. "But the reality is that the woman who uses her sexual power *and only that* power is flirting with the danger of seeing all that she has won sooner or later simply slip away.

But sexual power isn't all there is. And it doesn't last forever. Unlike education, qualifications, training ▶

POWER BEHIND THE THRONE. Twice married Mrs Simpson managed to drop her distinctly *un-fatale* first name, Bessie, after the failure of her marriages. Reinventing herself as Wallis, the American socialite captivated Edward, Prince of Wales. The love affair continued after he succeeded to the throne. Rumours that the new King would marry a divorcee was the biggest scandal to hit royalty, triggering a constitutional crisis and forcing his abdication.

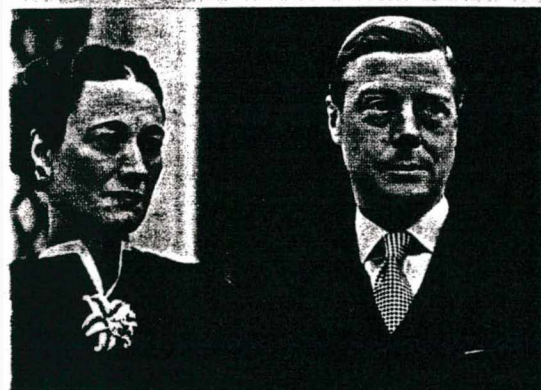
strating it in the public world of men. "Nature having given woman so much power," Dr Johnson observed, "men have wisely given her very little." The power we have over men, the biological ability to bear children, the capacity to distract, bedazzle, bewitch: this is the force which has led men to create so many systems to keep us down, to build so many obstacles and barriers, to develop so many bolt-holes or "men-only" no-go areas for women, from working men's pubs and clubs to the Houses of Parliament.

The fear men feel shows up in the labels they have been sticking on us

in ways that are appropriate today.

The women who can do this will have the world at their feet, and most of them do not need crowns or coronets to reward their prowess. For them sex is power, and they feel free to exploit it to the full. Some women use it to get husbands, jobs, big houses: it is this which makes a chalet girl mistress of the manor, or an erstwhile flight attendant the wife of the multi-millionaire international industrialist who just happened to catch her plane.

Inevitably, though, a force so primal and all-encompassing has its dark side. This may be a woman's greatest



WOMEN on top

◀ or experience, you lose it once you move out of that role – become a mother for instance. As “mother” you are no longer focused simply on your man, and you are not the same sort of sexual being in his eyes. Now your child is the beloved who feels your power and your man can feel that, by some unforeseen process, he is mysteriously relegated to being the little boy again, cast out of the charmed circle of the game that only two can play.

Even if you don't have children, every woman inevitably loses this particular power as she gets older. The middle years should be the time when we compensate for the loss of our looks by growing in strength, authority, wisdom and womanhood. So we will be bereft at 40 if we think that we have lost the only thing that counts. And any girl who depends on this as her primary resource, who takes the male estimation of it as the most important thing in life, will be in terrible trouble later on.

Even when you have it, it will not work for you at all times. For some

Who's who of the weaker sex – the men who've fallen prey to women's sexual power:

● **Mark Antony, whose love for Cleopatra caused the disastrous war with Caesar. Following Antony's defeat, they both committed suicide.**

● **The 19th century Irish politician Charles Stewart Parnell, “uncrowned king of Ireland”, who destroyed his career through his passion for a married woman, Kitty O'Shea.**

● **Conservative Party Chairman Cecil Parkinson resigned over his affair with Sara Keays. She claimed that he had promised to marry her and then didn't, despite her being pregnant.**

● **Also in recent times: War minister John Profumo, the football manager Tommy Docherty, MPs David Mellor, Timothy Yeo and Hartley Booth, Bill Clinton.**

women, preferring the exercise of power or making money. Others get so much fun from polo or powerboats or fast cars or world travel that even if what you have works on them like a charm, it will never last. The woman was never born whom all men desired. Every woman who has been labelled a world-class man-magnet knows at least one who got away.

So your sexual power can work for you, or against you, or not at all. You can use it, you can abuse it, or you can choose not to use it. When you do, success is not guaranteed, and any fleeting survey will show clear winners and clear losers among the

the use and abuse of your sexual power

players of this game. Winners are those who know what they have, and what they are dealing with as well.

Women like Elizabeth Taylor have gained their status by deploying their sexual power and then skilfully parlaying it into something else. Something of a financial or business nature, as a general rule. Certainly, it has to be something which will give control.

To be a winner, you needn't have to have hung onto your man, just as long as you come out of it keeping what you value – your independence, your freedom, and all your life-support systems like your cash and your credibility. If you rely on your sexual power alone, you'll be a loser. If you rely on getting control, you'll win, win, win.

Where would you position yourself on this scale? Work it out. We all have it, so you will have just as much as the next female, maybe more. But we all need guidance about how to acknowledge it and, more importantly, how and when we should make it work for us.



CHINA IN HER HANDS. Revolutionary Jiang Qing, the Chinese actress and film star who made her name appearing in Ibsen's feminist classic, *A Doll's House*, then became the wife and “evil demon” of the ageing Communist party chairman Mao Tse Tung. She became Minister for Culture, played a key role in the 1966-69 Cultural Revolution and was a leading member of the infamous Shanghai-based “Gang of Four” who attempted to seize power in China in 1976. Although she was quickly overthrown after Mao's death and imprisoned for life in 1981, Qing enjoyed almost 40 years at the top and remains the only woman in the modern world to seize and maintain such comprehensive political power.

REMEMBER THESE POINTS TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR SEXUAL POWER:

DO

- Be aware that you have it.
- Think carefully before you use it.
- Plan when, where and how to deploy it – this is a game of skill, not a mortar attack.
- Use it to make an impact.
- Allow it to position you as a force to be reckoned with.
- Harness it to help you get your own way in a difficult situation.

DON'T

- Rely on it as a substitute for intelligence, application, initiative.
- Think it will serve you just as well as training and experience.
- Spend your life flying by the seat ▶

women on top

345 of your pants.

- Be too blatant about it.
- Assume that you can make it work on everyone.
- Be a bad loser if it fails.

350 Think it will last for ever.

We cannot deny our gender – who wants to, anyway? Nor can we stop men thinking of sex – sex in general, sex in

355 particular, sex with Madonna, sex with the Princess of Wales, sex with us. Each of us needs to do what it takes to succeed.

And it's a lot easier if we are

360 aware of the flame we carry and use it with the greatest of discretion. Only by doing this can we learn to develop into something more, to ex-

365 perience the human-power of personal authority, the intelligence, style, savvy and charm of a woman at ease with herself, at ease with what she has and with the world at large.

370 With that, even when we have lost the power to turn heads, we will always be able to rule hearts and minds – most important of all, our own. ☐



FORBIDDEN FRUIT. Nell Gwynn started her working life as an orange-seller at the Theatre Royal in London before graduating to performing small comic parts on stage. Her vivacity and charm endeared her to Charles II, who soon took her as his mistress. She died at the age of 37 after bearing him two sons.

the use
and abuse
of your
sexual
power

The winners

Mandy Rice-Davies

Emily Barr

Joan Collins

Linda Lusardi

Ivana Trump

Brigitte Bardot

Princess of Wales

Joanna Lumley

Jackie Onassis

Kate Capshaw

Iman

Irene Clark

The losers

Christine Keeler

Antonia de Sancha

Linda Lovelace

Samantha Fox

Fiona Wright

Marilyn Monroe

Duchess of York

Patsy (Ab Fab)

Christina Onassis

Amy Irving

Angie Bowie

Lizzie Aspel

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