Approaching Masculinity in Dolce & Gabbana Advertising: A Visual Critical Discourse Analysis

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Abstract

Different models of masculinity have been introduced in society and, consequently, in discourse in the last decades. This article will approach the portrayal of masculinity in a sample of Dolce & Gabbana advertisements published in their newsletter from 1 January 2016 until 1 January 2021. The main objectives of this article are the following: 1) to deconstruct the main visual strategies used by Dolce & Gabbana to represent men in its newsletter; and 2) to characterize the main types of men's representation as social actors, in order to observe and systematize the predominant models of masculinity.

The analysis will be done taking into consideration the model of visual social actors proposed by van Leeuwen (2008) and visual grammar (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2021), in order to deconstruct the main characteristics of the visuals and to observe how masculinity is portrayed from the visual point of view. The findings indicate that the predominant model is connected with classical masculinity although there are texts in which other types of masculinities are presented.

Key words
Visual critical discourse analysis; masculinity; gender studies; visual grammar; advertising

1. Introduction

Media in general and advertising in particular have a crucial role in the creation of public opinion because they tend to give credibility to the social realities transmitted by them. Therefore, people's perceptions, knowledge and opinion are shaped by the media, due to their power in the social construction of reality (Fitzgerald and Young 2006; Hackley and Hackley 2017; van Dijk 2009). In consequence, it is important to analyse advertising discourse because it is one of the dominant discourses in society. Its main purpose is to persuade people to pursue services or products at the same time that it reproduces social reality (Danilina, Kizyan and Maksimova 2019; Del Saz Rubio 2018). In a sense, there are many social realities that people just know through the way the media represent them, following Brooks and Hebert (2006: 297):

> Much of what audiences know and care about is based on the images, symbols, and narratives in radio, television, film, music, and other media. How individuals construct their social identities, how they come to understand what it means to be male, female, black, white, Asian, Latino, Native American—even rural or urban—is shaped by commodified texts produced by media for audiences that are increasingly segmented by the social constructions of race and gender. Media, in short, are central to what ultimately come to represent our social realities.

I am interested in the visual representation of the male body in a sample of advertising discourse, to deepen understanding of the discursive construction of masculinity. Thus, the advertisements that the luxury Italian fashion designer Dolce & Gabbana uses to publicise their products in the newsletter that the company publishes online regularly have been chosen for this study. The advertisements have been chosen because of Dolce & Gabbana's worldwide popularity, for the variety of products it sells and for having men, women and children as target audiences. This company was founded by Domenico Dolce and Stefano Gabbana in 1985.

This article will analyse the visual representation social actors in general and men in particular, i.e., as participants in discourse (van Leeuwen 2008) in the advertisements of the globalised brand Dolce & Gabbana, in order to systematize the main ways in which men are portrayed visually in the corpus associated with patterns of masculinity. In this sense, I will explore if the classical model of hegemonic masculinity is still present and if there are also other models of masculinity. Thus, this study is justified because the visual representation of masculinity in advertisements needs further analysis in scholarly works.

The hypothesis in this article is that Dolce & Gabbana advertising uses men's bodies less often than it uses women's bodies and that the representation of men is associated with hegemonic masculinity. The main objectives of this study are: 1) to deconstruct the main visual strategies used by Dolce & Gabbana to represent social actors in general and men in particular in its newsletter; and 2) to characterize the main types of men's representation as social actors, in order to observe and systematize the predominant models of masculinity in the texts analysed.

The main research questions in this article are the following: What are the main visual choices used to represent social actors in general and men in particular in a sample of Dolce & Gabbana advertising? and what are the main ways of portraying masculinity in the sample of advertisements analysed? These questions will be answered by analysing the main visual characteristics of the corpus.

This article is divided in the following sections: the next section concentrates on the theoretical frameworks, followed by the literature review. Section 4 offers the data and methodology of the study, and section 5 offers the analysis. The paper finishes by offering a discussion and some conclusions.

2. Theoretical frameworks

Gender studies, critical discourse analysis (CDA) and visual critical discourse analysis will be the main frameworks present in this study. The fact that this article is aimed at approaching gender in advertising discourse, paying special attention to the construction of masculinity, means that this article is framed on gender studies. They pay attention to the differences between women and men, to the representation of both in the media, to the connections between gender and culture, among other aspects (Jule 2008; Riso 2008; Ross 2012; Wodak 2015). Following Talbot (2010: 3): "Gender is an important division in all societies. It is of enormous significance to human beings. Being born male or female has far-reaching consequences for an individual. It affects how we act in the world, how the world treats us".

A key idea in gender studies is to deepen understanding into the identities of both sexes in order to understand social differences and to deconstruct discriminatory practices that, traditionally, place women in inferior positions in society (Jule 2008; Talbot 2010). In this sense, it is necessary to deepen our understanding of masculinity and femininity from the discursive point of view, in order to understand people's behaviours.

Human beings learn to be women and men, i.e., people learn typical behaviours and discursive practices that make us women and men. Consequently, gender is learned very early in people's life as a way to adapt to the environment and as a way to belong to a group that is visible and recognized by society. Following Butler (1999: 6), "gender is impossible to separate from political and cultural intersections". Gender is expressed not only by the bodies but also by the behaviours that human beings have (Reynolds 2002). Therefore, it is society that frames the behaviours that are appropriate, taking into consideration what is expected from each gender. In this sense, it is necessary to deconstruct and undo the way gender is created and understood in society (Butler 2004) in order to deepen on the social construction of gender.

This article is also framed in CDA due to our interest in understanding the connection between the different linguistic and visual choices in texts and what they communicate in context. Language (including visuals) is used in social relations in order to legitimize relationships, to establish power differences and to reproduce ideologies (Fairclough 2002). Moreover, it is a form of social behaviour and it reproduces and creates social structure. Every choice in language is significant in its context, i.e., there is a connection between each choice made in language and in any other semiotic resource and the meanings added to the choices.

CDA establishes relationships between discourse and society; it not only concentrates on describing the world, but it aims at changing it. In this sense, the principles of CDA allow deconstructing the way language and power are related and how discourse reproduces social realities. Therefore, the analysis that CDA proposes observes the abuse of power of some social groups over others, discrimination on the basis of race, social class or sex, and possible situations of injustice, among others (Wodak and Chilton 2005; Wodak and Meyer 2009). In van Leeuwen's words (2009: 277):

> Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is based on the idea that text and talk play a key role in maintaining and legitimizing inequality, injustice and oppression in society. It uses discourse analytical methods to show how this is done, but without restricting itself to one particular discourse analytical approach.

I must specify that there is hardly any written language in the texts analysed, which justifies that the analysis concentrates on the visuals. In this sense, the model of visual grammar proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen (2021) will be taken into consideration to analyse visuals. They base their model on the three metafunctions proposed by Halliday and Matthiesen (2014) to analyse texts: ideational, interpersonal and textual. The authors (2021) assign representational, interpersonal and compositional/textual meaning to images.

The *representational* metafunction deals with the way realities are represented in texts, i.e., aspects of the world are represented as narrative. In fact, participants (who and what is depicted), processes (depicted actions or relations) and circumstances (where, when, how, with what) are explored. Vectors contribute to creating dynamism or action between the different participants. The physical appearance of characters helps readers infer their age, class, role and ethnicity.

The *interactive* or *interpersonal* metafunction is concerned with the social relations between characters and with the readers. Thus, Kress and van Leeuwen (2021) distinguish three types of systems to observe the way what is represented in a visual composition interacts with the viewer through (i) g*aze*, (ii) *frame* and *social distance*, and (iii) *angle of interaction*. Gaze analyses if images demand when characters gaze at the viewer or if they are offers, by presenting characters without that gaze. Social distance observes if characters are represented as 'close up', 'mid shot' or 'long shot'. Finally, the angles are used to position viewers:

The vertical angle is associated with the realization of power: if viewers look down they are given power, whereas what is looked upon appears weak and vulnerable.

The horizontal angle implies greater or lesser involvement, i.e., when characters are depicted as an oblique angle they are detached from readers, whereas when their depiction faces viewers 'front on', they are involved with the audience (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021: 134 ff.).

The *compositional* metafunction explores the way texts establish relationships with their context. Kress and van Leeuwen (2021: 181–2) propose three main types of composition in multimodal texts: a) 'Information value': the place in which elements are located; for example, from left (given information) to right (new information), from the top to the bottom or from the centre to the margins, can add a determined value; b) 'Salience': the different elements of a composition which are designed to catch the readers' attention; for example, appearing in the first or the second place, the size of an element, the colour contrast or sharpness; and c) 'Framing': the presence or absence of frames that connect or disconnect elements of meaning by whether they go or do not go together in the making of meanings.

Finally, the model of CDA proposed by van Leeuwen (2008) for the visual representation of social actors will also be taken into consideration. The author refers to social actors to name the different participants in social practices. His approach observes if social actors are referred to in discourse as active agents

or patients, as individuals or in groups; this model also makes reference to the function or identification of the participants in discourse, among other aspects. Following van Leeuwen (2008: 138-141), observing social distance, social relation and social interaction is useful to understand how people appear in visuals and their interpersonal relationships with the audience. Visual critical discourse analysis will contribute to the development of visual literacies that will allow deepening into the way texts create meaning and reproduce social patterns such as the ones on masculinity presented in section 5.

3. Literature review

The fact that gender roles and stereotypes prevail in advertising discourse justifies that the meanings that advertising transmits are sometimes accepted as real, and they can create stereotypes, including those associated with gender (Buonanno 2014; Eisend 2019; Montes 2021). In fact, advertising is full of stereotypes and clichés that simplify the social identity of both sexes and that perpetuate the classical gender roles based on societal norms that reproduce hegemonic power, following Khalid, Baig and Muhammad (2016: 60): "Advertisers use the patriarchal clichés to make their advertisement tempting and convincing. Instead of ejecting the oppressive power relations between the genders, they inject them in a society by using stereotypical images [...]".

Advertisements normally represent manhood following the traditional stereotypes, i.e., men are foregrounded connected with power, dominance, heterosexuality, emotional restraint, aggression and independence (Connell & Messerschmidt 2005; Giaccardi, Ward, Seabrook, Manago and Lippman 2016; Levant, Hall & Ranking 2013; Nilsson and Lundgren 2021; Rodríguez Cruz Manjarrez and Albertín Carbó 2021). Following Mackinnon (2003: 89): "The myth of masculine independence is embodied in confident and confidence-inspiring appearance". All these characteristics show that men appear represented by the media having traditional roles, connected with heterosexuality and following the traditional masculine roles (Attwood 2005; Parent and Moradi 2009). These studies confirm that the ideology reproduced by the media is associated with the patriarchal system (Conradie 2011).

Masculinity is a political category that organises society in general and institutions in particular. Mishra (2013: 3) states that "Theoretically, the masculine man is free of any feminine traits, including weakness, passivity and subordination. It, for example, denies narcissism and exhibitionism and remains free of traits such as vulnerability and sensitivity which are regarded as feminine traits". Masculinity is therefore connected with power and with some of the traditional stereotypes connected with men, such as strength, power and superiority.

In fact, traditional masculinity suggests that men are sexual actors with an great desire for women. Consequently, women are seen as sexual objects, and one of their main purposes is to please men and accomplish their desires (Mankayi 2008). This is connected with hegemonic masculinity, also known as "patriarchal masculinity", "sovereign masculinity" or "masculine virility". Following Connell

(2005a: 77), this "was originally defined '"as" the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women". This masculinity is associated with heterosexuality and social superiority (Alsop, Fitzsimons & Lennon 2002) and with the hegemony where "[...] one form of masculinity rather than others is culturally exalted" (Connell 2005a: 77).

Bourdieu (1998) made deep analysis on hegemonic masculinity, which he called 'masculine domination'. He foregrounded that it is based on body differentiation and on the superiority of the masculine sex, i.e., there is an androcentric perspective in all the areas of society. In fact, the hegemonic cultural discourse highlights the differences between both genders, since it is framed by binary structures that perpetuate stereotypes and differences. In this sense, there is a hierarchy between both genders that consolidates the ideas associated with each gender and the patriarchal ideology that frames and helps to perpetuate the said hierarchy.

Therefore, masculinity is a social construction that is connected with hegemony, power and patriarchy (Schongut 2012). It is connected with an ideology that perpetuates the superiority of men in the social construction of society. Following Whitehead and Barrett (2001: 17): "In our view, power and masculinity are rational constructions, processes of ongoing creation and action between individuals and political categories of individuals". In this sense, when we talk about traditional masculinity we are referring to some beliefs, values, stereotypes and behaviours, among others, that make visible and accepted the power and authority of men to be considered masculine. This type of masculinity is normally accepted by institutions. In fact, we concur with Talbot (2010: 160) in the following statement: "There are different versions of masculinities. Hegemonic masculinity is the dominant form, the one that counts as normal and that traditionally has the blessing of the church, the support of the state and, ultimately, has all the force and obviousness of common sense".

Generally, when talking about masculinity, the tendency is to connect it with heterosexuality (Dennis 2012; Talbot 2010), which shows the traditional ideas of the patriarchal system that does not take other forms of masculinity into consideration (Portell & Pulido, 2012). The study done by Norocel Saresma, Lähdesmäki and Ruotsalainen (2020) shows that Nordic masculinities are associated with white heterosexual elites. For this reason, it is necessary to rethink this concept (Connell 2005b; Groes-Green 2009) in order to broaden the perspective, to include different forms of masculinities and to consider the changes in masculinity, such as the importance that some men pay to their bodies or the fact of having jobs normally performed by women (Borkowska 2020; Knudsen and Andersen 2020).

The classical way of understanding masculinity is connected with hegemony. Hegemony is understood in the Gramscian sense: "[...] the "spontaneous" consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental" (Gramsci 1971: 12). In fact, hegemony refers to what is accepted or considered as a leading position or ideology in society, in Connell's words (2001: 38–39):

> The concept of 'hegemony', deriving from Antonio Gramsci's analysis of class relations, refers to the cultural dynamic by which a group claims and sustains a leading position in social life. At any given time, one form of masculinity rather than others is culturally exalted. Hegemonic masculinity can be defined as the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women.

Some studies explore new ways of understanding masculinities, to observe how men's identities evolve and how men's power is understood taking into consideration cultural differences (Connell 2012; Griffith 2012; Seidler 2006; Zhang 2010). There are also studies that pay attention to the male body and the way it is represented by the media (Draper 2012; Harper 2007; MacKinnon 2003; Pietrzak-Franger 2007; Pinto Coelho and Mota-Ribeiro 2014; Wisneski 2007). These studies concentrate on pointing out the importance of the images transmitted by media in the construction of people's ideology and in the main ways in which masculinity is portrayed in advertisements.

There is also research that studies the recurrent male dominance in discourse and its relationship with masculinity (Cameron 2011; Maltz and Borker 2011; Swann 2011; Wareing 2004). The fact of challenging hegemonic masculinity is important to advance in the way masculinity is understood (Howson 2006), especially taking into consideration the demands and changes that globalizations involves (Hooper 2000) and the necessity of advancing in gender equality so that societies can be more equal and developed (Coulter 2003; Lang, Greig and Connell 2008). In this sense, some studies promote the importance of new masculinities so that the traditional one loses power (Anderson 2009; Anderson and McGuire 2010; Duffy 2014; Portell and Pulido 2012).

There are also studies that concentrate on new masculinities and deconstruct the portrayal of men in a way that promotes gender equality at the same time that the typically masculine attributes are overcome (Blanco-Herrero, Rodríguez-Contreras and Gutiérrez-San- Miguel 2021; Knudsen and Andersen 2020).

4. Data and methodology

The data used in this article consist of all the advertisements collected from the newsletter that Dolce & Gabbana publishes regularly through the internet from 1 January 2016 to 1 January 2021, 353 in total. This company was chosen because it is an international company that sells a variety of products for women, men and children. The analysis is mainly qualitative-descriptive, following the tradition of CDA. However, some quantitative data are also offered, to complete the analysis (see section 5.1). Table 1 shows the distribution of texts per year.

Table 1. Distribution of texts per year

Year	Number of texts
2016	34
2017	79
2018	120
2019	39
2020	81
Total number of texts	353

Once the advertisements were compiled, they were classified, observing who the social actors represented were (just women or men, women and men or children). Then, in order to accomplish objective 1 in this article (see section 1), I observed the interaction of social actors (demand/offer) and if the bodies of the social actors were partial or complete. Next, I paid attention to the position of the object being advertised in the visuals. After that, in order to accomplish objective 2 in this article (see section 1), I concentrated on the way men were visually represented, in order to observe different models of masculinity in the corpus. Van Leeuwen's (2008) visual characterization of social actors was used to analyse the texts and Kress and van Leeuwen's model of visual grammar (2021) (see Section 3). The texts selected for the in-depth analysis are representative of the the main characteristics of masculinity found in the corpus.

5. Analysis

This section is divided in two sub-sections: 5.1 shows the main characteristics of the corpus, paying attention to the outstanding feature in the three metafunctions used in the analysis. Section 5.2 illustrates the main types of masculinity found in the corpus, using a text that is representative of the main characteristics found.

5.1 Quantitative analysis

Considering the representational metafunction, it is essential to observe the people represented in the texts analysed. Of the 353 texts analysed, the presence of women over men predominates in all cases. It is noteworthy that 2020 is the year with the highest number of texts where only a man is represented (12.34%), which contrasts with the 43.20% where only woman is represented in the same year. Moreover, in 2017, women appear in almost half of the texts analysed, in particular 44.41%, compared to 2.53% texts in which only one man appears. It is significant that neither in 2016 nor in 2019 is a single man represented.

More than one product is advertised when more than one person is represented, 2016 the year with texts with more than one person. The product occupies the

central place in the texts with no human representation. The highest percentage of such texts is in 2018 (41.66%) and the lowest in 2020 (11.11%) (see Table 2).

Table 2. Analysis of the social actors in the analysed texts

Year	Number of texts	Only a woman represented	Only a man represented	No human representation	More than one person represented
2016	34	36.36%	0%	18.18%	45.46%
2017	79	44.41%	2.53%	32.91%	20.25%
2018	120	32.52%	4.16%	41.66%	21.66%
2019	39	38.46%	0%	35.89%	25.15%
2020	81	43.20%	12.34%	11.11%	33.33%
Total	353			100%	

When paying attention to the interpersonal function, there are two aspects that should be highlighted. Firstly, in the interaction of social actors, the examples of petition (demand) where social actors look directly and ask for a response predominate in 2020 (72.83%), 2016 (63.63%) and 2018 (62.5%). However, in 2017 (65.83%) and 2019 (53.85%) there are more examples of representation of people as an offer. Secondly, the examples where bodies appear cut off have also been analysed, because it is difficult to establish a relationship between social actors and the audience when people are not represented as a whole (see Table 3).

Table 3. Representation of bodies and interaction of social actors

Year	Number of texts	Demand	Offer	Partial body is shown
2016	34	63.63%	36.36%	54.54%
2017	79	34.17%	65.83%	49.36%
2018	120	62.5%	37.5%	42.5%
2019	39	46.15%	53.85%	46.15%
2020	81	72.83%	27.16%	54.32%
Total	353	100%		

Finally, considering the compositional metafunction, the position of the product in the visual needs to be analysed. When analysing the position of the product (they are mainly perfumes, jewels and clothes) (see Table 4), it is striking that in 2016 the trend is to place it on the right, the most important position in the texts, in 90.91% of cases. In the other three years, the tendency is to place the products in the center, i.e., in a position that also contributes to highlighting the product, especially in 2020: 100%. Another noteworthy fact is that the number of texts in which the product appears on the right (21.51%) in 2017 is similar to that on the left (18.98%) and the same percentage, i.e., 2.56% appears on the right and on the left in 2019 (see Table 4).

Table 4. Position of the product in the advertising of Dolce & Gabbana

Year	Number of texts	Product on the right	Product in the centre	Product on the left
2016	34	90.91%	9.09%	0%
2017	79	21.51%	59.51%	18.98%
2018	120	13.33%	84.17%	2.5%
2019	39	2.56%	94.88%	2.56%
2020	81	0%	100%	0%
Total	353			

The previous analysis has contributed to accomplish objective 1 (see section 1), i.e., the analysis of the three metafunctions has contributed to the deconstruction of the main visual strategies used by Dolce & Gabbana to represent social actors in general and men in particular in its newsletter from 2016 until 2020. This analysis answers the first research question (see section 1) because it has illustrated the main visual choices used to represent social actors in general and men in particular in a sample of Dolce & Gabbana advertising.

5.2 Qualitative analysis

Due to limitations of space, this section offers an analysis of three texts that are representative of the main ways men are represented in the corpus of Dolce & Gabbana's advertisements and their association with masculinity. In this sense, the following analysis will contribute to accomplish objective 2 (see section 1), i.e., each of the following texts will illustrate the predominant models of masculinity found in the corpus analysed. This analysis will also answer the second research question by systematizing the main ways of portraying masculinity in the sample of advertisements analysed. They belong to three different campaigns. This classification can be applied to other samples of advertising discourse in future studies.

Text 1 illustrates hegemonic masculinity at the same time that sexuality and sensuality are evoked through the posture of the participants and the main visual characteristics. There are 57% of texts similar to this one in the corpus, i.e., sexual connotations and hegemony masculinity are observed in more than half of the texts analysed.

Considering the ideational metafunction, the social actors chosen by Dolce & Gabbana to advertise Light Blue (Bianca Balti and David Gandy) appear in a provocative and sensual posture and represented as patient, specific and associated (van Leeuwen 2008). The fact that the man touches the woman's stomach and that they both show part of their bodies (man's chest, woman's neckline and stomach) adds sexual connotations to the advertisement, to suggest that they are a heterosexual couple and to reinforce hegemonic masculinity. This suggests that they are hot, i.e., being sexy and as body temperature perception, which contrasts with the background of the visual, where a mountain with snow is clearly distinguished.

Text 1. Text from Dolce & Gabbana 2017.
Example of hegemonic masculinity and erotization of the body.
Campaign: Light Blue.[1]

The man's hand on the woman's stomach suggests control over her, i.e., masculinity is given power, which is associated with hegemonic masculinity. Therefore, a patriarchal structuring of gender relations is portrayed, where classical roles for women and men are suggested such as male protectiveness of the female.

The representation of the bodies in this text has an erotic and sensual component that adds to the bodies' objectification. In the corpus, there are many examples like this one, in which the bodies appear represented only partially. This suggests that there is no interest in the entire person but that parts of the body (in this case the man's hand and the women's genitals, her breasts and her partial nakedness) are used to frame the product. Consequently, the body is used for commercial purposes, i.e., the company uses beautiful, thin and white bodies that serve as a showcase for the product and to point out cultural ideals of female and masculine beauty.

Sexuality is also emphasized, because the man's fingers touch the end of the woman's trousers, where her hand also appears holding a ski pole. This could be considered a visual metaphor for the man's penis, given the direction that the stick is aiming. In addition, the Dolce & Gabbana perfume that is being advertised 'Light blue winter', appears next to her hand, reinforcing not only the product being advertised, i.e., the perfume, but also the woman's vagina by being very close to the perfume and also to the ski pole that she is holding. There are different vectors that highlight the product, such as the one connecting the name of the company and the perfume with the social actors' head at the top of the advertisement or their hands and the ski poles and the two perfumes at the bottom of the visual. The vectors between the social actors' mouth and the breast and chest reinforce the sexual connotations of the visual.

When analysing interpersonal aspects in the text, it is observed that, as far as social distance is concerned, there is a clear distance between the people represented and the reader; placing the perfumes in the foreground establishes that distance in order to give importance the product being advertised. Considering social relations, the vertical angle shows that we see the social actors at eye level, which involves equality (van Leeuwen 2008). The horizontal angle points out that we see the product and the woman and men frontally, which suggests 'symbolic involvement' (van Leeuwen 2008: 139). When paying attention to social interaction, the crucial factor is whether the represented people look at viewers or not. Text 1 demands, because both social actors look at the audience and therefore there is a clear interaction with people reading the text. In this sense, the text clearly invites the audience to buy the product. It is significant that the eyes of the social actors are blue, because this is associated with the name of the perfume, Light Blue, and with the colour of the bottles.

Considering the textual metafunction, the perfume appears highlighted due to its position on the right, which is the place of new elements, whereas the woman and the man appear in the centre and left of the visual. Moreover, the different vectors mentioned and the fact that one of the perfumes appears covering part of the woman's body makes the perfume the most salient element. The perfume is symbolically framed by the mountain and the snow at the back and by the hands of the social actors. Presenting the perfume in the prominent position and joining them by vectors to the social actors in a sensual posture is a way of associating the perfume with sensuality.

The fact that the woman is wearing black and the man white suggests a contrast between the sexes and between masculinity and femininity. This is also associated with the two different bottles of the perfume, i.e., one is for women and the other one for men. In fact, the analysis of this advertisement has illustrated some characteristics of hegemonic masculinity; this type of masculinity is justified and normalized in the symbolic patriarchal system that frames the texts.

Text 2. Text from Dolce & Gabbana 2018.
Example of masculinity portrayal through manhood.
Campaign: The One.[2]

Hegemonic masculinity is evoked in this text by representing mainly men as social actors and by foregrounding manhood through men's support. This is visually portrayed by the man on the right, next to the perfume being advertised, holding the hands of the youngest man in the visual and the one chosen to advertise the perfume, The One, by Dolce & Gabbana. There are 13% examples of texts like this one in the corpus, i.e., in texts similar to these ones there are no explicit references to sexuality and the portrayal of masculinity is reinforced by representing different men in the advertisements. All the social actors represented are in the street, and the youngest man in the visual receives support from other men, i.e., he is empowered by the group by being socially supported. The social actors are specific and associated (van Leeuwen 2008). The fact that the bodies are partially represented contributes to foregrounding the product, because the bodies are placed at the same level.

Different vectors connect the heads of the men represented. The hands of the two men foregrounded are connected with the perfume on the right of the visual by vectors, i.e., the hands guide the audience to concentrate on the perfume. In addition, the white figure that one of the men is holding reinforces the perfume and also frames the hands of the two men in the foreground. Actually, there is a vector connecting the young man, the white figure, and the product. The association through vectors between the perfume called The One and the man foregrounded being the one chosen by the group evokes the constructions of ideals of masculinity, such as the fact that the man is young and handsome. Whiteness is also part of the ideal of masculinity being portrayed. The two men foregrounded wear smarter clothes than the other ones. Their clothes contrast with those of the other men represented, who are wearing casual clothes (the one on the left is wearing an apron over his clothes).

The interpersonal analysis of the visual shows that the two men foregrounded are close to the audience, whereas the other ones keep a distance. In addition, the social relation is created by using a vertical angle that allows readers to see the represented participants at eye level. The horizontal angle shows the participants frontally as a way to involve them with the audience. The close relationship with the audience is reinforced by social interaction, since the foregrounded men and some in the background look directly at the audience, demanding an answer from viewers by eye contact.

The composition of the advertisement shows that the text is read from the centre to the margins. The youngest man wearing a black suit is the most salient element not only for his position but also for its size. The white figure that the man in the middle distance has in his hand, i.e. the same colour as the shirt of the man foregrounded, also makes him the point of attention. Moreover, placing an older man on the right next to the perfume, the vectors between both men and the perfume and the fact that the older man's hands are holding the young man's right hand foreground that the he is 'the one' chosen in the group. In this way, men watching this visual are also invited to be 'the ones', i.e., they can be special if they use this perfume. The fact that the perfume is on the right side of the visual suggests that the perfume adds status to those who use it and contributes to making them special, unique or 'the one'. The closeness of the man shows that this is possible for everyone using the perfume.

Text 3. Text from Dolce & Gabbana 2020.
Example of masculinity through group identity.
Campaign: Parco dei Principi.[3]

Ideationally, men's bodies are homogenized in this text by wearing clothes of the campaign being advertised. The fact that the background and the floor has the same design as the clothes worn by the men contributes to the homogenation and to portraying the body as a static advertising claim through posture, which can be considered 'shop window bodies'(maniquins) (there are 30% of texts similar to this one in the corpus). Thus, the body is used as a claim to advertise Dolce & Gabanba's clothes. The men are social actors represented as patient, generalized, assimilated and undetermined (van Leeuwen 2008), whose main function is to pose wearing Dolce & Gabbana clothes. This visual portrays a group of static men whose purpose is just to wear the original clothes or a Dolce & Gabbana collection. There are different vectors joining the bodies of the represented participants (heads, eyes, shoulders, hips, arms, hands, knees and feet), which reinforces the relationship between the different men in the visual.

From the interpersonal point of view, the men represented are 'demands' because they clearly gaze at viewers. We observe three levels: foreground, middle ground and background. The social distance is long-shot, because there is a clear distance from the viewers (clearly marked by the floor), which presents men's bodies as objects to be observed. This visual is an example of detachment because viewers are distanced from the men represented, angled away from the readers' view. This contrasts with the horizontal angle, which implies involvement with the audience because characters face the viewers directly. The vertical angle empowers the men represented because they look down on the viewers. The serious look and the static posture observed in the social actors suggests that they are confident and secure.

From the compositional point of view, this visual is read from the centre to the margins. The man standing in the centre of the visual is the most important

element not only for his location but also because he is the most salient element in the composition due to being the only man that is standing in the foreground (the other two men that are standing appear in the background). The position and size of the man in the centre contributes to highlighting the point of light on him Representing four men in the foreground and four in the background (this division is clearly marked by the step dividing them) balances the position of men in the visual (there are four on the right, three on the left and one in the centre) The combination of white, light blue and navy blue in the clothes, walls and floor highlights them and illuminates them. The fact that they are framed by the walls and floor with designs similar to those of the clothes contributes to seeing the text as a unity. The two bags on the floor, one next to the man in the centre and the other one next to the one on the left, shows that the campaign being advertised by the men with the clothes they wear also sells other products such as bags.

6. Discussion

The visual analysis is effective to deepen our understanding of the construction of masculinity that Dolce & Gabbana creates, because it shows how the company construes and communicates masculinity ideals. Thus, the masculine bodies in the visuals have cultural meanings (Butler 1999) because the way the bodies are presented re-creates cultural canons of beauty, masculinity, etc. (Montes 2021). In this sense, the male body is understood as a discursive "effect" created at the intersection of consumer practice and advertising discourse.

The texts analysed show that the men represented are associated with stereotypical identities such as being young, white, handsome, or slim, which shows the canon of beauty in Western cultures. In this sense, the different resources used in the visuals are associated with social practices where masculine bodies are used as advertising claims to persuade people to buy the products advertised and to imitate the life style suggested by the visuals. Moreover, the fact that there is sensuality in the postures and gazes in the social actors represented visually shows that the male body is portrayed as the object of visual pleasure, whose main purpose is to persuade readers to buy the products being advertised.

All the social actors represented establish a direct contact with viewers by a 'demand gaze', i.e., the represented participants gaze at the viewers directly and address them by a visual 'you'. In addition, close-ups, and medium and long shots are essential to establish distance or interaction between the participants and readers (van Leeuwen 2008). In this sense, we observe that in Text 1 there is middle distance with the audience, whereas a closer personal distance is observed in Text 2. This contrasts with the far personal distance, i.e., the one we keep among strangers (see Text 3), whereas close personal distance is the one we keep with intimates (see Text 2).

Considering masculinity, the analysis of the visuals shows that some of the texts do not challenge hegemonic masculinity, but on the contrary, they recreate it (see Texts 1 and 2). Text 1 illustrates traditional masculinity through the heterosexual relationship evoked between the man and the woman, i.e., masculinity,

whiteness and heterosexuality are joined. Thus, the way the man touches the woman suggests desire for her and possession (Mankayi 2008). Moreover, the sexual and sensual posture between the woman and men represent the erotization of the bodies, and the sensuality evokes power and dominance (Nilsson and Lundgren 2021).

Other texts of the same campaign also reinforce these characteristics by representing both bodies very close, touching each other and the perfume being advertised next to the sexual organs of both people.[4] In addition, hegemonic masculinity and a connection between the perfume and the man's sexual organs is highlighted in some texts of the campaign where the man appears alone.[5]

Text 2 also contributes to reinforcing hegemonic masculinity (Mishra 2013) by presenting the main social actor foregrounded and surrounded by other men. Apart from portraying manhood through men's support, the main social actor is associated with closeness and popularity, i.e., being 'the one', which is the name of the campaign that the text is advertising, reinforcing, and inviting the audience also to be the one. In this sense, regarding the social interaction between the depicted people and the viewer, when subjects look directly at the camera, readers are invited to be involved in the action, as we can see clearly in this text where the main character is foregrounded (Texts 1 and 3 also show it but there is more distance with the audience).

However, the way the men are represented in Text 3 recreates a different type of masculinity: men seem to be independent (they illustrate different clothes from the same campaign) and confident (their serious look). In this sense, Text 3 re-creates the myth of masculine independence due to their "[...] confidence-inspiring appearance" (Mackinnon 2003: 89). All the young men represented seem very confident.

In Text 3, the construction of masculinity is reinforced by group identity, which is portrayed visually in different ways: all the men represented are homogenised by wearing clothes of the same campaign, they are all young and slim men who look directly at the audience at the same time as their bodies are used to advertise the clothes they wear and, finally, their static posture justifies that I have referred to them as 'shop window bodies', i.e., the body is just an excuse to advertise products; it is just a static advertising claim through posture.

The changes to masculine ideas and patterns emerge slowly, as we can see in the texts analysed. A big brand such as Dolce & Gabbana re-creates cultural ideas and stereotypes associated with masculinity, i.e., men should be middle or upper class and have nice bodies (slim and muscular). Thus, the idea of hegemonic masculinity in advertising does not seem to change but rather strengthens stereotypes and patterns associated with hegemonic masculinity, which is normally associated with a patriarchal ideology.

7. Conclusions

This study has contributed to the visual portrayal of masculinity in an international company such as Dolce & Gabbana. The analysis shows that male bodies

are used as advertising claims in the corpus analysed. The fact that most of the men represented are young, white and slender builds a beauty canon related to these characteristics, as we can see in the three texts analysed. The idealised beauty and the sexualization and sensualization found in the bodies contributes to objectifying them. Thus, the texts focus everything on the body, not on the moral, intellectual qualities, or on the social capacities of the people represented.

This study demonstrates that although men are less represented than women in the corpus, their bodies are also used as a claim and as a symbol of hegemonic masculinity in the twenty-first century. Consequently, the partial body representation observed in Texts 1 and 2 fulfils the objective of framing the products; that is, the body appears as an advertising claim or as a way to frame the product.

Some of the texts in the corpus (see Text 3) foment alternative masculinities that will promote social transformation and shorten the distance between stereotypes associated with femininity and masculinity. In this sense, Dolce & Gabbana's advertisements where certain visual patterns portray hegemonic masculinity are an example of how advertisements can re-create and perpetuate the patriarchal system. Consequently, the stereotypical representation of masculinity found in some of the texts analysed does not contribute to the promotion of new masculinities. In fact, alternative and new masculinities are necessary in order to advance in the equality of both sexes in advertising and in society.

Notes

[1]   Link: https://www.google.com/search?rlz=1C1EJFA_enES780DO782&sxsrf=AOaem vIjLltht0hR3tDcbyVbOtLYxW_LVg:1642581276453&source=univ&tbm=isch&q=-campaign+light+blue+dolce+%26+gabbana&fir=UUYF9fIRgxYktM%252CVNc-S5Iyu26gQNM%252C_%253BQYC-en0q3xVcxM%252CA85Kc3LVV_Ztn-M%252C_%253BqHQ0nU49GOLLNM%252CkalosEOzeqrBAM%252C_%253Be-itF3zAE4f_vDM%252CR__CsUrF4nYs_M%252C_%253BiTQygfwnk63VP-M%252C_ESpHVv3Mv09UM%252C_%253Bp0iuF8gvx-0HnM%252CQiN-9LASxA8Q5eM%252C_%253BM7UQxaBtQ_vB5M%252Crdrsa7KMPvb-MyM%252C_%253BN53hSml_LIySJM%252C0i9z646fqr6E5M%252C_%253B-mQx-UHw-d8ztrM%252C-G52eUmeHxTZnM%252C_%253BUvMULeZNi-ykquM%252C3OBOBE33mthEyM%252C_&usg=AI4_-kRs9OB-3BP6LX0v_cjJy6v-FOjcFWA&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwi8nP2LtL31AhUK6OAKHRLRBkEQ7Al6BAgCE-FA&biw=1366&bih=625&dpr=1#imgrc=hyb2S0k-Kd0QjM

[2]   Link: https://www.google.com/search?q=CAMPA%C3%91A+DOLCE+%26+gabba na+2018+THE+ONE&tbm=isch&ved=2ahUKEwiPnbXqgrLvAhU2gc4B-HcPPDxEQ2-cCegQIABAA&oq=CAMPA%C3%91A+DOLCE+%26+gab-bana+2018+THE+ONE&gs_lcp=CgNpbWcQA1CPvBtYj8IbYNTEG2gA-cAB4AIABkgGIAa8GkgEDNi4ymAEAoAEBqgELZ3dzLXdpei1pbW-fAAQE&sclient=img&ei=2C1PYI_RILaCur4Pw5-_iAE&rlz=1C1EJFA_enES-780DO782#imgrc=0CMhTDnbTC-FmM&imgdii=IbV6lLx3cAmWXM

[3]   Link: https://www.google.com/search?q=+campaign+Parco+dei+Principi+dolce+%26+gabbana&tbm=isch&ved=2ahUKEwiJsq6Stb31AhUE1OAKHb0mCoAQ2-cCeg-QIABAA&oq=+campaign+Parco+dei+Principi+dolce+%26+gabbana&gs_lcp=CgN-pbWcQDDoHCCMQ7wMQJzoGCAAQCBAeUL8RWKcyYKFCaABwAH-gAgAHlAYgBlA6SAQU1LjkuMZgBAKABAaoBC2d3cy13aXotaW1nwAEB&scli-

4   ent=img&ei=Ns7nYYm_EISogwe9zaiACA&bih=625&biw=1366&rlz=1C1EJFA_enES-780DO782#imgrc=1W8sHgIVRMK-pM

4   See some of these texts in this link: http://www.fantasyfashiondesign.com/2017/05/la-campana-light-blue-eau-de-dolce.html

5   One of these texts can be seen in this link: https://www.google.com/search?q=-CAMPA%C3%91A+DOLCE+%26+gabbana+2017+CAMPA%C3%91A+-LIGHT+BLUE&tbm=isch&ved=2ahUKEwiP6K33hbLvAhVMyRoKHY-UCm-IQ2-cCegQIABAA&oq=CAMPA%C3%91A+DOLCE+%26+gabbana+2017+CAM-PA%C3%91A+LIGHT+BLUE&gs_lcp=CgNpbWcQAzoECCMQJ1DwmBBY6M-EQYMrHEGgAcAB4AIABhwGIAaaIXkgEEMjUuN5gBAKABAAaoBC2d3cy13aX-otaW1nwAEB&sclient=img&ei=GDFPYI_8O8ySa4-pqpAG&rlz=1C1EJFA_enES-780DO782#imgrc=xe2IN3SNtLGM5M

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