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'Good girls go to heaven; bad girls . . .' learn to be good: quizzes in American and Brazilian teenage girls' magazines

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ABSTRACT. This article examines 15 quizzes in teenage girls' magazines: the American *'Teen*, *Seventeen* and *Sassy*, and the Brazilian *Capricho*, over the period 1994–5. It argues that the genre *quiz*, an apparently playful feature in these magazines, is not as harmless as it appears to be. In addition to encouraging girls towards self-scrutiny, quizzes work as 'disciplinary instruments', aiming at the heterosexist socialization of teenage girls. Analysis of the macro-structure of the quizzes reveals a problem-solution structure is used to accomplish this. The producers of these texts judge, evaluate, and classify girls as either 'good' or 'bad', and tend to prescribe and proscribe types of behavior from a heterosexist perspective. The high informality and ludic appearance of quizzes, therefore, disguise what seems to be an important agenda: to discipline girls to be 'good'.

KEY WORDS: critical discourse analysis, heterosexist discourse, media discourse, quiz, sexist discourse, socialization, teenage girls' magazines

'Good girls go to heaven; bad girls go everywhere'
(Mae West)

INTRODUCTION

Over the past three decades there has been increasing attention to the way literacy reflects and shapes social practices. Scholars who have investigated women's magazines (Ballaster et al., 1991; Ferguson, 1983; Fischer, 1993; García, 1988; McCracken, 1993; McRobbie, 1981, 1991; McRobbie and Nava, 1984; Ostermann, 1995a) have all claimed that these publications constitute powerful ideological instruments. One of the main criticisms leveled at women's magazines is their attempt to socialize readers into types of behavior considered 'appropriate' for females, i.e. desirable to

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men, by advising women on how they are supposed to feel and to act, and by teaching them how to treat their bodies and how to dress themselves (Ferguson, 1983; García, 1988; McCracken, 1993; Patthey-Chavez et al., 1996). Publishers, editors of women's magazines, and the companies that advertise in their pages decide what is important and appropriate to be discussed, exercising power over the topics they regard as significant for women. As McRobbie (1991: 164) claims, 'the regulative, controlling mechanisms operate precisely along the terrain of the provision of knowledge and the way it is dispensed'.

In discussing teenage girls' magazines in particular, García (1988: 150) contends that teenage girls' magazines offer 'a socialization of social values, expectations, patterns and future goals' [our translation]. This system of socialization naturalizes heterosexuality or in Rich's terms (1980) 'compulsory heterosexuality', i.e. 'the ideology and social practice that pushes properly gendered women and men into couples and makes them believe this is a free choice' (Valverde, 1985: 83). That teenage girls would regard having a boyfriend as a normal, hence natural, part of their lives is part of the regular agenda of the magazines. As a consequence, activities that further success in the heterosexual marketplace appear in each issue. Fashion, beauty, and dating are the topic and/or title of regular columns, serve as the primary focus of advertising, and are prominent in special features:

> 'A guide for what to say (and what not to say) to the guy you like' [our translation] (*Capricho*, March 1994: 16)
> 'How to get your guy!' (*'Teen*, May 1994: 42–3)
> 'Guy Likes, Guy Gripes' (a regular section in *'Teen* magazine)
> '20 Ways to Score a Perfect 10' (*'Teen*, April 1994: 78–9)
> 'The rules for you not to do it wrong with your boyfriend' [our translation] (*Capricho*, June 1994: 122–3)
> 'Guys! How to tell if they like you: decoding male behavior!' (*'Teen*, August 1994: 24–5)
> 'What makes a guy ask girls out?' (*'Teen*, January 1995: 22–3)

Likewise, the March 1994 issues of *Seventeen*, *Sassy* and *'Teen* feature success in an institutionalized celebration of heterosexism—the prom. The cover of *'Teen* that month brings together the need to prepare one's self for the market as well as the ultimate goal—a date—by advertising this feature as 'Prom Style: the looks ... the dresses ... the guys!'

Moreover, experience reported in the magazines is filtered through the lens of heterosexuality; material that does not successfully pass through the filter is brought to the reader's attention. For example, in its April 1996 issue *Sassy* features an article by one of its readers about an all-girl's prep school. It begins:

> When people hear that you go to an all-girls' school, they immediately feel sorry for you. They believe that the lack of testosterone in the air has a way of turning students into study-obsessed she-nerds; either that or sex-crazed sluts who run around all night to make up for the daytime absence of boys. (p. 32)

Even though the article proceeds to dispel these misconceptions, this opening represents what a reader would normally be expected to think. The threat to a heterosexual environment is thus understood as destabilizing the norm in two possible directions. In the first, 'study-obsessed shenerds', the risk is flattening heterosexual desire, perhaps the more serious consequence since it jeopardizes the expected subject positions. The second, 'sex-crazed sluts', reaffirms heterosexuality through its search for excess which naturally results from deprivation.

The naturalizing of heterosexuality is further accomplished through the style of language used to deliver this ideology. García (1988: 150) argues that these magazines 'talk' as would counselors to their readers, speaking 'their own language'. The often conversational tone indexes a familiar interactional context, in which people who share mutual trust exchange information. We argue that one of the playing fields for this agenda is a common as well as popular genre in teenage girls' magazines: the *quiz*. A regular feature, quizzes at first glance seem to be fun, informal, and interactive, offering each reader a multiple-choice test through which she or her preferences are evaluated in various areas. These range from behavior, knowledge, personality, and the 'perfect match', to fashion and even the ideal perfume. Although many would certainly regard quizzes as playful in appearance, their ludic character disguises a heterosexist agenda to teach girls how to behave, an agenda whose ideological content has been seriously neglected (Peirce, 1990).

BACKGROUND

Get quizzical!!![1]

The practice of *quizzing*, so common in teenage girls' magazines, is not restricted to them. In fact, the quiz, written or oral, has a long-term tradition as a way of assessing people's knowledge, behavior, point-of-view, and personality, among other things. In the church, for instance, quizzing people dates back to the roots of Christianity. In the 13th century, for example, confessors would quiz penitents in order make them publicly declare their faith, asking them to recite Our Father, say the Ten Commandments, and so forth. Similarly, in medieval and early-modern Episcopal visitations, bishops or their representatives visited their parishes and questioned parishioners on their faith. It was Luther and Calvin, however, who actually invented the question–answer *catechism*, its development contemporaneous with printing, in the 15th century; the Catholic catechism followed thereafter.[2, 3]

Nowadays commonly associated with the school evaluation system, *quiz* is indeed a noun and a verb all too familiar to students and teachers; it is a more limited assessment used to monitor students' progress. One of the first attested uses of the word in the educational system occurs in the writings of the American educator, psychologist, and philosopher William

James. In a letter dated 26 December 1867, he suggests that 'giving quizzes in anatomy and psychology' could promote learning (*American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, 1992). Assessing what an individual knows by using this more limited test would be a genre familiar to the readership of teen magazines.

In the teenage girls' magazines investigated here quizzes are present in *every issue* (an average of 1.3 quizzes per issue in a year). In fact, in Brazil, quizzes are so popular with readers that in 1994 the magazine *Capricho* published a special issue consisting only of quizzes. Topics ranged from behavior to boyfriends, body care, and fashion. In that issue, even the advertisements were in the format of a quiz.[4] The editor of *Capricho* justifies the importance given to quizzes by the magazine:

> Why an edition of quizzes? Well, you know why. Because it is delightful, we love doing it to understand ourselves better, laugh, and have fun. No need to explain it to you. Quizzes are delightful and we always want to know more. So now you don't have anything to complain about. You just have to grab your pencil, and check it out. [our translation] (*Capricho*, Special Issue 1994: 5)

In the quizzes, girls are not only evaluated on one aspect of their lives. They are also given advice on how to improve in specific areas. The advice provided at the end of each quiz is supposed to help adolescent girls deal with their lives and their relationships. However, García (1988: 65) claims that quizzes constitute 'the application of a scientific discipline [psychology] in an ordinary and manipulative practice' [our translation].[5]

The provision of advice in magazines for both girls and women is not recent, however. Ballaster et al. (1991) note the presence of advice-giving in women's magazines such as the problem-page dating back to the 1850s. Nowadays, however, the 'ideology of advice' (McCracken, 1993: 56) permeates many other features in women's and teenage girls' magazines. Advice-giving ranges from tips on beauty and fashion, to food preparation, finances, vacation, sports, and, more importantly, behavior (how to conduct oneself at work, in the family, and with one's partner) and self-improvement. Such pervasive ideology in magazines for women seems to reflect larger societal beliefs about females, i.e. that womanhood is always in the making, that females are supposed to act in certain established ways, and that females have to be constantly reminded of what those ways are.

The editor of *'Teen*, Roxanne Camron, argues that this advice-giving is a neutral, supportive effort:

> Although our quizzes sometimes address serious issues, we are always careful to present the material in a way that will encourage our readers to think and make the decisions for themselves. *We simply provide them with the information on which they can base their decision.* [emphasis added] (letter, September 1994) [6]

In this study of quizzes we challenge this perspective. We argue that

quizzes are neither innocuous nor innocent. Through an analysis of the discourse of quizzes, we claim that in these tests readers are neither simply 'getting to know themselves better', as *Capricho* claims (Special Issue 1994: 5), nor are they being encouraged 'to think and make the decisions for themselves', as Camron states. Moreover, writers of quizzes do not merely seem to provide information on which readers can base their decisions; rather, they classify the respondent's behavior as appropriate or not, praising her when it is 'appropriate', and criticizing her and advising her to change when it is not.

SAMPLE

The quizzes studied were drawn from American and Brazilian magazines for teenagers. Since our knowledge of magazines for teens has been limited to the western world (Finders, 1996, 1997; Peirce, 1990, 1993; Talbot, 1992a, 1992b), the first author's familiarity with the Portuguese language and Brazilian culture made it possible to broaden our understanding of the types of written materials available for teenage girls in Latin America. That three American magazines and only one Brazilian comprised the sample is due to the fact that other Brazilian magazines addressed to the same audience were not yet published at the time of data collection.

The Magazines and their Readership

Although the Brazilian teenage girls' magazine *Capricho* is addressed to 12–19-year-old girls from middle-upper and upper socio-economic classes, according to Simone Miranda (Readers' Service Department), its actual readership group comprises primarily 13- and 15-year-old girls. The editor claims, however, that 19 percent of *Capricho*'s readership are boys of the same age, and that even though they are not subscribers, questionnaires answered by adolescents reveal that many boys do read these magazines, be they their sisters' or friends'.

Capricho's image and content are the result of editorial policy as well as reader input. Until quite recently *Capricho* carried the slogan '*Capricho*! A Revista da Gatinha!' (*Capricho*! The magazine of/to the cute young girl!), a slogan which characterizes not only the magazine's target age (young girls), but also their appearance—or at least their desired appearance (being pretty, appealing). Recently, the slogan was changed to 'Tem que ler pra saber!' (You've got to read to know it!), which radically shifted its tone to a more informative or even educational one.[7]

According to Miranda, *Capricho* receives approximately 5000 letters a month from the readers. In the screening process of the letters to be published in the magazine, the editors select only those which concern topics that 'all readers should know' (S. Miranda, pers. comm., 1994). In fact, *Capricho* does receive letters regarding controversial or sensitive topics,

such as abortion and AIDS, but the editors prefer not to answer them publicly. Those are addressed in personal replies to the reader.

In Brazil, many parents do not feel comfortable discussing sexual matters with their children. Therefore, many topics the girls' parents are reluctant to address, the magazine does (Miranda, pers. comm., 1994). According to Miranda, that is probably why *Capricho* has 'a great relationship with parents'. According to the editors, the reader at this age 'changes her mind too quickly, and that is why they need to be advised'. However, even though the magazine aims at being educational and informative, according to the editor, it tries not to carry a 'school-image'—which would be 'quite boring for the reader'. Topics such as politics and ecology 'are matters for the school to talk about, and the magazine does not want to compete with the school' (S. Miranda, pers. comm., 1994).

Whereas the Brazilian magazine *Capricho* is read by approximately 500,000 girls,[8] the readership of teenage girls' magazines in the US is so vast that *'Teen* alone is read by one third of all American high school girls![9] In 1993 alone, *'Teen* sold 1,157,000 copies. Like *Capricho*, *'Teen* magazine is also addressed to girls aged 12–19. According to the editor, Roxanne Camron (pers. comm., 1994), the ideas for the articles are taken from various sources, but the main ones are the readers themselves. The majority of the content materials is the result of information gathered from questionnaires answered by readers and material drawn from letters the magazine receives from them (25,000 a year). Different from *Capricho*, which carries roughly 60–70 percent content material, *'Teen*'s pages are more evenly divided between content material (50%) and advertisements (50%). Not surprisingly, its main advertisers are beauty and body-care products industries, such as Maybelline, Bonne Bell, Coty and Johnson & Johnson.

Selling considerably less in the teenage market (750,000 copies a year), *Sassy* appeared in the news-stands in 1988, attempting to present (at least at a superficial level) a different attitude:

> Sassy is the older sister who clearly wants the best for you because she doesn't kiss butt or chomp anyone else's style, but you also occasionally want to slap because she's such a know-it-all. (Letter of response from the editors, August 1994)

In many other aspects, however, *Sassy* appears to be quite similar to the other magazines analyzed here. Its pages, for instance, just as in *'Teen*, present 50 percent content material, and 50 percent advertisements. Furthermore, most of its commercial content revolves around fashion, beauty and body-care products. The same tendency is followed by *Seventeen*, both in terms of distribution of materials, and the products advertised. In fact, some of the ads in *'Teen* and *Seventeen* are identical. What perhaps mostly distinguishes *Seventeen* from its national counterparts are its considerably longer issues (40% more pages than *'Teen*, and 60% more than *Sassy*).[10]

The data analyzed here comprise the 15 quizzes taken from four teenage girls' magazines: the American *'Teen*, *Seventeen*, and *Sassy*,[11] and the

Brazilian *Capricho*, over the period 1994–95. Although quizzes cover the most diverse topics—ranging from beauty, body care, and perfume to personality and behavior—it is important to mention that in this investigation we concentrate only on those strictly related to *personality* and *behavior* (Table 1), which constitute the most common topics. Moreover, because quizzes are so widespread in magazines for adolescent girls, our analysis concentrates on two frequently occurring patterns of quizzes, characterized here as *the perfect girl* and the *not-so-perfect girl.*

TABLE 1. Magazine quizzes analyzed

Quiz	**Magazine**	**Issue**	**Location**
Quiz 1: 'Is your boyfriend your life?'	*Seventeen*	March 1994	142
Quiz 2: 'Você é machista?' (Are you a male chauvinist?)	*Capricho*	July 1994	128–9
Quiz 3: 'What do guys think of you?'	*Seventeen*	April 1994	106, 110
Quiz 4: 'Test your social savvy. Do you sizzle or fizzle?'	*'Teen*	March 1994	36, 38
Quiz 5: 'Você sobrevive sem namorado?' (Can you survive without a boyfriend?)	*Capricho*	August 1994	106–107
Quiz 6: 'Você se gosta? Mesmo?' (Do you like yourself? Really?)	*Capricho*	Special Issue 1994	40–41
Quiz 7: 'Are you independent?'	*Sassy*	May 1994	26
Quiz 8: 'What kind of flirt are you?'	*Seventeen*	August 1994	106, 112
Quiz 9: 'Are you a control freak?'	*Seventeen*	March 1994	96, 98
Quiz 10: 'Você é insegura?' (Are you insecure?)	*Capricho*	Special Issue 1994	52–3
Quiz 11: 'Do you have a big mouth?'	*Seventeen*	July 1994	46
Quiz 12: 'Are you a slacker?'	*Seventeen*	January 1995	6
Quiz 13: 'Are you a slacker?'	*Sassy*	March 1994	30
Quiz 14: 'Are you a user?'	*Sassy*	February 1994	30
Quiz 15: 'Você tem pavio curto?' (Are you short tempered?)	*Capricho*	November 1994	160

ANALYTICAL APPROACH

There were three central areas of interest in our investigation: first, the ideology underlying the evaluation and classification of girls' behavior and personality in quizzes, that is, the models from which the critique and advice on behavior in quizzes are drawn—such as traditional vs feminist views of women; second, the socializing role of the genre, i.e. to which types of behavior the magazine advises readers to conform; and third, the role of language and text structure in accomplishing the socializing role.

We frame our investigation in a broader orientation to language study, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)—initiated by the critical linguists Fowler et al. (1979), modified and followed up by Fairclough (1989, 1992a, 1992b, 1993), and Van Dijk (1993) among others—which approaches language as a form of social practice. The main focus of CDA is on how

language conventions and language practices are invested with asymmetrical relations of power and ideological processes. Therefore, it is the primary aim of a particular CDA to illuminate the relationship between language and society, and to uncover how language is used as an instrument of communication as well as control, or as a means 'to empower and disempower people and groups of people' (Gee, 1990: xx). CDA is used to make people aware of the way language reflects and/or constructs, and sets up social identities and social relationships for discourse participants, and how it can mirror and/or frame reality and knowledge ideologically.

We argue that the quizzes have a primary function problematizing the behavior of their adolescent readership on several levels, ranging from the questions the magazine asks the readers to consider at the opening gambit in the quizzes (the titles of quizzes) to the alleged solutions offered. This problematizing of the reader is recursive, not only within specific sections of the quiz but at the level of the quiz column as a whole. Therefore, our first linguistic analytical technique sought to capture the linguistic encoding of problematizing; to this end we turned to the works of Hoey (1979, 1983) on text structure. The macrostructure of the genre quiz seems to fit quite well the pattern of Problem–Solution proposed by Hoey, in which we find a problematization of a situation—in this case, the reader's behavior—for which a solution (or a set of solutions) is proposed by the magazine.

Along with examining the macrostructure of the quizzes we carried out a microlevel investigation. Here we found that three types of linguistic phenomena played key roles in the project of problematizing: (1) specific lexical choices and how they operate in signaling elements of the textual pattern and in classifying the girls' behavior; (2) the role of presupposition; and (3) and use of negation. We also discuss the clashes of opposing discourses, the feminist and the heterosexist, in constructing the evaluation of the respondent girl. Finally, we converge our linguistic analysis with broader societal discourses (Foucault, 1977).

TEXT STRUCTURE: THE PROBLEM–SOLUTION PATTERN

If you are not part of the solution, you are part of the problem[12]

To understand the politics of quizzes, one first has to consider the context in which adolescent female readers find themselves. Research over the past 15 years identifies the middle- and high-school years as a period during which girls experience a tremendous loss of self-esteem (American Association of University Women, 1991). The pressures of a heterosexist culture place substantial demands on girls to be concerned with their success in attracting potential partners (Peirce, 1990, 1993). The importance of physical attractiveness in this process is evidenced in concerns about weight which manifest themselves in participation in the dieting behavior of large numbers of (pre)adolescent girls as well as the explosion of eating disorders (Fallan et al., 1994). Teen magazines actively participate

in heterosexualization through the advertisements aimed at enhancing dating possibilities—'The dream of love gives you more than you ever wanted'.[13] Likewise, many articles as well as most of the quizzes are aimed at aspects of male–female relationships: 'Is your boyfriend your life?' (quiz 1), 'What do guys think of you?' (quiz 3), 'Can you survive without a boyfriend?' (quiz 5), and 'What kind of flirt are you?' (quiz 8). We argue that quizzes can contribute to the larger social practices which lead girls to devalue themselves, through the position they construct for their readers, problematizing girls' behavior and offering ideologically motivated solutions to these problems.

One framework that enables us to capture this process is the Problem–Solution structure offered by Hoey (1983). Although this approach was developed to capture the sequential semantic relationships between sentences in a text, it offers a useful framework for illuminating the matrix of inadequacies into which the reader is cast. One way in which this structure operates is the role the magazine plays in claiming that particular aspects of girls' behavior are problems which the girls must remedy. Because the writer identifies ways of presenting one's self to others as sites of trouble, the reader is, in effect, instructed that this site is something about which she must worry. Hoey has observed the pervasiveness of this process in his treatment of advertisements which purport to solve problems that readers were unaware existed. He notes these are 'examples of the complex relationship of linguistic Problem to real-world problem; [that is] it is often because A says that X is a problem that B sees it as such' (Hoey, 1983: 52).

The Problem–Solution pattern is defined by Hoey (1979: 78) as a 'structure made up of a situation requiring a response and a response to that situation which is evaluated as either successful or otherwise'. The elements which comprise this specific structure are: *Situation*, *Problem*, *Response*, and *Evaluation*. *Situation*, according to Hoey (1983), provides the setting or the circumstances for the discourse, and it is only in relation to the discourse pattern as a whole that it can be appropriately defined. *Problem* consists of an aspect of a situation that expects or requires a response. *Response* refers to that element of the Problem–Solution pattern that indicates the reaction or answer given to the problematized situation. Hoey claims that while all Solutions are Responses, the opposite is not always true: not every Response constitutes a Solution. This is due to the fact that a Solution carries a positive evaluation, while a Response is neutral regarding its success. Finally, there is the *Evaluation* element, which elicits some sort of opinion regarding the Response given to the initial Problem. In Hoey's terms (1979: 77), 'at the level of the overall structure, the Evaluation answers the question "*How successful was the solution*?" or "*Was the solution a good one?*" '. When a response is negatively evaluated, the negative evaluation signals the need for another response, and the cycle, a new Problem–Solution pattern, starts again.

Overall structure of quizzes

The genre quiz in these publications consists of four distinct basic parts: *title*, *test*, *scoring table*, and *classification*. Quiz titles tend to be in question format, 'Is your boyfriend your life?' (quiz 1), 'Are you a male chauvinist?' (quiz 2), 'Can you survive without a boyfriend?' (quiz 5), 'Are you independent?' (quiz 7), 'Are you insecure?' (quiz 10). The title functions first to set up the Situation, and second to signal what aspect of that situation requires a Response. The title question, therefore, establishes a problematic Situation that we refer to as the 'overall Problem'. The overall Problem in quizzes entails the need for an answer. Since the Problem is framed in the form of a 'need', the Response is nothing else but an 'answer' which is later evaluated. The Responses to the overall Problem are found in the *classification*, straight after the scoring table, at the end of the quizzes.

In the *test* itself, which follows the title, the reader is asked to select, from a number of possible responses, what she would do in certain given situations. Each response is subsequently assigned a specific number of points. Her answers are then tallied up numerically in the *scoring table*, and the total score results in a specific *classification*, i.e. a type of personality or type of behavior.

In structural terms, the test alone, i.e. only the set of questions and answers, without the title and the classification, constitutes a set of Problems and Responses.

> [*Problem*] There's that cute guy you've been scoping, waiting for someone at the mall. What's your move?
> [*Response*] (a) Spy from the jeans store to see who he's meeting.
> [*Response*] (b) Spill your purse at his feet so he has to notice you.
> [*Response*] (c) Ask him directions to the pet shop—then ask him about his favorite kind of dog.
> (quiz 4)

Based on the answers the girl selects in the test section, she is evaluated and classified in a specific way. However, despite the fact that the test is an essential part of the quiz structure—as it is through the test that the respondent is evaluated—it seems to play a secondary role for the readers. According to an interview carried out by the second author of this article with college students enrolled in a first-year Language and Gender class, what interests them most about quiz responses is 'their overall grade', i.e. how they are evaluated. That is, what catches their attention is *not* the content of the test items, but *how* they do on the test, or *how* they are classified. For that reason, we put the *test* part aside, and concentrated only on the *overall Problem* of the quizzes—*title* or initial question—and on the *Responses*—the *classification*, by focusing on the evaluative, classificatory, advising, and disciplinary aspects of the quizzes which follow the series of questions and answers in the test.

The classification part of the quiz

After being required to provide a particular Response to each of the Problems (questions) in the test, the reader is asked to sum up her points.

The resulting score places her into one of three or four categories or Responses to the overall Problem, even though only one is positively Evaluated. The positively evaluated Response, the Solution, coincides with what is considered by the magazine to be a desirable behavior for girls.

Negative categories reveal the potential complexity of the Problem–Solution pattern in quizzes. This complexity involves the phenomenon of *multilayering* which captures the observation that when a Response is negatively evaluated, a new Problem emerges and as such requires another Solution (Hoey, 1983: 82). For instance, in quiz 3, when a reader's score classifies her as a *Wild Woman,* she encounters a new Problem, since being a Wild Woman is a behavior negatively evaluated by the magazine.

Our analysis of quizzes resulted in the identification of two broad types which we have labeled *Type A*: the perfect girl, and *Type B*: the not-so-perfect girl. Both types have the same basic structure: *Multilayering Problem–Solution.* The difference between them is that whereas Type A quizzes present one of their categories as *entirely positively evaluated*, Type B quizzes do not. In the latter, even the positively evaluated category has its drawbacks or, at least, some 'potential' drawbacks. Table 2 shows a checklist which shows each quiz with its classification; Figure 1 schematizes Type A quizzes.

'What do guys think of you?' (Seventeen, *April 1994: 106, 110*)

This quiz deals with one of the most frequent themes found in teenage girls' magazines: boys, or their views on girls' behavior. Here girls are informed about what their male counterparts think of them. Depending on how she scores, the girl is classified in one of four types of behavior. The first classification, *A Wild Woman*, constitutes the *first Response* to the question

TABLE 2. Classification of quizzes

Quiz	**Perfect Girl**	**Not-so-perfect girl**
Quiz 1: 'Is your boyfriend your life?'	√	
Quiz 2: 'Are you a male chauvinist?'	√	
Quiz 3: 'What do guys think of you?'	√	
Quiz 4: 'Test your social savvy. Do you sizzle or fizzle?'		√
Quiz 5: 'Can you survive without a boyfriend?'	√	
Quiz 6: 'Do you like yourself? Really?'	√	
Quiz 7: 'Are you independent?'	√	
Quiz 8: 'What kind of flirt are you?'		√
Quiz 9: 'Are you a control freak?'	√	
Quiz 10: 'Are you insecure?'		√
Quiz 11: 'Do you have a big mouth?'	√	
Quiz 12: 'Are you a slacker?'	√	
Quiz 13: 'Are you a slacker?'		√
Quiz 14: 'Are you a user?'	√	
Quiz 15: 'Are you short tempered?'		√

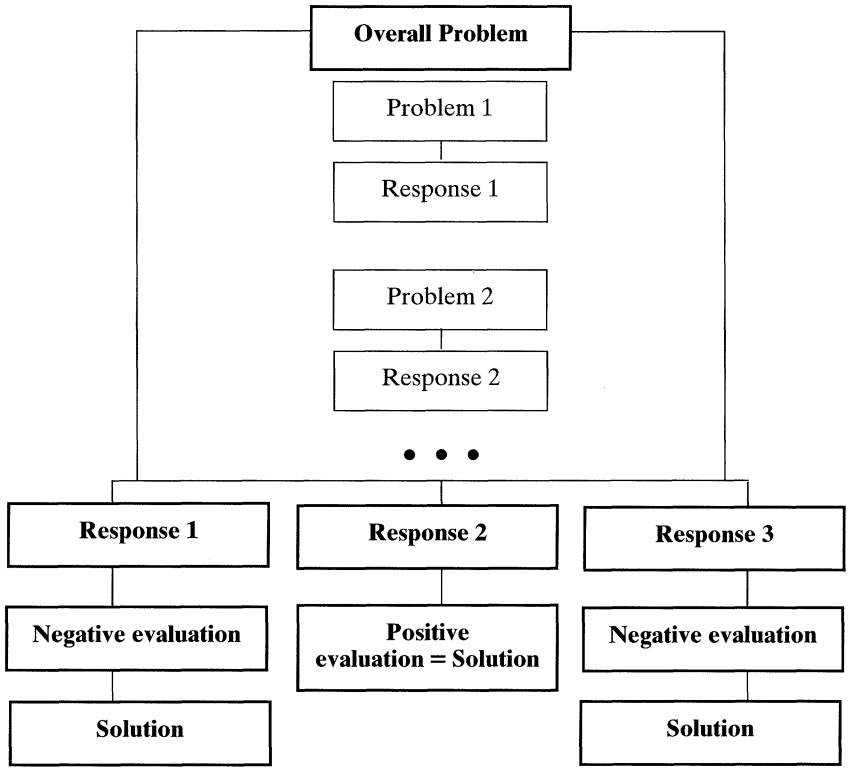

FIGURE 1. Type A quizzes: the perfect girl

'What do guys think of you?'. However, because this type of girl is negatively Evaluated, it becomes a new Problem. The initial part of the first sentence, 'Sure, guys are interested in you' constitutes a *positive Evaluation.* However, its second part, signaled by the conjunction *but*, encompasses the *drawback* of that Response: '*but* not necessarily for the right reasons'. [emphasis added]. The evaluation 'right' in 'right reasons' implies the existence of reasons that are 'wrong'.

The commentary continues that the decision to flirt actively 'is not the way to snag a great guy'. Note the use of negation in this sentence. This denial constitutes a form of *presupposition*, generally defined as what can be assumed as common ground for interactants. Presupposition, then, is some sort of proposition which the producer of the text takes as already 'given' for both him/herself and the receiver of the text (Levinson, 1983). According to Pagano (1992), the negation used here can be classified as *denial of background information*, in which the idea denied by the writer is something she or he assumes her or his interlocutor considers. The rejected background information in the sentence 'flirting your head off *is not* the way to snag a great guy' is the previous experience or belief that the editor

presupposes the girl has. It is assumed that she indeed flirts to a notable degree, or at least thinks that this is the way she will find a 'worthy' boy to date.

Up to the end of the paragraph, we find a *set of Solutions* given by the magazine. The suggestions appear both in the direct imperative form, and in mitigated forms, such as 'try to figure out'. Based on Hoey's (1979, 1983) model, instead of answering the question 'What has been done about the Problem?', the Solution here answers the question 'What can I do about it?'. In this way, editors attribute the Response to the reader and project it to the future:

> Try to figure out why you're so needy of the attention guys give you, says Kate Wachs, Ph.D., a psychologist in Chicago. ... Liking *yourself* is way more important than having any guy ... like you.

Note that although the advice is delivered by the editor, it is not *she* who is actually providing it. The magazine makes use of an 'accredited' source, Dr Wachs, to give the advice. In addition to her full name, her profession, educational level, and location are also provided. The reference to an accredited source confers more reliability, objectivity and seriousness to what is being said. At the same time, the aim of introducing her is to detach the editor from the advice. That is, it is not the editor who is telling the reader to change her behavior, but a highly specialized professional. In this way, the editor is not proffering advice and can therefore equalize her relationship with the readers.

The *second Response*, *A Great Girlfriend*, is the only positively evaluated classification. It is the actual *Solution* to the overall Problem:

> You've got everything down right. You know how to be friendly and flirtatious in a subtle, *non*intimidating, and *no*-pressure way.... [Y]ou *don't* change your behavior just because guys are around—you're always yourself.... And most importantly, you *don't* take guys too seriously.

The use of negatives is widespread again. Drawing on Pagano's framework (1992: 134), all the negatives here are *denials of contrast*. By saying that the *Great Girlfriend* type knows 'how to be friendly and flirtatious in a subtle, *non*intimidating, and *no*-pressure way', the magazine implicitly contrasts her with the type of girl that *does* flirt in an 'intimidating' and 'pushy' manner, i.e. the *Wild Woman*. Likewise, 'you *don't change* your behavior ...' and 'you *don't take* guys too seriously' implicitly contrast the *Great Girlfriend* with less desirable behavioral profiles.

The *third Response*, *A Great Pal*, just as *A Wild Woman*, is *negatively evaluated*. This classification reports that Great Pals are always told they have great personalities—which in American culture is generally understood as implying that the girl is physically unattractive. It is in the question in the second sentence that one finds the first hint that leads to a *negative Evaluation*: 'Bet you're sick to death of hearing that, right?'. Being weary is clearly an undesirable feeling.

Part of the *Solution* is 'to turn on the charm a bit more'. The rest of the Solution is both in the direct imperative: 'don't be afraid', 'just relax', and

'have faith', and more mitigated forms, using modals such as 'you *can* make physical contact', and 'you *can* even strike up a personal conversation'. Again, the Solution is given in the form of projected action; it is the behavior the reader should adopt from then on:

> Don't be afraid to smile ... or make eye contact. ... You can make physical contact, too ... by casually and gently touching his arm or hand. ... Just relax, says Dr. Wachs, and have faith in yourself that you can be cool and act playful. ...

The *last Response* to be considered, *A Snob Sista*, is not desirable either. The expression *A Snob Sista* is in itself derogatory. The first sentence of this classification both *Evaluates negatively* this type of girl, and explains why she is labeled a *snob sista*: 'You've got your guard up big time, girl'. Then there is a 'list' of *Solutions* for the Problem, suggesting the girl concentrate on things she likes about herself: '[T]hink positive! If you have to *act* like you're more self-confident than you really are at first, that's okay' [emphasis added].

Note that this classification and the quiz as a whole are based on a contradiction. The *Great Girlfriend* is positively evaluated for *being herself*: 'you *don't* change your behavior ... *you're always yourself*' [emphasis added]. The *Snob Sista*, however, is advised to do exactly the opposite, that is, to simulate a personality which is not hers: 'if you have to *act* ... that's okay'.

In the case of *A Great Girlfriend*, the girl is praised for being herself, and for not modifying her behavior because of a male presence. In that context, the approval functions mainly in contrast with *A Wild Woman*, the girl who *does* modify her behavior to impress guys. In the last classification, however, *Snob Sista* is negatively Evaluated for playing the 'difficult type' with boys. This girl is then advised to change her behavior and try to loosen up a little. In this case, acting out a personality which is not the girl's own is not only approved of but also recommended by the editors.

Another aspect to consider in this quiz is the strongly conservative tone of the 'opinions' guys might have about girls. A girl who is more assertive towards boys, approaching them, taking the action, assuming roles which have long been considered appropriate only for males in many societies, is labeled a wild woman. For boys, being assertive is not only an adequate behavior but also an expected one. For girls, however, this is certainly not the case. According to the text, and this is signaled in its vocabulary, boys dislike a girl who is more assertive and who might intimidate them. This perspective is overtly demonstrated in the vocabulary which describes the behavior of a *great girlfriend*: 'You know how to be *friendly and flirtatious* in a subtle, *nonintimidating*, and *no-pressure* way' [emphasis added].

Being a perfect pal to boys is, in its turn, a behavior not only disliked by boys, but by the girls as well, as it does not further the heterosexual agenda. A friendship relation between the two sexes is not what girls *want* and *should* be after: 'Guys are always saying what a great personality you have. Bet you're sick to death of hearing that. ...'. The adjective 'healthy', in the sentence 'there is nothing wrong with some *healthy* flirty', is interesting as

well. The classification of flirting as 'healthy' implies the existence of some kind of flirt that is 'unhealthy'. The unhealthy behavior here is probably the one the 'wild' girls have.

Type B quizzes: the not-so-perfect *girl*

Type B quizzes differ from the others in one main aspect: they do not present any of the Responses as an absolute Solution for the overall Problem. In other words, although there is one category, or Response, that is positively evaluated, this category is presented as also having some Problems or at least 'potential' Problems. Figure 2 illustrates the text-structure of Type B quizzes.

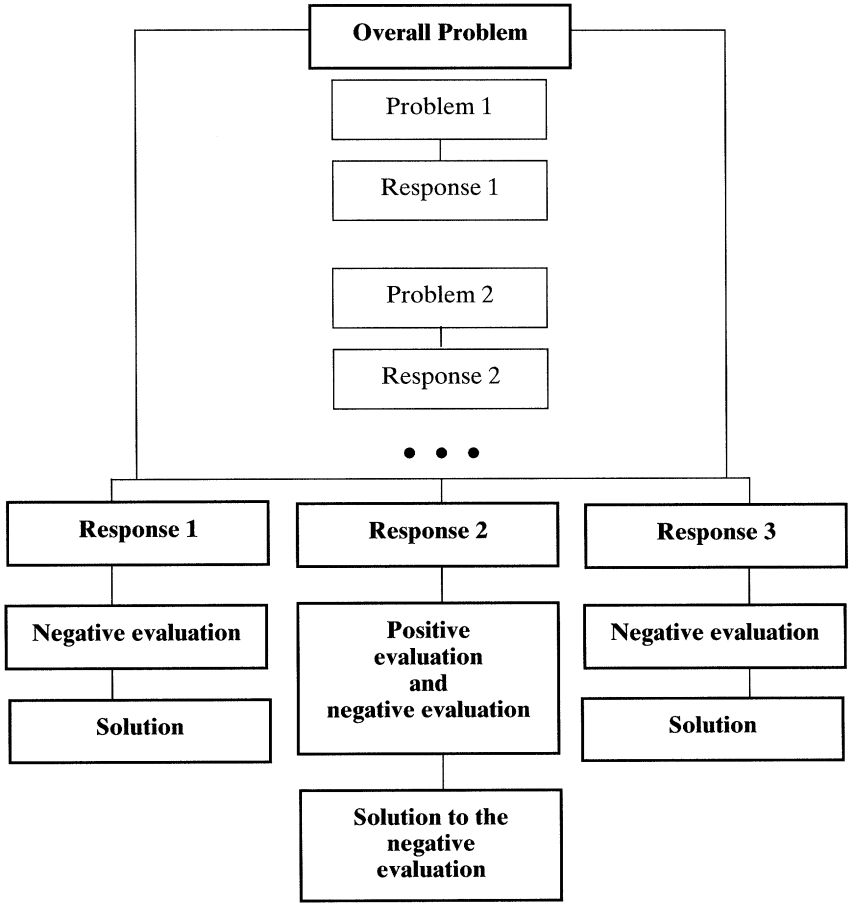

FIGURE 2. Type B quizzes: the *not-so-perfect* girl

'What kind of flirt are you?' (Seventeen, August 1994: 106)

In this quiz, girls are evaluated regarding their 'ability' to flirt. There are three possible types—*Flirtaholic*, *Flirtmaster*, and *Flirtaphobic*—of which only the *Flirtmaster* type is positively evaluated. The first Response, *Flirtaholic*, is negative in its morphology insofar as it refers to an addictive condition. This type of behavior is negatively Evaluated in the first sentence of the paragraph.

> [M]ale attention is nice, but why are you so hell-bent on having it all the time?... Maybe you feel like you're worth more when guys find you attractive—not surprising in a culture where a female's value is often measured by her sexiness....

As in the first quiz, behaviors or practices the magazine finds objectionable are framed as presuppositions. Set in the form of a question, the first sentence involves a manipulative presupposition. In a manipulative presupposition, the writer presents 'a proposition as given for another or established by him dishonestly, insincerely, and with manipulative intent' (Fairclough, 1992b: 121). Presuppositions seem to work effectively in being manipulative because it is difficult to question them. In this case, the manipulative intent of the presupposition consists of the writer setting up a particular life experience for the reader which is difficult to challenge. The question presupposes that the girl is actually committed to constantly having the boy's attention. In this sense, while an affirmative assertion such as 'you *are* hell-bent on having male attention all the time' is open to debate, and can therefore be contested, the presupposition in the actual text is not. In other words, if the magazine asks the girl 'why' she is that way—needy of male attention—this presupposes that the girl is in fact like that.

The editors' description of her own words as passé, in 'Hate to sound *school-marmish*, but putting guys at the top of your life-goal list keeps you from getting to know anyone else' [emphasis added], is also telling. When the editor's words become too evaluative and authoritative—as in the evaluation of the *Flirtaholic* type—and her talk recalls that of parents and teachers, she distances herself from the reader. Her strategy of reapproximation then is to 'excuse' herself for sounding like an old-fashioned teacher. In this way, she tries to regain the reader's empathy by resetting her discourse as different from those of the school and home. Such a move might work as a marketing strategy; after all, if the editor sounds like the reader's parents or teachers, the magazines might not be appreciated so much by girls, and consequently may not sell well.

The second Response, *Flirtmaster*, is the 'preferred' type of girl, as indicated by the lexical innovation attaching 'master' to 'flirt', creating a word meaning possessing expertise at flirting. The paragraph begins with a long positive Evaluation of this category. The positive value is signaled initially with the phrase 'You have *no problem* ...' [emphasis added]. In this paragraph, the girl is described positively regarding the cognitive and affective processes she supposedly engages in: 'like', 'understand', 'recognize'. It seems that she *thinks* and *feels* more than she actually *does*.

> You have no problem with the fact that you like guys and they like you.... [You] recognize that attraction is a two-way street ... you ... understand that there are other ways to relate to guys—like on a purely intellectual level.

However, the 'perfect' type, *Flirtmaster*, has its 'potential' Problems too. After evaluating the *Flirtmaster* so positively, the magazine advises her to 'resist the temptation to use your all-powerful flirtation skills to manipulate situations'. This sentence encompasses both a negative Evaluation, a 'potential' Problem, and its Solution. That is, by advising the girl to '*resist*' the tempting desire to use her flirting expertise to influence people in a devious way, the writer both suggests that the *Flirtmaster* does have the 'potential' to employ her abilities in manipulative situations—pointing out the Problem—and advises her not to do so—pointing out the Solution.

The third Response, *Flirtaphobic*, is negatively Evaluated. A phobia is an irrational fear and therefore an undesirable psychological state. In this quiz, the word *Flirtaphobic* comprises the element Problem.

> Are you lost in a time warp? ... Maybe you don't like to flirt because you think it's all about playing games, acting cutesy ...

The negative Evaluation of the *Flirtaphobic* can be found in expressions such as 'lost in a time warp', 'waiting around for boys to notice you', 'don't like to flirt'. The sentence 'maybe you don't like to flirt ...' presupposes the girl does not like to flirt. Note that *not to like flirting* is considered a negative characteristic. Therefore, not having guys on the top of her life-goal list, or not having them in her list at all, challenges the heterosexist norm.

The Solution for the supposed Problem is anticipated by the word 'technique':

> The technique ... has more to do with hanging out and laughing with guys than seductively licking your lips or playing dumb.... [D]on't worry about being perfect at it....

The use of the word 'technique' reduces flirting to a skill which can be learnt, and eventually mastered: the girl can become a *Flirtmaster*. Whereas the girl is encouraged to master her flirtation skills, she is also warned not to worry about being perfect at it. The latter functions to create solidarity with the girl for she will never be able to achieve 'perfection'. Nevertheless, it is highly contradictory if compared to the whole discourse in this quiz which encourages the search for excellence, even when the girl is positively Evaluated (see analysis of the Flirtmaster type).

A point worth mentioning about this quiz is the negotiation the reader has to make with two opposing discourses: the feminist and the heterosexist discourse. The disapproving description of the *Flirtaholic* type is clearly built from a feminist perspective, markedly in 'maybe you feel like you're worth more when guys find you attractive—*not surprising in a culture where a female's value is often measured by her sexiness*' [emphasis added]. There is an appropriation of this discourse in order to reproach those aspects of the *Flirtaholic* type which are quite sexist, such as the girl seeing herself and her male counterparts as 'objects to be won' and her offering nothing else

to the world than 'her feminine charm', a commodity like many other commodities offered 'in the market of human beings' (Kress, 1985: 35). Nevertheless, in the subsequent classifications in the same quiz, the reader is essentially motivated to learn how to attract boys in the 'right' way. The allusion to appropriate or approved ways or techniques for girls to flirt reflects the heterosexist discourse.

DISCUSSION

Use of expert systems

The use of accredited sources, such as therapists, psychologists, or 'quiz-expert' editors, is shown to be a strategic practice in quizzes, which lends credibility to what is being said (8 out of 15 quizzes). In this sense, girls are not being evaluated, classified and advised simply by a layperson. On the contrary, the editors try to ensure their readers that the information they are providing is based on what real experts say.

The disclosure of the source happens in two distinct ways. There is either direct/indirect report of the source's speech in the body of the quiz, or there is an acknowledgment of the source outside the text, as illustrated here:

> *Direct/Indirect Speech*
>
> Try to figure out why you are so needy of attention guys give you, says Kate Wachs, Ph.D., a psychologist in Chicago. (quiz 3)
>
> "A person who's into control is dictated by her fears," says Sam Alexander, a therapist in Pasadena, California. (quiz 9)
>
> *Acknowledgment outside the text*
>
> Special thanks to quiz advisor dr. kathleen hook [sic]. (quiz 7)
>
> For the behavior quizzes there was only one person: Cláudia Visoni, of course. For more than four years she has been the one who devised the *Capricho* quizzes. [our translation] (*Capricho*, Special Issue, p. 5)
>
> Don't be nervous! Even if your 'social security is low', our 'Social Assistance' section is packed with savvy strategies to build confidence and boost success! (quiz 4)

The use of accredited sources has two main implications. First, it is a strategy that distances the editor from the advice. It detaches the editor—who aims at the equalization of her relationship with the reader—from the authoritativeness of the evaluations and some of the advice provided. Second, it confers a tone of seriousness to the quiz. The issues teenage girls confront are serious enough to require the consultation of health or mental health professionals.

Although an adolescent girl's behavior is validated by the serious attention of a professional, it is simultaneously 'pathologized, medicalized, scientified' (Fischer, 1993: 17) [our translation]. The therapist's classification of a girl's behavior as unhealthy carries a different weight than that of a layperson. The use of expert systems breaks away from the ludic

appearance editors want to create in quizzes. The use of these professionals is intrinsically related to the evaluation and classification of girls through the lexical choices we discuss here.

Evaluation and classification of good and bad girls and the role of negation

As the sample analyses demonstrate, quizzes in teenage girls' magazines basically consist of evaluation and consequent classification of girls' behavior. Classification has to do with the way the world is linguistically ordered (Fowler and Kress, 1979: 210). Lee (1992: 16) notes that the categories of classification 'are not objective, ready-made, inherent properties of the external world but are subject to processes of perception and interpretation'. He then suggests that some words might be used in order 'to impose a classificatory scheme *on* the reader not by argument but through the more insidious process of naming and reference' [emphasis added]. That is, the classification of processes, person, and actions are not always presented directly in an argumentative way by the authors. Rather, in many instances they are simply labeled in one way or another as if that were the only way to refer to them.

In quizzes, there is the imposition of a classificatory scheme not only *on* the reader while a recipient of the text, as Lee claims, but also *of* the reader herself. That is, the 'object' of classification and the reader coincide, with a classificatory scheme of the reader imposed on herself. Lee (1992: 119) claims that text producers express evaluations 'through drawing on classification schemes which are in part systems of evaluation'. The lexical choices used to evaluate and finally classify the girl are what essentially signal the element of Evaluation in the Problem–Solution pattern. And it is at this point that we find the relation between the linguistic Problem and the real-world Problem. Recalling Hoey (1983: 52), it is because the editors say that a certain behavior is a problem that the reader *might* see it as such.

From the analysis undertaken, a few observations can be made about the lexical choice of classification. Girls seem to be classified under two main labels which, in fact, are never made explicit: the *good* and the *bad* girls. Here we return to the Mae West quote at the beginning of this article. As we can see, the working of these two labels seems to be much more complex than the division of 'types' of girls she proposes. Similarly to Mae West's view, in quizzes there is always only one type of girl who has the appropriate, adequate behavior; there is only one girl who is classified as 'good'. However, differently from West's, under the 'bad girl' label there is more than the undisciplined girl. There are at least two subtypes: the extremes of the continuum whose center is the good girl. At one end, for instance, there is the *too* independent or *too* flirtatious girl (quizzes 7 and 8); at the other, we find the *too* dependent or *too* little flirtatious adolescent. Sometimes there are even three types of inappropriate behavior, as it happens in the quiz 'What do guys think of you?'. The 'good' girl, nevertheless, remains only one, even though she might also be potentially bad, as in the case of the *Flirtmaster* type.

The problematic nature of such a dichotomic division of the girls' behavior goes further. Many scholars (Connel, 1987; Johnson, 1989; Roman et al., 1994) argue that the very concept of the dichotomy is at the center of patriarchy. Whereas the female world is constantly dichotomized, hegemonic masculinity is naturalized (Roman et al., 1994). Therefore, what one finds in quizzes is not only the classification of the adolescent female behavior on a continuum with only two choices. In a broader context, quizzes also reify the concept of the dichotomy as an appropriate way of thinking.[14]

Within the evaluation/classification of the girls' behavior, it is also important to observe the use of the terminology of the expert systems, primarily in relation to the 'pathologization' (Fischer, 1993) of her behavior. There seems to be a division of behavior between what is 'healthy' and what is 'unhealthy', which is represented through the lexical choice, such as: 'healthy flirty' (quiz 3), 'the healthy one' (quiz 7), and 'self-reliant' (quiz 7), vs 'socially insecure' (quiz 4), 'cured' (quiz 4), 'needy of attention' (quiz 3), 'inner security' (quiz 3), 'afraid of rejection' (quiz 3), 'confused' (quiz 7), 'miserable' (quiz 7), 'tongue-tied' (quiz 4), 'low self-esteem' (quiz 7), and the innovations 'flirtaholic' and 'flirtaphobic' (quiz 8).

Thus, being a 'bad' girl, according to these quizzes, is taken as an unhealthy state (quizzes 3 and 7). Nevertheless, it can be 'cured' (quiz 4). And the magazine is there to fulfill this job: to teach girls how to become good, with the help of the experts. The definitions of a 'good' and a 'bad' girl are overtly provided by the magazine. Becoming a 'good' girl seems to be what is expected of any girl. Appropriate behavior is something with which she can gain expertise—'flirtmaster' (quiz 8)—through the application of a series of 'techniques' (quiz 8), such as how to 'exit those no-win situations' (quiz 4) that the magazine teaches through the voice of experts.

The use of negation, mainly in the description of the 'good' girls also contributes to the dichotomizing of female behavior:

> (quiz 2) You *don't* hesitate one second to cry and 'ask for a lap' when you're sad. [our translation; emphasis added]
> (quiz 2) You *don't* see any problems with doing things that are known to be typical of males. [our translation; emphasis added]
> (quiz 3) You know how to be friendly and flirtatious in a subtle, *non*intimidating, and *no*-pressure way.
> (quiz 3) You *don't* change your behavior just because guys are around.
> (quiz 3) You *don't* take guys too seriously.
> (quiz 5) You *don't* change yourself just because you're dating. [our translation; emphasis added]
> (quiz 8) You have *no* problem with the fact that you like guys and guys like you.
> (quiz 9) ... you *don't* think it's necessary to get the whole world to bend to your will.
> (quiz 12) You *don't* expect the impossible from yourself, and you're also *not* afraid to try new things.

The denials in the description of the girl who is positively evaluated stand

in opposition to the other categories which are negatively evaluated. For instance, the negations we find in quiz 3, and which describe *A Great Girlfriend*, directly oppose *A Wild Woman* type, who is said to 'flirt her head off' and 'rely on guys to make her feel good'. Those negations constitute what Pagano (1992) classifies as 'denials of contrast'. By articulating what the 'good' girl does not do, or how she does not do it, the editors compare her to the negatively evaluated girls. It is exactly what the 'bad' girl does that the 'good' girl does not.

This technique seems to operate very well in the quizzes' function of disciplining girls, as discussed later. The editors assume that a girl who is negatively evaluated in the quiz is not going to read only her own classification and advice. She will probably read how the 'ideal' type is described, that is, how she is expected to be. By doing so, she will find a description of a series of things a good girl does not do, and will immediately identify herself with the type that is being contrasted. Therefore, the negative as well as the positive evaluations discipline.

Clashes of discourses

In the analyses of the quizzes many contradictions appear. Perhaps the most insidious of all is that the editors repeatedly encourage the reader to be herself while simultaneously advising her to change her behavior. In quiz 3, for instance, 'What do guys think of you?', the 'good' girl is the one who does not change her behavior 'just because guys are around'; she is always herself. On the other hand, the girl who is classified as a snob sista, is advised to 'perform' a personality that is not really hers.

The clash of the feminist and (hetero)sexist discourses appear in several quizzes. In quiz 2, 'Are you a male chauvinist?', for instance, the girl who *is* classified as a 'male chauvinist' is advised in the following way: 'You have to be careful not to let this [characteristic of being a male chauvinist] hinder you from being yourself'. Up to then, we find the girl being encouraged to be herself, and not to think of her male counterparts as better than she is. However, the non-male chauvinist, characterized as the assertive female, is *negatively* evaluated and is advised not to try to be stronger than she really is, as in:

> You have to be careful to try *not* to be stronger than you really are. This way, you might be running over the delicious fact of being a girl, with all the fragility and strengths that that means. (quiz 2)

Moreover, the 'good' girl is described as loving 'feeling protected' by her boyfriend. The ideal type, therefore, is the one who occupies the space between the strong and the weak. The preferred girl is the one who reveals some sort of weakness, supporting the patriarchal system of unquestioned male superiority. A similar contradiction occurs in quiz 7, 'Are you independent?'. It would be expected that being independent would be a positive thing. However, the girl who is so classified is negatively described as being a 'loner'.

Furthermore, if we compare two quizzes published in different issues of

the same magazine, we find contradictory positioning of the editors. In *Seventeen*, in the quiz 'Are you a good flirt?', the negatively evaluated Flirtaholic is advised to remember that 'self-assurance, brains, and creativity are what really count'. In the quiz 'What do guys think of you?', however, in addition to the emphasis given to boys' opinion of girls' behavior, the girl classified as A Great Pal is negatively evaluated. Contradictorily, she is not the 'desired' type of girl for she has the same qualities that the Wild Woman is blamed for not having: 'Guys are always saying what a great personality you have. Bet you're sick to death of hearing that, right?'

This series of contradictions unveil the unstable position these magazines create for their readers. On the one hand, they strive to create a new image of teenage girls' magazines of the nineties: they talk to a self-assertive, self-reliant, independent, non-male-chauvinist, and strong-minded girl. On the other hand, they support the heterosexist discourse, imposing on girls certain ways of thinking and behaving that conform to traditional roles for men and women. Therefore, a good girl should flirt, but not too much; be independent, but up to a certain point; not be a male chauvinist, but not completely. Above all, a good girl should be herself, but only as far as being herself means to be a good girl.

This is how they punish bad girls: quizzes as disciplinary instruments[15]

The genre quiz in teenage girls' magazines is compatible with a comprehensive social theory: the theory of the *disciplinary society*—whose origin and development are traced by Foucault (1977) in his investigation of the history of the prison. Foucault (1977) defines *discipline* as a technique that assures the ordering of human multiplicities. He claims that discipline

> ... may be identified neither with an institution nor with an apparatus; it is a type of power, a modality for its exercise, comprising a whole set of instruments, techniques, procedures, levels of application, targets; it is a 'physics' or an 'anatomy' of power, a technology. And it may be taken over either by 'specialized' institutions (the penitentiaries or 'houses of correction' of the nineteenth century), or by institutions that use it as an essential instrument for a particular end (schools, hospitals), or by pre-existing authorities that find in it a means of reinforcing or reorganizing their internal mechanisms of power [the family, for instance]. (Foucault, 1977: 215–16)

Foucault (1977: 216) argues that what we see today is a spread of disciplinary procedures which are not necessarily in the form of distinct institutions, but centers, groups, or places spread throughout society. Religious groups and charity organizations are examples of these aggregations that, for a long time, have been imposing discipline on the population. He also contends that the success of disciplinary power stems from the use of simple instruments. These instruments are: *hierarchical observation*, *normalizing judgment*, and *examination* (1977: 170). The instrument of *examination* combines the techniques of an 'observing hierarchy' and those of a 'normalizing judgment'. According to Foucault, an examination consists of 'a

normalizing gaze, a surveillance that makes it possible to qualify, to classify and to punish. It establishes over individuals a visibility through which one differentiates them and judges them' [emphasis added] (1977: 184).

The quiz in teenage girls' magazines seems to constitute one more type of *examination*. As a type of examination, it also comprises *observation*—the questions and answers—which *classifies* and *judges* girls in order to *normalize* them, or to 'correct' their behavior. Responsible for its elaboration are the 'specialized institutions' that Foucault talks about: editors, physicians, and psychologists—such as Dr Wachs (quiz 3). The specialized institutions, or expert systems, work as 'judges of normality' (Foucault, 1977).

In quizzes, there are also the 'micro-penalties' that we find in the prison and in the school system. The girl is 'punished' for not acting 'properly'. In these tests, the micro-penalties are immediately linguistic, condemning deviant behaviors, and ultimately social—rejection by suitable mates. The girls who are classified as 'bad' girls—the ones who have to be punished—are the ones who *do not observe* the norm. The norm is what the magazine—as a vehicle that reflects and/or constructs society—defines. The girls who are classified as having 'inappropriate' behavior are labeled as problematic. They are given advice on how to change or to correct that 'improper' behavior. The judgment, classification, and advice in the quiz work towards the *normalization* of the reader, that is, towards the achievement of conduct that the magazine describes as appropriate to the 'good' girl.

The characteristic of *hierarchizing* in the disciplinary systems is also typical in quizzes. The answers the respondent provides in the test classify her in one of the opposed poles, 'good' or 'bad', which are measured one in relation to the other, as demonstrated here. The reader's individual action is referred 'to a whole that is at once a field of comparison, a space of differentiation and the principle of a rule to be followed' (Foucault, 1977: 182).

In quizzes there is also the process of *punishment–gratification*. The good girl is gratified by being praised, while the bad girl is punished by being negatively described. This procedure might create in the 'bad' girl the desire to be gratified as well. In order to be gratified she has two options: she can either change her behavior or she can wallow in the negative answers she provides.

The hierarchizing system has a double outcome in quizzes as well. It both classifies girls according to their behavior, and exercises a continuous pressure over them to correspond to the same model: to be obedient, moderately flirtatious, socially well behaved, not completely independent or assertive. In this way, all girls are more easily subjected, and will eventually be all similar; they will be 'normalized'.

CONCLUSION

We have tried to demonstrate that like other major institutions such as the church, the school, and the family, quizzes in teenage girls' magazines also constitute a 'disciplinary instrument'. Readers are taught how to be 'good

girls', and socialized into attitudes and types of behavior that are considered 'appropriate'. In our investigation of the macro-structure of quizzes, in terms of the Problem–Solution pattern (Hoey, 1979, 1983), we have demonstrated that quizzes 'problematize' the girls' lives. They point out failings in girls, and offer the solution in the form of advice. However, often the 'problems' raised in quizzes might never have been identified by the readers as problems. Quizzes create endlessly problematic situations for girls, leading the reader to wonder about her behavior, to stimulate her wish to be tested and her wish to improve. Quiz after quiz, girls are encouraged to test, to scrutinize themselves, and to fix themselves and their behavior.

Problems sell magazines—problems related to beauty and fashion as well as to behavior. Teenage girls' magazines sell products *and* advice. In the case of quizzes, advice is sold. However, that advice is insidiously dispensed, presented not in a column entitled 'Experts tell you how to be a good flirt'; rather, advice is varnished in a highly interactive feature which is characterized by especially playful language. Furthermore, advice in quizzes is provided in a tone of equality, solidarity and intimacy which hides a powerful agenda behind it, i.e. to shape the behavior of girls at an important developmental moment.

Foucault claims that the discourses of therapy or counseling have become fundamental ingredients of 'social control'. Authority and control might be exercised in the strategic form of counseling. In quizzes, a 'pack' of recommendations is given either in the voice of the editors or of what Foucault (1977) calls the 'specialized institutions'. Rules for conformity of behavior are what basically define the genre. As Fischer (1993: 13) argues, the practices we find in teenage girls' magazines involve one special kind of submission: the submission of the girl to the 'other'—the boy, the physician, the psychologist. This dependency happens because it is this 'specialist' who controls her life, who knows what is best for her, and therefore, the one who has the authority or, at least, the experience to give her guidance.

Through the analysis of the linguistic conventions of the genre, together with a *critical* investigation of their implications, we have demonstrated that the quiz, a steady feature in teenage girls' magazines, is neither harmless nor ludic as the magazines would have us believe. Although editors suggest that it is up to the reader to decide what to do, the reader might be profoundly influenced by values conveyed by hidden discourses. Traditional feminine and heterosexist values and behaviors are emphasized, while more controversial ones are discredited. The girl is induced to be moderately independent, to behave 'properly' in social gatherings, not to be a radical feminist, not to talk too loud, not to 'pressure' and intimidate guys by being too flirtatious. The right, appropriate, favored, expected behavior is mainly what the male's eye judges to be so.

Teenage girls' magazines constantly betray themselves by reinforcing female submission, a female's behavior subjected to the 'male gaze' (Ballaster et al., 1991). The apparent liberal discourse of the magazine, informing the reader about her body, sexuality, and her rights in society, is

suddenly demolished by a discourse which tells her not to depart from accepted norms. Moreover, ethnographic studies of female teenagers' reading practices (Finders, 1996, 1997) point out how willingly early adolescent girls appropriate the magazines' language, experiences, and images as their own. Based on such eagerness Finders (1997) observed in the magazines' readers, she claims that 'one can hardly deny the impact of these texts on the social construction of the self. [...] These messages read over and over became scripts for the girls' (p. 65). Therefore, even though the messages conveyed in quizzes might not necessarily teach or radically change the girls' conception of their role, they certainly reinforce certain values. In quizzes girls can see a construction of the female that is a reflection of society's attitudes and ideals: that girls are supposed to be good girls. Although they may not learn their role solely from this source, the quiz does constitute a reinforcement.

What implications does this work have for social change? Van Dijk (1993: 280) claims that 'critical discourse analysis may not make much difference, unless we are able to contribute to stimulating a critical perspective among our students and colleagues'. It is known among school teachers that (pre)adolescent girls frequently bring magazines to school to be read during the break as well as during the classes, hidden between the pages of a textbook or sections of a binder. As claimed by Ostermann (1995b) and Finders (1996), educators can use these quizzes in the classroom to raise consciousness among students about the role of language in reproducing discriminatory discourses and unequal sex-relations. In the same way as quizzes scrutinize the girls' lives, teachers can encourage students to scrutinize the quiz in order to find the hidden messages it conveys, offering (pre)adolescent girls an opportunity to take a closer look at themselves and increase their awareness.

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NOTES

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1. From *'Teen*, April 1994: 86.
2. We appreciate the historical background offered by Thomas Tentler's (1997) personal communication.
3. In the US, for instance, in the late 18th century and beginning of the 19th, the *circuit riders*—itinerant preachers who were the links between the Methodist churches and society—were known for their work of visiting communities at least once a month in order to 'quiz' the members on their Christian faith (Noll, 1992).
4. A recently launched teenage girls' magazine in Brazil, *Atrevida*, reveals the same tendency. In 1997, it also published a special edition consisting only of quizzes.
5. According to Roxanne Camron, the editor of *'Teen* magazine, quizzes are sometimes written by an educational or psychological expert. Most of the time, however, they are simply devised by a writer who possesses expertise on the subject about which s/he is writing (pers. comm., 12 September 1994).
6. The interview with the editors of the Brazilian magazine *Capricho* was done through regular mail and *in situ*, those with the editors of the American magazines were done only through regular mail.
7. Another potential reason for such a shift is that the adjective *gatinha* (pretty, young girl) has been used in the past few years to describe pretty girls of a 'very' young age. As a result, keeping such a descriptor that trivializes the age of its readership audience would not have been a good marketing strategy for *Capricho*.
8. The magazine has a monthly circulation of 300,000 copies. The editors, however, believe that *Capricho* is read by over 500,000 Brazilian teenage girls, who exchange the issues among themselves, or read them at the hairdressers', dental offices, and other waiting rooms.
9. Percentage figures provided by the editor of *'Teen* magazine, Roxanne Camron.
10. Unfortunately, we were unable to get a response from the editors of the magazine *Seventeen* about their readership profile, and magazine attitude and contents.
11. *Sassy* is no longer an independent magazine; it was merged with *'Teen* in 1997.
12. Title of an article from *Sassy*, March 1994: 36.
13. Advertisement for Squeeze clothing (*Seventeen*, April 1996: 55).
14. We are indebted to Sonja Foss for drawing our attention to the important relation between the dichotomy of female behavior and patriarchal thought.
15. The initial part of the title, 'This is how they punish bad girls', is from *Sassy* (March 1994: 68).

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