

THE REPRESENTATION OF WORKINGWOMEN IN SPANISH TELEVISION FICTION

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INTRODUCTION

Television

The hypothesis of the active audience converged, in the nineties, with the advent of a second golden age of television whose commitment to the aesthetics and narrative complexity of the programs earned it the name of "quality television".

Woman

In contrast to post-feminist optimism, critical feminism denounces the entrenchment of an icon of a woman akin to neoliberalism: attractive, consumerist and ready to exercise her sexuality at all times.

Labor sphere


Television fiction rarely bets on an original representation of the dominant and independent woman, but rather opts for the reproduction of characteristics associated with masculinity, such as aggressiveness, individualism, competitiveness and decision making, as well as authority and the ability to plan.


METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS


This study is part of a project on the construction of female identities in Spanish television fiction and the Internet. The research proposes a methodology that combines quantitative (SPSS) and qualitative (socio-semiotics) methods to analyze the narrative construction of working women.

Table 1. Work situation of female characters in Spanish television fiction broken down by age


Age	Unemployed	Work	Study	Housewife	Retired	Prostit.	Others	Not known	N/A	Total
4-9	0.0%	0.0%	23.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%	5.3%	0.0%	2.7%
10-4	0.0%	0.0%	12.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.3%	0.0%	1.6%
15-17	0.0%	1.3%	29.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.5%	6.0%	4.1%
18-23	19.0%	11.1%	32.3%	2.4%	0.0%	60.0%	14.0%	19.3%	20.0%	14.7%
24-29	19.0%	20.4%	3.1%	7.3%	0.0%	20.0%	15.8%	10.5%	20.0%	16.2%
30-45	38.1%	44.7%	0.0%	31.7%	4.8%	20.0%	47.4%	29.8%	32.0%	36.2%
46-65	19.0%	19.4%	0.0%	53.7%	14.3%	0.0%	19.3%	21.1%	18.0%	19.2%
+65	4.8%	3.1%	0.0%	4.9%	81.0%	0.0%	1.8%	5.3%	4.0%	5.4%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%


 Women workers in Spanish fiction perform a limited range of work activities, among which the following stand out: those with university education, unskilled workers and waitresses and sales clerks.

 Waitresses and sales clerks tend to be the most popular female characters in their environment, with the highest percentage of employment problems.

 On the other hand, the characters that are represented with the secretary stereotype, usually face problems derived from the boss's authoritarianism, which occasionally lead to sexual abuse.

CONCLUSIONS

 A high number of female characters with qualified professions are dedicated to the attention and care of other people: primary and secondary school teachers, nurses, caregivers and physiotherapists. And they are not usually questioned by their superiors or by the rest of the male characters.

The analysis confirms the different hypotheses of the research and highlights the dialectic between the achievements obtained since the first representations of working women in television fiction and the resistance of some stereotypes "strongly rooted in patriarchal normative designs". 

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