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## Affects and Female Age in *Grace and Frankie*

**Abstract:** *This article aims to perform a cultural review, applying the contributions of theories of audiovisual, affect studies and gender studies, about the affect figures manifest in the serial fiction Grace and Frankie. We seek to understand the relationship between affect figures represented and the visibility of female old age on the show, discussing the family, kissing and intimacy figures in order to understand the relations of friendship and love represented in the audiovisual product.*

**Keywords:** *Affect; Series; Age; Women; Figures*

### Introduction

*Grace and Frankie* is a serial fiction product about friendship. *Grace and Frankie* is a series about love. *Grace and Frankie* is a series about homosexuality. *Grace and Frankie* is a series about family. *Grace and Frankie* is a series about sexuality. *Grace and Frankie* is a series about the leading role of the elderly. For this article, *Grace and Frankie* is, above all, a series about affect and about the visibility of the affects of old people, especially of old women. We propose to carry out a cultural critical analysis, applying the contributions of the theories of the audiovisual, affect studies and gender studies, regarding the figures of affection manifested in the series through audiovisual language and narrative. We seek to understand the relationships between such figures of affection and the visibility of female old age represented in the fictional television series *Grace and Frankie*.

According to Douglas Kellner (2001), the analysis and interpretation of cultural products such as this show and the examination of the modalities of representation in contemporary culture, from the perspective of cultural studies, "require methods of reading and criticism capable of articulating their insertion in political economy, in social relations, and in the political environment in which they are created, conveyed and received" (p. 13). To undertake such a task, cultural studies depend on the problems of contemporary social theory and cultural theories, in a project in which they "subvert the distinction between



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higher and lower culture” while “valuing cultural forms such as cinema, television and popular music”, according to Kellner (2001, p. 49).

For him, analyzing such products as popular Hollywood films helps the cultural analyst to understand contemporary society, since the mapping of the reasons for this popularity leads us to see what happens in cultures and societies. This is due to the fact that, at the same time that the media helps to forge identities, so do personal yearnings resonate in cultural products. Not surprisingly, this overlap between media and subject, between cultural products and identities, leads to the realization that “personal image, appearance, and style have become increasingly important in the constitution of individual identity” (ibid., p. 16).

A critical, multiperspectival cultural analysis that seeks to understand the relations, the modes of production of a text, the disputes between modes of cultural representation must necessarily be contextualist - to read the ideological texts “in context and relation” (KELLNER, 2001, p. 135). In context and in relation to the real struggles of contemporary society and culture; in relation to its historical, economic, social, political context, its genre; and in context with other films of the same kind or with the genres to which they belong. What we are looking for are resonant images, repetitions, recurrences, marks of discourse.

## Of affects

Considering this background, we seek to analyze *Grace and Frankie*, a North American series produced and exhibited by the streaming<sup>1</sup> company Netflix, which in recent years has dedicated itself to producing authorial/proprietary audiovisual content, especially serial shows, in the niche of the so-called quality TV, which recognizes television production as having a unique aesthetic and stylistic quality. It is a sitcom with 13-episode first season, each of them lasting 30 minutes in average (between 25 and 32 minutes). The series has already been renewed for its third and final season. All episodes of the first season were fully released at the same time in May 2015, instead of the weekly display which is the traditional model of TV networks<sup>2</sup>.

The plot revolves around two couples, Grace Hanson and Frankie Bergstein and Sol Bergstein and Robert Hanson, or Grace and Robert and Frankie and Sol. Soon in the first episode, Sol and Robert, partners in a law office for 40 years, invite their respective wives, Frankie and Grace, who do not get along, for a two-couple dinner. The women arrive earlier and, anxiously, speculate whether the husbands will finally announce their retirement. Sol and Robert arrive and break the news: they are gay, have had an affair for two decades and want to get divorced in order to get married. *Grace and Frankie* departs from this event to explore the affections of these four old people, all in their 70s, having to deal, in the last third of life, with new lives.

In the first season, the large narrative arc is the development of Sol and Robert's relationship. They live together, adapting to the life of a new couple, organizing a bachelor party and arranging the wedding. Other narrative arcs refer to the courtship of Grace and Guy; to Frankie's difficulty in detaching from Sol; and especially the development of the relationship between Grace and Frankie. In addition, as sub-themes, plots linked to their children appear: one of Sol and Frankie's sons, Coyote, is a drug addict in recovery, in love with Mallory, the youngest of Grace and Robert. Brianna, their eldest, finds it difficult to get emotionally involved. The end of the season leaves as a cliffhanger, the marriage of Robert and Sol, the imminent relationship of Frankie with Jacob and Grace's decision to deepen her relationship.

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<sup>1</sup> Transmission of content, mainly audiovisual, through the internet.

<sup>2</sup> The series is created and produced by Marta Kauffman and Howard J. Morris, and in Brazil, receives a 14-year-old indicative rating.

To interpret these characters, producers chose a cast of TV and Hollywood stars, which magnifies the impact, especially of the representation of the homosexual couple. The eternal Barbarella Jane Fonda plays Grace - vain, elegant and sexy. Slender, she dresses well, has good sense, runs the family, and a few years before left the direction of a large cosmetics company she created to her eldest daughter, Brianna. Lily Tomlin, a queen of 70s and 80s Hollywood comedy and a forerunner of names like Tina Fey, plays the laidback Frankie, a spiritualized Jewish late-hippie, a loving mother of two adopted children, a painter who works with art education for ex-convicts. Despite the clearly stellar character of the two protagonists, one of the trump cards of the series, the surprise is Sam Waterson's lineup for Sol and Martin Sheen's for Robert. Stars of two of the most successful shows, both critically and audience-wise, in the history of US TV (respectively *Law and Order* and *The West Wing*), the two star in the first episode already with a kiss, which, although no longer surprising American TV, did have repercussions and brought about great visibility and debates.

The male lead couple is definitely not the focus of the show - not even in the title. This kiss, therefore, is just one of the figures of affection in focus in this work. When we say figures, we draw inspiration from the amorous figures of Roland Barthes fragments. For the author, "the figure is the lover in action" (2003, p. xviii), it is movement and encounter. A series of figures whose succession is purely alphabetic, arbitrary, and arbitrated by language, which form a fragmentary discourse (or fragments - shards - of discourse), which is tangent to the organization of the enunciation without touching it directly but without departing completely from it<sup>3</sup>.

No logic connects the figures, determines their contiguity... They shake, they collide, they calm down, they gather together, they move away, with no more order than a flurry of mosquitoes. Loving *dis-cursus* is not dialectical; it turns as a perpetual calendar, an encyclopedia of affective culture. (BARTHES, 2003, p. XXII)

This is what Barthes (2003) describes as "waves of language", which come to the subject "to the tune of minute, random circumstances" (p. XVIII). These figures are recognized in something that is read, seen, heard, experienced - like a work of serial fiction. Although, for Barthes, the guide for making up figures is the love feeling, the affects seem to us, similarly, quite adequate to constitute figures, which will thus trace an affective topic, in the Barthesian sense, or affective inventories, in Deleuzian terms. "The affects are precisely these nonhuman *becomings* of man" (Gilles DELEUZE e Félix GUATTARI, 2010, p. 200). For Gilles Deleuze, affects refer to potency, "which becomes" (p.202). These are nonhuman *becomings*, of becoming, intertwining or distancing, "something that passes from one to the other" (p. 205) - movements, action. Recognizable patterns or sets of sounds, smells, tastes, shapes, colors and textures (images and narratives) that operate as certain types of repetition and engage our perception. These repeating spirals (patterns, recurrences of figures) form new images, identities, and movements, says Jane Bennett (BENNETT, 2001).

Movement, action, and encounter likewise lead to the thought of Baruch Spinoza (whom Deleuze actually resorted to), for whom affects relate to the encounters between subjects - the human power of affections, of being affected. "By affect, I understand the affections of the body, by which its power to act is increased or diminished, stimulated or restrained, and at the same time the ideas of affections" (Spinoza, 2014, p. 98-99). Affections that affect the body in many ways. It follows that in the same way, Muniz Sodré speaks of a "concern with what lies behind or beyond the concept, that is, with the experience of a primordial dimension, which has more to do with the sensible than with reason" (2006, p.23). According to Sodré, in Spinoza's thinking, the question of the body is fundamental. This body

<sup>3</sup> Unlike Barthes, however, here we put forth an analysis.

is marked by complexity, which “makes it capable of affecting and being affected by external bodies with which it interacts in the surrounding environment” (Idem).

The relationship with the body is one of the dimensions of affection. So does the notion - intuition, according to Sodr  - that the affective dimension is not contained in metaphysical reason. Spinoza even says that man’s submission to affection leaves him at the mercy of “chance” (p. 155). Hence we perceive the difficulties of “telling” affections, of trying to catalogue them, to map their figures. For even if much is said of love or friendship, of sadness and sorrow, of loneliness - all affections present in *Grace and Frankie* - there is always something that escapes, something unspeakable, bordering sensationalism in the conception of Fernando Pessoa’s Alberto Caeiro in *The Herdsman*:

My thoughts are all sensations. I think with my eyes and ears and with my hands and feet and with my nose and mouth. To think of a flower is to see it and to smell it, and to eat a fruit is to know its meaning ... And I close my warm eyes, I feel my whole body lying in reality, I know the truth and I am happy. (PESSOA, 1993, p. 39).

Caeiro, in fact, opposes thought to understanding. For us, it suffices to concede that affections transcend thought and lodge, in part, in another sphere, that of sensations. Even so, we are dedicated to some figures who “tell” of these affections, in an attempt to lodge in words (Michel FOUCAULT, 1999) that which is image, experience. These figures are represented and materialized in the audiovisual product by means of codifications manifest in the style and the narrative conventions that constitute it. The question of representation is tied to style, as Edgar MORIN (2001, p. 153) already suggested. The author starts from the idea that the image re-presents (restores a presence) to conclude that, therefore, the image is symbolic: it suggests, contains or reveals something besides itself.

One of the ways to analyze this codification - in a way, therefore, to decode it - is filmic analysis, which is configured as a tool widely capable of enabling the reading of an audiovisual product. Manuela PENAFRIA (2009, p. 1) says that the analysis is a decomposition (2009, p. 1). Jacques AUMONT and Michel MARIE (2004) go further and thus define film analysis as: “a way of explaining, rationalizing, observed phenomena [...] it is above all a descriptive and non-shaping activity, even when it sometimes becomes more explanatory” (p. 14). For the authors, each analyst constructs, ultimately, a valid analysis model for that product. From these premises, we conceive filmic analysis as a method that allows us to identify recurrences, tensions, similarities, mediations, possible dialogues and differences – to then perform interpretative operations of the products in view. In this article, we seek to show how the figures of kissing, family and intimacy speak of friendship and love. Traversed by old age and gender, they are two dominant affects in the serial audiovisual narrative of *Grace and Frankie*.

We also understand that filmic analysis is consecrated in film studies, and that it can often leave aside some characteristics attributed to serial fictions of recognized artistic quality. One of them is the text, which, together with the containment of language and the *mise-en-sc ne*, is “capable of attracting the attention of the public ... and provoking structural repetitions which nevertheless constantly present themselves as novelty”, says Marcel Vieira SILVA (2014, p. 245).

## About old age

The analysis of these audiovisual representations allows us to perceive how the series is not only an audiovisual product. It also has economic, sociological, market and cultural relations; it is constituted as a social practice, a practice of consumption and an institution that produces, reproduces and circulates systems of representation and imagination, in which viewers project – and identify – desires, dreams, fears, aspirations (AUMONT, 2012).

Like any cultural product, *Grace and Frankie* dialogues and transits with these images, through affective figures, crossed by old age and gender. The fact of bringing four old individuals to the foreground already promotes visibilities that bring a different look from that pointed out, among others, by Tania MONTORO (2009): that of the negation of aging. On the contrary, the bodies exhibited in the series do not want to appear younger to increase their capacity for seduction: they seek to seduce as they are, septuagenarians. The exercise of seduction is celebrated by Robert and Sol; by Grace in her quest for a new boyfriend and an active sex life; by Frankie, who insinuates attraction for another man. And such sexuality is natural to the other characters, far from being "toxic" or needing to be "contained" by the family, as Margaret TALLY (2008, p. 120) points out in most representations of female old-age in the audiovisual industry.

There is clearly a distancing from "adulthood", and in its place, *Grace and Frankie* promotes the recognition of the body as one of the *loci* of old age, "a process common to all, marked by losses and also by new conquests" (Maria Luisa MENDONÇA and Clarissa MOTER, 2012). One episode focuses on the relationship between old age and low vaginal lubrication - resolved with a homemade yam lube. Despite escaping aesthetic practices and plastic interventions in the old body, *Grace and Frankie* does not shy away from dealing with body technologies (MONTORO, 2009) in old age, as a vaginal lubricant or male sexual stimulant pills ("Everyone at my age takes it", according to Sol). The presence of body technologies as a necessity (rather than a confrontation) for old age, in a naturalized, disenchanting, and neutral way, is clear in Episode 5, centered on Grace's epiphany that a fall in the ice cream shop would lead to hip surgery with a titanium implant in the bone to continue walking.

The recognition of old age prevents what Maria Luisa Mendonça and Clarissa Motter classify as "ideological orientation", which rejects aging, especially female aging, through the victimization of women or the denial of old age. Instead of something to vie with in order to get and keep the male gaze, in *Grace and Frankie* the old age of women is exposed in a somewhat comic, rather than melancholic tone. Old age is naturalized. And it is through this contemporary representation of old age that the affective figures of *Grace and Frankie* appear.

This is not one of the most common themes in Hollywood serial production, but it is certainly not unprecedented. Female old age has been in the foreground in *The Golden Girls* (1985-1992), and more recently in the British production *Last Tango in Halifax* (2012-). There are, of course, old female characters in a large number of serials, but few protagonists. Recently, in the movies, they have slowly ceased to occupy the fixed roles of widows, grandmothers, loners, odd people, to be seen as women, as in *Something's gotta give* (2003), *It's complicated*, (2009), and, on another note, *Divine secrets of the Ya-ya sisterhood* (2002).

## The kiss

The first figure we capture is that of the kiss. For Morin, the kiss represents, in the audiovisual, a synthetic type of love, at the same time spiritual and carnal – a total feeling. It is the encounter "Of Eros and Psyché: the breath, in archaic mythologies, is the headquarters of the soul; on the other hand, it is the mouth that is sensually fixed first, linked to absorption and assimilation" (MORIN, 2011, p. 134). The importance of kissing as a moment that condenses sexual tensions on the screen justifies the fact that it, as Morin claims, condenses time – "the divine eternity of the moment". The figure of the kiss as one of the apexes of affective manifestation gains importance in *Grace and Frankie*, due to the gender crossing promoted by the kiss(es) between Sol and Robert. The couple's second kiss to appear on the show represents such condensation. In the half-light, at home, sitting side by side, Sol and Robert share a true "love kiss" in the purest audiovisual cliché. The setting given to the scene

is romantic and repeats countless "love kisses" of Hollywood cinema and TV. As a romantic kiss, it's aspirational. The figure of the kiss in Robert and Sol is marked by repetition, cliché and romantic tradition: it condenses the couple's sexual tensions, as a prelude to sex and possibility of exhibition (at least in the first season, in which there was no sex scene between the two).

The kiss starring Grace and Guy (Craig T. Nelson), her first boyfriend after the split, however, conveys a figure of different affection. It is a deconstructed kiss: anti-romantic, or neo-romantic in the sense proposed by Jurandir Freire Costa (1998). But it's not a love kiss. After saying goodbye to Guy on the doorstep, Grace impulsively kisses him. There is no close, slow motion, sound track. The middle plane is fixed, and at the end of the kiss, Guy says he did not expect it. Grace replies, "Neither did I". There is yet another kiss in the show, which does not condone sexual tensions but reveals them. It is an interdicted kiss given by Grace to a man who is not her ex-husband or boyfriend. Upon arriving home in Episode 6, she encounters a stranger eating in the kitchen and despairs. He is one of Frankie's ex-con students. As Grace walks through the kitchen, the camera follows his gaze over her body; He says: "Can I say you're very hot?"; "You can say whatever you want", Grace answers from across the table, looking him in the eye. On impulse, he grabs her and pushes her against the wall. The plane closes in both, and Grace softens at the kiss. She jumps on his legs and the two actually foretell sex, until she gives up. He kisses her cheek and leaves. Standing alone in the kitchen, Grace laughs. It was a sensual, lascivious kiss that empowers her as a woman, without hiding her old age, without pretending to make her younger (and therefore eligible to be kissed). No wonder it is that kiss that Grace will remember. Away from love, close to desire.

## Family

The relationship between family and affect is linked to the idea of home: it is the locus where the individual finds acceptance in the world, the place where family life finds security and happiness (BACHELARD, 1978). Denilson Lopes argues that the figure of the house can reveal the paradox of the desire for stability - or eternity - before a world in which time and space are increasingly configured as fast network flows, with shortened distances and flat times (LOPES, 1999). It is not by chance that when Grace and Frankie see the nuclear family structure that they have built collapse, they both find themselves exiled from this shelter - their respective homes. They leave, they leave everything, and they find shelter in a new house, desired by both, that becomes the space of this new affective reconfiguration marked by friendship, feminine dominion and freedom. It is the beach house that the two families maintained in society.

At the beginning of the series, the two are engaged in a silent dispute over space, which they desire only for themselves. Gradually, they perceive that it is the affection built by their contradictory housing, together, that constructs space as belonging, as interior worlds (LOPES, 1999). It is in this new house that they will reconfigure their sentimental lives: it is where Grace has sex with Guy, where Frankie takes the first steps in search of redefining herself as a woman. The sub-plot of the houses also shows the difference in the relationship between the couples: it is only in the last episode of the first season (13) that Sol and Frankie can empty the house in which they lived. At the end of the packing, the ex-couple and their two children share a long hug in the middle of the empty room: the house now belongs to the Chin family, and the family setting is finally undone when the children pull out of the embrace. What remains are memories.

By separating and leaving the houses, the families are redesigned. In *Grace and Frankie*, in fact, families have to do with what Nancy FRASER (1987), interprets as "the institutional orders of the modern world of life, socially integrated domains, specialized in

symbolic reproduction, that is, in socialization, formation of solidarity and cultural transmission" (p. 44). For Sara AHMED (2010), these model families are objects of affection that "transmit" happiness (happy objects) and, at the same time, vectors of unhappiness for those who do not fit into this model - heterosexual, monogamous, nuclear and parental. Happiness is then seen as an event involving affection, since being happy is to be affected by something, according to Spinozian thinking. "Happiness works as a promise that directs us to certain objects", says Ahmed (2010, p. 29). Bodies that are conceived as the source of bad feelings and that therefore break with the promise of happiness – like non-families or non-model families – would be affect aliens.

It is symbolic, therefore, that by taking on their relationship, Sol and Robert's first steps include: 1) settling as a husbands' couple in Grace's former mansion, a typical American upper-class family home, making the house a family space and protecting them from becoming affect aliens (including them in the possible sphere and capable of affection); 2) to promote a dinner with their four children - two of Sol and two of Robert - to introduce themselves as a couple to their respective families. As a family (and authorized by their families), their love does not become alien, and affection is inserted in the model of the promise of happiness. On the other hand, it prevents the advance that the alienation of these promises of happiness can provide, for example, forms of affection other than heteronormativity, as Ahmed argues.

The family is not a conflict-free figure of affection in *Grace and Frankie*. On the one hand, the children naturally accept the homosexual relationship of the parents and maintain the sense of welcome that family provides, subverting the heteronormative demand proposed by Sara Ahmed for the family to be a happy object and including new family models in this family affection. On the other hand, it is clear that Sol and Robert maintain the heteronormative structure by formatting their homoaffective relation, including the presence of the family as a happy object - and thus demonstrate a need for the heteronormative model in the construction of these affections, reproducing a hegemonic model of affective relationships.

## Intimacy

From intimacy nothing is hidden, as Gaston Bachelard warned about the depth of this figure (BACHELARD, 1978). Intimacy requires precisely the "disclosure of emotions and actions unlikely to be exposed by the individual to a wider public eye" (GIDDENS, 1993, p. 154). In other words, intimacy is a kind of emotional communication, with others and with one's self. If the family has a relation of proximity to the house, the bedroom is one of the spaces where intimacy is most manifest:

The intimacy of the bedroom turns into our own intimacy. Correlatively, the intimate space has become so calm, so simple, that all the tranquility of the room is located and centralized there. The room is, in depth, our room, the room is in us (BACHELARD, 2008, p. 344).

When the intimacies of Grace and Robert and Sol and Frankie are broken, the first materialization is the breakup of the room space. "You'd better sleep in the living room", Frankie says as the two argue in the bedroom. Close on Sol, disappointed, and Frankie watches him leave. It is important to note that the relation of Sol and Frankie is represented in the series as a love marriage, a confluent love, in the manner described by Anthony Giddens. It is a relation in which one enters only for the relation itself, and that only continues while both parties obtain satisfaction rather than the projective system of romantic love (1992, p. 55). Maybe that is why the emotional communication between the two remains so strong after the break up, and that's why Frankie has a hard time letting go. After driving her husband out of

the room, Frankie ends up following him. The two sleep cuddled on the sofa bed because the affectionate bond marked by intimacy has not been broken.

Grace and Robert, by their turn, maintain a colder relationship - a kind of functional relationship. "I was happy enough. We did not have the romance of the century, but I thought we were normal. I thought we were just like everyone else. I thought life was such", says Grace. The definitive conversation between the two marks this lack of intimacy by the visual codification: while Sol and Frankie talk side by side, Grace sees Robert in the door, through the mirror. They argue by means of each other's images - not bodies, and the middle plane on her figure places him standing in the background. Silently he leaves the room.

Robert and Sol leave the rooms they have occupied for 40 years to take possession of new spaces of intimacy (although, effectively, it is the old room of Robert and Grace, but redesigned). In a scene from Episode 3, Sol is a little bewildered as he awakens. Looks to the side, smiles. The camera shows Robert asleep. Sol hugs him, smiles. He snuggles up behind his husband. Cut to *plongée* of the couple hugging in bed, the sunlight enters the window on the left. They both sleep. Intimacy, domesticity, tranquility.

But it's not just love that demands intimacy in *Grace and Frankie*. As they share the new house, the two women construct an affection based on emotional communication to the point where Frankie gets hurt when Grace does not tell her something, and, in a different occasion, Grace gets annoyed when Frankie shares a secret with her former husband - after all, the two women are accomplices in that adventure, and the new intimacy belongs to them; that universe does not include (or should not include) the ex-husbands anymore. When, in Episode 12, Frankie is discouraged, Grace proposes to do anything to cheer her up.

The friendship between Grace and Frankie is born from contrast, and intimacy develops through the complement that one offers to the other. In the first episode, when they get to the beach house, each one reacts to the separation in her own way. Grace nestles on a couch in a coat; Frankie goes to the beach to go through a spiritual ritual with hallucinogenic substances. But her back locks (the body as a vehicle of old age) and she calls the other for help (and a muscle relaxant, another body technology). In the sequence, the two discuss the separation, in a scene illuminated only by the fire of the ritual, on the beach, with foregrounding in the two abandoned women, solitary, in the sand. Grace is angry that she has been abandoned in her last years; she is annoyed because she did everything right, followed the rules, did not let him worry and asks God why He did not warn her that there were no rules? She urges Frankie to feel anger, but the other retorts that she is not hurt or angry. "Why not?". "Because I'm heartbroken", Frankie says, crying. And in the next scene, the two are dancing on the beach at dawn. It dawns, and the two, still hallucinating, stand side by side and open their hearts to one another. In the open, the two old women walk along the beach, beside the sea, helping each other. The camera moves away. At the end of the episode, in the manner of one who has a life ahead, Grace asks, "What now?"

## Final considerations

As we said, *Grace and Frankie* gives almost unprecedented prominence to female old age on American TV. In the system of representation of old women, it inserts the body as an element that conveys, potentializes and helps to define this old age, but refuses to adhere to the denial of aging provided by body technologies (allied to gender technologies that insist on objectifying and reifying women before the scopophilic gaze of men). On the contrary, it reaffirms and naturalizes ageing as a part of life, flow, passage of time. In order to mark the place of the body in old age, the protagonists have urinary incontinence, osteoarthritis, impotence; they fear anticipated death in the near future; they take various kinds of medicine.

But, as subjects in contemporary society, they also smoke marijuana and make videos on YouTube. Therefore, the body is defined by old age, but it is not limited to it.

The two protagonists deserve affections, that is, they can be affected subjects and affect other subjects, as well as being able to re-signify their own lives - and their own affections - even in old age. The series insists that in addition to mothers, grandmothers, patients, old women are still women. They have sex, they fall in love, they are friends. They have vanity and careers, they lie and cry. The friendship they build affects them and is affected by the lovers they lose (as well as by those they will eventually win – narrative cliffhanger for a following season). The narrative of *Grace and Frankie* acts as a space to visualize and convey the affective possibilities of old age, as well as the naturalization of these affections, far from the patriarchal projections and clichés and limits on the identities of the “old woman”. In the same way, they reposition old age in time and in the subject’s time: not as an end, but as a “now” and a future, providing new avenues of experience for these characters. Affections cease to be contained and the expression of such affections, including sexuality and passions, are no longer punished. *Grace and Frankie* seems to offer new “ways of being in the world that are not defined solely by their role as mother, wife or professional” (TALLY, 2008, p. 130).

At the same time, *Grace and Frankie* also presents the possibilities of new and other affects in old age, represented by the relationship between Sol and Robert. The representation of this homoaffective love, however, is not free of tensions. If this identity position is celebrated, the series also insists on framing it in current heteronormative models: monogamous, based on the family, romanticized. It reaffirms the need for marriage as a public ritual for celebrating intimacy and social approval, since in the last third of the season the narrative arc concerning the organization of the marriage ceremony of Sol and Robert begins. The last episode revolves around writing marriage vows and breaking the monogamous pact, leaving a cliffhanger for the next season. There is no simple conciliation, since the permission for homoaffectivity to integrate with the heteronormative model also puts in check the man-woman relationship as monopolist of the place of romanticism, monogamy and the nuclear family.

*Grace and Frankie* is also limited in what it lets us see: what it shows is a female old age. Of white, upper-class, educated, successful, heterosexual, anglo-saxon (Frankie is Jewish) women. They have iPhones, cars, computers and two homes. Former wives from successful lawyers, they will receive pensions that help maintain this standard. This representation excludes a significant portion of female old age, both with respect to race, color, class and sexual orientation, but also with respect to the family. There is no space, in the system of representation of the series, for poor old women, alone, without children and without family.

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## Films

- ALGUÉM tem que ceder. Direção: Nancy Meyers. Roteiro: Nancy Meyers. Produção: Bruce A. Block, Nancy Meyers. EUA, comédia/romance, 2003, 128min.
- DIVINOS segredos. Direção: Callie Khouri. Roteiro: Callie Khouri, Mark Andrus. Produção: Bonnie Bruckheimer, Hunt Lowry. EUA, drama, 2002, 116min.
- GRACE and Frankie. Direção: Andrew McCarthy, Bryan Gordon, Dean Parisot, Dennie Gordon, Julie Anne Robinson, Matt Shakman, Miguel Arteta, Tim Kirkby, Tristram Shapeero. Roteiro: Marta Kauffman. EUA, comédia/drama, 2016, 365min. (1ª temporada)  
\_\_\_\_\_. EUA, comédia/drama, 2017, 375min. (3ª temporada)
- SIMPLESMENTE complicado. Direção: Nancy Meyers. Roteiro: Nancy Meyers. Produção: Nancy Meyers e Scott Rudin. EUA, comédia/romance, 2009, 120min.

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