

“Lady of the four decades”: a study on the link between music, women and age¹

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Abstract

This paper intends to study the role of music in the configuration of contemporary femininities and, specifically, the age and generational cleavage informing this relationship. First, we will go through three paradigms which inform studies about music and society: structural resonance, interpellation and narrative identity. From this overview, we will relocate the discussion: people appropriate music in such ways that it becomes an enabling and action-oriented device (DeNora, 2000). Second, we will analyze the account of two women who are members of an Argentine fan club devoted to Ricardo Arjona, who has been a highly successful Guatemalan singer and songwriter for over a decade in Spanish-speaking record industry. Our conclusion is that music is an aesthetical resource for agency which enables to erode middle-aged women's age and gender expectations.

Keywords

Music. Women. Age. Generation.

1 Introduction

My husband said to me: “you married to be free.” In my time, to go out, you had to ask permission, everything was highly structured, they did not let me go to the graduation trip, I am very... I was very repressed. Perhaps all of this draws my attention exactly for this reason, because I saw different things, his way of expressing himself, the lyrics (Ana, 51).

For 16 years, a group of about 30 people, most of them women, get together on the first Saturday of each month in a bar in downtown Buenos Aires. They are part of the official fan club of Ricardo Arjona in Argentina, a Guatemalana singer-songwriter who is a great success in the record industry.² They use the group to promote his music, conduct acts of solidarity, create bonds of friendship and companionship, and to give meaning to life cycles in a collective manner. Based on the appropriation of a musical object, they form a group of belonging and a complex space for socialization that they recognize as

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their own, and affirm that during the encounters, they feel “free” in comparison with how they feel in spaces and ties in which they are interpellated in an intersection of gender and a life cycle that places them in the role of caretakers of their home and family. The objective of this article is to question the connection between the music and the configuration of the femininities of this group, with a special emphasis on age and generational divisions that appear in its formation.

We begin with the hypothesis that in daily life, people interact and appropriate music in ways in which it constitutes an enabling device that promotes action (DENORA, 2000). We understand that music is a resource that allows people to reflect on themselves and their relationships, represent themselves, deploy strategic uses to achieve or modify certain emotions and move from an undesired mood to another. Thus, within this paradigm, we will focus on the ability that using music has to constitute gender,³ specifically in the configuration of femininities.

The paper first looks at the discussions that inform studies of music and society, and, then analyzes the connection between music and women, specifically about the way in which this cultural consumption generates skills about the ways of living a position within the age structure.

2 Theoretical approaches to the study of music

Three paradigms are central to studies about the connections between music and society: that of structural resonance, articulation and interpellation, and narrative. The first is based on the hypotheses of the English subcultures school (HEBDIGE, 2004; CLARKE, 2000; HALL; JEFFERSON, 2000; among others) and understands that certain musical styles establish ties with specific social actors through a type of “structural resonance” between social position on one hand and musical expression on another. That is, music would allow expressing

1 This paper is part of my doctoral thesis for the College of Social Sciences of the University of Buenos Aires, Argentina, entitled *¿Dónde había estado yo?: configuración de feminidades en un club de fans de Ricardo Arjona* [Where Had I Been?: configuration of femininities in a Ricardo Arjona fan club] financed by doctoral scholarships from the National Council for Scientific and Technical Research of Argentina (CONICET). The research that supports this work is among the projects based at the University of Buenos Aires (UBA) and the University of San Martín (UNSAM) and directed by Pablo Alabarces and Pablo Semán that are financed by UBACYT and FONCYT.

2 Edgar Ricardo Arjona Morales, who is known in the music world as Ricardo Arjona, is a singer who was born in Guatemala in 1964 and has been very successful in various Spanish-speaking countries for more than 15 years. Since his first record in 1985 he has made 13 studio albums, one live album and six compilations. He recorded his first record with the record company Discos de Centroamérica (DIDECA), which later granted the rights to Sony Music de México, the company for which he worked from 1991 until 2008. He then had a contract with Warner Music until late 2011 when he launched his own production company, Metamorfosis. His production is a hybrid of various rhetorics from bolero, ballads, protest songs and pop to what is not easily classifiable as belonging to the world of romantic music, although many of his songs tell stories about romantic and erotic relations.

3 The constitutive capacity of gender held by the uses of music have been analyzed in various studies. To name just a few: about boleros, De la Peza Casares (2001); about tango, Savigliano (1995); Archetti (2003); Campodónico and Gil Lozano (2000); Carozzi (2009); Liska (2009); about cumbia, Semán and Vila (2006) and Silba and Spataro (2008); and about cuarteto, Blázquez (2008).

or displaying certain previously constructed identities. However, this type of theoretical mark can lead to a type of reductionism that would indicate a reflective relationship between music and subjects, preventing understanding this connection in a more complex manner. The problem would consist in trying to find connections between a musical work and the social groups that consume or produce it, in a relationship that would be a homology between the material and artistic forms. This can be observed in the homologation that is often established in Argentina among young people in popular sectors and cumbia and between adults and tango and on a more general level among women and romantic music in many countries, to mention just some of the reductions related to divisions of class, age and gender respectively.

To circumvent the problem of the structural homology, certain analyses about music include the concepts of articulation and interpellation. This line of work includes studies such as those of Frith (2003) who affirms that the academic study of popular music is limited by the hypothesis that music must in some way reflect or represent people, given that the analytic problem is to try to trace these tracks between artistic works and social groups. Frith's proposal is to invert the common academic argument by indicating that the problem is not how a musical work reflects on people, but how it produces, creates and constructs an identity experience that is both subjective and collective: his thesis

is not that a social group has beliefs that are reflected in the music, but that the music creates this group identity. That is, that the social groups are only able to recognize themselves as groups by means of cultural activity, by means of aesthetic judgments such as those that are enabling, as is, music.

Meanwhile, Vila (2000) affirms that the theory of articulation and interpellations has a problem similar to the proposal of English theory of subcultures because of its difficulty in explaining why one interpellation is more successful than another, without, in the final analysis, appealing to some type of a structural homology. The author affirms that if music does not have intrinsic meaning, it would also not be productive to think that the meaning does not always and only come from the listener: "music does have meaning for us (not intrinsic meaning, but meaning), and this meaning is related to the articulation in which it has participated in the past" (VILA, 2000, p. 14). Reaching this point, Vila seeks to resolve the problems of the interpellation theory by using the development of narrative theory and introducing the idea of argumental plot to consider the limits to the possible articulations. The author would say that the narrative allows conferring meaning to choices made by subjects because by narrating (we) grant meanings and unity to our life, given that identity is a narrative identity (RICOEUR, 1995), both for the individual as well as for the community and it is based on this narrative that there will be a certain range of possible musical meanings in detriment to others.

These three paradigms – structural resonance, interpellation and narrative – help establish the scope of the discussions that are in play in studies about music: particularly the tie between cause and effect of listening to music, between emission and reception and between music and society. In this sense, this study is nourished by the findings of the existing theoretical field, yet also proposes to relocate the terms of the analysis based on the work of DeNora (2000), to the degree that DeNora’s work includes these discussions, condenses them, and goes beyond them, given that this allows questioning both the proposals that understand music as a reflection of the social, and adds to the complexity of the paradigms that study music as a space of configuration of identities. As Frith’s work discusses that of the subculture school and Villa discusses the work of Frith, DeNora does the same with the different paradigms and places the discussion on a new point from which it is possible to continue questioning the tie between music and society and the identity interplay that takes shape between them, based on an understanding of music as an essential element of an enabling device and a promoter of action. As we indicated (GARRIGA et. al., 2011), his approach goes beyond the tension that could be formulated, for example, between that of Adorno (2003) on one hand (and his emphasis on the musical material, the work, and the author) and on the other, that of Michel de Certeau (1996) (and his emphasis on the use of resignification and appropriation) given that DeNora recognizes that music is not merely a

“significant” or “expressive” medium but, in the plane of daily life, “music is involved in many dimensions of social agencying, in sensations, perceptions, in cognition and consciousness, in identity and energy” both individual and collective (DENORA, 2000, 16-17). The author’s thesis can be summarized in the following manner: in daily life, people interact and appropriate music in ways that constitute one of the privileged resources for undertaking “the reflexive aesthetic practice of subjectivating themselves to themselves and to others as emotional and aesthetic agents through various social sceneries ” (DENORA, 2000, p. 158). Thus, music becomes a device for self-representation, allowing people, as we indicated at the beginning, to deploy “strategic uses” to achieve or modify certain emotions, to escape an undesired mood, among other capacities.

Based on this conceptual apparatus, we will continue by analyzing the statements of women who participate in a Ricardo Arjona fan club in Argentina, to question what is it that the music enables in relation to the rules concerning gender and position in the age structure.

3 The musical experience from the perspective of age

In what way is music related to the social processing of age? Are certain kinds of music just for certain age groups? The relationship between music and age is complex and its study is commonly charged with automatism: it would

seem that there is music for “young people,” for “adults,” and music for “the elderly,” which generate the same problems as the label “music for women.” In each case, the connection between music and society is considered from the paradigm of structural resonance, that is, that there is music that “reflects” or “expresses” pre-existing, homogenous and static age and or gender identities. These concepts, essentialize, on one hand, the ways of living a position in the age and or gender structure and, on the other, the possible connection with music that can be made based on that.

Arjona’s musical production disrupts these classifications and conceptualizes age in various ways. On one hand, there is his most famous song “Señora de las cuatro décadas,” [Woman of four decades]⁴ with the lyrics:

Woman of four decades/ with steps of fire
as you walk/ Your figure is no longer that of
fifteen/ But time does not wither/ This sensual
touch/and the volcanic strength of your look
[...] Woman, don’t take the years from your
life/It’s better to put life in your years [...]
Woman of four decades/Don’t insist on going
back to 30/With your 40 and then some/Leave
tracks wherever you walk/That will make put
you in command any place you go[...].

These are some of the most significant lyrics for some – not all – of his followers, who find in them

an assertion of the capacity for seduction and pleasure of a woman who is no longer located in the age group that is most coveted in erotic terms – youth – and whose body no longer corresponds to the hegemonic canons of beauty.

On the other hand, this musical production is disruptive in terms of age not only because of these lyrics, but in other songs the analysis of the consequences of the passage of time in the life of the subjects, bodies and romantic relations is a central theme. It is taken up for use by his fans who - not as a cultural object cataloged as being for “middle age women” by the record companies and the media - fulfill this mandate: Arjona is listened to by people, mostly women, in a broad age group that, in the official fan club in Buenos Aires ranges from 14-80. In the next section we will analyze the intersection between music, gender, age and generation in the statements of the members of this group.⁵

3.1 About oneself

To study the tie between music and women, and specifically, the place of age and generation divisions in these relations, we analyze the statements of Mirta and Ana, two women who created the fan club 16 years ago and now form part of its executive board. We asked what were

4 From the record *Historias*, 1994.

5 The thesis on which this article is based is supported by field work conducted from 2008 - 2011 with the artist’s official fan club in Buenos Aires in which I conducted biographically oriented interviews, with men and women who are members of the group and conducted participant observation of the club and concerts by Ricardo Arjona.

the individual events that first led to their interest in an artist like Arjona; and then to organize a fan club.

I heard Señora de las cuatro décadas [...] at the time I was undergoing a very delicate situation in my life, my mother became blind (because of diabetes) and was living with me. I saw her in the bathroom and had this song in my head and realized she was big, she was a bit fat. Then after she lied down, I looked at myself in the mirror. I tell you I was 10kg heavier and I wasn't pregnant! Then I looked and asked myself how I had reached this point, what had happened to me, where had I been [...] Then I began to go on a diet, I went to a doctor, I began to exercise, I got in gear and began to study Italian. I began to do things for myself, my children were a bit older [...] And I thought 'I have to hear this guy. When he comes to Argentina I am going to see him' (Mirta).

In her youth, Mirta, who is 53, listened to Argentine rock bands like Sui generis and Virus, and also Serrat, with her selections giving preponderance to the words over the musical and audio component. This predisposition to listen to the lyrics of the songs was shaping her musical taste, a fact that appears to be recurrent in the people who choose this singer: they prefer artists whose lyrics “say something” that “reach them,” who tell stories, who narrate feelings in a way that seems “clear.”

Based on this aesthetic inclination, she had her first contact with Arjona with “Señora de las cuatro décadas.” With this song “in her head” Mirta observed in the mirror the changes in her mother’s body, as well as her own. The song functions as an alarm, as raw material that Mirta uses to elaborate that moment in her life and that of her mother. Other factors converge in Mirta’s statement: a transformation that begins with the aesthetic – she goes on a diet, exercises – which would allow her to move in another way, or, why not, to reinsert herself in the market of desire and love. On the other hand, to give her a place of activities that would bring her pleasure, “do things for herself” because her children are already older, realizing that these things had been suspended for a period in which she didn’t have time because the activities related to her motherhood occupied most of her days.

This is where age must be analyzed in its intersection with gender, given that the question “where had I been?” that Mirta asks could not be answered without this intersection: she had been taking care of her children and working, activities expected of a woman of her generation in this lifecycle.

This is the plot that is developed here, and which is placed in question based on a song, which steers the connection between Mirta and Arjona. There is not a passive listening that would only lead her to accept what a song by her favorite

artist would say about her. Something that the song says “touches” her subjectivity and gives her permission, as we indicated with DeNora (2000), to reflect on herself and permit a questioning of her desires, her body and her moment.⁶

One premise of this study is that the music that people select is significantly tied to particular life trajectories based on which meaning is given to this listening, trajectories that are informed both by the division of gender as well as by generational belonging. Ana and Mirta are part of the same generation, not because they are chronological contemporaries, but because they share the same conditions of existence: they are women born in the 1960s, in middle class families of Buenos Aires.⁷ These women grew up in a socio-cultural context that historically has defined the roles of people in society in a dichotomist manner according to gender divisions: maternal love, the home, and care for children were part of the construction of femininity during the first half of the 20th century (LOBATO et. al. 2000), and these imprints remain valid even if they coexist with questionings and modifications, which began to take shape in the second half of the century.

These modifications are related to those who were born in the 1960s, a decade of changes in various orders, above all in the daily life of women. Sexual morals and gender relations were partially changed since these years and to be a woman in the 1960s was, as Pujol (2003) enthusiastically affirms, distinct from being a woman just a few years earlier. If they were not “women” in the 1960s – because they were born at the change of the decade - the sociocultural context in which they grew up began to change since that time. To mention some examples: sexual pleasure began to be separated from reproduction, based on an idea of greater liberty and self-knowledge, and the contraceptive pill played an important role in this reconfiguration of sexual morals. This meant the redefinition of some customs, the construction of new legitimacies and the reconfiguration of inter-gender relations (FEIJOO; DE NARI, 1994). Of course these transformations differed according to the social, cultural and geographic origin of the agent. Focused on the urban middle classes – where these changes were stronger (idem) – since the 1960s, women from this social sector moved deeper into the labor market and university studies, creating tension within homes concerning, among other issues, who would care for the children.

6 This mechanism allows us to affirm that cultural consumption is a distinct moment of production, which is not inscribed in texts but has to do with the various forms of using the texts that the cultural industries promote (DE CERTEAU, 1996; MARTÍN BARBERO, 1983).

7 The concept of generation, which was first developed by Mannheim (1993) and later by Bourdieu (1998), indicates that to speak of generations it is not enough to speak of chronological contemporaneity; it is necessary, moreover, that changes are made in the conditions of existence that provoke individuals to be *generated* in distinct manners; that is, to act and think differently from subjects from another generation.

This coexistence of “the new” with “the old” in terms of the place of women in society is a characteristic of the decade in which Ana and Mirta were born and raised. For example, Mirta recalls that she wanted to be a radio announcer and that her mother told her that no, she had to do something that would make her independent, so she could feed herself, but that would allow her to work from her home so that she could care for the home and the family. For this reason she studied dentistry, the profession which she practices today. Nevertheless, she knows that this is not her vocation, but that in her time she had to do what her parents said, “*there were no options, it’s not like it is today.*” This comment by Mirta’s mother reveals a combination of the traditional rules about gender as well as the questioning about them: she tells her daughter that she should have a job so that she can be “*independent,*” and simultaneously indicates to her that she should work at home. In this way, we find a historic context of breaks, which indicated the existence of certain changes – that Mirta should be “*independent,*” as well as deeper continuities, that she work at home - which question the traditional concepts about the behavior expected of women.

Ana, 51, another member of the commission and founder of the club, said that she always liked music and that when she was eight years old her parents sent her to study accordion because

it was an instrument that they happened to have at home. And although she felt that it was an obligation, she recognized that “*I was very obedient, very careful with what my parents asked of me, I did not rebel against anything [...] we were educated like in the old days, you are in a little box and it’s very hard to get out, you don’t see anything else but what they taught you*”. It is for this reason that Arjona’s lyrics that most called Ana’s attention was one in which one can see something distinct from this family rule:

I found [the song] Jesús verbo y no sustantivo [Jesus verb and not noun] and I thought it was marvelous [...] and its boldness ...[impressed me] the simple way of speaking and of daring to criticize and everything ...religions in general [...] It says [they baptized me when I was 6 months old and didn’t ask me] Why do you have to be placed in a religion? [...] And as I was telling you, that I am shy, that I don’t express myself...I say: ‘oh, great, it’s well said’ [...]It would be wonderful to speak this way, where one says what one feels and what you don’t feel, if you like it fine, and if not, ok, right?

This song⁸ says

Jesús is more than a simple and flat theory/
What do you do brother, reading the bible all day long?/ What is written there is summed up in love, let’s see and practice it [...] Jesus doesn’t understand why they applaud him at the service/speak of honesty knowing that the tithe

⁸ The original version of these lyrics are on the 1990 CD with the same name, and because of its great success was released in new versions on a number of later works.

is a fraud [...] They baptized me when I was two months old and didn't tell me/ they made a piñata party and they didn't ask me/Please baptize me Jesus, like this, among friends.

Ana finds there the manifestation of a “boldness” that questions the mandates that come as givens, such as religion, and to say what one thinks without being impeded by shyness and self-control when facing the opinions of those around her. To find a space to question some family rules is a key element to understanding the place that these songs occupy as raw material which the women used to support the narratives of their biographic trajectories, and to reflect on other possible ways of conceiving the social no longer as a given, but as an arena that can be reconsidered. And this capacity was possible, in this case, based on the encounter with a song that would allow placing in scene a boldness that generated admiration.

3.2 Creating a fan club

One afternoon in 1995 Mirta and Ana, who at that time were about 35, went – like many other people – to the airport of Ezeiza, before they knew each other, with one objective: to personally see Arjona. Mirta was at a lunch with colleagues together with her husband and decided to leave early with the excuse that she had to go to the doctor. Although her husband knew where she was going, she thought it would be “not very responsible” to tell her colleagues, given that they could question her professional respectability if they knew about her fanaticism. She recalls that once she reached the

airport, she could clearly distinguish the practices of the fanatics according to their ages:

What I saw were girls running and screaming. Then, when they all left, I stayed and Ana was there, and I said to her: ‘excuse me, I was listening to you, and the same thing happened to me as to you, I found out by chance on cable’ and we began to exchange ideas. I asked for her telephone number and said to her: ‘if this is a fan club, it’s not for me’ and she said to me “me neither.” Then I said ‘what if we make another?’ I don’t know where this [idea] came from, and I swear that until today I still wonder where did that come from? And she said ‘no, in my house they would kill me, my husband would kill me.’ I said that she should leave me her phone number and later we would talk to see if we would meet. And that’s how we began (Mirta).

It is interesting to emphasize from this testimony that both women decided to organize a fan club because the existing ones were formed by young girls whose practices did not make them feel comfortable. The figure of the fan as a pathological subject (JENSEN, 1992), in this case because of the “hysteria” implied by their running and screaming, is interjected in the statements of these women. Thus, they propose a logic of fanaticism that allows them to conserve certain modalities that correspond to their place as adults in the age structure, even if in an act that is disruptive for their age, like organizing a fan club based on an intense fondness for a singer. If they would

include young people in the club, they would set certain limits of what is possible in the group: listening carefully instead of screaming, calming the disobedient and making intelligent (adult?) use of the time that they can share with Arjona, this is the advice that these women give to people who want to be part of the fan club. This advice clearly coincides with the role of mothers and educators for which they had been prepared.

Therefore, Mirta's testimony presents the idea of a "mature" woman who is professional, a mother and wife, which does not coincide, at first sight, with the image that she relates – not even for herself – to the term fan. Fanaticism, according to Lewis (1992), "is associated with adolescence or childhood, and is represented as feminine, not masculine. The combination of adolescence and femininity in the system of representation is significant" and adds that "the link between immaturity and femininity operates as a strategy to avoid the woman and her fanaticism" (LEWIS, 1992, p. 158). When the intended coherence between age and practice is broken, women begin to question themselves and those around them. This is due to the fact that what is placed in scene is an incongruence between age and conduct: there are forms of expressing physical and intellectual attraction that a male singer can provoke that are not part of the expected repertoire of the practices associated to an age group and to a gender, and being an adult woman places a person outside this interplay. This is due to the fact that adulthood is a degree of age, one of the

segmentations that operates on the life cycle – as is childhood and youth – which act in a performative way because, and this varies historically, "subjects tend to adapt to the social definition of the category [age] in which they are defined" (CRIADO BOADO, 1998, p. 88). This is to say that there is a system of representations, stereotypes and values that legitimate, shape and perform not only the roles of gender, but also those of age. And these roles are not only marked from the outside, but also form part of the self-perception of the subjects about what is good and what is bad, what is proper and improper for each degree of age and life cycle. In this way, the subjects learn to act as adults, and in the case of women, the adult is formed mostly from three logics of transition: in terms of profession, marriage and maternity. From these positions, to organize a fan club supposes a rupture between age, gender and expected conduct, a fact that appears in the statements of Mirta and Ana and in that of many other members of the group:

[...] this made me a bit uncomfortable, 'me, the professional', it had never happened to me, my head must be failing me, I have two children, I am a married woman, moreover, I have my mother in my house who said to me 'You're crazy! How can you go? But I went to Ezeiza (Mirta).

When I began I said, 'they'll kill me!' because imagine, it's not easy, I must do this, go out, go, here, there...but I felt a bit liberated. I don't know if my husband had the intelligence to not tell me, no, don't do it. But he complained, obviously he complains (Ana).

In both cases, one can read their interpretations about the place that they occupy in the age structure and what it is possible to do there, indicating that certain practices are treated as if they were crazy. Mirta said that something must be “*failing*.” The failure, of course, the supposed incoherence between age, gender and behavior: to go meet an idol at the airport and organize a fan club are not practices that can be undertaken by an adult woman – a professional and or a mother. This limit was marked by their family surroundings, and perceived by themselves.

But to have the disposition to give room to this failing was also experienced as a form of questioning the existing limits in their life trajectories: just like fans of Madonna produce, based on their musical selections, interpretations of her sexuality that question the patriarchal rules (FISKE, 1989);⁹ fans of romantic novels place limits on the demands from their environment and construct their own space based on a reading of their favorite texts (RADWAY, 1991); and fans of Elvis Presley find in his image and his songs companionship in the face of the anguish and loneliness experienced in adolescence;¹⁰ Arjona’s music and the fan club serve for its members, among other things, as a place where they can

collectively elaborate their feeling that can confer their own gender condition and their own position in the age structure and, therefore, the permission to live more flexibly with the rules and boundaries that indicate the way that they should pass through their life cycles.

4 Conclusions

The purpose of this article was to study the connection between music and women and, specifically, the place of the songs of a Guatemalan singer in the gender and age configurations of women who formed his fan club. The question that guides the analysis concerned not so much what Arjona’s music *is* but what it *allows producing*. To undertake this kind of questioning we proposed escaping the structural resonance paradigm given that the song “Señora de las cuatro décadas” does not “reflect” what Mirta was going through in terms of a romantic erotic relationship with a younger man and nor did the song “Jesús verbo no sustantivo” “express” what Ana thought about religiosity. By questioning what the music allows the subjects to do we affirm that both found in these lyrics routes to question certain rules learned in their youth about what a woman could and could not do with her time, to deal with

⁹ Fiske (1992, p. 37) indicates that this type of practice can be interpreted as “semiotic productivity,” a concept with which he defines the “production of meanings of social identity based on the cultural resources of the cultural goods” both from popular culture in general as in particular from the fan culture. To expand analyses of fanaticism see: Jenkins (1992, 1998, 2001, 2007, 2009); Jensen (1992); Lewis (1992); Harris (1998); Hills (2000); among others. Works in Argentina about fans: Borda (2008, 2011); Cragnolini (2001); Martín (2006); Skartveit (2009).

¹⁰ For more studies about women and fanaticism Cline (1992); about Beatles fans Ehrenreic et. al (1992) and Lewis (1992); about Elvis Presley fanatics Hinerman (1992).

her shyness, to go out of the house and to re-encounter her own body. Ultimately, these women authorized themselves to question some of their positions from a musical agenda that permitted movement in this direction.

Based on the use of the conceptual apparatus developed by DeNora (2000) we understand that music is part of a mechanism that we can call the aesthetic dimension of agency: it allows people to reflect upon themselves and their ties, self-represent themselves and make their feelings understood, as we have indicated. Therefore, as an enabling resource that promotes action, music is also a vehicle to construct experiences that question the age and gender expectations existing for middle age women.

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“Señora de las cuatro décadas”: un estudio sobre el vínculo entre música, mujeres y edad

Resumen

El objetivo del trabajo es indagar el papel de la música en la configuración de feminidades contemporáneas y, específicamente, estudiar los clivajes etarios y generacionales que informan dicho vínculo. En primer lugar realizaremos un recorrido sobre tres paradigmas que informan los estudios sobre música y sociedad: resonancia estructural, interpelación e identidad narrativa. A partir de allí relocalizaremos la discusión: las personas se apropian de la música de modos en que ésta se constituye en un dispositivo habilitante y promotor de la acción (DeNora, 2000).

En segundo lugar, analizaremos el relato de dos mujeres que forman parte un club de fans de Ricardo Arjona en la Argentina, un cantante y compositor guatemalteco de gran éxito hace más de una década en la industria discográfica hispanohablante. Concluiremos que la música es un recurso estético de la agencia que permite erosionar expectativas etarias y de género existentes para mujeres de mediana edad.

Palabras clave

Música. Mujeres. Edad. Generación

“Senhora das quatro décadas”: um estudo da relação entre música, mulheres e idade

Resumo

O presente trabalho visa interrogar o papel da música na formação das feminidades contemporâneas e, mais especificamente, estudar as clivagens etárias e geracionais presentes no mencionado lazo. Na primeira parte efetuaremos um percurso pelos três paradigmas que informam os estudos sobre música e sociedade: ressonância estrutural, interpelação e identidade narrativa. Contendo os resultados desse percurso relocalizaremos a discussão: as pessoas se apropriam da música de formas que esta torna-se um dispositivo que habilita e promove a ação (DeNora, 2000). Na segunda parte, analisaremos a história de duas mulheres que fazem parte de um fã-club de Ricardo Arjona, na Argentina. Concluímos que a música é um recurso estético que configura a agência no sentido de redefinir as expectativas habituais sobre a relação entre idade e sexo nas mulheres de meia idade.

Palavras-chave

Musica. Mulheres. Idade. Geração.

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