



## New technologies and body modifications in post modernity

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**Glória Marianna Barreto Teixeira**

### 1 INTRODUCTION

The present work brings brief problematizations about the use of the body as a consumer product in today's society. Since the socially constructed bodies are surrounded by the need to reproduce body standards established by the media and the dissemination of pharmacological, cosmetic and surgical procedures in force in postmodernity. The present work brings questions about the use of the body through the survey of relevant and recent studies on the subject in question, without the intention of a deep reflection on the subject.

### 2 OBJECTIVE

This qualitative work aims to bring brief problematizations about the use of the body as a consumer product in postmodernity.

### 3 METHODOLOGY

The research was carried out through a bibliographic survey on the theme of the body and the media in postmodernity, developed with articles found on academic google and in books that address the subject. It should be noted that the theme in question arose from the classroom discussion with high school students from the state school system, developed in Physical Education classes on the theme of body and cyberculture.

### 4 DEVELOPMENT

The body seems to be the object of study of several areas of knowledge. Therefore, this study aims to point out some approaches that understand the process of social construction of the body surrounded by symbolic values resulting from media relations emerging from the logic of consumer culture. In this perspective, a body is not only matter, tissues, bones and muscles, it is also everything that happens around it. Thinking about the body is also thinking about the identity acquired in contemporary culture whose developments can be seen, for example, in the growth of the



pharmacological industry and products and services related to the body, its construction, modification, care and control.

Recent studies show that postmodernity has brought new aspects to the configuration of human bodies, so that once considered rigid and immutable, it is constantly changing and evolving as a result of the need to maintain a strong and young body brought by medicine and the beauty industry. This body needs to be fit for working time, capable of producing more and more (MOREIRA and BEZERRA, 2021).

It is noted that only in the second half of the twentieth century that the social dimensions given to the body began to change. Before the era of post-industrialism and post-Fordism, the fall of industrial capitalism occurred, based on regulated and disciplined work. This fact changed the lifestyle of society, emerging the ideals of consumption, well-being and leisure (MOREIRA and BEZERRA, 2021).

The body is presented today by ideals elaborated by the media, especially by social networks. The body is the most beautiful object desired in the world. Its representations, signs, customs and desires are offered as products. In this scenario, we observe the approach of the body business. For Santos (2021),

Talking about business, at first, presupposes commercial relations involving exchanges that are, in general, mercantile. Business is also the denial of leisure in its origin and, within the logic of social relations of consumption, is linked to the ability to maintain activities that have to do with the processes of production and circulation in the economy, because of the interests of capital: in the case of the body, to its possibility of being a sign of beauty in harmonious conjunction as property (p.19).

These questions are guided by a bias of a theoretical field subsidized by studies that emphasize the cultural dimension of the body, where it makes it possible to understand certain cultural attributions reproduced, for example, in bodily and sports activities, in forms of work, and in ways of being and acting according to female and male biology. It is observed that for a long time bodily and sports activities were not recommended for women, since the female sex was considered more fragile than the male.

Foucault's (2019) studies reveal that bodies are historically dated cultural constructions and institutions invest in the body different disciplines to docilize and control it. For the author, certain cultures attribute meanings based on the hierarchy of body anatomy. His analysis announces that the body is a social, cultural and historical construction. The social body arises through the materiality of power, which are the consequence of historical and social processes resulting from the dominant culture. The domain of the body itself is given by the investment in the maintenance, alteration and exaltation of good physical form.



In view of this perspective, to think about the body in today's society, it is necessary to understand which body standards have been disseminated as a strong, beautiful and young ideal by the media and the marketing industry. For Moreira and Bezerra (2021), technological advances and easy access to the internet and social networks influence the spread of fitness. According to the authors:

Thus, especially in the context in which we live, marked by the development of technological devices and the forms of expression and communication of subjects, the ways of being and being in the world are greatly influenced by the media. In the case of cyberspace, in particular, the increased visibility, very noticeable in the famous social networks, and the connection without pause, leveraged by the vast access to the internet and the spread of mobile devices, shape ways of relating to ourselves, to others and to our bodies, including with regard to the ways of displaying the physical form and the cult of the body (p.33).

Bodies modified by technological advances, cosmetics, medicine and biotechnologies have been in evidence in recent decades due to the urgent need for physical remodeling. This body is in all social institutions, including schools.

By traditional logic, bodies were the object of meticulous attention. For Louro (2016), watching, controlling, shaping and correcting bodies are concerns of the processes for the formation of an ideal model of man. According to Louro, bodies are targets of cultural pedagogies, which find in school a safe and efficient way to transmit values and "produce" social subjects. The school would be a social place of production of bodies regulated and controlled by the media, by teachers and by a form of indoctrination of bodies.

Studies show that bodies needed to be schooled, indoctrinated and disciplined. Louro (2016), when talking about the pedagogies of sexuality, brings important questions about the schooling of bodies. For the author, the school practices the disciplining of bodies in order to form civilized men and women. This production of bodies makes evident the gender roles taught at school. They teach a tough masculinity, forged in sport, competition and violence for boys and a docile, discreet, gentle and fragile femininity for girls.

## 5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The understanding of the body as a social construction, surrounded by meanings and signs brings numerous reflections on the forms of consumption in the current society. As seen in the literature presented, the forms of body care have been and are being modified continuously and in an increasingly accelerated manner. The relationship of subjects with their own body seems to be directly related to access to social networks and the media. This factor has changed the forms of existence and values given to the body. Taking care of the body has become a necessity and good shape has become a rule. However, the price to acquire this product, which we can call "perfect body" demands economic capital that is not accessible to the entire population. In addition, the bodies modified by new technologies go



beyond the conceptions of functional health to a vision of a machine body, productive, efficient, performative and useful.



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