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Postfeminist Heroines: Contradictions of Female Audiovisual Production on YouTube

Abstract: *This article investigates the contradictions and ambiguities of the representation of women in vlogs published by ordinary women on YouTube. The paper examines the origins of amateur videos on the Internet and the relationship between TV and web, discussing the characteristics of the television of intimacy. More specifically, the research analyses Flavia Calina's channel, which has nowadays more than 800,000 subscribers and 130 million views. The investigation examines videos, comments from viewers and a meeting between the vlogger and her audience, in view of postfeminist criticism. The findings suggest that Flavia Calina, famous because of her digital reality show, synthesizes a kind of neoliberal middle class heroism, in which feminine empowerment is associated with the display of intimacy and the celebration of individual choices.*

Keywords: YouTube; Vlog; Postfeminism; Intimacy; Celebrity

On December 20, 2014, a group of 500 people, mostly women, met in the auditorium of a hotel in Morumbi, in Sao Paulo. To be there, the audience had gone through a fierce contest – tickets for the event, costing R\$ 35 each, were sold in five lots of 100 units in less than two minutes on the Internet.¹ I was lucky: in the last lot of sales, with great skill and speed to type my data, I was able to get my ticket.

When I got to the hotel, there was a crowding at the door. Groups of three to five women laughed, mothers and their teenage daughters talked quietly, some couples with babies on their lap held trolleys, purses, and tickets. They all carried large, brightly colored bags in their hands, which reminded a birthday party. In the taxi, while I paid for the ride, the



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driver commented: "I stopped by here earlier, it was already full, it seems that there is a famous woman in this hotel."

He was right. In that fancy hotel were 500 people who would meet for four hours with Flávia Calina, a popular YouTuber. Flávia created her channel in 2009 and, at that moment, had more than 800 thousand subscribers and about 130 million views.² Only one of her videos, "My normal birth: birth of baby V.", had almost 6 millions views.³ The website *Social Blade*, which provides user statistics for social networks, estimated that Flávia was a "B+" on YouTube. From subscriber rankings, views and network impacts, she could earn up to US\$ 60,000 monthly.⁴

Forty minutes after the appointed time, the back doors of the hotel's auditorium opened. The soundtrack of the channel, in a dancing style, played loudly. Flávia Calina, surrounded by three security guards, crossed the hall under effusive applause and shouting. Bouncing as she walked, she carried a camera pointed at herself in her right hand and in her left hand a sign written "hi, how are you?" Like the public, Flávia was also shouting. The expectation for her entrance, the revelation of the door opening, the warm greeting and the animation of Flávia Calina reminded the spaceship that led the Brazilian kids TV host Xuxa to her auditorium, in the 1990's.

The popularity of Flávia Calina and the emotion expressed by the audience at the event suggest that the vlogger, through her YouTube channel, has become famous. Less known than famous figures of traditional television, Flávia can be considered a type of celebrity, since the media established her fame.⁵ Posting from Monday to Friday, Flávia Calina broadcasts a reality show of her life, addressing one of YouTube's most symbolic appeals: "broadcast yourself." The characters of her channel are herself, who, in most of the videos, is heavily made up, in the foreground, speaking with her eyes toward the camera; her one-year-old daughter, and her husband.⁶ In October 2014, Flávia was interviewed by *Glamour* magazine, along with other Brazilian vloggers. For the magazine, vlogs are an Internet "phenomenon" and a "hit" (Stephanie NOELLE, 2014, p. 116).

Flávia Calina is an ordinary middle-class woman. She is 35 years old, was born in São Paulo and grew up in Barueri. In 2005, she moved to the United States after marrying a Brazilian employee of a multinational information technology company. At the time, Flávia was finishing her degree in Communication and Multimedia, at Puc-SP, a course that she never concluded. Arriving in the United States, she decided to work in another area and started as a teacher assistant at a kindergarten.

Out of Brazil, Flávia decided to send news to her family through YouTube. The themes of the first videos were makeup and beauty, which pleased her main Brazilian spectators – her mother and sister. The channel was thus similar to most blogs of middle-class women: Flávia, seated at a desk, was making herself up in front of the camera, talking about beauty products. After a while, her day-to-day life began to be incorporated into the videos. Difficulties in getting pregnant, an in vitro fertilization, and the series "30 things to do before the age of 30" changed the channel's editorial. The number of subscribers began to grow, and Flávia, finally, abandoned the activities in the kindergarten to dedicate herself exclusively to the web.

² By early 2017, numbers had grown exponentially, with more than three million subscribers and about 800 millions views.

³ In January 2017, the video jumped to 15 million views. Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7jydpn0j2AE>, accessed on 27 Aug. 2015.

⁴ Information obtained at <http://socialblade.com/youtube/user/fla1982>, accessed 19 Feb. 2015.

⁵ As Celebrity Studies analyses, the celebrity is characterized by the media's input. About this, see Daniel BOORSTIN, 1992; Chris ROJEK, 2008; Graeme TURNER, 2009.

⁶ In 2016, the protagonist had another son, adding a new character to her channel.

Engaged in the narrative construction of her daily life, she posted, from 2009 to 2017, approximately one thousand videos. In the presentation of the channel, the “about” section of YouTube, the text informs:

I am a teacher, an eternal teacher. In my channel I try to teach everything I've learned in school, in life and on You Tube. Here you will find videos about maternity, health, beauty and the daily life of a family that lives in the United States.

The description suggests that the channel, besides being a reality show of the life of Brazilians in America, also broadcasts educational videos.

According to Michael STRANGELOVE (2010), about 365,500 videos are posted on YouTube every day. Amateurs make most of them, but “many YouTube producers are not looking for fame and fortune. (...) They can only have the intention of reaching small communities, members of their own family or simply their friends” (p. 23). Flávia Calina is always provoking the attention of her viewers by encouraging them to comment, evaluate and share her videos. For every 100,000 new subscribers, she promotes celebrations – what expresses the impact and expansion of her channel. In addition to educational goals, the videos, therefore, also seek for more popularity.

The ‘lessons’ transmitted by Flávia are recorded by herself or by her husband and then edited by them as well. Each video is about fifteen minutes long and currently reaches, in less than 24 hours, around 200 thousand views. Although homemade, the productions are very well done: the camera does not shake, the sound is clear, there is attention to the framing, the lighting and the rhythm of the narrative. The fifteen minutes never follow a same plane sequence; a careful edition organizes the different elements. In some videos, she explains how the editing process occurred, what was left out or what she forgot to explain.

Flávia can start the video in her kitchen, making lunch, then continue in the car, with her daughter in the back, telling that she is going to the supermarket, and show the shopping cart and the products on the shelves. Or she can start the video by cooking a dish, then show the friends coming to dinner and finally show the empty house and comment which dish was the most appreciated. There is continuity in the themes: on her daughter’s birthday, a series of videos showed the celebration’s preparations (purchases, orders, food preparation and decoration), the time of the celebration and the days after the event.

The channel thus presents a serial logic, composed of independent units that are sequenced during the episodes. The aesthetics of serial narrative, whose origins are associated to modernist literature and to *feuilleton*, seeks to conquer the reader through hooks that motivate the curiosity for following the story.

Flávia’s channel subscribers, when commenting on the videos, indicate the meaningful effects of the serialization. “People, how Vi is biggggg I’m SHOCKED”, registered a user about the development of Flávia’s daughter. “Hey Flavinha, how is Lucky? At 6:30 he jumped on the table, it looks much better = D”, asked a viewer about Flávia’s pet cat who had been hospitalized on the last few videos.⁷

Other manifestations of the public are disconcerting. When she declared financial difficulties to pay for a new in vitro fertilization treatment, her viewers created, on the Internet, a chip in for Flávia Calina’s fertilization. With the funds raised, the chip in would add a character in the continuity of the serial narrative of the channel. Possibly, users did not realize that they were behaving like the executive producer Christof, who controlled the situations experienced by Truman Burbank in the movie *The Truman Show*. When she heard about the

⁷ Comments on ‘Nossa rotina noturna’, available in <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EFmT6Sm0sGI>, accessed Feb. 20, 2015.

chip in, Flávia Calina stated that she was delighted, but would not accept the money. She suggested that the fund be donated to charity.⁸

Serial language, with an emphasis on everyday events and intimacy, makes Flávia Calina a vlogger, a person who produces a blog through videos, the video diary. The format became popular, especially in the United States, in 2005, with the advent of YouTube.

In *Camgirls*, Theresa SENFT (2008) rescues the origins of the transmission of home videos by ordinary people on the Internet. This audiovisual product emerged, in the 1990s, predominantly linked to the female universe and also, to a lesser extent, to the gay public. Through coupled or fitted computer cameras, without sound and by dial-up connection that allowed an image to be sent every five minutes, the first cam girls produced their videos at home, usually in their rooms. The audiovisual phenomenon was thus known as homecamming, a domestic filming. Theresa Senft has identified five types of homecamming: real life, art-cam, porn-cam, group house cam, and community (p.38-42).

Despite the variety of themes, Senft demonstrates that the porn category, with the transmission of images of young women having sex, was the most common type of homecamming in the 1990s. Pioneer Jenny Cam, who had nine cameras in her apartment between 1996 and 1998, became famous for the controversial transmission of masturbation and sex with her boyfriend.

In an interview she gave at the height of her popularity, Jennifer Ringley told ABC News that she wanted to "show people that what we see on TV – people with perfect hair, perfect friends, perfect lives – is not reality. I'm reality" (SENFT, 2008, p.16).

Jennifer argued that, unlike television, homecamming did not manipulate the narrative displayed. The novelty had thus emerged as an effective promise of access to reality, a task that traditional television, at that time, also imposed on itself. In the 1990s, as Dominique MEHL's (1996) pioneer work analyzed, television began to bring ordinary people, recruited from everyday life, to talk about their private lives and intimate experiences. Denominated 'intimacy television', programs developed different strategies, genres, and formats for showing personal and real narratives.

In the model of compassion, for example, guests are encouraged to report their problems in front of the cameras, seeking to elicit the public's altruistic and compassionate emotional states. These victim characters on welfare television would define the first era of intimacy television.⁹ Other models, elaborated throughout the 1990s – identity television, relational television, and competitive television – presented, in the same way, three central dimensions: lived experience, intimacy and common individuals.

They are invited to share their daily experience: to offer fragments of life narratives, tell their personal stories. They promote the figure of the witness, who attests to their existence and their own experiences (MEHL, 2008, p.271).

Intimacy television, motivated by the pursuit of lived experience, had tried, through live language and happenings, to establish this authentic connection with the reality of ordinary people. Analyzing an episode of Argentine television, in which a man confesses live to have killed a friend, Beatriz SARLO (2000) argues that the happening

Is a piece of life that authorizes not only its own images, but also, by proxy, all television images. (...) The truth of television is in the live recording and live broadcasting (...) television

⁸ Created on Nov 1st., 2014, after the refusal, the chip in was renamed 'A gift from the Calina family'. Available at <http://www10.vakinha.com.br/VaquinhaE.aspx?e=312066>, accessed Feb. 19, 2015.

⁹ The concept of 'television philanthropy' was developed by João FREIRE FILHO, 2009.

presents "what happens as it is happening" and, in its scenario, things always seem truer and simpler (p.75)

Since the 1990s, television would build an illusion of access to 'real life' and 'truth' through means such as happenings. In this new television, scenarios emerge that seek to create television reality. "The focus is no longer on the truth of statements, that is, the adhesion between the statement and the fact, but on the truth of the enunciation which concerns the amount of reality of what happened in the video" (Umberto ECO, 1984, p.188). However, camera mediation, frames and time limitation would persist. The truly real images remained indescribable and incomprehensible.

In the 1990s, homecamming, rudimentary when compared to contemporary digital techniques, brought similar features to intimacy television. With fewer gadgets and editing devices than traditional television, women, by connecting the cameras in their homes, provided access to their experiences. Morally despised due to its mostly pornographic content, homecamming also met media social expectations from that moment on – the immersion in the daily lives of ordinary people.

Throughout the 2000s, the production of amateur videos changed. As information technologies advanced (new and cheaper cameras, computers, applications and digital connection), real life gained more space. Young women began to present in their videos makeup techniques, shopping at malls, humor skits, diet tricks and emotional difficulties. Beyond the porn universe, successful cam girls became humorists, saleswomen, models, adwomen, designers and nutritionists.

Abandoning the crude non-edited style of homecamming, the videos, in the era of YouTube, incorporated strategies of television language. Specifically, the real life narrated by vlogs began to coincidentally emphasize the strategies of intimacy television. The vlog, or personal diary, transmits, in the public space of the Internet, stories and dramas related to the personal life of their authors. Empowered by its amateur character, intimacy television, in the vlog, enhances the reality of the experience of ordinary people.

Flávia Calina is aware that the material she exhibits, the content of her videos, is her intimacy. Using a loud microphone on an improvised stage, her opening words at the hotel event, in São Paulo, were to declare to the public the reason for holding the meeting.

I wished you to be able to have access to me. It's hard to understand, on the one hand, you are in my house, you are in my living room, in my bedroom – I mean, I don't think I ever recorded there, right – but you are in my kitchen, in my city, it is very intimate, very intimate... Sometimes, it is a little abstract, for me, to think that so many people know our life, know our history. But it's a pleasure to be able to say this to you, to share this with you, because that's how I get inspired: I see the story of other people and I can apply it in my own story.¹⁰

Despite pointing out that the goal there was 'access to her', in the auditorium, escorted by security guards and positioned on top of a stage, Flávia Calina seemed more distant from her audience than in the videos of her channel. Unlike the pioneering cam girls, Flávia does not display her sexual practices on YouTube, but she shows, without discretion, all her intimacy.

She has already taken viewers for a tour of all parts of her house: tour of the new room, tour of the baby's room, tour of the basement... Some scenes are banal; in the video "What is in my fridge?", she narrated how "to organize the refrigerator to help in nutritional education".¹¹ For 25 minutes, the video showed Flávia taking all the food out of her refrigerator and

¹⁰ Audio transcription recorded during the event, on Dec. 20. 2014.

¹¹ Video available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jj1KLSANXas>, accessed 20 Feb. 2015.

explaining her family's eating habits. She then demonstrated how to accommodate each kind of food and exhibited the final outcome of the organization.

In other cases, the display of intimacy is disturbing. In the video of her first delivery, one of the most watched, the images fully exhibited the occasion, from the purse break to the final moments, when the new family member is ready to go home. The scenes were edited observing the same sequence of TV show 'One Born Every Minute' (broadcast in Brazil by Discovery Home and Health): the entrance in a hospital room, the beginning of the contractions, the examinations by the obstetrician, the usual long moments waiting for the delivery, and the birth. Differently from television style, however, Flávia's video showed more intimate moments, such as the application of epidural anesthesia and the extenuating pains, scenes normally displayed in a more measured and discreet way by the television show...

Vlog images, therefore, do not have the crude style of homecamming. The video diary results from a meticulous editing process that highlights the rhythm of a life experienced in front of cameras. Following the logic of intimacy television, the images approach television language; on the other hand, being amateurish, the vlog presents differences when compared to traditional television.

A global analysis of the videos posted on Flávia Calina channel indicates that she plays the following social roles.

- 1) Mother: she takes care of the children, explaining not only daily activities, but also the Montessori method for early childhood education, an area in which she specialized.
- 2) Housewife: Flávia prepares food, manages the organization, cleaning and care with the objects and animals of the house.
- 3) Wife: she is married, and her husband is a character present in the videos; she mentions the day-to-day life of the marriage and participates in social activities with him.
- 4) Consumer: videos often show her shopping for herself, for home and for all family members.
- 5) Vlogger: This role relates to the metanarrative of her videos. Flávia explains how videos are recorded and edited, shows the gifts she receives, requests comments and 'likes', thanks for new subscribers, answers questions and reflects on her video practice.

Flávia Calina's dedication and popularity suggest that being a vlogger is, for her, a profession, in which technical knowledge and time are spent in exchange for financial income. At the same time, when she exhibits her intimacy, Flávia seems to be a traditional middle-class housewife, fulfilling activities related to the roles of women in private life – mother, she cares for her children; housewife, she cleans, cooks, and organizes the home; wife, dedicates herself to the marriage; consumer, manages the family's purchases. There are, therefore, ambiguities in the construction of her roles as a woman: a successful professional in paid work who also fully exercises the domestic tasks.

Lila ABU-LUGHOD (2003), analyzing the Egyptian television series as belonging to the melodrama genre, discusses two of their central characteristics: everyday life and ordinary people. There are no great heroes, as in epic literature; even on adaptations of classic folk narratives, the characters become afflicted by intimate and mundane problems. By representing ordinary people involved in their daily lives, Egyptian television constructs characters endowed with great emotional intensity, subjectivity and desires, which encourages ordinary individuals to reflect on their projects. This kind of narrative is beneficial to contemporary neoliberalism, in which individuals are led to make their own choices and examine their plans.

Lila Abu-Lughod, however, criticizes the insertion of melodrama in societies where modernization has not occurred fully. In Egypt, the notion of national development is strongly

tioned to politics, and secularization was constructed as essential only to some modern needs. The insertion of individuals into the family remains as an ideal. Egyptian serials thus contribute to creating a new type of individualized subject – very different from societies where modernity has been fully consolidated.

In part, the extreme staging of melodramatic selves may seem necessary for those whose goal is to “modernize” a society whose dominant social form is still the family and kin network and whose cultural forms until quite recently (and even contemporaneously in some regions) could be understood to work in different ways and with differing constructions of personhood (ABU-LUGHOD, 2003, p.85).

The melodrama, emphasizing the importance of the individual subject, contributes to creating ambivalence in the traditional Egyptian society. There is no rigid distinction between modernity and tradition, but rather interferences and conflicts, in which the construction of subjectivity is crossed by contradictory demands.

Under the American way of life, Flávia Calina connects to the ambivalent Brazilian context, exposing and narrating the life of a modern woman, who is at the same time traditional. Tips for raising children, home organization routines, culinary recipes, walks and leisure moments coexist with the life project of a woman who seeks to elevate her fame and popularity, make money and gain recognition, from a job in new media.

There seems to be no conflict between the two spheres. In the videos, the household tasks, organized into a ‘real’ narrative, provide content for building and maintaining her fame. Since the 1960s and 1970s, domestic activities are seen as a burden imposed on women. In criticizing the ‘feminine mystique’, the feminist movement revealed the problematic association between domestic work and female achievement (Betty FRIEDAN, 1971).

In Flávia’s videos, the roles of housewife and famous vlogger seem to occur without difficulty. During the event in São Paulo, a participant brought up the question.

I am married, I work and I have the difficulties of all mothers who work, and sometimes I ask myself, how I can manage all this? When I watched the video in which you went down to work out, I thought, OMG! So, I know how difficult it is for us to have to pay attention to the family and I think it's admirable how you do things and it seems like everything is easy, so we think, my, how do I do it?¹²

Flávia responded that she loved to make videos and, therefore, did not find the activity so exhausting. She said that in the future she would rely on the help of collaborators. Finally, she added: “But we do not do anything between midnight and six, so let’s work.”

In her videos, Flávia Calina is not a feminist heroine. The term was coined by Charlotte BRUNSDON (1995) to synthesize the work of a first generation feminist Anglo-Saxon soap opera studies. In the 1980s, with the worldwide phenomenon of melodrama success, studies sought to analyze (and exalt) strong female characters, who worked outside the house and had to deal with difficulties.¹³ The soap opera, although it did not present exactly feminist heroines, was perceived as a privileged object for understanding the transformations of the heiress of feminism after 1960-1970. “These programs offered feminism – or brought the agenda that feminism made public – the contradictory demands directed at women (Charlotte BRUNSDON, 1995, p. 54)

In Brazil, an example of this heroine was Malu, the protagonist of the TV series *Malu Mulher*, broadcast between 1979 and 1980 by Rede Globo. The character Malu, a middle-

¹² Audio transcription recorded during the event, on Dec. 20. 2014.

¹³ Bruno CAMPANELLA (2012) Opposing the perspectives of Charlotte Brunson and Len Ang, analyzes television heroines in the reality show Big Brother.

class São Paulo sociologist, was experiencing, surrounded by contradictions, female independence, paid work and sexuality. According to Heloísa BUARQUE de ALMEIDA (2014), in the series, Malu expresses, in several situations, that “a woman needs to fight, to battle, to be independent, to own her body and her pleasure.” At that moment there was still a unified understanding of ‘being a woman’; Malu, the Brazilian feminist heroine, brought to the fore “an approach that reveals the difficulties faced by women, the inequalities between the sexes and how the world seems to be unfair and difficult for women” (BUARQUE de ALMEIDA, 2014, p.211).

When suggesting that there is no conflict between the activity on YouTube and housework, Flávia Calina does not raise concerns about a possible feminist agenda. Her videos do not demonstrate contradictions in the social roles of contemporary women, doubly entangled by the high performance in the labor market and the feminine mystique of the home.

Flávia is not a traditional melodramatic heroine either. She does not appear to be preoccupied with personality conflicts or difficulties to ‘fit in’ in the world. She does not complain about love problems, is not being cheated by a villain and does not suffer from overwork; there is no polarization between good and evil, oppressor and victim (Peter BROOKS, 1995). Confident, engaged in her work, narrating her options and life projects, she does not need to be rescued by a good guy.

Neither feminist nor problematic, Flávia, middle class, educated and articulated, uses digital communication in search for fame. In presenting her life on YouTube, she demonstrates her ability to master information technology and television language in the achievement of a very clear life project: the popularity of the “everyday life of a Brazilian family in the States United”.

The good thing about all this, the good thing about YouTube, is that I have control of these images, you know? I'm not in a place, say like a reality show, where they do whatever they want, they manipulate it the way they want, and they make the drama they want. So I do not have these things in my channel... My only goal is to serve you in some way, to give myself and to give away all the information that I have, that I have lived and that I learn in the day to day.¹⁴

Unlike a traditional television reality show, where there is a business, industrial and organized manipulation, Flávia affirms to dominate, herself, the visible narrative of her channel. The supposed mastery of her image is constituted by the editing work, more genuine, authentic and real than the television industry. Claiming to keep control of the content she produces, she suggests that she has the autonomy to preserve what she thinks is most important: serving the public with information. She expects, therefore, that the viewers will trust her decision on what to show or not. By believing that she controls her images and the ‘reins’ of her life, Flávia Calina refers to a sense of post-feminist media.

Polysemic, the idea of post-feminism marks, among other things, a balance of ideas and issues of feminist mobilization. As Wendy BROWN (2005) argues, the formation of feminist canons, the postcolonial context and the interest of pop culture in feminism have repositioned gender considerations. Feminist politics, the multiplicity and the complexity of demands have started to be questioned.

In the mass media, however, post-feminism did not follow this systematic academic retrieval.¹⁵ According to Angela McROBBIE (2009), since the 1990s, the media treats feminism

¹⁴Audio transcription recorded during the event, on Dec. 20. 2014. Video available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o3X0yWRk3n0>, accessed 20 Feb. 2015.

¹⁵Authors aligned to the post-feminist reflection, based on the concept of gender, have questioned paradigms of the social sciences, such as, for example, Gayatri Spivak, Gayle Rubin, Judith Butler, Wendy Brown, Nancy Fraser, Rita Felski, Toril Moi, Donna Haraway, and Julia Kristeva.

with good intentions, but rarely demonstrates, appropriately, its political and collective project. Successful women have come to compose the universe of a renewed feminism, such as power feminism and girl power, in which women are empowered. TV shows such as *What Not to Wear*, romantic comedies, chick lit and popular journalism announce that women have conquered power – feminism 'is successful' (McROBBIE, 2009). As a consequence, the permanence of inequalities between men and women is not problematized. Post-feminism reaffirms the autonomy, strength, and empowerment of women in the twenty-first century, to the detriment of feminism as a collective mobilization (Stephanie GENZ; Benjamin BRABON, 2009; João FREIRE FILHO, 2007).

Post-feminism is contradictory, multiple and reveals the impossibility of a single agenda to achieve justice. Post-feminism is an aura, an atmosphere, a sensibility (Rosalind GILL, 2007), built by journalism, fashion, music and feminist discourse.

Rather than being tied to a specific contextual and epistemological framework, postfeminism emerges in the intersections and hybridization of mainstream media, consumer culture, neo-liberal politics, postmodern theory and, significantly, feminism (GENZ; BRABON, 2009, p. 5)

Even without a single agenda, in the mass media, there is a common aspect: the celebration of power. Rather than promoting collective mobilization, post-feminist media urges women to be individually strong and to maintain resilience in the face of problems. The representations of the feminine in the media emphasize narratives of achievement and happiness, achieved through individual capacities, disconnected from inequalities. The stories of women who 'got there' are models not only because they have achieved their projects, but also because they are seen as responsible for their destinies. Criticizing Anthony Giddens and Ulrich Beck, Angela McRobbie (2009) suggests that popular culture would disseminate nowadays a version of female success in which power and decision replace feminism as a political claim.

On YouTube, Flávia Calina has more control of her image than participants in a TV reality show. However, like other individuals in search of fame, she also subscribes to a pact of visibility in exchange for subscribers and views. Taken together, the videos of her two deliveries, for example, have been seen almost 20 million times. The babies were born under the spotlight, and even without consent, they also became celebrities. Sprawled in the videos, the children's daily life is entirely accompanied by thousands of people. In "Our Nightly Routine", the daughter eats tomato, chicken, and rice; then bathes and reveals that she loves to brush her teeth; then she listens to a little story and sleeps. In "Acrobatics by the Pool", she has fun at a hotel in Florida; in "Joy to Fly", the baby is fascinated by the clouds; in "Independence in the supermarket", the child takes the first steps without the mother's help.

A central resource for celebrity training, the intimate life of Flávia Calina and her family, especially her children, is exposed. Unlike sexy television characters, she does not exhibit the intimacy of sex in her visibility pact, but rather the intimacy of middle-class family life. Not assuming explicitly that she diligently seeks fame and recognition, Flávia Calina hopes that the public believes she intends only to offer valuable educational information.

Achieving visibility through the exposure of intimacy in the media suggests, however, that she also aims to become a celebrity. The meeting with 500 spectators at the hotel in São Paulo, the launch of beauty products with her name, the presence in media reports, the numerous comments and the increasing conquest of new subscribers show the commitment to maintaining and expanding her visibility. When she does not post videos, she apologizes, because she knows she needs to produce content on a daily basis so that her audience continues to guarantee her views.

The effusive disclosure of female success suggests a surpassed feminism, since women are free to do whatever they wish. Female celebrities represent the paradigmatic version of this discourse: they are examples of a successful neoliberal life, based on individual freedom to build a singular path, which has a positive outcome – the attainment of visibility.

Visibility, however, has an ambiguous value. 'Seeing more' – a high capital index – does not mean that events, people, situations, places and problems are perceived in a more accessible and fair way. As Josep ESQUIROL (2008) analyzes, although we consider vision "the most powerful" of all the senses, it is necessary to "learn how to look" (p. 56). Only by developing a watchful eye, prepared and instructed to see, can relationships emerge based on the ethics of respect. To be famous, today, therefore, does not mean to have respect, admiration, recognition, heroism and the inscription of a name in posterity, characteristics assured to the famous in the pre-media era.

The celebrity exposes contradictory representations of a successful life, because it is made, to a large extent, by an ambiguous material: visibility. In line with post-feminist sensibility, the heroism of female celebrities is hybrid and contradictory, shaped to be seen, undergoing the variations of the visibility market.

In post-television, as announced by Jean-Louis MISSIKA (2006), desacralization and secularization seem to abolish the differences between spectator and producer. The banal and everyday scenes of Flávia Calina's vlog, which seek to get closer to the 'reality' of the public, have turned her into a celebrity, famous for her reality show. Flávia Calina is a post-feminist heroine, admired by a legion of women who recognize and seek, on her daily vlogs, empowerment through a life story in progress under the spotlight of YouTube.

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