



KADIR HAS UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
AMERICAN CULTURE AND LITERATURE DISCIPLINE AREA

**MUSCULAR, SEXY, AND POWERFUL: HEGEMONIC MASCULINITY IN  
MEN'S LIFESTYLE MAGAZINES IN THE US AND TURKEY**

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SUPERVISOR: PROF. DR. MARY LOU O'NEIL

PHD THESIS

ISTANBUL, JUNE, 2018

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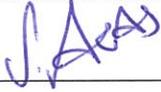
Submitted to the Graduate School of Social Sciences of Kadir Has University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of PhD in the Discipline Area of American Culture and Literature under the Program of American Culture and Literature

ISTANBUL, JUNE, 2018

I, SERKAN ARAS;

Hereby declare that this PhD Thesis is my own original work and that due references have been appropriately provided on all supporting literature and resources.

SERKAN ARAS



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06.07.2018

## ACCEPTANCE AND APPROVAL

This work entitled **MUSCULAR, SEXY, AND POWERFUL: HEGEMONIC MASCULINITY IN MEN'S LIFESTYLE MAGAZINES IN THE US AND TURKEY** prepared by **SERKAN ARAS** has been judged to be successful at the defense exam held on **06.06.2018** and accepted by our jury as **PHD THESIS**.

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## ABSTRACT

ARAS, SERKAN. *MUSCULAR, SEXY, AND POWERFUL: HEGEMONIC MASCULINITY IN MEN'S LIFESTYLE MAGAZINES IN THE US AND TURKEY*, PHD THESIS, İstanbul, 2018.

This dissertation examines Turkey and USA versions of three men's lifestyle magazines, *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health* to identify the characteristics of the ideal man of hegemonic masculinity in these magazines. These men's lifestyle magazines idealize the heterosexual white man who has a muscular body, high sexual power, dresses well and cares about his look. The magazines employ a discourse that gives the message that this ideal man is also the favorite man of hegemonic masculinity who has control over women and marginalized masculinities. The comparison of the magazines shows the ideal man in Turkey and USA versions of men's lifestyle magazines has similar characteristics.

**Keywords:** Hegemonic masculinity, men's lifestyle magazines, masculinity, gender

## ÖZET

ARAS, SERKAN. *KASLI, SEKSİ, VE GÜÇLÜ: AMERİKA VE TÜRKİYE'DEKİ ERKEK DERGİLERİNDE HEGEMONİK ERKEKLİK*, DOKTORA TEZİ, İstanbul, 2018.

Bu çalışma *GQ*, *Esquire*, ve *Men's Health* isimli erkek dergilerinin idealize ettiği erkek imajını karşılaştırmalı bir biçimde analiz etmektedir. Tez, bu üç derginin Amerika ve Türkiye versiyonlarının 2014-2016 yılları arasında yayınlanan sayılarına odaklanmıştır. Çalışmanın sonucunda bu erkek dergilerinin benzer özelliklere sahip erkeği idealize ettiği görülmüştür. Bu dergilerin Amerika ve Türkiye versiyonlarında kaslı/fit, cinsel gücü yüksek, heteroseksüel, giyimine ve genel olarak nasıl görüldüğüne dikkat eden erkek figürü ideal erkek olarak sunulmaktadır. Dergiler, idealize ettikleri bu erkek figürünü görseller ve metinler yoluyla tarif ettikleri hegemonik erkekliğin bir temsili olarak işaret etmektedir. Bu bağlamda ortaya çıkan ideal erkek figürü, kadınlar ve marjinalize edilmiş erkekliklerden daha güçlü bir figür olarak tanımlanmaktadır.

**Anahtar Sözcükler:** Hegemonik erkeklik, erkek dergileri, erkeklik, cinsiyet

## INTRODUCTION

Masculinity has been a popular subject in academia since the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The rise of second-wave feminism in 1960s and 1970s, which sought not only to politically enfranchise women, the concern of the first feminist movement, but also critique and dismantle the patriarchal structures which restricted women's rights more broadly across society, saw masculinity become an important topic of discussion and research. Thus in the process of fighting for women's emancipation from traditional sex and gender roles, women (and men) began to discuss, and transform, the concept of masculinity.

Throughout this time period, the ways in which masculinity has been approached have morphed and developed. As R.W. argues, during the 1970s, masculinity was generally explained via a theory of sex and gender roles, "in which being a man or a woman means enacting a general set of expectations which are attached to one's sex" (2005, p. 22). However, as masculinity came under critical attention, it became clear that "[t]he reduction of gender to two homogenous categories" posed difficulties in grasping many issues related to masculinity; in other words, in the academic sphere, masculinity was emerging as a more complicated and multifaceted concept (Connell, 2005, p. 26). By contrast, it is important to note that in popular culture today, sex role theory is still used widely while referring to masculinity, and many newspapers and magazines still make news based on the idea that there are fundamental differences between men and women simply because their bodies are different.

Returning to the critical understanding of masculinity, the extent of academic studies on masculinity and gender in the 1980s, combined with the effect of post-structuralist thinkers such as Foucault, Derrida and Butler challenged ideas about masculinity in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Building on Foucault, Judith Butler argued in her seminal text, *Gender Trouble* (1990) that, rather than being a fixed or inherited entity that is decided by the sex of a person, gender is rather a social construction, built and reinforced by societal norms, expectations and conventions. The constructivist approach has been a crucial step in Gender Studies. Yet, in spite of these developments, one of the main focuses of the feminist movement has continued to be the fight against hegemonic masculinity,

highlighting that insights regarding the production of gender roles have had little impact on the actually-existing nature of societal gender relations. Thus, with her groundbreaking book *Masculinities*, Connell explains the idea of hegemonic masculinity as the problematic “legitimacy of patriarchy that guarantees the dominant position of men and the subordination of woman” (2005, p. 77). While the notion of hegemonic masculinity has continued to be criticized by many researchers and was reconsidered by Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) in the light of the criticism, when examining today’s popular cultural products such as advertisements, films and magazines its continuing ubiquity remains obvious and its presence looms large.

Working on the complex nature of masculinity, researchers like Connell (2005) and Edwards (2006) have come to the conclusion that although many adjectives may come to one’s mind when they are asked to describe masculinity, it is not possible to have a universal definition that can fit all countries and social structures around the world. Even inside an individual country there are multiple masculinities, because masculinity is constructed by society in different spheres rather than defined by the natural environment. Thus, in *Gender Trouble*, Butler explains how societies actually create gender stereotypes by attributing some roles to men and women and how heterosexuality is normalized while homosexuality is cursed (1990). According to Butler, a society creates certain gender types and excludes the gender types that are seen as harmful to members of the community (1990). Although its expression differs, this process is replicated across societies, and across the products of popular culture, in today’s world. Using this method, the hegemonic masculinity defined by Connell is protected and sex role theory is repeatedly recruited to create societies own individual and ideal gender types.

This dissertation evaluates men’s lifestyle magazines which use and reproduce the symbols of Western hegemonic masculinity. This masculinity encompasses class, race, physique, sexuality, and attitude toward women and fashion. What emerges as hegemonic is the figure of a middle class white Western man, heterosexual, possessing a huge physical and sexual power, who wears stylish clothes and who objectifies women in order to reinforce his power. The magazines explored in this study consist of American and Turkey versions of three men’s lifestyle magazines published between 2014 and 2016: *Gentleman’s Quarterly (GQ)*, *Esquire* and *Men’s Health*. By comparing the American versions of magazines with the Turkey ones, I have tried to identify the discrete discourses

on masculinities they have produced and the ways those discourses travel back and forth between different versions of the magazines. In examining more than two hundred issues of these magazines in total, it has become clear that both the American and Turkey versions of all three magazines employ hegemonic masculinity at various degrees, evidenced through their portrayal of women, homosexuals, “racial” and ethnic minorities as inferior subjects while privileging and reinforcing the symbol of the middle class white Western man with the aforementioned qualities.

Today, the power of popular culture and its effects on people cannot be ignored. Films, TV programs, and newspapers are studied widely in the academic world. Magazines are likewise important documents of culture. As Bethan Benwell states: “men’s magazines cannot be treated merely as textual products, unaffected by time and space...A series of independent moments including context of production and consumption/reception all contribute to the cultural phenomenon of men’s lifestyle magazines” (2005, p. 89). In other words, a two-way process emerges: magazines both reflect and produce ideas and images; then, they send them back into the target culture. In this way, magazines actually include what the society would like to buy, and, in doing so, reflect the cultural norms of the society. So, as a product firmly embedded within culture, such lifestyle magazines are key indicators of the masculinities that will be accepted, and those that are likely to be rejected, by the society in which they are produced. Thus, the photos, slogans and articles contained within men’s lifestyle magazines combine to create a homosocial zone in the modern paper media and depict masculinity types that they simultaneously create in response to the gender norms operating within their target audience.

When comparing the masculinities depicted in men’s lifestyle magazines in Turkey and the US, a few factors have led to the choice of particular publications. First of all, *GQ*, *Men’s Health* and *Esquire* are all published in Turkey and the US. This provides an opportunity to directly compare and contrast the differences and similarities in the representations of masculinity across these two cultures. The similarities detected and analyzed in this study also suggest how ideas and images related to masculinity travel around the world and become more hegemonic, even as they might seem universal. More importantly, these three publications are some of the best-selling men’s magazines in both the USA and Turkey. The table below (Table Int.1.) details the USA circulation averages of men’s magazines for the six months ending in June 2016:

**Table Int.1.** The USA circulation averages of men’s magazines for the six months ending in June 2016

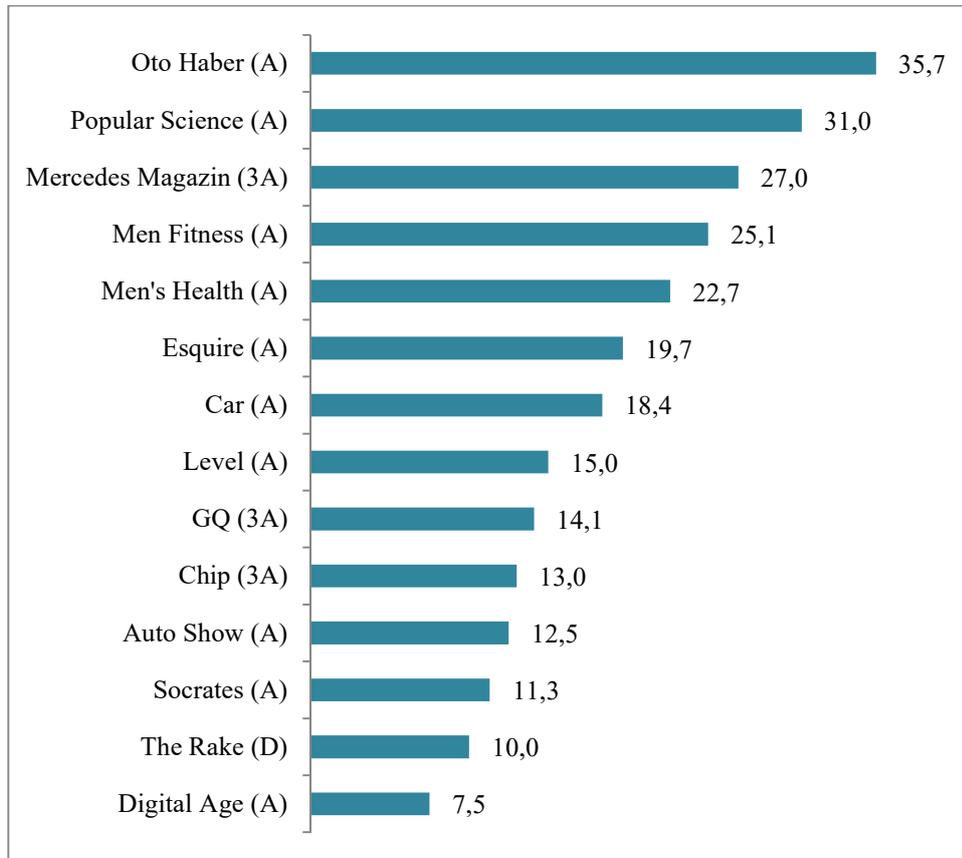
<b>Publication Name</b>	<b>Total Paid &amp; Verified Circulation</b>
<i>CIGAR AFICIONADO</i>	249,416
<i>ESQUIRE</i>	758,502
<i>GQ GENTLEMEN'S QUARTERLY</i>	946,726
<i>MAXIM</i>	928,753
<i>MEN'S BOOK CHICAGO</i>	88
<i>MEN'S HEALTH</i>	1,852,715
<i>MEN'S JOURNAL</i>	758,298
<i>MEN'S FITNESS</i>	700,035
<i>OUTSIDE</i>	687,834
<i>PLAYBOY</i>	673,473
<i>POPULAR MECHANICS</i>	1,202,525

Source: (Alliance for Audited Media Snapshot Report 06/30/2016)

As seen in the table, the most popular magazine for this period is *Men’s Health* with 1,852,715 copies sold. *GQ* has a circulation number of 946,726, more than *Esquire* with 758,502 copies. While the figures show *Popular Mechanics* and *Maxim* are the most popular US magazines, we have excluded them from our comparative study as these publications do not have direct Turkey counterparts.

*GQ*, *Men’s Health* and *Esquire* are also popular magazines in Turkey although a similar audited source that reveals the circulation numbers of men’s lifestyle magazines is not easily accessible. A company called Cereyan Medya prepares monthly reports of circulation based on the numbers that are given by the magazine publishers. The chart on the next page (Chart Int.1.) shows Turkey circulation averages of men’s magazines in July 2017.

**Chart Int.1.** Turkey circulation averages of men's magazines in July 2017



Source: (Cereyan Medya July 2017 Report).

These figures show that *Men's Health* has a monthly circulation in Turkey of approximately 22,000 copies whereas *Esquire* has 19,000. *GQ* is the third biggest men's lifestyle magazine, with a circulation of 14,000 copies per month. Thus we can see from these figures that of those men's lifestyle magazines published in both countries, *Men's Health* is the most popular. There are, of course, other magazines under the heading of men's magazines that have higher circulation numbers than these three magazines; however, they are defined by industry or activity specific content, such as technology (e.g. *Chip*), cars (e.g. *Autocar*) or science (e.g. *Popular Science*). These men's magazines can be called men's interest magazines rather than men's lifestyle magazines (Benwell, 2003a, p. 6). By contrast, men's lifestyle magazines include men's interests in feature articles but primarily give focus on lifestyle, such as tips for a healthy body, advice on romantic relationships with women and sex secrets for heterosexual men.

Of the three magazines in this study, *Gentlemen's Quarterly* (Nolen, 2010a) is the oldest. It was first published under the name of *Apparel Arts* (1931-1957), became *Gentleman's Quarterly* (1958-83) and finally was rebranded *GQ* in 1983 (*GQ*). Today *GQ* is present in 20 countries in 12 different languages. The magazine contains articles, interviews, news and photos covering relationships, fashion, health, technology, travel, food and a little politics. Conde Nast, the USA publisher of the magazine, markets *GQ* as follows on its website: "The only publication that speaks to all sides of the male equation, *GQ* is simply sharper and smarter" (brands/*GQ*). By referencing its male readership as an equation to be solved, the publisher suggests that men have a complex nature with unknown variables and this complexity can be resolved by reading *GQ*. The words "sharp" and "smart" have multifaceted meanings which give clues about *GQ*'s approach towards its target audience. "Sharp" implies smart, fashionable, clear and, at times, severe, whereas "smart" means intelligent, fashionable and, most recently, technological (smart devices). In short, *GQ* USA addresses men who are (or aspire to be) fashionable and smart without giving up their "sharpness".

Considering *GQ* USA's 2014 cover shots, it is apparent that *GQ* USA regards "how to look" as a crucial issue that all men need advice on. By contrast, the two covers featuring women are prime examples of photos in which women are presented to the gaze of men as primarily sexual objects. All the men featured on the covers, while not necessarily muscular, are presented as physically fit and in good shape. Of twelve issues, there are three black men and two women featured on the cover page, making the visual presence of white men predominant.

The first issue of *GQ* Turkey appeared in March 2012. *GQ* Turkey's motto is that "*GQ* is the magazine of men who go their own way"<sup>1</sup>. The phrase invokes a sentiment of independence and living according to one's personal wishes. Hence the Turkey version of *GQ* is aimed at men who live as they wish and are independent. Even the mottos of the two versions reflect different aspects of masculinity, which makes *GQ* an ideal magazine for this comparative study in masculinity.

2014's *GQ* Turkey covers show that the magazine's Turkey version also attaches high importance to style, views women as objects upon which to be gazed, and highlights men

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<sup>1</sup> "Bildigini Okuyan Erkeklerin Dergisi" (*GQ* Turkey, March 2012, Cover)

who are fit, young and good-looking. The covers also reveal differences between the USA and Turkey versions in terms of content. Although they have similar sections and themes, the articles are mostly different. In other words, the Turkey version of *GQ* is not a straight translation of the USA version, but exists as a separate and discrete publication. Occasionally, some interviews and articles are taken from the USA version and used in *GQ* Turkey version after being translated into Turkish, but in general, the content is original.

*Men's Health* is the best-selling of all three magazines. It was first published in the USA in 1987. Today, it is one of the world's most popular men's lifestyle magazines. The magazine's publisher Rodale Inc. states "*Men's Health* is the biggest men's magazine brand in the world, with a global print and digital readership of 55 million across 37 editions in 61 countries" on its website (brands/international). The USA version's slogan is "*Men's Health* is the number one source of information for and about men". In the Media Kit, prepared by the *Men's Health* team, containing comprehensive information about the magazine and its readers, the publication's mission statement is stated as:

The brand for active, successful, professional men who want greater control over their physical, mental and emotional lives. We give men the tools they need to make their lives better through in-depth reporting covering everything from fashion and grooming to health and nutrition as well as cutting edge gear, the latest entertainment, timely features and more. (Men's Health Media Kit, 2018)

This mission statement shows how *Men's Health* aims at men's whole-person wellness by giving its readers the necessary tools –not knowledge– of various subjects such as fashion, health, nutrition, sports and entertainment. The magazine's emphasis on "control", and its stated quest to allow its readers to achieve "greater control" over their lives, demonstrates the publication's core belief that that men need to work more to get more control over both their body and emotions. Indeed, such is the stress on control in *Men's Health* messaging that we can assume the publication may aim to make some readers believe by exerting greater power over themselves, their bodies and their desires, they can also control the world.

In its 2018 media kit, the reader profile is presented in detail (Men's Health Media Kit, 2018). *Men's Health* USA claims that they have 13,392,000 total audience of which 82.5 percent is men and 17.5 percent is women. The median age is given as 43.6. The magazine claims 52.9 percent of readers are married while 47.1 percent is single. 34 percent of readers are at least college graduates and 64.6 percent have a full-time job.

2016 covers of *Men's Health* USA reflect differences between *GQ* and *Men's Health*. While *GQ* focuses on style, *Men's Health* mainly concentrates on physique –and specifically– big muscles. Clothed or unclothed, all the models depicted have significant muscle-tone and are presented as in peak physical condition. Body-conditioning –or building hard and strong muscles while losing weight– is the common message of all the covers. The message even translates to the fonts used: sans serif, big and bold and positioned just under the title of the magazine, the slogans are the clearly prioritized to be the first written features to grab attention of the readers. Similarly significant cover messaging, though less prominent, are slogans to entice readers to uncover the secrets of good heterosexual sex and relationships, which are mostly written in red ink. All the models on the covers are men.

The Turkey version of *Men's Health's* was first published in October 2007 by Group Medya. On the magazine's website ([menshealth.com.tr](http://menshealth.com.tr)), it seems to share the same motto: for men and about men; however, on each and every cover its motto is “The Joy of Being a Man”, which replaces the motto of “A Magazine Men Live by” in the American version. The choice of words in translation suggests that the editors of the Turkey version of *Men's Health* wish to promote the notion that simply being a man is enough to make men happy. The target reader profile of the Turkey version is slightly different than the USA version: 84 percent are men, 16 percent are women; 55 percent are married, 45 percent are single; 80 percent of readers hold at least a university degree. (men's-health-dergi).

Similar to its USA version, *Men's Health* Turkey also seems to claim expertise in physical fitness and in showing how to build big muscles. Comparing the 2016 covers of the USA and Turkey versions, it can be seen that the slogans on the covers are generally directly translated from one language to another. Most of the slogans and feature highlights are same, although cover photos are generally different. The January issues of 2016 are good examples: “Get Back In Shape, 21-Day Plan, Hard Muscle Diet, Secrets of Red-Hot Sex” is directly translated to Turkish. Likewise, this indicates that there is a lot of directly translated content, making the two versions of *Men's Health* similar. “Ask MH”, “Bulletins”, “Style+Grooming”, “Metashred” sections in the Turkey version are translations from the English version. Also, from the coverage, it is apparent that as *Men's Health* USA had a joint issue for January and February, *Men's Health* Turkey kept the twelve-month format and simply translated some articles to be used in January and kept

some others behind for the February issue. When *Men's Health* USA's joint January-February 2016 issue is compared with February 2016 issue of *Men's Health* Turkey, it can be seen that there is also directly translated content in the "Food+Nutrition", "Fitness+Muscle" and "Sex and Relationships" sections. For this study, *Men's Health* Turkey's issues published between 2014 and 2016 are examined. When all issues considered, we can detect that particular sections, including "Ask MH", "Bulletins", "Fitness+Muscle", "Sex and Relationships" and "Girl Next Door", which answers the readers' questions related to romantic relationships, contain substantial direct translations most of the time.

*Esquire* is another men's lifestyle magazine that has a long history. The USA version was first published in 1933 by the Hearst publishing company. In its earlier manifestations, *Esquire* was an important platform for fiction and non-fiction writers such as Thomas Wolfe, Ernest Hemingway, William Faulkner, John Steinbeck and Truman Capote (Nolen, 2010b). Today it is a men's lifestyle magazine covering the subject categories of style, news, politics, culture, and food and drink. The magazine's motto is "Man at His Best": masculine, intelligent, style, modern, inventive, curious, and sophisticated. These adjectives are revealing in terms of the presentation of masculinity in the magazine, but most importantly it is the only magazine in the group that emphasizes masculinity as one of its core elements. In its media kit, this motto is further explained as "*Esquire* defines, reflects, influences what it means to be a man in the contemporary world" ([esquiremediakit.com](http://esquiremediakit.com)). This is the most assertive slogan of these three magazines, and this confidence continues in *Esquire's* identification of its target reader:

While other men's magazines are written for highly aspirational readers, *Esquire* is geared toward men who have arrived, they dress for themselves; have both the means and the knowledge to invest; can order with confidence in a fine restaurant; have a healthy respect and admiration for women; take vacations that enrich their lives and recharge their energy; and have mastered many of life's basics. (*Esquire Media Kit*, 2017)

Thus *Esquire's* masculinity is as follows: mature, self-sufficient, socio-economically successful and confident. Women are to be admired and respected, but remain fundamentally separate, "other" and thus objectified in *Esquire's* social relations.

*Esquire's* Turkey version was published earlier than the Turkey versions of *GQ* and *Men's Health*, first coming out in October 1993. The Turkey version's slogan is different than the USA version: "Adamakıllı Dergi". The slogan has two connotations. One is based on a word-for-word translation of the slogan: "A Magazine with a Man's Mind",

seemingly an appropriate slogan for a men's lifestyle magazine. However, an alternative interpretation invokes very sexist connotations. In Turkish, "adamakıllı" also means "with a male mind", an idiom which refers to something "thoroughly and properly done". By implication, a female mind is unable to carry out things "thoroughly and properly", and thus the slogan operates sardonically to undermine women. This profoundly sexist Turkish slogan acts as a precursor to the forms of masculinity on display in the magazine. The Turkey version of *Esquire* claims it knows what is in men's minds. The magazine covers subjects from culture to economy, from travel to profiles of famous men.

As T.W. Reeser claims, masculinity became an increasingly important topic in academia in the twentieth century and there are different ways to examine it (2010, p. 9). These men's lifestyle magazines reflect the dominant masculinities marketed by the media, and, indirectly, those masculinities that the men in the target societies are in favor of. In other words, these magazines show the stereotypes of masculinity in Turkey and in the USA in printed media and they also mirror the representations of masculinity in their readers' minds.

### *Gender and Masculinity in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*

According to K. G. Gardiner, the most significant success of 20<sup>th</sup> century feminist theory is its approach to gender as a social construction (2004, p. 35). The same argument is valid for the concept of masculinity and analysis of it, too, as a social construction; in this way, developments in the feminist movement have influenced discussions of masculinity considerably. In his book, *Cultures of Masculinity*, Tim Edwards explains the development of masculinity in three phases in line with the feminist movement in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (2006, p. 2). The first phase of discussions surrounding masculinity is defined by the sex role theory that became popular in 1960s. Connell agrees with Edwards, in the sense that the first significant attempt to form a social science-based concept of masculinity was fundamentally shaped by the concept of the male sex role (Connell, 2005, p. 21; Edwards, 2006, p. 2). This theory emphasizes that there are some "general set of expectations" from women and men (Connell, 2005, p. 22). These expectations are believed to be shared by the all members of a society. In other words, according to the sex role theory, women and men are supposed to act in certain ways which have been

accepted and reinforced by the society. In this way, masculinity can be interpreted as an “internalized sex role, the produc[t] of social learning or socialization” (Connell, 2005, p. 22).

According to Connell, the positive aspect of the sex role theory was its indirect suggestion of potential change in the society (Connell, 2005, p. 22). In other words, if sex role norms are “facts” created by the society, they can be changed by the society in time. This chance of change was addressed by several feminist theorists in the 1970s, who claimed that the subversion of women could be eliminated by changing society’s expectations upon which the roles are built. Connell also states that “[r]ole research became a political tool, defining a problem and suggesting strategies for reform. Sex roles could be changed by changing expectations in the classrooms, setting up new role models and so on” (2005, p. 23).

Although the theory has been widely used in masculinity studies, second-wave of feminism in the 1980s alleged that sex role theory proved to be an unsuitable framework under which to study gender. Joseph H. Pleck suggested in the *Myth of Masculinity* (1981) that sex role theory assumes there is a concordance between norm and personality, meaning that one can be accepted as a psychologically healthy person as long as one does what is expected from him/her based on his/her sex (as cited in Connell, 2005, p. 25). Pleck claims that when a person cannot fulfill these expectations, he/she does not have the chance to challenge or violate it but just feels inadequate because of not being able to meet the expectations of society (as cited in Connell, 2005, p. 25). Connell shares a similar idea with Pleck, claiming that sex role theory exaggerates the degree to which people’s social behavior is delineated, as it assumes the role definitions are shared by both society and the individual and ignores other pressures such as social inequality and power (Connell, 2005, p. 26). For Connell, sex role theory has difficulty at understanding power issues because the theory is based on the consent (Connell, 2005, p. 26). The theory assumes everybody agrees on it willingly and ignores the effect of power that affects the hierarchy between men and women. A further reason why sex role theory is not a suitable framework for masculinity is that the theory categorizes men and women as discrete homogenous groups and ignores crucial and determining factors effecting behaviors, such as “race”, class and sexuality (Connell, 2005, p. 26). Sex role theory has mostly focused on white, Western and middle class men (Edwards, 2006, p. 2).

Having realized the inappropriateness of sex role theory to examine masculinity, the second phase of masculinity studies focused on power, its complex nature, expressions and practices, in order to embrace issues such as black, gay and working-class masculinities (Edwards, 2006, p. 2). Believing that recognizing the diversity in masculinity is not adequate and it is necessary to recognize the relationships between various kinds of masculinity, Connell invoked a concept of hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 2005, p. 37). Connell claims that there is a hegemonic masculinity that is dominant and exerts power over all other masculinities and women. Connell states “hegemonic masculinity can be defined as the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women” (Connell, 2005, p. 77). Hegemonic masculinity does not have to be the masculinity already performed by the majority of men in a society, although it is definitely normative (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 832). In other words, it is shown as the target all men are supposed to work towards and it asks all men to position themselves in relation to it. Moreover, even though some men may not fully have the characteristics of the man idealized by hegemonic masculinity, the hierarchical power structure is accepted by many as even men who do not conform to the ideal benefit from the dominance of hegemonic masculinity and have power over other masculinities and women (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 832).

Connell and Messerschmidt also draw attention to the historical aspect of hegemonic masculinity. Defined by the patriarchal system, Connell and Messerschmidt outline that the norms of the hegemonic masculinity are subject to change in time as society itself evolves (2005, p. 833). This aspect of the hegemonic masculinity concept was promising since it showed that it was malleable and presented the possibility that a “more humane, less oppressive means of being a man might be hegemonic” in the future (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 833).

The third wave of masculinity studies has been affected by post-structuralism in the feminist movement as it evaluates gender from three angles: “normativity, performativity and sexuality” (Edwards, 2006, p. 3). In the third phase, gender became a concept that is more difficult to define and it became more “unstable and fluid” (Edwards, 2006, p. 3). In addition to social science studies, the third phase of masculinity discussions also

involved media and cultural studies of masculinity, emphasizing that gender has come to be regarded as a kind of representation and social construct (Edwards, 2006, p. 3). The following section discusses this major breakthrough in masculinity studies.

### *Gender as a Social Construction*

Gender as a social construction is an important theme in modern gender studies and also in discussions surrounding masculinity. It is similar to sex role theory in the sense that both are concerned with public beliefs about masculinity but there is a significant difference. Sex role theory assumes “existing norms which are passively internalized and enacted” whereas “gender as a social construction “explores the making and remaking of conventions in social practice itself” (Connell, 2005, p. 35). That means that conceptualizing gender as a social construction goes a few steps further: rather than trying to provide equality for men and women by changing the social beliefs according to an equitable frame based on duality –men and women–, gender as a social construction questions the very fundamental categories of men and women themselves and aims to demolish the male and female duality (Butler, 1990, p. viii).

Judith Butler is the pioneer of social constructivism in Gender Studies. In her groundbreaking book, *Gender Trouble*, Butler makes her case for gender being an entirely social construct, in spite of its seeming naturalness, and, moreover, emphasizes the coercion involved in the male/female dualism:

Gender is thus a construction that regularly conceals its genesis; the tacit collective agreement to perform, produce, and sustain discrete and polar genders as cultural fictions is obscured by the credibility of those productions—and the punishments that attend not agreeing to believe in them; the construction ‘compels’ our belief in its necessity and naturalness. (Butler, 1990, 190)

According to Butler, gender and the norms that shape gender are all formed by society and people are forced to believe their naturalness, their utility and their reality via various interplaying mechanisms. With this claim, Butler powerfully undermines the idea that gender, with all its attendant norms, is a fixed and unchanging reality but rather argues that it is instead a socially constructed categorization based on rules that need not necessarily be obeyed. Butler takes this claim to the extreme, suggesting in fact that that gender is entirely artificial rather than real:

If one thinks that one sees a man dressed as a woman or a woman dressed as a man, then that one takes the first term of each of those perceptions as the reality of gender: the gender that is introduced through the simile lacks reality and is taken to constitute an illusory appearance. In such perceptions in which an ostensible reality is coupled with an unreality, we think we know what the reality is, and take the secondary appearance of gender to be mere artifice, play, falsehood, and illusion...This is naturalized knowledge although it is based on a serious of cultural inferences...in fact a changeable and visible reality. (1990, xxiii)

By invoking drag, Butler argues that gender and all the norms related to it are created by society. This creation is accepted as a natural reality and people judge themselves based on this “reality” which, Butler argues, is actually a subjective cultural product. Judith Lorber, following Butler, similarly claims that gender is a social construction. According to Lorber, although people take gender for granted and accept it without questioning, gender is constructed by society right from the beginning of a person’s life and everyone actually “does gender” (1994, pp. 99-100). When a baby is born, it is assigned to a sex based on its biology, given a name, coded by color blue or pink and this sex category defines the status of this baby in society in the future (Lorber, 1994, p. 100). Lorber agrees with Butler in the artificiality of gender, citing transvestites and transsexuals as examples of people who have been doing gender like the other “normal” people. Thus she uses her analysis to effectively attack the assumptions of patriarchal gender relations which frequently alienate, ostracize and disenfranchise such minority identities (Lorber, 1994, p. 100).

Both Butler and Lorber put forward the idea that the society aims to form a systematic order in which different categories function together and carry out their duties. Lorber states that “as a social institution, gender is a process of creating distinguishable social statuses for the assignment of rights and responsibilities” (Lorber, 1994, p. 101). Butler also claims that gender as a social construction defines what it is to “be a good mother, to be heterosexually desired object, to be a fit worker, in sum to signify a multiplicity of guarantees in response to a variety of different demands all at once” (1990, p. 199). Both Butler and Lorber suggest gender is socially constructed in such a way that all responsibilities in the society can be carried out (Lorber, 1994, p. 101; Butler, 1997, p. 135). Butler names this approach as “institutionalized heterosexuality” (1997, p. 135). Marriage can be a good example of the institutionalized heterosexuality. Butler believes that people would not be separated into categories of men and women if society did not see marriage useful in terms of sharing responsibilities and establishing kinship (Gardiner, 2004, p. 45).

Considering gender as a social construction, it is important to question how this system looks so natural that people accept the norms without questioning them. Butler explains this situation with her performative theory of gender (1990, p. xv; 2004, pp. 198-199). Butler states “performativity is not a singular act, but a repetition and ritual, which achieves its effects through its naturalization in the context of body, understood, in part, as a culturally sustained temporal duration” (1990, p. xv). According to Butler, people “do” gender by performing certain acts that are attributed to their sex by the society (1990, p. 209). In this sense, Butler reminds its readers of her concept of reality, which actually refers to the socially created norms performed by people.

Butler’s performative theory and other poststructuralist feminists such as Lorber have changed the nature of our understanding of gender. Rather than being something stable, solid and nonnegotiable, gender has become something unstable, fluid and negotiable.

#### *Masculinity as a Social Construction: The Transformation of Masculinity as a Concept*

As the nature of gender was challenged by poststructuralists, the concept of masculinity was also transformed. With the effect of poststructuralism, it became more difficult to define masculinity. As Butler states “[w]hen the constructed status of gender is theorized as radically independent of sex, gender itself becomes a free-floating artifice, with the consequence that men and masculine might just easily signify a female body as a male one, and woman and feminine a male body as easily as a female one” (1990, p. 9). This means that once the link between the body and the gender is broken and it becomes evident that people actually perform a gendered reality that is constructed by society, masculinity also turns into a fluid and unstable notion that is not just bound to the male body. Such destabilization has made some theorists look for alternative masculinities. For example, Judith Halberstam puts forward the idea of “masculinity without men” to refer to masculinity in female bodies. In her work, *Female Masculinity*, Halberstam claims that female masculinity is not an imitation of maleness but it is actually the proof that masculinity is socially constructed (1998, p.1). Halberstam gives the androgyne, the female husband, the drag king, the tribade, the female-to-male transsexual as proof for her claim suggesting that masculinity can be constructed on the female body. Halberstam claims both that “we are all transsexuals” and “there are no transsexuals”, implying that

the body cannot be described as feminine and masculine simply on biological sex lines and that such cognitive links (biological sex with gender) are entirely socially constructed (as cited in Gardiner, 2004, p. 46). While Judith Butler gives butches and femmes as evidence to show the construction of gender, Halberstam gives transsexuals as a proof for gender construction. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick puts forward a similar idea. Sedgwick states “sometimes masculinity has got nothing to do with men...As a woman, I am a consumer of masculinities, but I am not more so than men are; and, like men, I as a woman am also a producer of masculinities and a performer of them” (1995, p. 13). Sedgwick claims that both men and women have various degrees of masculinity and femininity in them as she evaluates masculinity and femininity not as opposite poles but “perpendicular dimensions” (1995, p. 15).

The basic assumption that masculinity belongs to (biologically sexed) men has now been critically challenged through discussions of female masculinity, transsexuals, lesbians, gays and people who have had surgery to change their sex. Today, it is possible for a woman to have surgery and become “masculine” with the help of hormones and plastic surgery. Thus when masculinity is separated from the male body, its fluid nature can be seen more clearly. In this sense, it is hard to say masculinity is inherent in the nature of man, or even tied to the possession of a penis, and to claim there is just one type of masculinity. As Todd W. Reeser states: “...even within a single cultural and temporal context, ideas of masculinity are far from stable and fixed. While there may be some agreement among some people about a given definition, such a definition is never agreed upon” (2010, p. 3). In this way, a white-collar businessman may be regarded as non-masculine by a builder or a gay man with a muscular body can be regarded as more masculine than a slim straight man. Reeser puts forward that “masculinity has no natural, inherent, or given meaning, that it does not have to mean something predetermined, and whatever meaning it has is in constant movement” (2010, p. 11). Thus affected by poststructuralism, Reeser emphasizes the complex and multi-faceted nature of masculinity.

The flexibility of masculinity not only makes it difficult to define, but also enables it to have different expressions for various purposes in a society. Considering Butler’s and Lorber’s ideas about society’s use of gender as an ordering system, it can be said that society itself constructs and imposes masculinity in a certain way because it uses

masculinity as an ideology that will be for the benefit of the society and maintain the status quo. Masculinity can be considered as an ideology in the sense that with it comes a series of beliefs which tell people how to live and which many people internalize (Reeser, 2010, p. 20). This notion becomes more pressing when the relationship of masculinity with power is considered. Masculinity's link with power has been discussed widely in feminist theory. The main body of power in countries, their governments, can be interpreted as hegemonic institutions which use masculinity as their primary governing power by forming big armies of men. In economic and social arenas, a similar mechanism applies: the business world uses its power to create the ideal "capitalistic masculinity"; sport praises the "muscular and fit masculinity" (Reeser, 2010, p. 20).

If masculinity is considered to be an ideology, one other linking factor is its seeming naturalness, or common sense. A person can buy an ideology without thinking about it since it looks so natural within the cultural and historical context at the time (Reeser, 2010, p. 21). People are bombarded with masculinity at all times in various contexts. Advertisements, television programs, celebrities, and the beliefs of others create a masculinity which is tacitly internalized and accepted by other members of the society, and these various means are used to propagate and shore up dominant masculinities through "images, myths, discourses and practices" (Reeser, 2010, p. 21). Recalling Butler's performative theory, it can be said that when these propaganda tools are repeated constantly and are unavoidable, they turn into a practice which makes certain types of masculinities natural and acceptable. People live their life and judge other people based on the ideal –so called "real"– masculinities, as Butler suggests, without questioning them, or their own acceptance of them.

In today's world, hegemonic masculinity operates via a nexus of images and ideas: society is sent messages regarding masculinity through "sports (football is for men not gymnastics), clothing (jacket and tie) and toys (gun for men, doll for girls)" (Reeser, 2010, p. 24). Moreover, contemporary myths transmit multiple messages reinforcing the dominant masculinity as well. For example, superheroes like Superman or cowboys in American culture can be read as masculinity myths that are presenting ideal representations of masculinity, which may appeal a lot of boys (Reeser, 2010, p. 24). As an example of discourse that is used to propagate masculinity, the discourse in men's

locker rooms is an example (Reeser, 2010, p. 24). The language used in such homosocial<sup>2</sup> arenas reveal much about the masculinity praised in society.

Of course, language itself is also another important tool used to propagate masculinity in a society. As Reeser argues

what we imagine when we use the word masculinity is strongly influenced by the way we talk about it, including the actual content of what we say, what we don't say about it, and the choice of words in what we say...to study masculinity we have to examine how it is articulated. (2010, p. 29)

That argument is especially valid when a cultural text or a certain discourse is analyzed in order to examine the notion of masculinity in that culture. A slogan on an advertisement, a joke about women or the choice of words in homosocial arenas can give a lot of indicators about the dominant masculinity a certain society.

According to Reeser, masculine identity creation is established and maintained by its recognition of, and relationship to, another –non-identity. Thus society normalizes a certain kind of masculinity by creating “an abnormal other”, and an anti-norm is created in the discourse (2010, p. 31). Reeser gives heterosexuality versus homosexuality as an example, claiming that the presentation of homosexuality as a visible problem guarantees the normativity of the invisible heterosexual (2010, p. 32). In other words, to reinforce heterosexuality and to maintain its power, homosexuality is presented as an abnormality. The fluid and unstable nature of masculinity suggested by poststructuralist gender critics, and its relationship with power, can be best examined with the frame of hegemonic masculinity first proposed by Kessler et. Al. in their study of social inequality in Australian high schools in 1982, which went on to become a major concept in theorizing masculinity for key academics in the field (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 830).

### *Hegemonic Masculinity*

In her book *Masculinities*, Connell describes hegemonic masculinity as “the masculinity that occupies the hegemonic position in the given pattern of gender relations” (2005, pp.

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<sup>2</sup> “[h]omosociality refers to the nonsexual attractions held by men (or women) for members of their own sex.” (Bird, 1996, p. 121). For the relationship between homosociality and masculinity, see “Hybrid Masculine Power: Reconceptualizing the Relationship Between Homosociality and Hegemonic Masculinity” by Steven L. Arxer.

76-77). Her broad definition suggests that, for Connell, hegemonic masculinity actually suggests multiple masculinities that are continuously interacting in various power relations. According to Connell and Messerschmidt, while examining the practices that enable men's dominance over women to continue, hegemonic masculinity was accepted to be normative (2005, p. 832). That means that all the other masculinities that float around and outside hegemonic masculinity have been accepted as abnormal and inferior to hegemonic masculinity.

Connell stresses the idea that hegemonic masculinity does not have to belong to a large group of men and only a minority of men may have the power to define it (2005, p. 79). However, the majority of men can benefit from this hegemony as hegemonic masculinity "requires all other men to position themselves in relation to it as hegemonic masculinity embodies the currently most honored way of being a man" (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 832). In other words, although a large group of men do not have the power to set the norms of hegemonic masculinity, they take the advantage of it as they shape their gender referring to the hegemonic masculinity while expecting suppressed groups to accept these norms. Connell and Messerschmidt position gender hierarchies in a historical perspective, which means that the peculiar circumstances that constitute hegemonic masculinity are subject to change over time (2005, p. 833).

The concept of hegemonic masculinity has been applied to many studies in diverse fields, from criminology to media studies to literature. Indeed, the notion of hegemonic masculinity is used to show the relationship between some types of masculinities and a variety of different crimes (Messerschmidt, 1993). The concept of hegemonic masculinity was also used as a frame while discussing the representation of masculinity in media by researchers such as Robert Hanke (1998). Some sports have also been examined from the perspective of hegemonic masculinity and the representations of masculinity in these sports have been discussed by researchers like Messner (1992). Hegemonic masculinity has even been a subject of interest in medical literature, such as Sabo and Gordon's (1995) study exploring the relationship between hegemonic masculinity and a higher incidence of male risk-takers in terms of illness and disease. Studies focusing on organizational behavior (Messerschmidt, 1995), the military (Barrett, 1996) and art (Belton, 1995) have all found the concept useful in research. The ubiquity of its use implies the truth of Connell and Messerschmidt's claim that "the analysis of multiple masculinities" and the

notion of hegemonic masculinity has come to entirely replace sex role theory in the academy (2005, p. 834).

While being used widely by researchers, hegemonic masculinity has also received criticism. Collinson and Hearn criticized the concept for its ambiguity, stating:

It is important to acknowledge the way in which masculinities can change over time could be shaped by underlying ambiguities and uncertainties, may differ according to class, age, culture and ethnicity etc... Yet on the other hand, this emphasis upon multiplicity and difference ought not to degenerate into a diversified pluralism that gives insufficient attention to structured patterns of gendered power, control and inequality. (1994, p. 10)

In other words, Collinson and Hearn suggest that the multiplicity of masculinity potentially makes it challenging to delineate and critique the power relations of the structural inequality that exists between men and women. On the other hand, Petersen (1998) suggests that the multiplicity of masculinity is necessary to recognize gender as a social construction. In contrast to Collinson and Hearn, Petersen puts forward that the multiplicity of masculinity makes it possible to see power not as a “fact of nature” (Petersen, 1998, p. 40). While evaluating these ideas in a reflective piece covering responses to their own pioneering work, Connell and Messerschmidt suggest that it is absolutely natural to have different essentialist views or “conceptual confusion”, but that there is enough research that has been conducted by historians and ethnographers to prove the idea that there are multiple social constructions (2005, p. 836). Connell and Messerschmidt also claim that hegemonic masculinity should not be interpreted as the dominance of men (all masculinities) over women (all femininities) as the relationships among men, women and masculinities are complicated (2005, pp. 846-47). Connell and Messerschmidt put forward that hegemonic masculinity itself cannot be referred as power or dominance of men over women as hegemonic masculinity is just one dimension of gender dynamics which are also affected by factors such as “race”, class, and region (2005, pp. 839-843). Additionally, Connell and Messerschmidt suggest women themselves also construct masculinities and they state “...our understanding of hegemonic masculinity now needs to give much closer attention to the practices of women and to historical interplay of femininities and masculinities” (2005, p. 848).

Mike Donaldson also criticizes hegemonic masculinity. In his paper, “What is Hegemonic Masculinity?” Donaldson claims that people who are presented as the models of hegemonic masculinity actually may not have the traits it requires and may not be masculine enough (1993, p. 647). Donaldson gives the Australian football player

Warwick Capper as an example and suggests that he seems to be accepted as a model of hegemonic masculinity on TV, a person that represents the dominant masculine features in the society, but that the tight shorts he wears actually decreases his status in masculinity rather than strengthens it (1993, p. 647). Donaldson also reminds the reader of the iron man –the Australian surf champion presented by Connell as model of hegemonic masculinity, and claims that his position as a champion actually does not let him do things that his peers might consider masculine, such as drinking too much, getting into fights etc. (1993, p. 647). However, perhaps Donaldson misses the subtlety of Connell’s argument here, as she indeed claims that one even does not have to have all of the ideals of hegemonic masculinity to enjoy the privileges provided by hegemonic masculinity; one does not need to be the ideal man of hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 2005, p. 79). Demetrakis Z. Demetriou gives a more nuanced response to the problematic of hegemonic masculinity. First of all, Demetriou divides the concept into two spheres: external hegemony and internal hegemony. External hegemony addresses the dominance of men over women in the family, the state and the labor market, whereas internal hegemony refers to the hegemony over other masculinities (Demetriou, 2001, p. 341). Demetriou suggests that Connell regards other masculinities as subordinated or marginalized by hegemonic masculinity and states “Connell understands the process in a more elitist way where subordinate and marginalized masculinities have no effect on the construction of the hegemonic model” (2001, p. 345). Demetriou believes that actually there is always an ongoing dialogue between hegemonic masculinity and other masculinities. Demetriou suggests that especially when it is to its own benefit, hegemonic masculinity “appropriates” some elements from other masculinities. In this sense, rather than accepting an internal hegemony that is based on a dualism between hegemonic masculinity and other masculinities, Demetriou puts forward the notion of a “hybrid masculine bloc” that is composed of “both straight and gay, both black and white elements and practices” (2001, p. 348). Demetriou stresses that this masculine bloc is a historic one and the diversity of masculinities in it help it adapt itself to the changes in history (2001, p. 348). Unlike Connell who regards those masculinities outside the hegemonic as oppressed, Demetriou draws attention to the relationships between hegemonic masculinity and other masculinities.

All these criticisms made by different researchers working in different fields were evaluated by Connell and Messerschmidt (2005). After taking in the criticism, Connell and Messerschmidt suggested that they retain, reject and reformulate some ideas in response. Connell and Messerschmidt state that the multiplicity of masculinity, the idea that hegemonic masculinity suggests the domination over non-hegemonic masculinities, the notion that a hierarchy of masculinities is based on hegemony rather than force, and the reality that masculinities change over time have been proven by research and can be accepted as items to retain (2005, p. 846). Furthermore, Connell and Messerschmidt state that while formulating the relationship between gender and power and analyzing “the global dominance of men over women”, it is not a good idea to “locate all masculinities and all femininities” in the same spot, because such viewpoint cannot grasp the relationships between men and women’s actual relationships with dominant masculinities (2005, pp. 846-47).

Connell and Messerschmidt accept that hegemonic masculinity can change by appropriating some elements from “other” types of masculinities, and that oppression and interaction can happen simultaneously (2005, pp. 847-48). Thus, Connell and Messerschmidt find Demetriou’s critique compelling and convincing. They further exhort other researchers who study masculinity to focus on women’s activities, arguing that these practices regularly affect, and even form, masculinities as well (2005, p. 848). Claiming that “women are central in the construction of gender among men”, Connell and Messerschmidt draw attention to women as mothers, schoolmates, girlfriends, sexual partners, wives, and workers. The men’s lifestyle magazines examined in this dissertation also show how women contribute to the definition of the ideal man by praising him because of his muscular body, sexual power, style or appearance.

Geography is the other aspect that Connell and Messerschmidt consider in reformulating hegemonic masculinity in order to consider the possibility to form a transnational masculinity (2005, p. 849). While reminding readers of the difficulty in formulating a global masculinity, Connell and Messerschmidt suggest a framework to analyze the hegemonic masculinity on three levels (2005, p. 849):

1. Local: constructed in the arenas of face-to-face interaction of families, organizations, and immediate communities, as typically found in ethnographic and life-history research;
2. Regional: constructed at the level of the culture or the nation-state, as typically found in discursive, political, and demographic research; and

3. Global: constructed in transnational arenas such as world politics and transnational business and media, as studied in the emerging research on masculinities and globalization.

Despite the complexity of carrying out such research, Connell and Messerschmidt claim it is necessary, arguing that the institutions and practices in local, regional and global contexts inevitably affect and change each other (2005, p. 849).

According to Connell and Messerschmidt, the body is the other element that must be studied more regarding its existence not only as an object of performance but also as an “agen[t] in social practice” (2005, p. 851). Connell and Messerschmidt are convinced by those arguments that have claimed that the body can be a site of social critique, questioning and radical action because physical and performance-based gender disruption, crossing and passing are all possible ways in which people are capable of challenging hegemonic masculinity (2005, p. 851).

### *Is Hegemonic Masculinity in Crisis?*

Hegemonic masculinity has also been discussed from the perspective of crisis. This aspect is especially important when understanding modern representations of masculinity, because accepting or rejecting the notion of a crisis in hegemonic masculinity makes a big difference in understanding and interpreting such representations. Some critics like MacInnes and Kimmel have claimed that hegemonic masculinity has experienced a crisis in response to some of the effects of second wave feminism, attributing the male violence to the anxieties men feel in negotiating the responsibilities assigned to them as requirements of male sex role in a mediatized environment where the traditional status of men is being destabilized and questioned (Edwards, 2006, p. 6). Others are less pessimistic, preferring to argue that masculinity is not in crisis but just evolving over time, since it is a “configuration” responding to a changing social reality (Connell, 2005, p. 86). Nevertheless, Connell recognizes that there are crisis tendencies stating at play in current gender relations, arguing:

The concept of crisis tendencies needs to be distinguished from crises of masculinity. As a theoretical term ‘crisis’ presupposes a coherent system of some kind, which is destroyed or restored...Masculinity is not a system in that sense...It is a configuration of practice within gender relations.” (2005, p. 84)

In other words, Connell accepts the fact that there are some changes in masculinity but this does not mean that masculinity is in crisis since masculinity is not a fixed system that must work in the same way all the time. Connell certainly argues that the fight for equality between men and women and the market conditions that have facilitated the inclusion of women's labor more and more has led to the "historic collapse of the legitimacy of patriarchal power" (2005, p. 85). Connell also adds the idea that the acceptance of gay and lesbian identities as an alternative to heterosexual identity can also be accepted as signs of crisis tendency (2005, p. 85). In sum, Connell supports the idea that there are some challenges that masculinity faces in the modern world, yet finds it difficult to see these challenges as reasons to place masculinity as a whole in crisis.

By contrast, Kimmel believes that masculinity has experienced a multifaceted crisis on different fronts, arguing that one cannot separate the developments of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century from that crisis. Returning to Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1973), which claims that men actually suffer because of the anxiety masculinity caused, Kimmel puts forward that with second -wave feminism masculinity went into crisis (2006, p. 173). Kimmel emphasizes that oppressed groups such as women, homosexuals and racial minorities rebelled against oppression, which was regarded as necessary "for men to build a secure identity" (2006, p. 174). However, the changing labor dynamics and the emergence of new power struggles in the market place created different expectations from men, most markedly the fraying of their responsibility, and thus power, to be the breadwinner of the nuclear family (2006, p. 174). Similarly, in the US context, black men and gay men also began to vociferously resist the white heterosexual monopoly over masculinity, claiming that they, too, were real men (2006, p. 174).

According to Kimmel, all these developments led to a crisis in masculinity in various dimensions of life, especially in working life. Kimmel reminds the reader of Brenton's argument that, far from being a motivating factor, the pressure that men feel because they want to be successful breadwinners is actually often a cause for conflict (2006, p. 175). In the western world's business classes, this impetus found expression in the merciless capitalism of the Reagan and Thatcher era. In other words, a man's responsibility to be a breadwinner was recalibrated towards being a successful businessman in the neoliberal marketplace of the 1980s and 1990s, which encouraged machismo and misogyny to run unfettered, again putting men and their masculinity into crises. Thus, Kimmel argues,

men's struggle to protect their position becomes a struggle to protect their masculinity, which, in the process, creates anxiety. The original idea is no less powerful; but it is now more difficult for some men to fully embody it.

Many critics contest this view of masculinity in crisis. In his book *Cultures of Masculinity*, Tim Edwards claims that there are two aspects to be examined in terms of arguing that there is a masculinity crisis: "crisis from without" and "crisis from within" (2006, p. 6). With crisis from without, Edwards considers the discussions of crisis in different aspects such as work and education, which reiterates the idea of anxiety attached to men no longer always having to be in the position of the breadwinner. In other words, Edwards claims that the important matter considering crisis from without is the idea that men don't have the privileges he used to have in the past in different institutions of society such as education and work due to the social and economic changes taking place in Western society. By contrast, with the crisis from within, Edwards focuses on the change in "men's experiences of their position as men, maleness and what it means", which covers sentiments such as "meaninglessness", "powerlessness" and "uncertainty" (2006, p. 6). In a way, Edward discusses that it is difficult to define masculinity with direct equations. For example, he states that although violence is associated with masculinity mainly, a close look at the demographical and geographical details related to violence does not prove violence is merely a masculine "performance" (2006, p. 10).

To question the existence of crisis from without, Edwards evaluates the limited empirical data from other studies as evidence of crises in masculinity in many arenas, including work, education, representation, crime, family, sexuality, and health (2006, pp. 7-13). When addressing ideas about a crisis from within, Edwards evaluates the ideas of Horrocs (1994), Clare (2000) and MacInnes (1998). He concludes that it cannot be said there is a crisis of masculinity from within as well, since all these theories are based upon the sex roles paradigm, which is an outdated approach (2006, p. 20).

As Connell states, masculinity can change over time and it does not have to include the features of the majority of men (2005, pp. 77-79). The men's lifestyle magazines analyzed in this dissertation are examined through the framework of hegemonic masculinity. Both the Turkey and the USA versions of these magazines are produced based on a hegemonic masculinity which feeds and is fed by the norms of each society in which they are published. However, this process does not happen in isolation in two societies. The

similarities between hegemonic masculinities branded by the USA and Turkey men's lifestyle magazines show that the Turkey versions of the magazines "borrow" a lot of dimensions of the ideal man of hegemonic masculinity from the USA versions. This tendency contributes to a global understanding of hegemonic masculinity. However, the Turkey versions also show how local masculinities may prefer ignoring some aspects of the US masculinity such as "tolerance" towards homosexuality. By mentioning homosexuality less compared to the USA versions, the Turkey versions of the men's lifestyle magazines are driven by the local hegemonic masculinities in Turkey. Considering Connell and Messerschmidt's framework of masculinity, this dissertation can be accepted as an example of work attempting to take in the global scale of masculinity, since it is a comparative study which focuses on the print media in both Turkey and the US. It is this global scope that is expected to make the main contribution of the dissertation to the current literature of masculinity.

#### *Men's Lifestyle Magazines as Cultural Texts of Masculinity*

While explaining the conversion of culture into an industry, Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer state: Culture today is infecting everything with sameness. Film, radio, and magazines form a system. Each branch of culture is unanimous within itself and all are unanimous together" (2002, p. 94). In other words, they claim that films, radio programs and magazines ignore the differences of their audiences and boost conformity in collaboration. Although they seem to be separate industries, they all communicate the same message based on the same ideology. That is why all these industries reflect the ideology that they expect to be accepted by the target culture, creating a feedback loop of ideological conformity. And the power of the culture industry is ubiquitous, as are the narratives they transmit. As Stevenson, Jackson and Brooks suggest "...it is evident that the media continue to have the power to define what everyone is talking about" ("2003, p. 113). Thus, the implication is that, with all mass cultural products and their representations, images and texts, the media directs and reflects what already exists as an ideological structure within people's minds. As a part of this great mass culture mechanism, it can be said that men's lifestyle magazines also reflect some aspects of masculinity in the culture where they are sold.

Jonathan Rutherford states

Consumer culture has created a simulacrum of male experience. Men can dress it, parody it, drink it, smoke it, watch it on TV and drive the latest model of it...we live in a culture which values authenticity and self-fulfillment. We are called upon to invent our own identities; to live in our own way... If we fail to achieve this, then our life might be considered wasted... Men's lifestyle magazines were a response to this predicament. (cited in Benwell, 2003a, preface)

Thus, men's lifestyle magazines create an idealized representation of men that other men are to consume and internalize or incorporate into their lives while, simultaneously, supposedly creating their own unique individual identity. In that sense, men's lifestyle magazines both impact the culture and are also impacted by it. Men's experience while consuming masculinity leads to an interaction between culture and men's lifestyle magazines. Men's lifestyle magazines also establish the conventions of relationships among men. Rutherford suggests the idea that these magazines provide "a language and a representation of male performativity" which ensures a man's social acceptance by his peers" (cited in Benwell, 2003a, preface). With the language and context they generate, men's lifestyle magazines become a homosocial arena that defines the male way of doing and reacting to things. In Edwards' terms, men's lifestyle magazines are both "cultural texts" and a "cultural phenomenon" 2003, p. 133).

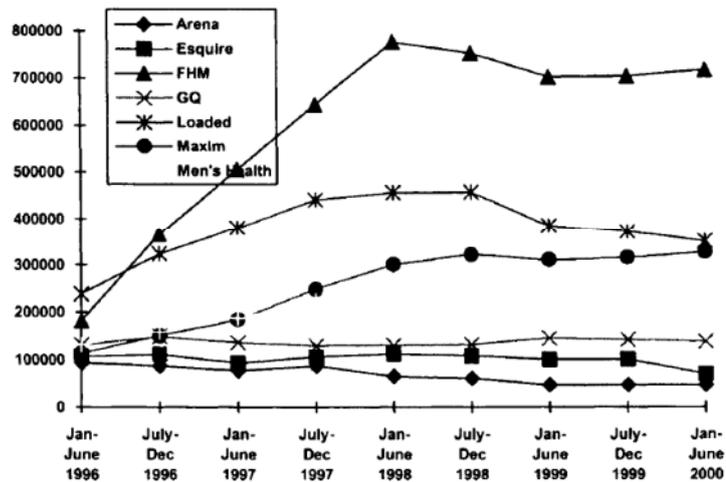
The beginning of men's lifestyle magazines written for men can be dated back to the release of *Arena* in 1986. Until that time, the bosses in the publishing sector believed men would not buy magazines or

Men don't define themselves as men in what they read as people who are into cars, who play golf, or fish... Successfully launching a general interest men's magazine would be like finding the holy grail. (cited. in Nixon, 1996, pp. 129-130)

However, in less than a decade men's lifestyle magazines became very popular, especially initially in Britain. After *Arena* in 1986, *GQ*, *Esquire*, *Attitude*, *FHM*, *Loaded*, *Men's Health*, *Maxim* and others entered the market in 1990s. Stevenson, Jackson and Brooks claim that there was "a 400 percent growth from 1991 to 1996" in the British men's lifestyle magazines market (Reading Men's Lifestyle Magazines" 113). In 1990s, the content of the men's lifestyle magazines also diversified. Magazines like *GQ* and *Esquire* focused on fashion and style whereas magazines such as *Men's Health* focused on wellness and health. In looking at the British magazine figures between 1996 and 2000, it can be seen that all men's lifestyle magazines except *Attitude* targeted heterosexual

men, all were about 120 to 130 pages and each cost between two and three pounds sterling (Stevenson et al., 2003, p. 118). The chart below details the comparative circulation figures of the highest grossing magazines in Britain in this period.

**Chart Int.2.** The comparative circulation figures of the highest grossing magazines in Britain between 1996 and 2000



Source: (Audit Bureau of Circulations cited in Stevenson et al., 2003, p. 119).

The circulation figures in Chart Int.2. not only show the impressive growth of this relatively young market but also reflect the reality that great social change was occurring in nineties Britain. The growth of the men's lifestyle magazines and the social changes that affected masculinity were not peculiar to Britain. At the same time, the popularity of men's lifestyle magazines was not only increasing just in Britain but also in other countries such as the USA.

According to Benwell, "...men's magazines are one of the few arenas in which masculinity is regularly addressed, discussed and scrutinized" (2003b, p. 157). Thus men's lifestyle magazines provide a homosocial space in which men negotiate the core aspects of masculinity in dialogue with other men, while trying to answer the question: *What does it mean to be a man?* That is actually what makes men's lifestyle magazines important in terms of discussing masculinity in a given society. As men's lifestyle magazines consider their target audience, which is composed mostly of men, and design their products accordingly, the presumption is that the masculinity presented by them is supposed to be the one that is shared by thousands of men. Although men's lifestyle

magazines seem to address a small group which is middle and upper middle class, their sales figures and the global expansion show that the magazines have reached a great number of men around the world.

Men's lifestyle magazines communicate with their readers via both design and content: on the covers, there are generally famous men, famous women or both, and all are presented as sexually appealing figures. In magazines such as *Men's Health* that define masculinity in terms of being fit and healthy (and highly body conscious) muscular and sculpted male bodies are on the covers. Their covers are a key component of this messaging, and these magazines start to define their version of masculinity and ask their readers to follow their "example" on the covers. All men's lifestyle magazines have a motto on their covers that defines the unique aspect of their ideal masculinity, and all these magazines give advice to men about how to do things "in a manly way" in areas such as fashion, health, food, travel and sex.

#### *Studies on Men's Lifestyle Magazines around the World and in Turkey*

Several researchers have previously investigated the representations of masculinity in men's lifestyle magazines from various perspectives for the last 20-25 years (Nixon, 1996; Vigorito and Curry, 1998; Stevenson, Jackson and Brooks, 2000; Alexander, 2003; Crewe, 2003; Stibbe, 2004; Attwood, 2005; Taylor, 2005). A brief overview of the literature uncovers the following strands. Nixon (1996) studied the form as a cultural product that both reflects and shapes the masculinity dominant in the target culture. Stevenson, Jackson and Brooks (2000) evaluated the effect of men's lifestyle magazines on changes in men's identities and gender roles. In an interesting intervention into the field, Vigorito and Curry (1998) examined the differences in how men's roles are portrayed in popular magazines aimed at men and those aimed at women.

Continuing to diversify the work done in the field, Alexander (2003) puts forward that men have been exposed to a "branded masculinity" that creates an ideal masculinity that makes men feel dissatisfied and compelled to follow the examples set by the brand. In a top-down analysis, Crewe (2003) claims that it is the editors' cultural beliefs and conceptions of masculinity that have created the masculinities in men's lifestyle magazines. Focusing on *Men's Health*, Stibbe (2004) shows how hegemonic masculinity is often built upon negative health behaviors. Attwood (2005) underlines and details the promotion of heterosexuality in men's magazines. Taylor (2005), who has worked on

American lad magazines, concluded that articles about sex in men's lifestyle magazines primarily reflect reductive gender stereotypes about sex in the given society.

Physical appearance and an emphasis of the body and on muscularity have also been important topics in the discussion of masculinity, especially in the studies of the advertisements used in men's magazines (McKay, Mikosza, and Hutchins, 2005; Elliott and Elliot, 2005; Barlett, 2008). Others have foregrounded the presentation of ethnicity and race in these publications from the perspective of masculinity (Pompper, Soto, and Piel, 2007). The well-known scholar Benwell examined modern masculinities in his 2003 collection, *Masculinity and Men's Lifestyle Magazines*, and he returned to the genre, focusing on ironic discourse and readers' reaction to men's lifestyle magazines repeatedly in his work in the early 2000s (Benwell, 2004, 2005, 2007). Benwell claims that the study of reader reception can help to understand the cultural meanings of the discourses in men's lifestyle magazines, but that it is largely ignored as a scholastic tool in the field. On a related topic, during this period Benwell also studies how irony is used in these publications to express antifeminist feelings and to prevent the forming of the idea of visible masculinity (2004). Hegemonic masculinity has also been an important topic of research in men's lifestyle magazines (Ricciardelli, Clow, and White, 2010).

The research about men's lifestyle magazines in Turkey is limited compared to the research done in the United States and the United Kingdom (Erdoğan, 2014, p. 24). As İlker Erdoğan (2014, p. 24) states, the limited research that has been done in the field mostly examines masculinity in men's lifestyle magazines by focusing on advertisements (Bati, 2007; Aydoğan, 2008; Kula Demir, 2009; Erdoğan, 2011, 2013, 2014, 2015; Kılınc 2015). Bati examines the representation of the ideal men in fashion advertisements in the Turkey versions of four men's lifestyle magazines: *Esquire*, *FHM*, *Max* and *Boxer* and claims that there are two types of men depicted in fashion advertisements, one representing the traditional aspects of masculinity such as power and dominance, but the other often presents aspects that are "slightly womanly" (2007, p. 19). Aydoğan has worked on the advertisements in *Boxer*, *Esquire* and *FHM* men's lifestyle magazines and has concluded that as the consumption dynamics have changed over time, the targets of the advertisements have also changed (2008, p. 244). For example, car advertisements no longer target just men and cosmetics advertisements no longer try to communicate only with women (2008, p. 244). Kula Demir also has focused on *Boxer*, *Esquire* and *FHM*

men's lifestyle magazines and examined the depictions of men in advertisements (2009, p. 85). Kula Demir has claimed that in many of the adverts, men are depicted as *metrosexual*, rather than traditional, and attach importance to looking good and being modern (2009, p. 85). Erdoğan also has written articles about representations of masculinity in Turkey versions of men's lifestyle magazines. In his article titled "Erkek Dergilerinde Sağlıklı Erkek Neden İdeal Erkektir? (2013b)" Erdoğan discusses that while providing its readers with health tips, *Men's Health* Turkey reproduces a type of hegemonic masculinity which demonstrates lots of actions that may affect health negatively (2013b, p. 140). Erdoğan also analyzes (2011-2013a) the ideal man of hegemonic masculinity in the Turkey versions of *Men's Health*, *FHM*, *Esquire*, and *GQ* and concludes that the ideal men in these magazines are fit, muscular, stylish and well-groomed. In his article dated 2014, Erdoğan evaluates men's lifestyle magazines through different aspects such as their ideology and readership. Erdoğan also has conducted a research (2015) in which he analyzes the texts and photos in *GQ* Turkey through the perceptions of the *GQ* Turkey readers of these texts and photos.

In another study focusing on the adverts in men's magazines - specifically *GQ* and *Men's Health*, Kılınç (2015) puts forward that the hegemonic masculinity in these magazines depicts men as trendy, erotic, consumerist and lusty. So far there has not been a comprehensive comparative study of the Turkey and USA versions of *GQ*, *Men's Health*, and *Esquire* which analyses the presentations and the profile of the ideal hegemonic man. This dissertation aims to serve that purpose.

### *Hegemonic Masculinity Promoted by Men's Lifestyle Magazines Published Both in Turkey and the USA: GQ, Esquire and Men's Health*

Theoretical examinations concerning gender, social identity, and masculinity within magazines identity have argued that magazines provide for, and legitimize, particular representations of gender identities and gender role expectations. Readers then draw on the cultural frames presented in such magazines when constructing their own self-identity...In addition to theoretical scholarship, research has examined how magazines may impact on men's attitudes and belief in society. (Waling, 2017, p. 429)

Considering Waling's statements, it can be argued that men's lifestyle magazines are much more important than previously assumed. The reason is that they actually provide role models to men by presenting an image of the ideal man that they themselves have

created. Although a magazine is essentially a product, it is also a vehicle reflecting the values and norms idealized, not just by its publisher, but also by the society in which it is published. In this way, a magazine communicates society's messages about gender norms to its readers, who first receive then reinforce the stereotypes by placing them back in the social world. That is why the readers of men's lifestyle magazines never just read a product from a publishing company, but also read, absorb and potentially act out in society what society expects from them. While reading this magazine and realizing the society's expectations of him, a man also forms his own perceptions about gender by "individualizing" the gender norms. In other words, after a certain point, the readers may feel that they are actually reading their own ideas, such is the power of their worldview being reinforced. That is how the connection between men's lifestyle magazines and their readers is established. In this dialogue between the readers and the publishers, a type of hegemonic masculinity is created, promoted and reinforced. This relationship operates as if a veiled contract between the readers and men's lifestyle magazines exists. Such a relationship, or dialogue, requires listening to each other. While readers' expectations are considered by the publishers while formulating their magazines, magazines also ask their readers to listen to them. As Howson suggests, this is the way that hegemonic masculinity becomes apparent in this relationship of mutual benefit:

Using a reworking of Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinity, Howson argues that hegemonic masculinity as a theoretical framework is better understood as describing what men should do and should be as opposed to describing their actual reality" (as cited in Waling, 2017, p. 430).

As Howson claims, while imposing the norms of their ideal hegemonic masculinity, men's lifestyle magazines tell them what they should do and, potentially having been affected by the models presented by these magazines, men are persuaded to follow what the magazines tell them to do because men start to accept the ideals of the magazine as their own. Waling explains the hegemonic masculinity in these magazines as the following: "Connell notes that in Western society, the archetypal hegemonic male is white, heterosexual, able bodied, and middle class and often typified by physical and mental characteristics such as aggression, muscularity, and being confident" (Waling, 2017, p. 430).

The following dissertation demonstrates that these magazines employ ideas of hegemonic masculinity, which define being a man as a person with a strong body and sexual power,

who is young and heterosexual, who objectifies women, and who cares about what he wears and how he looks. The source material is the USA and Turkey versions of *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health* between the January 2014 and December 2016. Depending upon the concept of hegemonic masculinity and its global appeal, it can be suggested that all these men's lifestyle magazines together create more or less the same ideal man in their USA and Turkey versions, but small but significant differences exist. However, for the purposes of this study, the following dissertation aims to focus on the common features of the ideal man which emerges in both the USA and Turkey versions of these men's lifestyle magazines.

## CHAPTER 1

### THE IDEAL MAN: PHYSICAL PROWESS

All the men's lifestyle magazines examined in this study idealize the muscular and fit body and set it as a norm. Comparing the USA and Turkey versions of the magazines, while *GQ* and *Esquire* mostly present the fit man as a model, *Men's Health* fills its covers and pages with muscular men who seem proud of their muscles.

In *Men's Health*, *GQ*, and *Esquire*, a person who has a strong or athletic body presents as the ideal male figure. Both the USA and Turkey editions of *Men's Health* communicate this message the most strongly; for *GQ* and *Esquire*, peak physical fitness is desirable but it is neither publication's *raison d'être*. A quick overview of the covers of *Men's Health* enables one to easily determine the magazine's notion of the ideal male body whereas *GQ* and *Esquire* do not stress the importance of the muscular and fit body on their covers to the same extent, or indeed in their content, since *GQ* and *Esquire* focus more on the style aspect of the ideal man. That being said, the ideal stylish man branded and promoted by *GQ* and *Esquire*, nevertheless has always a physically fit, if not muscular, body and, in the fitness pages and advertisements they include, *GQ* and *Esquire* take pains to idealize the fit male body.

In their relationship with their readers, men's lifestyle magazines call upon their readers to follow the examples they provide. That is why they explicitly present their muscular and fit men as examples. *Men's Health* USA suggests that all their cover models are good examples for their readers. The editor-in-chief states "Our cover guys reflect the *Men's Health* brand: ... We should all learn something from these men –their successes and their failures" (Phillips, April 2015a, p. 10). *GQ* Turkey also points at a role model for its readers: "Since David Beckham started to climb up the stairs of fame, he is highly admired by women. The men who are adored by women turn into a role model for other men" (*GQ* Turkey, July 2015). These extracts from the magazines show that men's lifestyle magazines actually provide good examples for their readers and expect them to follow these men as these men have "proved" to be the ideal. This ideal man in the men's lifestyle magazines has a muscular and fit body. The magazines believe that that is the body their readers would like to have. *Men's Health* Turkey states "...because we know

that everybody has dreams regarding their bodies and works to make them come true.” (Büyükbayrak, 2016d, p. 10). *GQ* idealizes the same muscular and fit man by stating “He (pointing to a muscular man) is the idol of a lot of men” (*GQ* Turkey, August 2015). The situation is not different in *Esquire* USA which also praises the fit body by stating “Staying fit never goes out of style” (*The Esquire Guide to Body Weight Training*, 2016, p. 105). The following three extracts also reflect the men’s lifestyle magazines’ approach to body:

“Get Fit. In Style.” (*fitbit blaze*, 2016, p. 45).

“Ronaldo (footballer): Nobel Prize Winner for Physical Perfection” (*GQ* USA, February 2016, p. cover).

“Eat Like Him, Be Like Him” (Easter, 2016, p. 54).

Considering the extracts above it can be stated that with both their Turkey and the USA versions, the magazines give their readers the message that the magazines provide examples of perfect bodies in their pages and the readers will have the same body if they do what these ideal men do. By littering their pages with images of muscular and fit male bodies, *Men’s Health*, *GQ* and *Esquire* in both USA and Turkey versions tacitly assume their readers desire a similar physique for themselves. Thus, helpfully, all the three magazines provide training programs that purport to help their readers achieve the same body type as the archetypal masculine ideal they have consecrated on their pages. The readers are asked to apply the training programs to “create their body from scratch” (*Men’s Health* Turkey, August 2016, p. 104) and to “have the body they dream” (*Runtastic Results*, 2016, p. 77). In both its Turkey and USA versions, *Men’s Health* provides training tips in its each and every issue. *GQ* and *Esquire* also suggest some training programs in their USA and Turkey issues occasionally. While inviting its readers to do exercise, *GQ* Turkey reminds its readers of the benefits of a fit body by stating “With these exercises, you will make other people look at the shapes of your shoulders” (July 2015). The USA version of the magazine even offers a transformation to its readers: “How I Got My Body: 8 Incredible Tales of Total Human Transformation” (February 2016, p. cover). *Esquire* USA also suggests a regular training program for the readers who would like to be “better” by stating “A year-long ten-part series on how to get stronger, faster, healthier, and better at every age.” (April 2016, p. 80). In this way, *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men’s Health* all idealize the fit and muscular men by reminding their

readers the advantages that this kind of body would bring. All these extracts from the magazines refer to a “good transformation” of the body. This transformation, which always ends up with good results such as being healthier, stronger –and, by implication, more physically attractive– is not only branded by these men’s lifestyle magazines as a way of looking better and being healthier. Rather, the magazines make other associated promises to their readers: achieving the ideal body, they argue, also lends you personal power and the ability to take control. Physical fitness is the baseline in helping to construct the masculine ideal.

### **1.1. BIGGER, BETTER, AND MORE POWERFUL**

In all the men’s lifestyle magazines examined in this dissertation, the male readership is called upon to work out for a fitter and stronger body, with no exceptions. The discourse mainly focusses on muscles and from the slogans of the magazines, it is apparent that “big” is the key word:

#### **Forge Big Shoulders**

(Gaddour, 2016, p. 26).

“Bigger Arms” (*Men’s Health Turkey*, August 2014, p. cover).

“Big Man: Özgür Tetik” (Balaban, 2016, p. 126).

“Want Bigger Arms? Then Keep Doing Squats” (Yeung, 2016).

“The Fully Charged Man: Success, fitness, fullness” (Hendrickson, 2015, p. 48).

“Build Big Muscle” (*Men’s Health USA*, April 2016, p. cover).

#### **GIANT MUSCLE SECRETS**

(Easter, 2014, p. 34)

All these quotations relay the same message to their readers. With repeated emphasis on the words “big” and “bigger”, all the magazines boldly trumpet that the ideal man should have big muscles. The combination of muscular cover guys held up as ideal examples for the readers to follow and the reiteration of these bold typeface slogans create a powerful ideological field. As Stibbe states:

This orchestration of the desire for big muscles both reflects reality (Jacobi and Cash, 1994, report that 91% of men want to be muscular) and contributes to the construction and reproduction of desire. The ideal shape is reflected by the “cover models,” a group of identically shaped men –hugely muscular, lean, tanned, body hair shaved...This gives no

option for the reader to choose an ideal shape from a number of alternatives (2004, pp. 37-38).

Attending these slogans, all these magazines provide their readers with expert written training programs or suggestions that will help them become more muscular. To make this aim more realistic, *Men's Health* Turkey even chooses the man of the month among its readers with a competition called MH Best Body. The readers send the photos of their muscular bodies and the magazine puts the photo of "the best body" on its covers or inside the magazine by underlying that he is a reader who followed *Men's Health* instructions. However, we can see that with their USA and Turkey versions, *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health* encourage their readers to work for bigger muscles not just because they believe it is the ideal and the healthiest physical condition their readers should have. The magazines also want to give the message that bigger muscles mean more physical strength and that being strong is also as a characteristic of the ideal man. This is taken to the extreme in some cases, with *Men's Health* and *GQ* even promising that following the magazines advice will give the power of superheroes to their readers:

"Have a Diet that is similar to Super Hero's... Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No, no, he is the *Men's Health* man who does not need a spider bite or telephone cabin to have the supernatural powers with the help of simple food recipes" (Canning, April 2015, p. 80) In the article there are recipes for these aims: "to have an iron-like heart, bullet-proof skin, muscles that tear apart t-shirts, eyes with laser power, an intelligence that makes others crazy".

"You believe you are a man who can knock down the world" (*GQ* Turkey, July 2015).

"He (Arnold Schwarzenegger) is so supernatural that he has the control of all his muscles. (*GQ* Turkey, August 2015).

"Reach light speed" (Goldstein, 2016, p. 154).

Of course, these magazines know that their readers are aware of the fact that they cannot reach the speed of light or acquire supernatural powers but still they use these slogans to convey the message that the ideal man is all-powerful and unstoppable. The implication is a direct link between big muscles and possessing power in all areas of life. A superhero or an unstoppable man can do whatever he wants. This is the promise. If one is muscular, then one will be unstoppable, capable of achieving whatever one desires. Thus, by using these powerful slogans and the images of sculpted muscular men while simultaneously

providing readers with fitness tips, these magazines seem to seek to influence their readers' the perception of the self. In other words, they use the language and imagery of the male body in peak physical condition as the archetypal aspirational model, the purpose of which is to make their readers feel the need to be as muscular as the men on the pages of these magazines.

The effectiveness of these techniques has been well studied. As Alexander states,

[e]mpirical evidence suggests that ideals of masculinity are affecting men's and boys' understanding their self-identifies and behaviors. Pope, Philips, and Olivardia (2000, p. 6) coined the term "the Adonis Complex" to describe "an array of usually secret, but surprisingly common, body image concerns of boys and men". These concerns range from a preoccupation with building muscles, eliminating fat..., hair loss, and penis size" (Alexander, 2003, p. 538).

The body image presented in these men's lifestyle magazines actually affects readers a lot. That is the way magazines sell themselves and individuals form their beliefs about the ideals of gender.

What is clear from the above discussion is that all three magazines idealize the muscular or fit male form as an absolute prerequisite characteristic of the ideal man.

## **1.2. CONTROLLING YOUR BODY MEANS CONTROLLING THE WORLD: "HOW COULD YOU BE THE STRONGEST MAN?" (MUTLU, 2016, P. 56)**

Men's lifestyle magazines try to convince their readers to do what they suggest because they believe their readers actually aspire to superhero/human characteristics in order to assert control over their individual social, romantic, professional world and this promise of men's lifestyle magazines becomes a tool to promote hegemonic masculinity. As was demonstrated in the previous chapter, hegemony means claiming and maintaining a leading position over others (Connell, 2005, p. 77) and hegemonic masculinities are positioned at the highest level and enjoy the privileges given by the patriarchy (Connell, 2005, p. 77). Moreover, hegemonic masculinities oppress subordinated masculinities which include gays and immigrants, and suppress marginal masculinities such as black and working class masculinities (Hinojosa, 2010, p. 181). These men's lifestyle magazines clearly position the muscular male body a keystone of the hegemonic masculinity they are part of producing.

The men's lifestyle magazines studied, especially *Men's Health* Turkey and USA versions, clearly argue that men have a biological potential that can be turned into a multifaceted and effective power. However, while Kleain claims that this power may not be as effective as men think it is, men are still focused on achieving it. As Kleain argues, "[t]he biological may not determine the social, but that does not stop men from 'artificially attaching all manner of power and privilege to biological differences'" (as cited in Stibbe, 2004, p. 33).

As we have seen, *Men's Health* is the magazine that most vigorously promotes the muscular body, unsurprisingly as its stated mission aims to help its readers achieve physical fitness. While *GQ* and *Esquire* do not go to the same extreme as *Men's Health*, they nevertheless promote fit and muscular men through the advertisements or fitness tips within the content. While promoting the fit and muscular male body, these magazines also seem to argue that having a powerful body is a way to control their world. As Stibbe indicates "Bodybuilding, however, represents 'the most extreme view of masculinity our society has'" (as cited in Stibbe, 2004, p. 38). This is because if men compete with each other for power according to muscle size, then, it follows that men as a group "win" out over women. Thus, this emphasis on muscle can be seen as an inherently misogynistic act. With reference to bodybuilding in particular, because "bodybuilding fetishizes muscles, it further exaggerates gender-based characteristics...that are...loaded with cultural meaning" (as cited in Stibbe, 2004, p. 38). Indeed, the construction of the ideal man as hugely muscular therefore serves an attendant ideological goal of reproducing male dominance. In this way, men's lifestyle magazines transmit the message that the muscular male body, as symbolic of male physical power, not only makes men superior amongst their peers but also helps them to control the world around them. As hegemonic masculinity assumes the dominance of other groups including some men, homosexuals, and women, this focus on the implication that physical power leads to overall power and control can be interpreted as a tool to establish the hegemonic masculinity.

"Take Control with 24 Tactics" (*Men's Health* Turkey, December 2015, p. cover).

"Working on your body is working on your life". (*The Fix Gym*, 2016, p. 25).

"Strength + Power, Take Control" (*Men's Health* USA, December 2015, p. cover).

"Your Body is a Wonderland" (about/health).

This wedding of muscles with power and control creates a mechanism through which magazines equate muscularity with control and power. This orchestration of “control” proves the idea that men want to be more muscular as they want to control the world. In this equation, increasing the physical power of the body results in increasing, and ultimately total, control of the individual’s world. Thus the body acts as a microcosm of both life and the world itself.

Sometimes Men’s Health refers to that muscle-power equivalence by using militaristic language. Images of armed conflict and campaigns are invoked by tough personal physical training routines. By doing so, the link between personal physical power and the ability to wield power on a world stage is made even more explicit, confirming the quest for bigger muscles as a guarantee for entry into the club of hegemonic masculinity:

“Train, Suffer, Conquer.” (Foley, 2015, p. 119).

“Use these 5 techniques to reveal all the potential of your guns” (*Men’s Health* Turkey, June 2015, p. 58).

“Wake up the Warrior in You”... “Get Your Armor” (Court et al., 2016, p. 101).

“My goal is to be fight-ready. I want to know I have the strength to fight a man off” (Court et al., 2015, p. 84).

“Men can get away with visible scars. They are proof that you have lived an interesting life, taken risks, maybe lost a bet... (McGlynn, 2015, p. 89).

Thus, as men are called upon to make their muscles bigger, they are reminded that they are in a war in life. To win that war against others (men and women), take control over the world and take a prime position within the current system of hegemonic masculinity, men need guns in the form of big muscles.

### **1.3. THE FIT AND MUSCULAR BODY IS NECESSARY FOR GOOD HEALTH.**

Although men are thought to be risk-takers, they are actually influenced by these health columns in men’s lifestyle magazines a lot. As Stibbe states, “[w]hen it comes to health behavior, influences may include books, films, images on television, the advice of doctors, the comments of teasing of friends, and quite recently for men, magazines” (2004, p. 32). *GQ*, *Esquire* and *Men’s Health*, in both USA and Turkey versions, are

littered with tips about health. These magazines also claim that a fit and muscular body is also a must that a healthy man has to have.

“Muscular and Healthy”: (*GQ* Turkey, January 2015, p. 117).

“A man should do sport to live healthily, or, live a healthy life.” (*GQ* Turkey, May 2015, p. 120).

“...fitness is also about protecting and enhancing the only body we have got. It is about our health...” (*Esquire* USA, February 2016, p. 43).

“...Actually the only thing we have is our body and soul. Hence, to be able to happy, we have to care about these two... (Büyükbayrak, 2014c, p. 26)

“I started swimming for the reasons you’d expect from a 38-year-old father of two: cranky knees, balky back, the creep of middle-age spread... I did eventually get what I hoped for: I lost weight, my shoulders broadened, and my clothes all fit better. But I found myself enjoying the mental benefits of the swim above and beyond the physical ones” (Himmelman, 2016, p. 62).

“For generations men have been saddled with the assumption that we don’t care about our health. But more than ever, we are going to the gym, purposefully eating things like chard and bulgur...” (Dorment, 2014, p. 68).

The extracts above send the message that health is much more important for men, and that having a muscular or fit body is a part of being healthy. However, as Stibbe indicates, “while doing anaerobic exercise and having adequate muscle mass and tone is clearly an important goal, selectively developing huge muscles is not” (2004, p. 38). Although having bigger muscles does not mean being healthier, the magazines need to make a link between the two in order to persuade their readers, and in so doing they present an insidious and disingenuous discourse of health. In other words, magazines tell their readers that if looking good is not enough for you to work at gaining a muscular or fit body, you should at least do it for your health. When the muscular body is connected to health and men are asked to work out, working for bigger muscles is depicted as a responsibility of men who want to be healthy. By implication, those who choose not to take that responsibility are expected to be anxious because they don’t care about their body.

To present the muscular and fit body as a means towards better health and increased control, *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men’s Health* use photos in which the male cast is active and

not objectified. When these magazines refer to female body, they generally draw attention to its beauty. In other words, images of the female body are generally objectified based on the physical “beauty” attributed to them. However, in the case of a male body, the magazines do not present male bodies in terms of their attraction or physical beauty. Instead, they present them as active men, powerful and ready to take the control of the world. The photos below are prime examples of the gulf of difference between how women and men are depicted in the men’s lifestyle magazines examined in this dissertation.



Fig. 1.1. White, J. 2014, *Emmy Rossum* [photograph], *Esquire* USA.



Fig. 1.2. Barclay, G., April 2016, *Tom Hopper* [photograph], *Men's Health* USA.

It is possible to find dozens of examples like the photos above in the Turkey and USA versions of *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health*, and these photos typify the disparity between the gendered body all these magazines convey. In both images, the models are half-naked. However, they are

positioned differently. The woman in the photo (fig. 1.1) is clearly objectified. With her hair, make up, and looks, her beauty is underlined, and her ripped tights give a ravaged sort of impression and establish that she is clearly sexualized. She looks away from the camera, yet half-smiles passively, as if she knows she is being looked at. Everything about the image is constructed for the consumption of the heterosexual male gaze. By contrast, while the man on the *Men's Health* cover (fig. 1.2) is also half naked, he does not look objectified. He looks the readers right in the eye as if he was challenging them with his looks and muscular body. While the image of the woman is clearly placed in a passive position, expecting and expected to be looked at by readers and bent to their fantasies, the physically dominant male figure is profoundly active, both in his muscular body and in his looks. In Bordo’s terms, the man in the photo says “I’m rock” (2000, p. 182) and he is “staring to establish dominance” (2000, p. 184). As Waling argues:

These body ideals are constructed in such a way that they are presented as instrumental to health as opposed to essential for beauty...By associating ideal body image with health as opposed to attractiveness and beauty, magazines like *Men's Health* and FHM bypass the traditional notion of masculinity that holds men are not and should not be interested in maintaining their appearance. Instead, they present sculpted male bodies as pictures of health and longevity" (2017, p. 438).

We could push this analysis still further, and in so doing locate a disruption to the heterosexual normalcy which pervades the hegemonic masculinity these magazines are invested in. Thus, one could argue that in the homosocial zone created by these magazines, the only way to make their readers accept images of half-naked men's bodies in their pages is to place the images in a nexus of signifiers which link the naked muscular male form to health and wellbeing. This works to desexualize the male body, shifting the viewers' frame of reference and desire from one of sexual possession (in the case of the image of the woman) to physical challenge.

Indeed, objectification renders the body passive, but if the signifying content is about health then somehow the body is still active. As Bordo argues, "[f]or many men, both gay and straight, to be passively dependent on the gaze of another person for one's sense of self-worth is incompatible with being a real man" (2000, p. 171). Bordo also claims that it is generally women who are displayed, as if in a static tableau, and men are actually depicted as a "moving target" (2000, p. 171). That is exactly how men and women are portrayed in *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health*. To talk about the beauty or attractiveness of the male body goes against one of the very basic tenets of hegemonic masculinity, which is heterosexuality. As the readers of these magazines are assumed to be heterosexual, health rather than beauty is the fundamental reference to the male body.

Bordo links this positioning of men as active to the perception of passive and active in society (2000, p. 186). She suggests that being passive is associated with women as women have historically been regarded as inferior in patriarchal systems because of her penetrability while men have been assumed to be active beings who take a leading role thanks to their supposed tendency toward rational thinking (2000, p. 186). This difference is yet starker when the magazine's images contain both men and women. Firstly, by presenting men and women supposedly captured together in moments of intimacy, the heterosexual normalcy of the masculinity promoted by *GQ*, *Esquire* and *Men's Health* is underscored. Invariably, the active position of the man is "maintained" and his muscles

exposed for the gaze of the readers, while the woman's passivity is emphasized. The photos below are good examples of this strategy.



**Fig. 1.3.** Watts, B. February 2016, *Ronaldo and Alessandra* [photograph], *GQ* USA.

**WOMAN BRAIN WONDERS...**

**Why does he get miffed when I accuse him of always thinking about sex?**

Men think about sex 19 times a day, or once every 50 minutes, an Ohio State University study found. It's still more often than women (10 times a day), but it's not "always." The same study revealed that men think about food 18 times a day and sleep an average of 11 times a day. So tell her that if "hot daydreams about taking long naps in nacho cheese" count as sex to her, then sure, you're "always" thinking about sex.



**Fig. 1.4.** December 2016, *a man and a woman in a café* [online], *Men's Health* USA.

Interpreting the photo on the left (fig. 1.3) in this light, it can be stated that Ronaldo (the man in the photo) who is a Portuguese footballer that plays as a forward for the Spanish club Real Madrid is placed in a position of strength, center stage, with his

feet planted on the floor and muscles flexed. By contrast, his co-star, Alessandra Ambrosio, stands half behind Ronaldo, awkwardly placed on one foot and hooking her arm round Ronaldo for support. She is not only passive, but literally unsteady and needing to be propped up by the powerful, steady, reliable Ronaldo. Thus, on this cover Ronaldo is anything but a passive object. His name in large bold red type, matching his bold red underwear, Ronaldo is positioned as the readers' ideal man: muscular, active, happy, heterosexual and seemingly dating a beautiful woman. By contrast, Ambrosio, her name relegated to small black typeface below Ronaldo's, needs almost to be carried. In the second picture (fig. 1.4), the woman is being fed. Both images imply an infantilization of women inherent in the heterosexual relationships promoted by the hegemonic masculinity on show in these magazines.

#### 1.4. BODY ANXIETY

As it is not possible to look like the muscular men on the covers of men's lifestyle magazines without intense effort, and possibly professional levels of commitment, the male readers of these magazines feel anxious and continue buying the magazines as if

purchasing them can be a short cut<sup>3</sup> to big muscles (Stibbe, 2004, pp. 38-39). Magazines continuously provide men with images of fit bodies or big muscles as examples to be followed and set the fit and muscular body as a norm. Among the three magazines, especially *Men's Health* not only promotes fit and muscular male body, it seems to promote a culture of male body anxiety, and capitalize on the fears they encourage by exhorting their worried readers to take the “necessary” actions. As Stibbe states, from one aspect, this may be how the magazine sells itself to its readers. However, it can also be interpreted as another mechanism in the effort of men's lifestyle magazines to promote their ideal hegemonic masculinity. The extracts below show that the readers of *Men's Health* are repeatedly warned and reprimanded if they have not begun their muscle-building regime, and are consistently reminded of the promises of what a fit body brings: The editor-in-chief claims that men who have said “I will start doing sports tomorrow” or “this is my last French fries” now are regretful and trying to find clothes to hide their belly (Büyükbayrak, 2015b, p. 12).

“We (men) used to make fun of women's bikini season panic but those were the old days. Although the name of the panic is different, it is also important for men to meet the summer with a fit body. We prepared a program that enables you to achieve serious results in a short time...By working through April and May, you can reach the fitness that will allow you to take off your t-shirt with confidence” (Büyükbayrak, 2015a, p. 16).

“Never Stop Becoming an Athlete” (Kit Ace, 2016).

“Why have I still not got fit?” (Akhan, 2015, p. 98).

“There are certain attributes no beach body should be without”. (Heffernan, 2015, p. 47).

“...While you are reading these lines, others are having fun on beach with a fit body and self-confidence (Büyükbayrak, 2016c, p. 6).

By portraying muscular and fit bodies on their pages and showing these bodies as those of real men, the magazines create an intense pressure on their readers. The readers are supposed to feel anxious if they are not in shape. This anxiety also makes readers to continue buying the magazines in order to take in the advice given by them. In a way, it is a sales tactic. Among the three magazines, *Men's Health* is the magazine that has that tendency most. In both the USA and Turkey versions, *Men's Health* reminds its readers

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<sup>3</sup> Some examples of short cuts are: “Get Back in Shape: Results in Two Weeks” (Campbell, 2014, p. 119), The Sort, Intense, and Effective Exercise (*GQ* Turkey, October 2014), “The Five-minute Fitness Recharge (*Esquire* USA, May 2015).

that to have a fit body is a must in order to be a real man. Readers who are exposed to this idea again and again while reading the magazine are supposed to take action and start doing the training regimes provided by the magazine. The reader is urged to be ready for the opportunities that he may encounter in his life anytime and anywhere with his muscular body. In that sense, anxiety level increases as having a muscular body is more than having a strong body: it is also about the positive changes such a body will supposedly prompt in a person's life. The magazine also points at the special times or events that require a fit body, such as summer or a beach holiday. In short, the magazine tries to give the message that when a man has a muscular and fit body, he feels self-confident all the time and can welcome and capitalize upon all the opportunities in his life.

### **1.5. OBJECTION!**

Although all these three magazines praise the fit and muscular body in varying degrees, it is possible to encounter some articles that also question the necessity of possessing a muscular body to be an ideal man. In *Esquire* Turkey, there is an article titled "Do All of Us Have to Be Thin and Fit?" In the article, it is said that it is actually "the last opium of the digital age: The Situation of Being the Thinnest and the Fittest": A psychologist from Turkey claims that one of the most important things that the capitalist society imposes upon us is being thin. She states "in the past, people who were a little fat were told "you had better lose weight". However, today people who do not lose weight are condemned" (Doğan, 2016a, p. 106).

In *GQ* Turkey, there is a similar piece that draws attention to dysmorphia<sup>4</sup>. In the article titled "Mr. Big" it is stated that that "being a big man is a wish that men are conditioned in since their childhood via both natural and environmental factors" (Gürsel, 2015). The article questions this conditioning: "while women have tried to be beautiful, men tried to become "büyük adam (Mr. Big)". Advertisements, films were always promoting these images." The writer states that this situation does not have to be like this and it may cause

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<sup>4</sup> Body dysmorphic disorder, in which an individual magnifies the negative aspects of a perceived flaw to such a degree that the person shuns social settings or embarks compulsively upon a series of appearance-augmenting procedures, such as dermatological treatments and plastic surgery, in an attempt to remove the perceived defect (Body dysmorphic disorder).

some problems. The writer then gives the example of muscle dysmorphia, meaning that no matter how muscular a person is, he still feels that it is not enough. The writer says such a tendency is like the inverse of anorexia and its cause is psychological. The writer claims that when the time allocated for social activities is far less than the time spent on doing sports, then body dysmorphia may be evident. The writer also accuses “the likes” for this psychological disorder. She claims that when people see a lot of photos of six pack abs on social media, men force themselves to attain greater and greater levels of muscularity<sup>5</sup> (November 2015).

Alexander reiterates this idea of dysmorphia:

Pope, Philips, and Olivardia conclude that the significant number of boys and men suffering from body dysmorphia, particularly as manifest in muscle dysmorphia, is due in large part to media-generated images of the “supermale” combined with the male body industries that seek profits built on male insecurities” (2003, p. 539).

Although *Esquire* Turkey and *GQ* Turkey seem to be aware of the fact that muscular body is branded as the ideal body and this puts pressure on people, all the three magazines examined in this study continue praising the muscular male body. In both the USA and Turkey versions of *Men’s Health*, the magazine explicitly claims it is a must to have a muscular body for a man and includes advertisements of muscle growth products. Although *GQ* and *Esquire* do not have any advertisements of muscle growth in their USA and Turkey versions between 2014 and 2016, the magazines fill their pages with the photos casting fit and muscular men. In that sense, the objections in *GQ* and *Esquire* actually prove that the media, which also includes men’s lifestyle magazines, idealizes the muscular men.

#### CHAPTER SUMMARY

The USA and Turkey versions of *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men’s Health* share a similar kind of bodily normalcy inherent in the hegemonic masculinity produced and branded by them. The male readers of the magazines are called to work for muscular or at least fit bodies. Among the three magazines examined in this dissertation, *Men’s Health* is the one which idealizes the muscular and fit body the most in both its USA and Turkey versions.

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<sup>5</sup> For more information about muscle dysmorphia and its relationship with masculinity, see “Muscle Dysmorphia: Methodological Issues, Implications for Research” by Suffolk, Dovey, Goodwin and Meyer; “Muscle Dysmorphia and the Perception of Men’s Peer Muscularity Preferences” by Lin and DeCusati.

However, *GQ* and *Esquire* also idealize men with fit and muscular bodies. Rather than focusing on the beauty of the muscular and fit male body, the magazines claim that a fit body is needed for better health. Moreover, the magazines promise their readers that bigger muscles mean more physical power, and in this logic, control over their world although that physical power is not as effective as the readers would think since it fundamentally relies on biological essentialism. While exposing this power through the male body, the magazines use some tactics that turn the photos of half-naked men into a different performance. In contrast to the women, who are overwhelmingly objectified in the photos, men are put in an active position to prevent male body from being regarded as beautiful—a heterosexual man in the world of hegemonic masculinity would not like to be gazed upon or to gaze on other men because of his own or others’ “beauty”. To stress the heterosexuality of the ideal muscular and fit men, the magazines also take photos of men with women next to them, but invariably in a position of subordinacy.

## CHAPTER 2

### MAN WHO HAS SEXUAL POWER

*GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health* not only encourage their readers to have a stronger body but also give tips that can help their readers increase their sexual power. Except *Esquire* Turkey, the Turkey and USA versions of all these magazines regularly provide their readers with various ways to improve their sex lives through special sex issues, advice or health columns, or sections allocated for sex-related issues. In terms of the relative importance each magazine attaches to the subject, *Esquire* Turkey occasionally makes sexual power a part of its agenda in its health section, in which there are some short advice articles and a section where Doctor Öz (2014) answers reader questions. By comparison, *Esquire* USA has a column that it has published from time to time titled "Sex". While *GQ* USA published an annual "Love, Sex, Madness" issue between 2014-2016, *GQ* Turkey has a column titled "Sex Editor" in all its issues. Of the three magazines, *Men's Health* proves the importance it attaches to issues of sexual power with the articles it includes in all its issues across both the Turkey and USA editions. *Men's Health* promotes a specific attitude to sex, Boni argues: "Magazines such as *Men's Health* construct male sexuality as performative and mechanical, where "the body becomes a sexual machine, which has to be controlled and kept functioning, and the sexual organs are transformed into "tools" or instruments by which the performance is accomplished" (2002, p. 473). Although Boni refers specifically to *Men's Health*, this study argues that this same mechanistic approach to the body, performance and sex is evident in all three magazines examined in this study.

Sexual power seems to be a discourse that *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health* employ as an indispensable element of hegemonic masculinity. In both the Turkey and USA versions of *GQ*, *Esquire* and *Men's Health*, sexual power is presented as a "requirement" of real masculine manhood, and men are asked to increase and maintain their sexual performance in bed. It seems that sexual power is also an important concern for the readers. A reader asks to the advice column in *Esquire* USA the question of "Is everyone having more sex than me?" (A question to Stacey Woods who gives advice on issues about sex) (Woods, 2015b, p. 44). The reader who asks this question seems to question his sexual power as he compares himself with other men. By putting this question in the column, the

columnist seems to regard this question as important and common. In another issue, the magazine again reminds its readers of the importance of sexual power by promoting a product with the slogan of “Maximize Your Potential” (*applied nutrition*, 2016, p. 136). *Esquire* Turkey also mentions sexual power and presents a man without enough sexual power as a man who has a problem under the heading of “The Most Common Sexual Problems of Men” (Uzun, 2014a, p. 121).

*GQ* Turkey also claims that sexual power is significant for a man. The magazine states “Increase your sexual appeal in 6 different ways...show your power” (*GQ* Turkey, January 2015, p. 77). Believing that the male readers want to improve their sexual performance further, the magazine gives suggestions. Additionally, the magazine reminds the necessity of high sexual power through the interviews it does with women. In an interview with Miranda Kerr, she says “sexual performance is important in relationships” (*GQ* Turkey, July 2015). In a way, the magazine means that it has a reason to suggest the readers to maintain and increase their sexual power: Women want it. To increase the sexual performance, the magazine also reports the positive effect of fitness on sexual performance in its article titled “The Effect of Fitness on Your Sexual Performance” (Şeker, 2014, p. 154). The USA version of the magazine also suggests their readers to work out to have a higher performance in bed: A Fitness Guide to Better Sex?” (*GQ* USA, May 2016, p. cover). *Men’s Health* emphasizes the importance of sexual power in all its issues in the USA and Turkey versions. The magazine has a monthly advice column which always includes some strategies, methods or medication that aim to increase men’s sexual power because the magazine believes that “Men are expected to be horn dogs, ready for sex at the drop of a bra” (Herbenick, 2015a). Addressing their readers by stating “Be the Boss in Your Bedroom” (Masters, 2014, p. 82), *Men’s Health* Turkey also asks its readers to keep and increase their sexual power. The article titled “With the secrets to keep alive the fire in you and your bedroom, better sex, more sex.” is a good example of this tendency (*Men’s Health* Turkey, January 2016, p. 101). *Men’s Health* also reminds its readers the importance of men’s sexual power for women by stating “When a beautiful woman says: Ok, Let’s go to your place, your exam begins” (Vrabel, 2014, p. 107). In a way, a man without enough sexual power cannot pass the exam and qualify himself as a successful real man.

All these extracts underline how important it is for the archetypal ideal man to possess sexual power. Invoking workplace hierarchies –“Be the Boss”– and the classic vocabulary of the sexual encounter –“fire” in the bedroom, “more and better sex”– it is clear that the ideal man is supposed to be capable of and ready to turn on a high sexual “performance” anytime. Achieving such prowess is therefore presented as a challenge for all the readers.

## 2.1. STRONG ERECTION

Sexual performance focuses on the need to be able to get and maintain a strong erection in Turkey and USA versions of *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men’s Health*. Thus, the successful achievement of an erection is presented as one of the proofs of a man’s sexual power. The ideal man created by these magazines is supposed to have strong erections. It is given as one of the norms of the ideal man who is the product of hegemonic masculinity in these men’s lifestyle magazines. The magazines claim that men are worried that they may not have strong erections that will satisfy their partners. *Men’s Health* Turkey states “What makes men afraid in bed?: My partner will not have an orgasm, I may experience premature ejaculation, my penis might be regarded as small, my performance in bed could be bad, I will have erectile dysfunction” (*Men’s Health* Turkey, October 2016, p. 36). Except the size of the penis which seems to be presented as another problem, all the other problems can be combined under sexual performance and strong erection. *Men’s Health* claims that it is problematic and stressful not to have a strong erection. *Esquire* USA also seems to assume strong erection as a normalcy for men. The magazine states “Men with back pain report a significant decrease in their sexual activity” (Woods, 2015a, p. 16). The Turkey version of the magazine explicitly claims that erectile dysfunction is a big problem for men: “Erectile Dysfunction” is one of the most common problems among men (Uzun, 2014a, p. 121). *GQ* Turkey also regards erectile dysfunction as a problem and offers solutions in its article titled “Can the Problem of Erectile Dysfunction be Solved?” (*GQ* Turkey, April 2014, p. 182). The question (fig.2.1) from one of the readers of *Men’s Health* USA also proves that the magazine depicts strong erection as a must:

**I'm 37 and no longer wake up with an erection. Is something wrong?**

GREGG GALVESTON, TX

"You're at the age where morning erections become less frequent," says Tobias Köhler, M.D., M.P.H., an associate professor of urology at Southern Illinois University School of Medicine. "You're probably fine if it happens only occasionally, but if you haven't had any in three months, get checked."

**Fig. 2.1.** Galveston, G. 2016, *A snapshot* from *Men's Health USA*, p. 19.

All men's lifestyle magazines examined in this study praise sexually powerful men and provide information about the ways to increase and sustain this "power". As sexual power is associated with having a strong erection, the

erect penis becomes the symbol of sexual power. The extracts on the previous page show that men seem to be afraid of sexual problems of different kinds. The magazines, especially *Men's Health*, facilitate a discourse of male fear around sexual failure which at the same time is essentially a failure of masculinity. Anything that damages a strong erection is therefore positioned as the enemy of men:

"Know Your Enemy (erectile dysfunction)" (*Men's Health Turkey*, November 2015, p. 42)

"Enemies of Erection". (*Men's Health Turkey*, September 2014, p. 70)

A strong erection is seen as a *sine qua non* of masculinity. All men are expected to be able to achieve a strong erection. In *Men's Health Turkey*, December 2015, the advertorial which promotes a dietary supplement and that is titled "Longer and happier nights" is about natural aphrodisiacs that can increase sexual performance (Ultra Men, 2015). In the advertorial, it is stated "sexual drive is one of the most important functions of the body" (*Men's Health Turkey*, December 2015, p. 44). That means that having a muscular body is not enough unless it is combined with a powerful sexual drive. Portraying sexual power as a primary function of the male body puts forward the idea that if a man has a problem that affects his sexual life negatively, that shows his body does not function as it should.

In the magazines, sexual drive is presented as fundamentally heterosexual—a function that works in conjunction with the body of a sexually attractive woman. Thus, articles about sex invariably include photos of women or men with women. This presentation of sex as necessarily between men and women underlines the notion that a constituent part of the magazines' ideal man is his heterosexuality. The same idea appears in the articles related to sex as well. In an article entitled "Momentary Ascending Force", "when one man encounters a woman who is charming or generous about her décolleté, a real case of alchemy happens" (Fetters, 2015, p. 45 and *Men's Health USA*, October, 2015, p. 86). The same article appeared in both the USA and Turkey versions of *Men's Health*, which

suggests that publishers in both countries felt its message is transcultural. By putting men and women into the same frame, sexual power is presented as heterosexual power in which men who have strong erections have the “active” role. In other words, the existence of women in photos or articles maintains the message that the magazines are for heterosexual men who are supposed to have an active role in a sexual relationship. That is the reason why the magazines provide advice and tips, down to the names of pharmaceutical treatments, so as to help the heterosexual reader perform his role.

Among the important matters regarding sexual power and ability, sexual dysfunction in particular is depicted as a major problem that all men should protect themselves from. In the context of these magazines, problems related to sexual dysfunction refer mostly to erectile dysfunction and premature ejaculation. In *Men’s Health* Turkey, an article titled “How Hard Are You?” (Kuş, 2015, p. 68) asks its readers to grade their own sexual performance. The photo accompanying the article is a stone in a shape resembling an erect penis, a barely veiled metaphor for the rock-hard phallus. The article goes on to detail how erectile dysfunction affects more than 100 million people around the world, and advice as to how to solve this problem is given by a doctor.

Penile performance is a key recurring topic for *Men’s Health*. Another article entitled “15 Realities About the Penis” exhorts the reader to “learn the ways to keep it healthy, strong and ready for action all the time.” (Zimmerman, 2015, p. 49). The magazine also regularly presents empirical data about men and problems related to erectile function. In *Men’s Health* Turkey (Keskin, 2015, p. 14), an article awkwardly titled “Everything About Sexual Problems” (Cinsel Problemler Hakkında Her Şey) provides some illuminating information about the profile of Turkish men. According to the article, in Turkey there are more than 7 million men who have sexual problems but do not get medical assistance. The writer cites that societal pressures and cultural taboos prevent men from seeing specialists.

If we look at the empirical data, then it would seem that *Men’s Health* Turkey is right to call out erectile dysfunction as a big problem affecting the male population of Turkey. According to data by TurkStat (tuik.gov.tr), there were almost 40 million men in Turkey in 2015. If *Men’s Health’s* figures are correct, that means almost one out of six men have problems related to erectile dysfunction. Yet, despite these figures, the magazine consistently utilizes a discourse that plays on male insecurity surrounding these issues. In

June 2015 issue of *Men's Health* Turkey, it is stated "Because of cultural reasons, a successful sexual relationship is a matter of sufficiency especially for men" (p. 14). By associating "sufficiency" with culture, the magazine seems to claim that it is because of the culture that sexual power is a criterion for men. However, by reminding this idea to introduce the article that provides solutions to sexual problems, *Men's Health* actually produces the same discourse. *GQ* Turkey also claims that sexual problems are things that "should be mended" like other repairs that men are used to do. The magazine states "Let's see what we can do by regarding premature ejaculation not as a problem but as a dripping tap" (Baran, 2014d, p. 170). By depicting premature ejaculation as a dripping tap that should be repaired, the magazine claims that it is actually an annoying problem that a person needs to fix. Indeed, the magazines clearly present erectile performance on a scale based on success or failure, and consequently sees men with this problem as people who cannot perform as "normal" men are supposed to perform.

▶ **"THIS NEVER HAPPENS to ME!"** ◀ (*GQ* USA, May 2015, p. 110).

It is not enough even to have a strong erection. Readers of *GQ*, and *Men's Health* are not only supposed to have rock-hard erections but also longer erections. In *Men's Health* Turkey, it is said that fitness helps performance in bed (May, March 2015, p. 136): "Harder, stronger and longer (erections)". In the article it is claimed that intense training contributes positively to one's sex life. Thus, here again, the idea that a strong body is not enough is reiterated; it must also come with a long and strong erection. This also means that a strong and fit body is also meaningful not only in terms of allowing men to take control over their lives in general but in terms of their ability to dominate in bed. In *Men's Health* Turkey, basing its claim on a research by California University, it is stated that "The men who go to the gym have four more partners compared to the ones who do not go" (August 2014, p. 101). Thus the ideal man emerges as having both the muscularity and the sexual prowess to wield power effectively over the world in which he lives.

In the article titled "Penis File", the section called "the effects of fitness on your sexual performance" states "If you do not stay for a long time in the gym to reach the perfect sexual life you have dreamed, you should learn how this affects your performance in a positive and negative way" (Şeker, 2014, p. 154). The article claims that fitness increases the durability of the body and makes a person confident about his body (p. 154).

## 2.2. DOES SIZE MATTER?

In both the Turkey and USA versions of *GQ* and *Men's Health*, the penis seems to be the most important element of the male body whereas *Esquire* does not focus on it. In the advice articles, sexual health pieces and interviews with men and women, the penis repeatedly comes up as an important issue. While magazines generally emphasize the fact that size is not important, they occasionally feature ways to make the penis bigger, which suggests that there are readers for whom size matters.

“Nobody wants a small. If there’s one global, irrefutable truth, it’s that all men dream of being enormous... Beyond its sexual function, the penis plays an undeniable, if subtle, role in establishing pecking order, whether at the urinal or in a locker room. Size matters, and not just in bed” (Wallace, 2016, p. 81).

“It is not about the size (of penis)” (*GQ* Turkey, March 2015, p. 132).

In March 2014 issue of *GQ* Turkey, there is an article titled “Penis File: Everything We Should Know About the Strongest Gun of the Men: this file is about your best friend. As you know it better, you will get along with each other better”. In the article itself, the subheadings read: “Is Size the Only Problem? Bigger Doesn’t Mean Better”, “How Can You Make Your Penis Live 100 Years?”, “Bigger and Healthier”, “Defeat Cold Weather, Stress, Cholesterol for a Bigger Penis” (Şeker, 2014, p. 154).

*Men's Health* Turkey, June 2015 edition (Nicoll, p. 112) features “Does a bigger one mean a better one?”. Citing hearsay, the article suggests that thousands of men around the world are queuing up to get a penis enlargement operation. Indeed, the article argues that, globally, there are more penis enlargement operations than mammoplasty (breast enlargement) operations. Tellingly, the reason given is homo-social, rather than sexual. In the article, Dr. Mills claims that many men want to have an operation not because of feelings of sexual inadequacy, but what he calls “shower syndrome”. A man, who had the operation one year ago, named Güven K, is cited as an example: since the age of 14, Güven K, did not want to engage in any situation that included nudity and he described his sex life up until the previous year as a disaster. He claims the operation changed his life and adds that he had the chance to have sexual relationships with different women. He is quoted as having had better reactions from the women with whom he had a sexual relationship as a larger penis increased his self-confidence. The article questions how the

significance of having a big penis is formed among men and the conclusion is pornography. The article argues that the increased exposure of men to porn in recent decades has worked to create an ideal in porn consumers' minds, despite the fact that such trends in pornography change over time.

Reading this article, a reader may come to the conclusion that a bigger penis means more self-confidence and having more sexual relationships with a greater number of women. Yet the messaging across the various issues is mixed, constantly oscillating between the importance and unimportance of penis size. In its February 2015 issue, for example, *Men's Health Turkey* features an article drawn from a thousand letters written to men by the female readers of the magazine (p. 104). Covering issues of sexual attraction, the article states that the consensus reached by the women is that the penis is *not* the most attractive part of a man's body; rather, the majority of the letter-writers rank the chest as most attractive, then the stomach, then the hips. Penis comes in after that. The feature concludes that women also think size does not mean anything on its own.

Of course, this article turns the tables on the anatomization and objectification of women's bodies that, as we have seen, routinely takes place in *Men's Health*, and turns this lens on the male body. However, in this case, the final consumer of this brief brush with the female gaze is still the male reader of the magazine, as the purpose of the article is to persuade them that size is not important.

We can glean from this feature that the male readership should know that it is not women who want men to have larger penises. Therefore, we must conclude that this impetus comes directly from the men themselves. Indeed, this male desire is openly acknowledged in the magazine. In June's issue of *Men's Health Turkey*, a feature entitled "Is the Important Thing Really Size?" highlights that "the big penis myth comes from men's fantasies, not from women's dreams..." and that, in fact, "although men prefer an erection of 18 centimeters, women prefer 2.5 centimeters smaller" (*Men's Health Turkey*, June 2014, p. 34).

Similarly, an article from *GQ USA* also shows that it is men rather than women who really care about the size of the penis: "Huge News for Men: an enterprising L.A. surgeon has invented a silicone penis implant, which, because we're sure you have a friend who'll want to know, and can nearly double your size." The subheading goes on to highlight that while the doctor's "customers" (not patients) are "very satisfied", their wives are "mostly

satisfied” (Wallace, 2016, p. 81). The language of the market is telling here: the doctor-patient relationship is sanitized into “doctor”-“customer”, yet of course the article details the pain caused by the implant in the recovery stages. Despite the pain, however, which the article admits is a huge burden for a man, the emphasis of the article is to highlight that men still have this operation simply to increase their penis size. Presenting this article and informing readers about this implant operation is on its own a sign that the readers care about their penis size.

While elsewhere *GQ* and *Men’s Health* seem to remind their readers of the unimportance of size, many articles refer to the penis as a gun, depict the man with a bigger penis as more confident and happier with women, and detail ways to increase size. Overall, the consistent attention on the subject shows that these two magazines are involved in encouraging a psychological preoccupation with the organ, which, over time, works to link masculinity with penis size.

### **2.3. SEX: NO LIMITS**

*Men’s Health* also promotes limitless sex in which a man is invited to enjoy his (hetero) sexuality to the full. In the process, women are generally objectified and frequently placed in an inferior position. A sexual encounter based on mutual terms, agreement and pleasure is entirely absent from this viewpoint, which instead places the man’s desires center stage, the female partner receding until she becomes little more than a tool to facilitate the man’s sexual gratification. Thus, the cover of the October 2016 edition of *Men’s Health* Turkey commands: “Do not limit yourself in sex”. At times, the disparity the genders is even more apparent as reader’s are encouraged not only to not limit themselves but also to ignore their partners’ stated limits: “Limitless Sex: make her sit on the bed and ask for her limits. You are about to force those limits and make her crazy.” (Kylstra, 2014a, p. 107) Issues regarding consent, it seems, have no place here.

The theme of pushing limits recurs throughout the issues of *Men’s Health*. In February 2015 *Men’s Health* Turkey, features a column advising men about things a man should definitely do before he dies. The subjects covered include: “Make your own porn movie”; “Play sex roulette on the internet”; “Have sex with a woman older than you”; “Have a

Threesome”, “Have sex outside”; “Cheat on her” and, finally, “[b]ecome the master of multiple orgasms” (Kylstra, 2015, p. 90).

The advice above shows that the magazine calls upon its readers to exceed their limits in sex. In all these suggestions, a man is expected to realize his fantasies by objectifying the female body. Breaking his own limits will make her “crazy”, or an actress in his porn movie, or a constituent part of a threesome, which, the article states, is every man’s fantasy, provided of course it is composed of two women and one man. It will also make her the object of betrayal –to be cheated on, or alternatively, the recipient of multiple orgasms. All options objectify the woman: her agency, desire, and in the most extreme examples, her free will is lost in these fantasies. Thus limitless sex becomes an element that contributes to the construction of hegemonic masculinity in the magazine, and lends it an inherently misogynistic shade. While pushing the limits, men consider women just as female bodies to satisfy and to be satisfied: “Break Your Chains: ... Women are looking forward to the things that you hesitate to offer” (Uzunsoy, 2016b, p. 72).

In all these examples, women are portrayed as waiting passively but willingly to be made happy and satisfied by men. In *Men’s Health Turkey*, (Tönbek, 2014 , p. 90), the article titled “The New Rules of Naughtiness” states: “Millions of women are willing to push the limits in the bedroom. Everything you need to do to give them what they want is in this article”. Some suggestions in the piece are: Take Control, Manage her Mind, Give Orders. There is also a questionnaire called: “How naughty is your lover?” Giving orders, managing women’s minds and taking control all speak to a masculinity which, it is assumed, sees men want to have sexual dominance over women. In contrast, women are placed in an inferior position in which she waits for orders passively and surrenders her agency for the sake of the orgasm that men, through their skills, will bestow upon them. The magazine in both Turkey and USA versions even suggests humiliation as a way to make women happy: It is stated that “nasty words trigger a rush of feel good endorphins as your brain tries to ease your pain...Insult your partner in a way that is also erotic. For example, instead of body shaming, say something like “You are a dirty, dirty girl” (Tedesco, *Men’s Health Turkey*, 2015, p. 35, and *Men’s Health USA*, 2015, p. 30).

Unequal sexual power dynamics and eliminating all the limits for men promotes a heterosexuality that oppresses and controls women. Sexual preferences are to be explored, tried and tested by the man, with the woman’s role reduced to the site of the

performance. Thus the hegemonic masculinity to which these magazines subscribe and contribute is shown to be laced with problematic and misogynistic attitudes to sexual relations.

#### 2.4. SEX SUPPLIES: MEDICATION

In his article titled “We are So Pumped Full of Shit by Media”, Waling interviews a number of men about the influence of men’s lifestyle magazines. The following encounter with Ian is instructive:

Ian claims that *Men’s Health*, in addition to pressuring men about their appearance, is placing pressure on their sexual performance through advertising sexually enhancing drugs to young men. In doing so, it produces anxieties about sexual performance by medicalizing male sexuality (Marshall, 2002; Potts et al., 2003; Vares et al., 2003). What Ian demonstrates is the disjuncture between representations of masculinity and health, where illnesses are invented to create a market for the product (Marshall 2002). Discourses about erectile dysfunction focus on anxieties and pressures to perform sexually (Potts et al. 2003; Vares et al., 2003). A product such as Viagra, which promotes the treatment of erectile dysfunction, creates a narrative of masculinity that conforms to an idealized, normative heterosexuality” (Waling, 2017, p. 241).

Considering the importance attached to sexual virility by *Men’s Health*, having a high sex drive and having sexual stamina are necessary aspects of the hegemonic masculinity branded by the magazine. That is why the magazine provides an abundance of sexual advice and tips for its readers. However, when a man needs something more than suggestions, the magazine presents pharmaceutical alternatives. These medicines are generally presented via branded advertisements, which claim to find solutions for men’s sexual problems, especially sexual dysfunction. In *Men’s Health Turkey*, (April 2015, p. 140), there is a medicine offered to men so that they can “be ready for the night”. It is a medicine that seems directed at men who would like to improve their sexual performance. On page 143 of the same issue, there is the advert for carob molasses, which is also said to improve sexual performance. In the content itself, the magazine warns men against the dangers of sexual anorexia. In *Men’s Health Turkey*, 2016 (January, p. 34), in an advertorial about sexual anorexia titled “Don’t Let Your Relationship Break Apart”, the writer claims “[s]exual desire is one of the basic drives of life... The function of sexual drive is to prepare the man’s and woman’s bodies for sex...[n]ot to let unhappiness take over in your bedroom and affect your whole life...”. In other words, the magazine warns the reader that if a man cannot solve his sexual problems, he runs the risk of losing his

partner and his happiness. Returning to Ian's point above, for those who are experiencing sexual problems, such articles can add to anxiety, and compile pressure for a man already concerned about his sexual performance. On the same page, there is an advertisement for "Ultra Men", which claims to be a pharmaceutical supplement that makes a man "ultra" sexually strong. Elsewhere, the pressures compound as *Men's Health* even suggests that sexual problems may be a primary factor in early male deaths. After raising anxiety levels, the magazine helpfully finds solutions. In the Turkey version of the magazine (March 2016, p. 20), various plants and herbal remedies are suggested as effective treatments for erectile dysfunction, and on the following pages the warning comes in the format of a scientific truth: "According to research, men who suffer from erectile dysfunction are 70% more likely to die in eight years compared with men who do not". In this way, the magazine reinforces the idea not only that men who are "functioning normally" should not have these kinds of problems but also that men who want to have a healthy life should treat any sexual difficulties as an urgent health matter. By showing that high sex-drive and sexual prowess to be something that all men should possess at a high level, the magazine sets this as a norm and asks its readers to comply with it. To reiterate: the norm is heterosexual, and that all men should be both sexually powerful and always ready for sex; any deviation from that norm is immediately medicalized (unlike the penis enlargement operations above, which are rather *demedicalized* and, instead, commercialized). Therefore, to prevent abnormal behaviors, a man may need some medication that will help him to perform at his "normal and expected" level.

## **2.5. WOMEN**

In all three magazines, many references imply that one of the fundamental aims of men is having a relationship with the idealized woman of their dreams. To realize this dream, a man needs to have sufficient sexual prowess to keep his partner satisfied and contented. But as we have seen, this simultaneous idealization and normalization of the heterosexual relationship is complicated by competing desires: the wish to sexually satisfy his ideal partner while at the same time controlling her. This dynamic is played out most explicitly when magazines focus on the female orgasm, as the following extracts demonstrate:

“If there is a woman in your bed with a smile on her face because she is sexually satisfied, you are a happy man” (Darling, 2016a, p. 118); “7 Guaranteed Ways to Woman Orgasm” (Özdemir, 2015, p. 65); “The Road Leading to a Woman’s Orgasm” (Baran, 2014c, p. 161); “Why Can’t Women Reach Orgasm” (*Esquire* Turkey, March 2014, p. 10); “Here, your concern should not be how long her orgasm lasts but how long it takes for her to reach orgasm” (*Esquire* Turkey, January 2014, p. 10); “How to Understand If an Orgasm is Fake: It is a pity but it is the reality. If you have had sex with 10 women, 7 of them were fake...How can you differentiate between the real and the fake one?” (Baran, 2014a, p. 141); “Our Lesson: The Female Orgasm –10 Ways to Make Her Live the Final that She is Dreaming of” (Herbenick, 2015b, p. 56).

This obsessive return to the subject of a woman’s sexual satisfaction means that the female orgasm becomes talismanic of her sexual enjoyment, yet at the same time is more and more enigmatic. A woman’s ability to achieve orgasm is recast as a conundrum for the man to crack and an opportunity to practice ever-heightened levels of control. In the process, male anxiety about his ability to solve the puzzle can creep in. Thus, in the article which follows argues that “[i]n every man’s mind, there is a subject that he wants to believe he knows well, but remains, in fact, always mysterious: woman and orgasm. Women want to experience it and men want to make them have it. But don’t worry, the tips that you will learn shortly will help you achieve your goal” (Herbenick, 2015b, p. 57).

Of course, providing tips as to *how to get a woman to orgasm* forestalls a more personal conversation between couples about specific preferences and keeps sex as a performative, rather than intimate, act. Moreover, it implies that the female gender as a whole is simply sitting and waiting for sexual satisfaction and enlightenment to be provided by the men in their lives, unaware of how to access personal pleasure other than via a man acting under detailed instruction. However, this focus on the female orgasm also places men in a difficult position. On the one hand, by dutifully learning the steps that will take a woman (any woman) to orgasm, male readers may believe that they can be happier in their sex life and that they will be admired and desired by the women in their lives. On the other hand, prioritizing the orgasm increases the pressure on men, and this pressure could be the force that makes male readers revisit the tips, advice and even the medical solutions in pursuit of a better sexual life with greater sexual prowess.

In the February 2016 edition of *Men's Health* Turkey, the editor-in-chief writes directly to his readers:

Of course we cannot give up the support we should give to you about your relationships and sexual lives in the days before Valentine's Day. I am sure you are already good in bed. There are few men who think differently in that sense. But let me tell you: You can find 21 golden tips that will make you and your lover happier and have more enjoyable sexual lives" (Büyükbayrak, *Men's Health* Turkey, February 2016, p. 10)

It seems that the magazine's idealized man is supposed to have two main aims regarding women's orgasms: firstly, the intense focus on it establishes heterosexuality as the unspoken norm; and, secondly, a man's happiness in his relationships depends on his ability to acquire certain physical skills which work to please his partner. Intimate, open and honest conversations about sexual preferences are not encouraged. The focus is consistently on physicality. Thus the sexual norms of hegemonic masculinity are reduced to the acquisition of physical skills, variety (of positions) and sexual stamina. Emotions and intimacy have little role to play in the relationships of men who conform to the sexual norms of the hegemonic masculinity promoted in particular by *Men's Health*, but also by *Esquire* and *GQ*.

#### CHAPTER SUMMARY

In both their Turkey and USA versions, *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health* suggest that it is not enough to have a strong body without sexual power. Although all these magazines refer to sexual power through some articles, photos and advertisements, *Men's Health* is the magazine that focuses the most on sexual issues across both its Turkey and USA versions while *Esquire* occasionally mentions. Sexual power is generally associated with strong and lasting erection and there is significant focus on the penis itself, particularly its size. Readers are provided with ways of enlarging their penises, rather than encouraged to find a psychological solution to their feelings of insecurity. The idealized man is presented as one who should never have sexual dysfunctions; sexual dysfunction itself is medicalized and treated as an illness, and thus all these magazines present measures and treatments to combat this, condition. Men are expected to have high sexual performance with strong and lasting erections; the risk of being called a sexual failure is constant. *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health* link this sexual power to heterosexuality through focusing on the female orgasm, with the emphasis being on the notion that a real man needs to know

how to make “his woman” happy. Thus, the woman is presented here as the man’s possession, her sexual pleasure achieved as a result of waiting for a man to please her and thus her orgasm ultimately just another way to confirm her partner’s masculinity. At the same time, this relationship reinforces a dominating heterosexuality, which gives the “active role” to men and the “passive role” to women. Thus, sexual performance, physicality, penis size and power over women in bed are all part of the construction of the hegemonic masculinity that these magazines are all invested in.

## CHAPTER 3

### MAN WITH WOMEN

Although *GQ*, *Esquire* and *Men's Health* are men's lifestyle magazines, women have an important role in them. As men's lifestyle magazines present an idealized image of men, they also provide idealized images of women for these men. Alexander encapsulates how gender idealization functions:

According to Cohen (2001, p. 5), a gender ideal is formed by the shared beliefs or models of gender that a majority of society accepts as appropriate masculinity or femininity"...For Goffman, women and men "read" images of femininity and masculinity and then attempt to mimic them when giving a gender performance. (2003, pp. 537-539)

This supports the idea that while reading men's lifestyle magazines, men not only form an ideal for themselves, but also form and reinforce a notion of the ideal woman. This ideal woman is a necessary part of forming the hegemonic masculinity branded by *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health*. As we saw in the previous chapter, men are supposed to be heterosexual if they want to be a member of this "club" which is hegemonic masculinity, and women function as proofs and as means for men to practice their heterosexuality. That is why with their slogans and photos, these magazines portray men and women together in the same frame. However, frequently there is more than one woman in the frame. *GQ* Turkey warns men to be careful in placing too much emphasis on tactics, asking "How Far Can a Man Go with Tactics? A Lot of Women Means No Women" (January 2016, p. 102). Nevertheless, this is not the general tendency of men's lifestyle magazines examined in this study. In reality, rather than focusing on nourishing a monogamous relationship, these publications rather promote having different relationships with more than one woman. These relationships run the range from a flirtation, a summer fling, a one-night-stand to a full-blown affair. One could argue that this is why *GQ*, *Esquire* and *Men's Health* fill their pages with photos of different women. While marriage is an accepted form of relationship and some content is directed at the marital relationship, generally when the topic is covered, men are portrayed not regarding as loyal husbands but as womanizers who want to have relationships with different women. As the previous chapter suggested, being a womanizer is another accepted aspect of hegemonic masculinity. By having relationships with different woman, a man can

perform his heterosexuality and present himself as someone who can get whoever he wants. Thus women again are categorized as inferior, lacking in personal agency and functioning mainly as objects of desire, showing men's power over women. Hence the idealized man of men's lifestyle magazines can basically be described as heterosexual womanizer.

In men's lifestyle magazines, loyalty is portrayed as something men are naturally incapable of. In *Men's Health* Turkey, there is an article titled "If a married man flirts" (Huber, 2015, p. 109). The article argues that "[a]ll married men who make a vow of loyalty experience a moment at which they struggle against the laws of attraction". The article details the story of a married man who was about to cheat his wife (but did not), and reveals how the temptation to cheat is tied up the ego and with feelings of male anxiety: it is said that

the woman who we thought would be the most difficult to get into bed, and whom we believe we most desire, is the same woman who sits at the top of the "food chain" and who, we assume, would not want us for that reason. We realize this and we are right. Most of the time, only outstanding men can get these women. But what happens if that woman really wants us?

The story continues: when his wife claims that she is aware of everything, the man admits that there are two things that attract him about this woman: first, that "she is a successful person... If she becomes interested in me, it will mean a lot to me", and second, "Erin [the woman] represents a newness that promises excitement. I mean the important thing is not her but what she represents". The same article appeared in April 2015 issue of *Men's Health* USA. The story ends with the man's wife forgiving him for contemplating infidelity.

This story implies that women are expected to forgive men if they cheat as it is something that every married man is tempted by. Simultaneously, it supports a narrative of marital settling, where a man settles for a woman to marry because he recognizes he cannot reach to the women at the top. This undermines both the idea that marriage can be full of sexual desire, excitement and satisfaction and that a woman can be both married and successful. Thus, the idea of looking outside the marriage at successful women who, they believe, will also bring new and exciting things to their life is normalized as part of every married man's experience.

The one-night stand is also features as a pinnacle of excitement in one's sexual life. In an article entitled "Leave Your Mark at One Night", *Men's Health* Turkey celebrates the

frisson of the brief encounter (Miller, 2015, p. 87). Thus, it argues, the most unforgettable sex happens at the most unexpected time. Full of the language of exhilaration, the article adopts the position of a more experienced older brother and tells the reader “if you do not have a serious relationship, it is exciting to flirt with all the women you encounter.” Quoting American therapist Stephen Snyder, the magazine claims that “a sexual intercourse that includes a bit of guilty conscience is more exciting” (p. 87). The same article appeared in *Men’s Health* USA June issue of 2015. The Turkish version substituted the English for Turkish female names. Addressing men who “don’t have a serious relationship”, the magazine already assumes that men may cheat on women. Presenting cheating as something exciting because of the guilt that men would feel, the magazine essentially normalizes and justifies cheating on the basis that cheating can add to the thrill of a man’s sexual experience.

The September 2015 issue of *Men’s Health* Turkey features an article called “The Guide to Save Your Marriage (and Life)” (p. 122). The accompanying photo of the page tells it all: a “sexy” woman seeks to get the attention of a man who plays with his mobile phone. In the article, it is said “even men who have a happy marriage are curious about how their life would be if they get divorced. Although the dreams consist of naked weekends full of sexy women, the reality is not that exciting”. Although the article goes on to detail the harmful sides of divorce, it begins by normalizing a husband’s roving eye, even for those who have a happy marriage. The figure of the single man is sexual: it is assumed that the single man spends his whole weekends having sex with numerous women. By contrast, the married man is often figured as sexually dissatisfied. Thus, *Men’s Health* Turkey frequently posits that marriage is in fact a burden. In August 2014, the magazine opined: “We are really in trouble nowadays. People with an “independent soul” are getting married. Our mothers nag by saying ‘When will I have my grandchildren?’ Is it really your turn?” (Özdemir, p. 78). Marriage seems to be something that a man should escape as long as he can. Indeed, sometimes even the loyalty that a lasting relationship can bring is a reason for the magazine to warn its readers. In the March 2016 issue of *Men’s Health* Turkey, an article gives tips from a woman’s perspective to men who would like to experience one-night stands. In the article, there are also reminders for men whose one-night stand turned into a relationship: “Year 1 - Losing your freedom: When you start a relationship, it is normal to feel trapped... Year 5 - Separation: Career and children may

make it difficult for you to spend time together... Year 10+ Getting bored” (Grier, p. 87). In other words, spending 10 years with one partner is a process of increasing negativity. The implication is that men should feel free to continue to have relationships with more than one woman without feeling the bond of loyalty.

The magazine makes use of some limited statistics to show that men are not expected to attach importance to loyalty. In December 2014, *Men's Health* Turkey contained an article titled “Are You a Virtuous Man?” (Kylstra, p. 111). The magazine claimed that every ten years it asks its readers to provide the definition of a virtuous man. The question gleaned responses from 1,500 men, with some interesting results. According to the survey, 50% of men had told a lie to make a woman have sex with him, 36% had cheated on their wives or lovers, 54% had told lies about where they went then their partners asked, 16% had had sex with their friend's girlfriend. 36% who is cheating on their wives and lovers means that one in every three men cheats on his partner.

*Men's Health* Turkey is not the only magazine that warns men about the boredom of marriage. The September 2015 issue of *GQ* Turkey features an article about cars titled “Which model would you give as your gift?” The highlight claims that “everybody knows that a present is the road to a woman's heart” and goes on the spotlight cars that can be bought as presents for women. The writer warns the readers about considering buying her a Volkswagen, arguing that the subtext to buying a Volkswagen is *marry me*. The writer says “if you don't want to find yourself going to a picnic with kids, don't buy a Volkswagen”. Hence, marriage and family life is shown as a shackle from which a man should escape from if he does not want to give up his freedom. In November 2015 issue of *GQ* Turkey there is advice about how to end a relationship smoothly. One of the suggestions is: “Tell her you will never get married as many women will get the message and look for more promising relationships”. Thus marriage is portrayed as a phenomenon that women want but that men do not.

The December 2015 issue of *GQ* Turkey features stories of men who have cheated their wives. There are five stories and at the end the moral of these stories is given: the joy of cheating is fleeting but the shame lingers. Yet the content of the article seems to bear a different message. In the cheating cases discussed, men often present themselves as innocent participants, who simply had the fortune to be the object of desire for another. Relating the tale of meeting up after an affair, a man tells the writer “I just thought we

would drink coffee and I would clear my mind, but she said her husband is not as manly as me and she could not forget the legendary nights that we had had together and that she missed me a lot. We should say it was just a temptation I couldn't resist. I had thought we were just meeting up for old times' sake." Another story of infidelity begins with the man stating "the girl stole my heart by saying "I am your number one fan". Still another lays the emotional responsibility at the feet of the woman, saying "she fell in love with me". Although the article seems to give the message that men should not cheat, it is not successful since it accepts cheating brings some kind of joy and also portrays the male participants as innocent, passive recipients of the other woman's lust. The thrill, the flattery and, supposedly, care for the feelings of the other woman are given as reasons why men cheat on their wives and their vows of loyalty. *GQ* Turkey also refers to loyalty in another issue: "It is more difficult to cheat on a woman in the digital age. If you are on that path, do these: Delete the e-mails, messages, internet browser records, and call history on your mobile" (January 2014, p. 133). Again, cheating is presented as a matter of thrill and excitement, and so the magazine normalizes infidelity by giving advice to men on how to hide it from their wives.

*Esquire* USA also focuses on cheating, this time from a cheated woman's perspective. The married female writer admits

I think at some point most married women, no matter how much they trust you, have a little anxiety about whether you might cheat. We worry about the woman who is hotter and/or younger and who has more subtle ombré highlights and skin that is all one color instead of a smattering of bluish veins and random broken capillaries. We hire personal trainers and get Botox shots in our eyelashes and drink the elixirs Goop tells us to drink, all in the hope that if we can just look as much like the Other Woman as possible, with her perfect boobies and legs and whatnot, we will be safe. (Klein, May 2016, p. 46)

The magazine suggests that women frequently feel anxious and under pressure to maintain their beauty because they are afraid of being cheated on "no matter how much they trust" their husbands. This also shows that for women, even the most reliable man may cheat.

With all these articles related to fidelity, men's lifestyle magazines present the cheating man who proves his heterosexuality by having relationship with more than one woman as normal. These aspects of hegemonic masculinity also affect the portrayal of women in these publications. Although from time to time loyalty in relationships is highlighted as a *sine qua non* of a good relationship, *Men's Health*, *GQ* and *Esquire* mostly claim that a heterosexual man is interested in a number of women at any one time, an important

foundational perspective that affects the presentation of women and the female body in their pages. Considering the heterosexual and philandering man as their primary reader the magazines objectify the female body.



Fig. 3.1. A snapshot from *GQ Turkey*, December 2014, cover.

The advice on how to cheat (fig.3.1.) taken from *GQ Turkey*, demonstrates a coherent and consistent narrative about the perception of women, heterosexuality and fidelity for the idealized man. All extracts on the previous page together with this advice place men in a superior position in which he “has” more than one woman at any one time as a matter of course. All of them speak to a kind of power and misogyny that men are expected to assume over women. In sum, this is what the performance of hegemonic masculinity looks like.

### 3.1. THE OBJECTIFIED FEMALE BODY

“The use of images of women in magazines such as *Zoo Weekly* and *Ralph Magazine* also maintains pressure for men to objectify women in order to demonstrate an appropriate maleness. Research by Ward, Vandenbosch, and Eggermont (2015) and Ward and Schooler (2006) about men’s views of women’s bodies as represented in magazines found similar conclusions” (Ward and Schooler cited. in Waling, 2017, p. 441). The researchers argue that the media paints women as sexual objects whose bodies are constructed for the pleasure of men, as opposed to offering a more multidimensional representation. Magazines that produce representations of objectified women allow men to reinforce their own perceptions of traditional gender ideologies (Ward and Schooler cited in Waling, 2017, p. 441).

*GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men’s Health* are no different from *Zoo Weekly* and *Ralph magazine* in terms of objectifying the female body. In all the men’s lifestyle magazines examined in this study, the female body, in other words the woman, is objectified. Almost all women on covers, interviews and advertisements have a common body type: they are all thin with a model-like physique. By repeatedly presenting a certain type of body, the magazines create an image of the ideal beautiful woman and heap praise upon the forms they present

by repeatedly referencing their beauty. The assumption that all men enjoy seeing beautiful women becomes the *modus operandi* of the magazines' publishers. In other words, they place a standardized vision of beautiful women on their pages for consumption by the male gaze, which serves both the womanizer and heterosexual aspect of the idealized man who wants to benefit from the power of hegemonic masculinity:

"It is not enough to say beautiful, she is something different" (Akyıldız, 2015a, p. 43).

"Scarlett Johansson is the woman who men see in their sexual dreams. The woman who men talk about most is Kim Kardashian." 31% men say they will end their relationship if their partner gets a lot of weight... (Battis, *Men's Health* Turkey, March 2015, p. 30).

"In addition to her tempting beauty, Caplan's courage also deserves to be recognized. The reason is simple. Right in the first episode, she had a sex scene. Considering the name of the TV series (*Masters of Sex*), we are sure that Caplan, who does not hesitate to be naked on screen, will have more brave scenes. We are sure to enjoy this assertive mixture" (*GQ* Turkey, January 2014, p. 25).

"Right Woman, Hot Sex: Stop Looking for Her, Find Her." (*Men's Health* Turkey, September 2016, p. cover).

"Keep in mind that if you buy the perfect present on Valentine's Day, the possibility of being awarded with perfect sex in the evening is 18%." (Baran, 2014b, p. 149).

"The Loveliest, Sexiest, Madliest of Them All": Kim Kardashian (*GQ* USA, July 2016)

"Let me Satisfy the Curiosity in This Article: The Most Beautiful Woman is the Most Beautiful Woman of the Women Who You Can Touch" (Gürsel, 2014, p. 154).

"Super-Hot Supermodel Alessandra Ambrosio" (*GQ* USA, February 2016, p. cover).

"Bridget Bardot - 1960-70s most desired woman" (*GQ* Turkey, March 2015, p. 84).

"Jennifer Aniston: The woman who makes you feel you have everything in life (for now, Angelina could be yours)" (*Esquire* Turkey, April 2015, p. cover).

"Everyone knows men's weakness for Victoria Secret models. If you are not an exception, we would like you to meet Lily Aldridge "this beauty cannot be real" (*GQ* Turkey, January 2015, p. 96).

"The rising Instagram girl of that crew of filthy mouthed, thick-eyebrowed, impishly irreverent babes who make it clear that models are having way more fun than anyone else right now" (Gregory, 2015, p.144).

“Kim Kardashian West’s boob is so soft it makes velvet feel like splinters. It makes the fur on a baby bunny’s tummy feel like a plastic bag of syringes. It is so soft that...” (Weaver, 2016).

Women are also expected to be sexually attractive in order to be “desired” by men. In *GQ Turkey*, July 2015, a top model, Miranda Kerr, is introduced to the reader with the title of “Miranda Kerr: She is not from this planet”. The cover goes on “she is one of the people who made our [men’s] lives beautiful...the angel we watch breathlessly... (*GQ Turkey*, July 2015). Awards such as *Esquire*’s annual “Sexiest Woman Alive” demonstrate the emphasis on a woman’s sexual attractiveness and, that once chosen, these awards frame the woman in question, rather than her professional achievements. Penelope Cruz is described as “chosen as the sexiest woman by *Esquire* last year” (Akyıldız, 2015b, p. 49), and similarly Emilia Clarke is introduced as chosen as “the sexiest woman alive” by *Esquire* (Markovits, 2015, p. 94).

From the extracts, it is clear that men’s lifestyle magazines present thin and sexy women as the representation of ideal beauty that all men are presumed to desire. The fact that 31% of men saying they like the women in their life because they are not fat shows that the concept of beauty that is created by these magazines is accepted as a standard for some readers of *Men’s Health Turkey* (Battis, 2015, p. 30). Additionally, *GQ Turkey* explicitly states this reality by claiming that: “Although we (the readers) may have different ideas about the details, we can come to a consensus when we talk about beauty” (*GQ Turkey*, March 2015, p. 84). Thus we can see that magazines brand this particular version of beauty as endorsed by general consensus, as if it is a concept on which all male readers have agreed.

With their Turkey and USA versions, *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men’s Health* magazines do not only create the ideal image of beautiful woman. By placing their concept of the beautiful woman on a pedestal, they present acquisition of such a woman a life goal be achieved, and by providing advice in order to achieve this aim, the magazines imply that a man can only be a real man if he has love and sexual relationships with this kind of woman. In other words, the magazines claim only real men can get these beautiful women and readers can become real men if they follow the instructions given by the magazines. With a series of advice columns and articles, each magazine promises to help men find a beautiful and sexy woman for themselves. Starting from the beginning of the process,

there is advice about how to assess whether a woman is beautiful and sexy. Notably, *Men's Health* elevates this assessment to the scientific level, quoting research evidence. In the March 2015 Turkey issue, a riddle is posed: "What is the part of body that gives us a clue about a woman's lust?" (p. 162). The answer is said to be the breasts. In the article, it is said that according to a research that has been done at a university, women who have bigger hips have more sexual partners in their lives. The implication for the male reader is, presumably, the bigger the hips, the bigger the sexual appetite. Thus a man can assess if a woman is his ideal simply by looking at the size of a woman's hips.

However, this anatomization does not stop with the hips. In *Men's Health* Turkey, June 2014 (p. 31) a photo of a woman with a bikini is accompanied by the following caption: "Hips Don't Lie: Can the body lines of a woman give clues about the sex life of that woman? In a new research, 148 women's waist and hips were measured. Then, these measurements were compared with their sex lives. Women with bigger hips were estimated to have a greater number of sex partners. Moreover, most of these partners were from one-night-stands" (p. 31). These verifiable numbers, presented in a scientific fashion, aim to help men not only to identify beautiful and sexually attractive women but also encourage them to read women's bodies still deeper in order to identify who will be good and adventurous in bed. Of course, this overwhelming focus on the physical only reinforces the visual way in which these magazines approach sex and relationships, and contributes to a masculine culture which incessantly objectifies women on their appearance.

Providing advice on getting the ideal women, men's lifestyle magazines simultaneously see themselves as helping their readers to become real men. Calling on men to "take the necessary actions and to be active" in order to secure a beautiful and sexy woman, these magazines invariably portray women as passive individuals who will always respond positively to men who apply the strategies the publications suggest. This can be interpreted as a reflection of the particularly misogynistic strain of heterosexuality that comes under this kind of hegemonic masculinity, in which men are supposed to be active while women are supposed to be passive. With their Turkey and USA versions, *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health* positions women in this way mostly through the photos of objectified female bodies. However, *Men's Health* also explicitly states this approach to women in its various issues:

“Women are open to extraordinary offers but they just wait for your (men’s) sign” (Hodgson, 2015, p. 89).

“She’s Hot. Are You Ready?” (Maltby, 2015a, p. 101).

“She wants it so much, are you ready?” (Maltby, 2015b, p. 88).

“What does she want in bed? Try and become indispensable” (*Men’s Health* Turkey, May 2015, p. cover).

“She Is Waiting for You: The woman in your dreams is out there. She is waiting for you to find her and live with her happily ever after” (Uzunsoy, 2016a, p. 72).

This image of the “willing woman” actually means the dominance of men over women. Women are portrayed as passive beings who are simply waiting to be pleased by men, on the condition that men find them sexy. The woman who is defined here refers to the beautiful and sexy woman. These women are also said to have a very adventurous sex life in which men have unlimited power. In other words, these women are portrayed as the ones with whom men can realize limitless fantasies. Among the three magazines examined in this study, *Men’s Health* is the one which most clearly states this approach, the quotes below showing how the magazine defines and celebrates sexual adventurousness:

“Does she want to be tied?” asks the headline, accompanied by a photo of a topless woman: “BDSM is said to widen the limits of sex” (Tedesco, *Men’s Health* Turkey, September 2015, p. 35).

“The things that you think you cannot suggest now are in women’s fantasies (a third woman in sex, having sex outside home, handcuffs etc.) (Okes, 2016, p. 72).

“Take her wherever she wants to be taken: Sex in Nature, Sex in A Secret Place, Sex Escapade, Sex for Once, Spontaneous Sex, Sex on Plane, Exhibitionist Sex (Darling, 2016b, p. 62).

In all these examples, the assumption is that the man is the original creator of adventurous sexual fantasies and that, luckily, and seemingly unexpectedly, women are becoming increasingly receptive to these ideas. In only one of these quotes is the man exhorted to “learn what women want”, with the suggestion that in fact a woman has some level of agency in terms of sexual preferences.

In short, *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men’s Health* objectify female body in their Turkey and USA versions in the process of reinforcing their vision of the alpha male - ultra heterosexual

and womanizing. This necessarily positions women in an inferior position. As Waling states “This sexualization of women functions as an important signifier of heterosexuality and masculinity by demarcating gender boundaries and challenging women’s authority” (2017, p. 442). This objectification, which presents women via the gaze of men, puts women in a passive position and develops a language of sexual and gender relations by which the female body is constantly described, anatomized and sexualized, via a process of idealization and beautification. *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men’s Health* involve all their male readers in this process, by linking proof of their “manliness” to accepting this idealization and encouraging them to “aim high” and attempt to reach these beautiful women.

### **3.2. MEN VERSUS WOMEN (*ESQUIRE* USA, APRIL 2015, P. 76)**

In addition to female bodily objectification, in *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men’s Health* women are also routinely described as human beings that are difficult to understand. Thus, the magazines attempt to help men find a window into a woman’s alien psyche:

“Guidelines to Understanding Women” (*Men’s Health* Turkey, December 2016, p. cover).

“Over one thousand issues, we got them (women) wrong more often than we got them right” (Taddeo, 2015, p. 210).

“Ways to Reach the Unreachable Woman”:... Our main aim is actually to make you get the unreachable woman” (Özturhan, p. 172).

A man asking the Girl Next Door: “Could you tell me the one and only thing that will never fail while trying to steal a woman’s heart?” (*Men’s Health* Turkey, July 2016, p. 13).

“Alexanda Stan explains 5 things you should know about women.” (*Men’s Health* Turkey, September 2014, p. 74).

The Play of Balance: Rules of a 12-hour Relationship argues: “Today is the time of women who are stronger and who live their sexuality more freely. Research shows that men do not know how to approach these women... Let’s learn the new rules of one night stands from women...” “Women have changed but men have not. In the article men are said to get rid of cliché statements such as “are we going to your place or mine?” and use statements like “Let’s escape somewhere more beautiful” (Grier, 2015, p. 92).

“What Can’t We Teach Them: the eternal difference between men and women will remain as an unchanging reality even till the end of the world. No matter what we (men) do, we are sort of insufficient. Men are not caring, don’t talk much, express their emotions, don’t comment about their partners, swear unnecessarily, are so superficial...in short, no matter what men do, the men will not make women happy”... (Karan, 2014c, p. 71).

The extracts above make clear that men’s lifestyle magazines present women as complicated human beings who are essentially different from men. For this reason, they imply, a man needs advice in order to navigate a relationship with a person that is fundamentally alien to their nature and that they do not and cannot understand without help. The extracts can also be seen as a support for the idea that it is not men’s fault when something goes wrong with a woman but that it is the woman’s mysterious and unfathomable nature which is at fault. Whether about women’s complexity or simply the women’s fault, problems in a relationship are invariably put down to absolute difference between men and women, and women and men are depicted as at two opposing poles. Playing into this existing narrative, men’s lifestyle magazines aim to prove to their male readers that they need the magazines’ advice to have good relationships with the other pole they don’t know. It could be a permanent monthly section in the magazine, it could be an interview with a woman. *Men’s Health* both in the USA and Turkey versions have a monthly section dedicated to advice for men regarding women. *GQ* and *Esquire* in their USA and Turkey versions mostly include interviews with women who give advice to men implicitly by answering the questions of the editor. The advice is generally presented as structured and easy to follow:

“What Not to Say on a First Date” (Calechman, 2015, p. 24).

“Compliments that Women Really Want to Hear” (*Men’s Health* Turkey, September 2016, p. 38).

“8 Ways of a Faster Match” (online friendship websites): ...the most comprehensible and guaranteed way of finding the woman you have been looking for” (*Men’s Health* Turkey, September 2016, p. 106).

“Ghosting Protocol”: Not answering the messages of the person whom you don’t want to continue your relationship with...” (Bundy, 2016).

“Guarantee to end up the night in the bedroom with tempting words” (Beland, 2015, p. 52).

Five ways of stealing your summer love’s heart (*Men’s Health Turkey*, July 2016, p. 36).

Ideal Partner in 8 Steps (Tedesco, *Men’s Health Turkey*, July 2014, p. 62).

“The Hottest Sentences: With 6 Simple Sentences, guarantee her coming to your arms” (Beland, 2014, p. 60).

“Our counterparts-ELLE and a few of their stylish pals- share can’t-live-without items guaranteed to impress the women you love” (*Esquire USA*, December, January 2015, p. 114).

“International Relations that You Have Always Wanted to Study: How to Meet Women from Abroad (*GQ Turkey*, September 2015)

Words such as guarantee, steps and ways all refer to the methods aiming to show men how to reach the women they want. In this way, *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men’s Health* want to relieve their readers by suggesting that they will reach their goal for sure if they follow the easy steps that are suggested by them. “8 ways”, “8 steps”, and “6 simple sentences” actually make this advice look more systematic and easy to follow. They also show that there are different ways that can be tried and there are some steps that should be strictly followed in a row. It is like a solution to a math problem: different ways, following certain steps in a systematic way. In a way, it can be suggested that in these men’s lifestyle magazines women are presented as complex problems that could be solved by men when men make use of the advice given by the magazine. In other words, men are supposed to feel “they have the control and they manage the relationship” when they interact with women. Therefore, the advice from the magazines are expected to be and presented as a tool to have hegemony over women in relationships.

While giving advice to men about how to “get” the women they want, the magazines also provide their readers with the clues pointing how men should behave and what men should have. With their Turkey and USA versions *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men’s Health* all provide “sample men” to be followed by their readers. They do an interview with these men, they ask women they interview about the ideal man in women’s minds, or sometimes they write articles about the ideal men for women:

“What do Women Want?”: “a good career is a must, don’t be your mother’s man, the weight is not important, leave your past in the past, spend money, don’t have too many

female friends, respect private life, call at least three times during the day, cook well and like shopping” (*Men’s Health Turkey*, May 2015, p. 76).

“She Wants the Rebellious Man in You: You are kind, thoughtful and understanding. And unfortunately, you are boring. Make her meet the bad boy in you” (Darling, *Men’s Health USA*, October, 2015, p. 89 & *Men’s Health Turkey*, October 2015, p. 96).

“The Most Ideal Men According to Women”: On this page, six men are listed and some of the characteristics are: “being calm”, “gentleman”, “thoughtful”, “handsome”, “protective”, “good father”, “masculine attitude”, “chic”, “perfect body” (*Esquire Turkey*, February 2016, p. 12).

“The Men We Love” (*Esquire USA*, May 2014, p. 62).

“Take the Cave Man as Role Model: Target the instincts of women and start your of sexual revolution: Women like able tall men with beard” (Breslaw *Men’s Health USA*, 2015, 11 & *Men’s Health Turkey*, November 2015, p. 80).

“The Vice is Right”: “Hey, a little bad behavior is good for you. We asked 2,800 guys about their drinking, cussing, betting, and speeding. How do you stack up?”. In the article there is interesting information from the survey: 79% of men say hearing other people curse does not bother them, the other 21% disagree; 30% guys drive fast simply because they enjoy the thrill; 10% of men have been arrested for public drunkenness; number of men who swear in front of their colleagues is 69%. In the article, basing upon some quotations from some people, the writer claims that “your degenerate habits can fuel lifetime happiness” (Lawler, 2015, p. 102).

“International Relations That You Have Always Wanted to Study: How to Meet Women from Abroad (*GQ Turkey*, September 2015). In the article, the interesting advice is “leaving your macho attitude”. The writer gives the reason as: “Of course you should get rid of some behaviors that would only work with Turkish women: jealousy, “why did you wear this?”, “you could not make it”, playing with the ego of the person you like to make her fall in love with you...”

Considering the characteristics of men explained in the extracts above, it seems that magazines ask men basically to be macho by being protective, bad, masculine cave man. This image of man is highly acceptable in terms of hegemonic masculinity as all these adjectives refer to the control and oppression of men over women. As oppression is one of the goals of hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 2005, p. 77), *GQ*, *Esquire*, and mostly

*Men's Health* suggest their readers to be tough guys and present this suggestion as something desired by women, which also puts women in an inferior position.

In contrast to these statements encouraging macho attitude, the magazines, mostly *Esquire* and *GQ* idealize the men who cook and the men that are romantic and intelligent: "The charisma of the man who cooks"... apart from wide shoulders and 6 packs, there are few things that make a man sexier more than cooking" (*GQ Turkey*, August 2015).

"Become cool, romantic, sympathetic, like yourself" (Gürsel, 2016, p. 146).

"Nesrin Cavadzade describes the perfect man": "should know how to make women feel like a women (being romantic)"... "The man who cooks starts the flirt match 1-0" (Kuş, February 2016, p. 50).

"There are "men's duties" that are verified by women. Men write poems, buy flowers, organize a dinner out, make surprises. However, at the end, it is always women who are romantic. We accept there is a problem in this equation but there is not much to do...Is not it romanticism is woman's wish and man's effort?" (Uzun, 2014b, p. 122).

In an interview with a famous woman, she answers the question of: What Should a Man Do to Get Your Attention? She states: "Smiling, relaxed and be at peace with himself. If he tries to enjoy every moment of his life, wants to discover new places and tastes, respects himself and his family, he gets my attention" (Doğan, 2016b, p. 46)

"A man who gets attention with his intelligence could be more attractive to me even he is not handsome" (Karan, 2015c, p. 85).

"The More Smarter, The More Sexy": The article gives examples of Arthur Miller, Woody Allen and Serge Gainsbourg as the men who made the women fall in love with them because of their intelligence: "sapiosexual...thanks to this phenomenon, you don't need the gym membership. First goal is the city library" (Alışkan, 2016, p. 112).

"The Rise of Sapiosexuality" (*GQ Turkey*, April 2016).

"He does not have a car but a book": "women like men who read more because intelligent means sexy" (*GQ Turkey*, April 2015, p. 129).

Although being romantic, intelligent and a good cook seem to suggest a man different from the one idealized by hegemonic masculinity, that is not the case in terms of men's lifestyle magazines. The reason is that men are called to have these characteristics not for their own selves, but for getting the women they want to have relationships with. Men are suggested to have these qualities because they will take help him to reach the women in

their dreams. This makes these qualities suitable for the ideal man of hegemonic masculinity as they help men to reach the beauty he is after and to prove his heterosexuality while keeping the relationship under his control.

### **3.3. FEMINISM AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN MEN'S LIFESTYLE MAGAZINES**

Men's lifestyle magazines also touch upon feminism directly from time to time. Although the magazines seem to accept the changing perceptions about men and women in terms of gender equality, it is also clear that there is a long way to go.

In the article titled "New Generation Men", the writer admits that the gender roles have already been challenged: "It is the end of the world that we know. As women earn more than men, gender roles change. Now business dinners are women's job whereas men take care of the children...Are we really ready for this?" (*GQ Turkey*, May 2016, p. 58). By stating "it is the end of the world we know", the writer shows that some traditional aspects of patriarchal world collapsed and by asking the question of "are we really ready for this", the writer actually states that men are not ready for these changes although the changes have already taken place for some time now. Considering this anxiety, *GQ Turkey* also explains the benefits of feminism for both women and men. In the article titled "Will Feminism Also See Us?", the writer explains the benefits of feminism for men: Working Women=Powerful Economies, Independent Women=Independent Sexuality, Developing Relationships (more intelligent women make men want to learn more), Fairness for Everybody (Feminist movement sought for justice not only for women but also for men) (*GQ Turkey*, April 2015, p. 129). In the January 2016 issue of *GQ Turkey*, there is an article titled, "An Innocent Turkish Man Who Encountered a Feminist" (p. 150). As the title may seem to pity man and undermines feminism, the writer makes the warning at the beginning: "Let's say it at the beginning. The aim of this article is to remove the barrier between you and the feminist movement. It is meaningless to postpone this issue in a country whose routine agenda is the women who are killed (by men)". However, as the article progresses, the writer makes suggestions to be applied when a man encountered an angry feminist. On the next page, after mentioning the women who are killed by men as a serious problem in Turkey, the writer states "While a lot of women turn into panthers

who look for their rights, a lot of men have been target for women for valid or invalid reasons. But don't be afraid. We listed each and every vital action that can be done when encountered with an angry feminist. Our ultimate goal is to make you like the feminist movement." The things that are suggested as the things that should not be said: "*I don't believe in the equality of men and women.*" This is suggested not to be said everywhere. "*Women should not drive as they cannot:* Remember that 9/10 female drivers are harassed, 9/10 vital accidents are caused by men. Yet, *What was she doing there in those clothes?*": The writer reminds that this will just lead to new cases. "*So you hate all men:* "Feminist is not the women who hate men but it is the women who hate patriarchy". *Just ugly lesbians become feminist:* The writer reminds that even men can be feminist. *Feminism lasts until you find a man as communism does until you find the money:* The writer reminds the women who have been killed after they get married. "*Don't touch the angry feminist*": the writer suggests listening to rather than trying to scare women with body language". Although the article voices important issues about the perception of equality and feminism together with the serious facts such as the women killed by men in Turkey, it still reflects the readers of the magazine have some issues and bias regarding feminism. Even by stating the "angry feminist", the magazine refers to a stereotype of a feminist in men's minds. Even though the article seems to defend women to a certain extent by clarifying the bias against women, it still shows men's limited understanding of feminism.

In the September 2016 issue of *GQ USA*, the editor-in-chief uses the title of "Fear of a Lady Planet" for his piece. He states

For the hardest-core Hillary haters and knee-jerkiest Trumpers, this election is not about sovereignty or national security but about something more threatening: submission. Just as many aggrieved white males couldn't bear to submit to a black leader under Obama, causing strange, finger-pointy, *That man is from Kenya!* anxieties, many now can't imagine submitting to a powerful woman, and so must conjure a she-devil worthy of their hysteria. *Lock her up!*, the convention crowd roared, like some chant from a witch trial. It will all be okay, I want to say. Hillary will become president, she will be capable and wise, and exert sound and prudent judgment, all qualities Donald Trump couldn't milk out of a vice president if you paid him. She'll be part of our growing up, our maturing as a political culture, once we accept her. But we must submit to wisdom. (Nelson, 2016a)

Here, while pointing to Hilary as a capable and wise person rather than labeling her beautiful or blonde, the magazine shows it may also have a feministic point of view from time to time although it also objectifies female body occasionally.

All these articles related to feminism and women's rights show that *GQ* and *Esquire* are aware of the problems faced by women while *Men's Health* do not include this topic as a matter to be solved. Even though *GQ* and *Esquire* claim that women should have equal right with men and they write articles to give their messages, at the same time they still continue designing their pages with the objectified female body which focuses on the "beauty" rather than the rights or power of women. The reason why magazines do not fully defend women's rights with its all aspects is that strong women are something to be afraid and so is feminism because it directly challenges hegemonic masculinity.

*Esquire* Turkey also claims equality for women. In the article titled "We have an objection: Why do women make 24% less compared to men?", the magazines draws attention to the inequality in salaries of men and women. The article calls men to act by stating "it is time for men to take action for a fairer world" (Doğan, 2015, p. 78). In the article, it is said in Europe women earn 16.4% less compared to men. In the article, it is also claimed that the social structure in which child care is undertaken by women and the breadwinner role attributed to men are some causes that exclude women from work life (Doğan, p. 78). As Connell claims in her book *Masculinities*, the breadwinner role of men is taken granted as a part of masculinity by male role theory and was regarded as something universal although it came up in Britain in 19<sup>th</sup> century due to the changes in British society (2005, pp. 28-29). Connell adds that trade unions made use of this concept while deciding on the wage of the women and men (2005, p. 29). The article in the *Esquire* shows that the breadwinning position of men is still used by men who are backed by norms of hegemonic masculinity. In this way, while men earn more money, women are oppressed because of their sex. Although *Esquire* seems to defend women's rights in that area, the magazine on the other hand continues objectifying female body rather than stressing their success in life. This situation actually is a reflection of men's perception in Turkey. Although women's rights are part of the agenda now, there is a still long way to go and hegemonic masculinity continues to oppress women.

*Esquire* refers to women's rights in its various issues. While referring to Women's Day in March 2015 issue, the editor-in-chief of *Esquire* Turkey introduces an article which explains the story of successful women and states that "the old interpretation of weakness for women always created chaos for them. Men have never faced the contradictory aspect

of being strong...Today, we see some slight changes yet being weak (women's being weak) has never changed...If we had experienced one of a thousand that women have had, we (men) would be crying at a corner" (Noyan, 2015, p. 12). While *Esquire* Turkey seems to underline the problems that women face in the patriarchal society, it also reminds its readers that there is a long way to go. In the following year, the editor-in-chief of *Esquire* Turkey raises the same issue (2016, p. cover). On the cover of the issue, there is a slogan: "How Can You Be a Feminist in 7 Steps?". Inside the magazine (Noyan, March 2016, p. 18), the editor-in-chief states "It is really weird to discuss the rights that a person should already have. Additionally, except physical differences, the fact that there are inequalities between two sexes in terms of rights, status, income, and promotion makes March 8 a product of pharisaical thought, don't you think?...I would like to talk about the pages that we attribute to women by dreaming days on which "being the opposite sex" is explained with the concept of "being a person" and the sex discrimination is left". In the same issue, in the article titled "How Can You Be a Feminist?" (Dinç, 2016, p. 112), the writer gives some information about feminism in general, the problems experienced by women in Turkey, and the perception of feminism in the world and Turkey by referring to the writers such as Michael Kimmel and Simone de Beauvoir. The writer refers to "the things we know really well" such as "wishing for a boy, sacrificing an animal to God because of having a baby boy, having children until a person has a baby boy". She depicts gender as something we cannot choose but something the society has regulated. While quoting Simone de Beauvoir "You don't born as a women but you make it", the writer claims that gender is a social coding...The writer also gives some problems women in Turkey experienced: 414 killed in 2015, more were exposed to violence, raped or harassed. The writer adds that patriarchy claims "You Cannot Exist if You Don't Serve Me". Referring to Kimmel, the writer ends the article by saying that feminism is also good for men as it will create a relief for them. In other words, with feminism, men will also get rid of the responsibilities the society asked from him such as the role as the breadwinner.

By explaining feminism and gender as a social construct and the situation in Turkey at the time, *Esquire* shows women in Turkey are still oppressed by men and the readers need to learn more about women's rights. On the other hand, the magazine goes on preparing articles that are in line with the norms of hegemonic masculinity.

In *Esquire* USA, (April 2015, p. 82) there is an article titled “Sex and America” in which acceptable sexual behaviors are analyzed. The writer claims that men and women’s definitions of sexual harassment are very similar however the strange thing is women say they experience and observe it all the time whereas men say they just hear about it. According to a survey that was carried out by *Esquire* and *Cosmopolitan* magazines, the 82% of women think American popular culture is demeaning the women and 68% men agree with that. 51% of women claim that they consider themselves as feminists. The rate for the same item is 29% for men. 33% women say they have been the target of sexual assault in their lives when a person forces sexual activity on them without consent. For men, it is 10%. 52% of men and 48% of women believe that under the right circumstances, most men are capable of rape. Especially the last percentages about rape show how much men objectify women and how much danger the women feel. In the same issue, there are pieces written by nine different writers on what it is like to be a man or a woman in America. Carpentier (2015, p. 100) states, “some men say that things are not that bad for women anymore. They point to Hilary Clinton and 20 women in the US Senate...I am not sure whether to laugh or scream”. Cooper had gender operation and became man-states, “some people argue we are amidst a fresh stage of the gender wars that women are catching up. Those people would be wrong...That is not war. That is domination...Masculinity is rewarded more, elevated more; even masculinity in females is generally acceptable than femininity in males...I don’t get called crazy bitch anymore...Now I am just a dick. And I can say without hesitation: Dick is better”. These two pieces prove that women still feel the overwhelming effects of patriarchy. Although things may look better in structure and theory (like the number of women in the USA Parliament), the practices and beliefs of the society have not transformed enough yet. While *GQ* and *Esquire* voice the rights of women and refer to the inequality between men and women, *Men’s Health* believes it is men who have a disadvantageous position in society.

*Men’s Health* USA claims that men should be saved rather than women. There is an article titled “Save the Males” (Scott, December 2015, p. 65). The same article did not appear in the Turkey version most probably as the article is about American men. In the highlight of the article, it is said “A half-dozen federal agencies are dedicated to protecting women while the health of men is virtually ignored. That double standard could kill you.”

The article claims that if the women had a bad condition in terms of health, the issue could be given more importance by the federal agencies: “Take all the bad things that happen mostly to men and try to imagine how much worse you would feel about them if they happened to women”. The writer even claims that “It is fair to say that physical well-being of men is glaring societal blind spot—a casualty of outdated notions about gender roles and male privilege” and adds “there are some evolutionary reasons”. For example, throughout history men as heroes died so that the others could live. In other words, men sacrificed their life for their countries. The writer claims that men’s bad health not only affects them negatively but also creates problems in society: “Our poor longevity and heightened odds of addiction, self-harm, and committing violent crimes affect not only us but also welfare of women and children and even the economy as a whole”. The writer quotes a gender studies expert without giving a name and states this expert said “A *Men’s Health* movement has about as much relevance as white liberation”. By quoting a man called Henry, the writer claims that some men having more political power does not mean any good for the health of a man who is coughing his lungs out in a coal mine. Henry also claims that “guys basically have a protective instinct and are looking for ways to help women and children”. The writer suggests that a *Men’s Health* office can also “take up violence as a health issue” since the writer claims violence can be caused by some mental health factors. At the end of the article, the editors call men to write a petition and send it to the White House to ask for the foundation of an Office of *Men’s Health*. Just focusing on the health issue without presenting any statistics except the life expectancy of men and women and the money spent on women’s health by *Women’s Health*, the article tries to persuade readers men need to be saved. While doing that the writer refers to men as heroes who have sacrificed their lives for women and children throughout history. The article is totally against feminism and women’s rights as it claims it is not women but men who have a disadvantageous position in society and who live shorter compared to women. Moreover, as Connell states “the figure of hero is central to the western cultural imagery of the masculine” (2005, p. 213). This proves the idea that the article not only ignores the inequality that is experienced by women in the US, but also bases its arguments on one of the fundamental aspects of hegemonic masculinity.

## CHAPTER SUMMARY

*GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health* portrays men as heterosexual womanizers who would like to have relationship with numerous beautiful and sexy women. This beauty is defined by these men's lifestyle magazines and it generally describes thin women who have the body of top models. The magazines present these beautiful women as the women only real men can have relationships with. All the magazines examined in this study objectify woman body while taking attention to her "beauty". However, magazines present these objectified bodies in a way that assumes all readers agree on the beauty of them. The magazines also promise their readers to help them to reach these beautiful women. In that sense, these women are presented as mystical beings that are difficult to be solved by men in order to give the message that men need advice. With their advice, the magazines aim to support men on their way to joyful relationships in which men are active and men prove their heterosexuality. The magazines encourage men to cheat on their lovers and portray marriage as something to be afraid of. All these put women into an inferior position by objectifying the female body. On the other hand, *GQ* and *Esquire* include articles calling for equal rights for women. However, these two magazines also continue objectifying female body, which shows they are not very sincere in their approach to women. *Men's Health* does not refer to feminism at all and even claims men have an inferior position by pointing to lower life expectancy of men. It seems that *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health* are all aware of the inequality experienced by women but their approach suggests that they still apply the norms of hegemonic masculinity which oppresses women.

## CHAPTER 4

### STYLISH MAN

In their Turkish and USA versions, *GQ*, *Esquire* and *Men's Health* all attach high importance to style. Each and every issue of these three men's lifestyle magazines are packed with suggestions related to style: what is fashionable, how to put together a good outfit, and what to wear for special occasions. However, considering the men's lifestyle magazine covers examined in chapter one of this dissertation, it is apparent that while *Men's Health* emphasizes the importance of a strong body on its covers, *GQ* and *Esquire* underline the significance of style. *GQ* USA publishes two special style issues during the year. One of them is for spring and summer while the other one includes tips for fall and winter. In *GQ* Turkey's media kit, the magazine claims "[*GQ* readers] like to spend money on products of luxury living and men's toys. Following fashion is one of [their] biggest hobbies of 49%" (*GQ* Turkey Media Kit 2016, p. 5). Considering this figure and data collected through readers, *GQ* Turkey shapes its magazine according to its reader profile and thus attaches high importance to style.

*Esquire* also knows that its readers want to read tips related to style. While *Esquire* Turkey includes style tips in its all issues, *Esquire* USA publishes "The Big Black Book" twice a year with a similar approach to *GQ*. It includes information about recent trends in menswear. Also, in *Esquire* USA media kit, the magazine states "*Esquire's* sense of fashion decorum is legendary. Its tagline— "[t]he best of everything that he can afford"— is exemplified by showing fashion in an intelligent light, and the magazine positions itself as the sommelier of style. *Esquire* sees itself as allowing readers to get more than just trends but also value and impact from their purchases, be they cars, clothes, cognac or any other object a man should have" (2017, p. 6). In this way, *Esquire* claims that it provides its readers with something more than plain fashion and it aims to give them the best of everything that a man should have to be stylish. This idea is also reflected and reiterated from time to time in the magazine: "Ever since *Esquire* set out in the fall of 1933 to inspire readers to give a little care and thought and study to the selection of clothes, editors have devoted part of every issue to helping men understand the prevailing tastes and best practices of the times" (*Esquire* USA, October 2015, p. 186). *Esquire* USA

also seems to believe that American men need style tips, as it argues in its March 2015 issue (Raab, 2015, p. 118): “The last ten years have been powered by intermittent waves of dandyism that drove otherwise sensible American men to cultivate interesting facial hair... and [to] reeducate themselves in the lost art of throwing things together... Having spent the past decade learning to dress up, we are now applying our appreciation for quality and our attention to craftsmanship to dressing down”. The magazine even offers a How To guide to dressing in the American Way –”How to Dress American Now: American style can mean a lot of things but mainly it means a particular way of putting yourself together without looking like you tried so hard... You need to notice the guy first before you register his clothes” (August 2015, p. 52). *Esquire* Turkey seems to have the same mission. In each and every issue, the magazine offers tips related to style. Similar to its USA version, *Esquire* Turkey also reminds its readers the importance of style in its issues explicitly.

As *Men’s Health* mainly focuses on body rather than style, the magazine does not offer specific style issues. However, in each and every issue of *Men’s Health* in both in the USA and Turkey versions, there are tips regarding style, this time from the perspective of highlight the muscular body it idealizes. The editor-in-chief claims “At *Men’s Health*, we have been trying to make suggestions that will provide you with a greater quality of life for years. Being healthy and fit is just one part of this. What you wear and how you look play a vital role as well” (Büyükbayrak, 2014b, 16). From time to time, just as *Esquire* and *GQ* do, *Men’s Health* also warns its readers and suggests that they should be careful about their style: “There is only one person who loves you whatever you wear and this is your mother. Everyone else evaluates you based on what you wear when they see you for the first time... The worrying thing is this grade is awarded in the first few seconds” (*Men’s Health* Turkey, April 2016, p. 150). This warning shows the importance of style for the magazine.

*GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men’s Health* give style-related tips and suggest fashionable products to their readers in different formats. These tips not only aim to create each individual magazine’s ideal man but also the archetypal example of hegemonic masculinity. When Mort examined the relationship between fashion and men in 1988, he stated that “Young men are being sold images which rupture traditional icons of masculinity. They are stimulated to look at themselves and other men as objects ... They are getting pleasure

previously branded taboo or feminine” (1988, p. 98). In other words, Mort claims that paying attention to fashion and style, which was previously regarded as a feminine pursuit, has turned into a source of enjoyment for men. What Mort said is still valid today. Considering the style content in *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men’s Health*, it seems that men are enjoying fashion and style tips provided by these magazines. Going one step further, Barry claims that today style has become a way to communicate masculinity. Barry states “[u]nderstanding the reasons underpinning men’s motives for consuming fashion is crucial because consumer culture provides a platform where men negotiate masculinity” (2015, p. 144). This shows that fashion is a way of expressing masculinity in capitalist culture. In other words, by wearing certain clothes men reveal where they stand in the line of masculinity. According to Barry, while doing this, a man also reinforces his heterosexuality and his commitment to hegemonic masculinity by wearing certain clothes. He states “I found that contemporary men buy fashion to express hegemonic masculine ideals in order to protect the boundaries of their gendered identities and prevent their identities from being questioned” (2015, p. 154). Reflecting on this short history of perception of style by men, it is apparent that paying attention to style and fashion, which was once accepted as a feminine practice has been used today as an expression of hegemonic masculinity. That is why the style tips and suggestions in *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men’s Health* aim to cultivate a stylish man, who makes use of elements of fashion to express his loyalty to hegemonic masculinity.

#### 4.1. STYLE IS PERSONAL.



**Fig. 4.1.** Kivanç, K. December 2014, *A snapshot from GQ Turkey*, p. 112.

To convince the readers that they will be the ideal men of hegemonic masculinity if they follow the style tips in their pages, magazines first need to persuade their readers that style is a way of expressing themselves.

Thus the lifestyle magazines examined in this study claim that style should be personal and should reflect a person’s own character. In this way, *GQ*, *Esquire* and *Men’s Health* all present fashion as individualistic, and personalize the tips they give. For instance,

*Men's Health* Turkey asks “[w]hich one is your color?” (August 2015, p. 122) and *Esquire* Turkey highlights “Two Different Styles, Two Different People”: “If you are not stubborn about your style, you definitely have seen that a person in five different styles can be five different people... For that reason, clothes are the expression of who you feel like today.” (*Esquire* Turkey, March 2015, p. 16).

The emphasis on individual personalization is reiterated repeatedly across all three publications. Thus we see statements arguing “[s]tyle means nothing, unless it’s personal” (*The Black Book*, *Esquire* USA 2014/Spring-Summer, p. 31); “Let Your Style Become Your Signature” (*Men's Health* Turkey, October 2014, p. 199) and encouragement to “elevate your personal style” (*GQ* USA, October 2016, p. cover). Predictably, personal styling reaches heights of eloquence with *Esquire* USA’s May 2016 edition: “We all seek to find something in this world that develops with us...that feels made just for us. That has formed a sacred bond with us” (p. 68).

The possessive “your” and the repeated use of “personal” are the key words in this context. All the magazines give the messages that although with every season comes a new color palette, a man should choose his own color among them and develop his own personal fashion sense like a signature, which is the essence of stylish dressing. To make a style personal, *GQ*, *Esquire* and *Men's Health* claim that it should reflect a person’s own character. As it is stated in the *Esquire* USA: “Clothing is fundamental. Every morning, we get up and put something on. We dress differently in nearly every activity we engage in. Only rarely do we throw something on with absolutely no thought. There is always a decision involved, a calculation of... how we want to present ourselves to the people we are going to interact with... Inevitably, what we wear represents some facet of who we are.” (Granger, 2015, p. 40).

*Esquire*, *GQ* and *Men's Health* also explain why styling should be deeply personal. They claim that style can be turned into a personal expression of the self, a tool through which people present their identities to other people. In other words, style is presented as a dialogue among people and readers are expected to dress up considering the message they want to convey to other people. For that reason, there are lots of tips in *GQ*, *Esquire* and *Men's Health*, both in the USA and Turkey versions. Here follows some examples: “Choose a tie clip that reflects your character...” (*GQ* Turkey, February 2014, p. 26).

“Your perfume should reflect your identity just as your car does” (*Men’s Health* Turkey, April 2016, p. 162).

“Accessories are the main components that you can reflect your character through” (*GQ* Turkey, March 2014, p. 34).

“Your lifestyle is reflected in the clothes you choose” (Kıvanç, 2016, p. 81).

“Make Your Style Speak” (*Men’s Health* Turkey, November 2014, p. 154)

“Pairing a sneaker with a suit takes some of the formality out of the ensemble” says Liad Krispin... “It shows the guy does not take life too seriously” agrees Sartori... “A suit with sneakers shows” says Poopat of Common Projects, “that you are powerful enough that you don’t have to impress anyone” (Stein, 2015b).

“Sometimes getting dressed is more like getting into character, and no role is more dependable for winning the day and getting the girl” (*GQ* USA, January 2016).

“The clothes speak very quietly about the person wearing them...” (Sullivan, 2016, p. 78)

All these extracts show that the magazines give their readers the message that their clothes actually speak for them and that people evaluate each other’s clothes while forming their first impression of each other. This claim not only creates a need to attach more importance to clothes but also aims to make men consider what they want to tell others through their clothes. This is the point where style and the norms of hegemonic masculinity meet. While deciding on what characteristics they want to reflect through their style; the readers of *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men’s Health* are also expected to consider the characteristics of “the real man” –the archetype of hegemonic masculinity branded by these magazines: heterosexual, womanizing, unique, powerful, elegant, masculine, rebellious, modern, self-confident, and heroic.

Although the magazines seem to encourage their readers to find their own styles, at the same time they impose the characteristics of the hegemonic masculinity produced by the magazines. In that sense, the readers of these magazines are expected to find their true self by transforming themselves into a version of this ideal man.

#### **4.2. STYLE: BE YOURSELF BY BECOMING SOMEONE ELSE.**

In the USA and Turkey versions of *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men’s Health*, style is shown as a way to discover your true self. In this process, while adapting his style, a man actually

becomes someone else when wearing different clothes. Considering that, as we have seen, men's lifestyle magazines' claim that style reflects personality, different styles turn into different characters. In this way, a man can be a different man when he changes his style. Yet ironically this is the point where the man finds his true self –by becoming someone else: “Be comfortable, be sexy, be yourself, become someone else” (man undercover). In that sense, the style actually becomes a means of transformation. In a way, the magazines suggest that changing style enables readers to become their real selves. This claim can also be interpreted as transformation into a real man, in other words the archetype of hegemonic masculinity. Yet this injunction actually conveys the message to readers that unless they follow this advice, then as they are they are not good enough –they are not enough of a real man. The process both creates and feeds off reader anxiety. That is why the characteristics of archetypical hegemonic masculinity are praised and the readers are called upon to incorporate these characteristics by adapting their styles.

While identifying his character and signaling how he wants to reflect his personality through his clothes, a man is also expected to choose who he wants to be: “Dress like Bond. Feel like Bond.” (Heid, 2016, p. 95). Apparently, the magazine claims that by adapting Bond's style, a man not only looks like Bond but also can feel like Bond. Thus, a man who would like to look self-confident, to be appreciated by women (which is always the case in Bond movies) and to achieve extraordinary things an ordinary man cannot achieve, should dress like Bond. Here Bond, who possesses many of the defining features of hegemonic masculinity, functions as a style icon who, if followed sartorially, will lend his personal character traits to those who follow him. The example of Bond is invoked in order to tempt readers to test out the theory that by dressing like somebody else, a man can incorporate the character traits he wants to present to other people. It is possible to find similar examples in *GQ*, *Esquire* and *Men's Health*:

“Yes, it helps to have his genes. But it also helps to have his jeans –and his leathers, and his tees” (The 13 Most Stylish Men, 2016).

“16 Style Essentials, One Well-Dressed Man (You!): “Wear Your Confidence”, “Build Your Strong Suit”... “Collect the right elements, combine them with flair, and your personal sense of style will take flight. You never know where you might land” (*Men's Health* USA, March 2015, p. 134).

“The Most Fatherly Designs:...Of course, while your father may not be that man now, maybe he is planning to turn into that man next year...While selecting your present for Father’s Day, give him the chance to transform into that man” (Şengül, 2015a, p. 78).

All these extracts chime with the notion that *GQ*, *Esquire* and *Men’s Health* encourage their readers to discover their true selves by transforming their wardrobe. It further functions as another message that works to justify the magazines’ existence, as that is why the readers of these men’s lifestyle magazines are expected to need the magazines for their advice and guidance. Further, the extracts also make clear that the *raison d’être* of these men’s lifestyle magazines is to craft an image of masculinity. The words of Alexander reflect this same idea: “As boys and men consume popular culture and advertisements, they also consume the masculine gender ideal associated with specific products” (2003, p. 540). In other words, the magazines create this idea and then sell it to men.

#### 4.3. DIFFERENTIATE YOURSELF FROM OTHERS.



Fig. 4.2. A snapshot from *Men’s Health USA*, September 2014.

While selling this idea of differentiation *GQ*, *Esquire* and *Men’s Health* claim that style not only helps a man transform into his better self, a more powerful reflection of his character, but that it also makes him stand out from the crowd. That is why the magazines

remind their readers that they have to do something different in order to be recognized and to shine among one’s peers while forming their personal styles. Indeed, the following quotations demonstrate just how important an idea this is in these publications:

“Every dude owns denim. So how do you stand out from the crowd?” (Michel, 2015, p. 57).

“... create a difference with the tie you wear, ...” (Karan, January 2015a, p. 108).

“Make a Difference with Your Style” (*Men’s Health Turkey*, July 2014, p. 121)

The repeated emphasis on “difference”, “exclusive[ity]” and “unique[ness]” again highlights the importance of individualism in the construction of hegemonic masculinity. Style is thus presented as an asset that will make the readers different from the average

man and stand out in the crowd. Yet, of course, this claim is actually deeply ironic. First of all, the readers are only exposed to a limited collection of clothes and accessories, as fashion's major *modus operandi* is to homogenize into discrete trends rather than diversify the range of apparel consumers actually buy and wear. Therefore, there will actually be a lot of men wearing the same thing if they buy only what the magazines suggest. Moreover, the magazines all agree on the similar characteristics of the ideal man of hegemonic masculinity they together have been involved in creating and they brand the products by referring to these characteristics, such as being brave, self-confident, powerful etc. So yet further homogenization occurs. For that reason, differentiation, individualization and uniqueness seem in fact to work in the opposite way and what occurs from encouraging personal signatures is an archetypal figure that wears the same clothes, perfume and shoes as the next man who reads *GQ*, *Esquire* or *Men's Health*.

Nevertheless, all three magazines emphasize fashion's role in creating an unforgettable image. According to *GQ*, *Esquire*, *Men's Health*, similar to being different, becoming an irresistible focal point of attention is another asset that style can bestow on men:

"People who will see you in this coat will never forget you this winter and you will be the one who everyone talks about" (*GQ* Turkey, January, p. 59)

"Want to grab attention this summer in a way that flatters any guy's body? The answer is stripes..." (*GQ* USA, July 2017)

"The Men of the Night: It is not difficult to get the attention of everybody on a night that is important for you" (*GQ* Turkey, December 2015)

"The easiest way to draw attention to your feet" (*Esquire* Turkey, March 2014, p. 123).

"Learn how to keep people's eyes on you with the designs that reveal the man you truly are, with your self-confidence, modernity and fitness" (*Men's Health* Turkey, December 2016, p. 134).

Thus being "different", "unique", "exclusive", and "unforgettable" means being the center of the attention of others. But it is obvious that by choosing from the limited collections suggested by these magazines, a man cannot really be unique for, as long as these magazines tap into the dominant trends in consumer culture and are successful, there will be other men just around the corner who dress in a similar way. The reality is that all these adjectives and the tendency to put the men at the center constitute the magazines' wish to create a legion of style icons, because an icon is unique and unforgettable. So

style iconography adds another facet to the hegemonic masculinity branded by these magazines. Iconography, which is symbolically linked to heroism, is created by hegemonic masculinity itself in order to set the standards for other men who are supposed to follow the hero (Connell, 2005). In this case, the stylish men in these magazines are presented as heroes to be followed by readers and the readers are supposed to believe that they will be like these heroes if they dutifully follow orders –or the tips– for good style.

#### **4.4. TAKE CONTROL OF THE ZONE YOU ENTER.**

The characteristics of the hero the magazines want to create become more apparent when they detail the things that a good style brings to their readers. One of the most important promises of style, it seems, is mastery and control over one’s surroundings, physical or emotional:

“These combinations will make you the master of every setting” (*Esquire* Turkey, May 2015, p. 126). This slogan is used in an advertisement published both in *Esquire* Turkey and *GQ* USA, but the messaging in *Men’s Health* is the same. All these three men’s lifestyle magazines claim that simply by being stylish, one can take control of the place he is in because his outfits signals that he is the dominating force in that zone. The magazines also give the message that a man should take care to be dressed well in all places and at all times:

“Will you meet your lover after work to go to the cinema together? Or will you attend a business meal in which both everyday and serious issues will be discussed?... It is possible to let people recognize your style yet realize that you are different wherever and whenever you like” (*Esquire* Turkey, February 2014, p. 42).

“We all agree that you should always be chic in the office” (*GQ* Turkey, February 2014, p. 26).

“You can be the most stylish men on the beach... a shirt with a light color will make you the most stylish man of happy hours” (*GQ* Turkey, July 2015).

“The most stylish men on the beach” (Şengül, 2015b, p. 60).

“One Man, Three Styles: A man needs life-saving combinations in order dominate every zone he enters” (*Men’s Health* Turkey, July 2014, p. 131).

“Being Chic at Work” (*GQ* Turkey, May 2016, p. 39).

“Fact: More people are checking out your style at the gym than on the street” (“The 2016 Complete Closet”, *GQ USA*, January 2016).

“The Man of Every Setting”: “Modern Cool”, “Urban Safari”, “Active Smartness” (*Esquire Turkey*, March 2016, p. 76).

“The gym might not be the most fashionable place at times, but that does not mean you should not dress to impress” (*GQ USA*, March 2016).

According to these *Esquire*, *GQ* and *Men’s Health*, a man is expected to be chic no matter where he is; he could be on the beach, in the office, in the gym or in a restaurant. The magazines claim that a good style will enable a man to dominate every zone he is in. By using his personal style, a man is expected to “take hold of every zone he enters”, which implies he can also take control of the people. In other words, an attendant purpose of being fashionable is domination and power, or, as helping to establish oneself as the alpha male in the room. As one of the most important aspects of hegemonic masculinity is dominance over others, including women (Connell, 2005, p. 77), marginal masculinities and minorities, this aspect of style can be interpreted as directly linked to hegemonic masculinity.

#### **4.5. YOUR STYLE CAN MAKE YOU ELEGANT.**

The other characteristic of the stylish hero branded by *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men’s Health* is elegance. All magazines use the word “elegant” in their slogans on their style-related pages:

“A Real Gentleman, More Luxurious, the Most Elegant and Simple” (*GQ Turkey*, September 2015).

“Distinctive and stylish elegance, impulsive, confident ardor” (*Esquire Turkey*, September 2015, p. 10).

“The Symbol of Elegance” (*Esquire Turkey*, August 2016, p. 49).

“The Representation of Elegance” (*Esquire Turkey*, October 2015, p. 80).

“The most elegant watches of the moment...” (*GQ USA*, August 2016).

“Look elegant this Autumn” (*Esquire Turkey*, September 2015, p. 120).

“Elegance is having the knowledge to make the right combinations” (*Esquire USA*, 2014, p. 46).

“Evening watches look more elegant” (Sullivan, *Esquire* USA, September 2016, p. 84). The sheer number of slogans with the word elegance proves its conceptual importance. According to Cambridge Online Dictionary, elegant means “graceful and attractive in appearance and behavior”, so being attractive not only in terms of looks but also in manners. The origin of the word comes from the Latin word *elagans*, means “specially chosen as being of good quality”.

Ricciardelli draws attention to the fact that *GQ* and *Esquire* (Canada versions) generally include models “dressed in high-end business attire”, such as Armani, Dolce & Gabbana (2010, p. 75). The same trend can be seen in the magazines of our study. When the meaning of the word elegance is combined with the presentation of high-end brands, it becomes clear that by referring to elegance, these magazines are idealizing men who can afford these clothes, and therefore have financial, educational and cultural capital. This aspirational model is inherently conservative, in that it bolsters the individual at the top of the hierarchy and in so doing reinforces the social structure that keeps him there. As Allen highlights, “differences among individual men such as age, physical size and strength, class, wealth, sexual activity and so on are ranked according to the masculine stereotype and invested with varying degrees of patriarchal power; the characteristics become markers of masculinity or the lack of it” (Allen, 2002, p. 47). *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men’s Health* want their readers to be at the top of the hierarchy. Therefore, the high-end brands suggested by the magazines, even if they are outside the price range of the majority of the readership, are placed there in order to present the aspirational model of a man with the highest social status, who dominates others.

#### **4.6. BE MASCULINE.**

Given that our subject is the construction of hegemonic masculinity, it is no surprise that masculinity itself plays a vital role in the presentation of its archetypal ideal man. By referring to style as masculine, *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men’s Health* impress upon their readers that there is nothing feminine about paying attention to one’s style, so long as one forms their style based on the masculine items suggested by the magazines: “You can find the most classic and masculine cashmere pullovers...” (Işık, 2014a, p. 83).

“Masculine Attitude” (*Men’s Health* Turkey, July 2014, p. 121).

“The proper (*adam akilli*) man’s boot preference” (Karan, 2015a, p. 54).

One reader’s question: “Are there style lines that straight men just shouldn’t cross?” (*Esquire* USA, May 2014, p. 65).

“Step up your game with some masculine rings” (*GQ* USA, March 2016).

For a suit: “it guarantees the masculine charm” (*Esquire* Turkey, June 2015, p. 144).

Continuing the theme of suits, in their article, which was written after interviewing four men about their choice of suits, Barry and Weiner claim that the suit itself is a symbol of hegemonic masculinity. They reveal that “[a]ll of our participants displayed thought and consideration when making suiting decisions...this effort was driven by a desire to access status and power. We would also suggest that these men wanted to minimize the risks that can occur from wearing the “wrong” clothing.” (22). In other words, the purchase of a suit is fraught with ideological and symbolic weight, as it is the piece of clothing most invested with notion of power and, they argue, sexuality. The extracts from *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men’s Health* above reinforce that message to the readers, with the implication that as long as the readers choose the items suggested by the magazines, they are guaranteed to look powerful and heterosexual. These two dimensions of hegemonic masculinity are the key characteristics its archetypal man must have (Connell, 2005, pp. 77-78).

The power aspect that is associated with masculinity is also referred on the style pages of magazines, not by using the word masculinity directly but by inferring its significance by using militaristic language:

“Suitable steps are important to strengthen your military stance (*GQ* Turkey, January 2016, p. 22).

“The Comfort of Opposition” (*Esquire* Turkey, September 2016, p. 122).

“Bring Out Your Dark Side, Conquer Casual Friday” (Michel, 2015, p. 58).

“If you want to fire up your style, use orange” (*GQ* Turkey, January 2015, p. 57).

Although masculinity is not used as a word in these slogans, the phrases such as “strengthen your military stance” or words like “conquer” refer to the power that the ideal man is expected to possess by virtue of his style choices.

#### **4.7. REBEL WITH YOUR STYLE.**

While we have seen that the fundamental logic governing hegemonic masculinity is conservative, being rebellious is, ironically, another constituent characteristic. According to Cambridge Online Dictionary, rebelliousness means “opposing the ideas of the people in authority and plan to change the system, often using force“. The symbolic contradiction of hegemonic masculinity is that it idealizes the male rebel at the same time as functioning as a retrograde political tool which serves to bolster existing aspects of oppressive structures, including patriarchy, misogyny and heteronormativity. In this sense, the rebelliousness encouraged is always the a-political acting out of a dilettante, rather than the rebelliousness of political idealism or social activism, both of which have no place in the construction of hegemonic masculinity. Nevertheless, combining power and rebellion with some force is a recurring theme for *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men’s Health* remind their readers this idea of rebellion:

“Rebel Style” (*GQ* USA, December 2016, p. 104).

“Reveal the rebellious man in you. Catch the free soul of outdoor clothes.” (*Men’s Health* Turkey, November 2015, p. 137).

“The rebellious side of smartness” (*Esquire* Turkey, March 2015, p. 56).

“The rebellious side of silence” (*Esquire* Turkey, May 2016, p. 136).

“The season’s most elegant-and rebellious-shoes” (*Esquire* USA, October 2016, p. 115).

“Your clothes could use some micro-aggression” (*GQ* USA, March 2016).

“This is a Style Revolution” (*GQ* Turkey, February 2014, p. 96).

#### **4.8. BE A MODERN MAN.**

Modern is a similar word to masculinity in terms of the difficulty at coming up with an objective definition. However, considering the slogans in *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men’s Health*; that modern means up to date, keeping up with the times:

“The most modern traveler” (*GQ* Turkey, August 2015).

“Old rule: Don’t wear denim on denim...New rule: Go ahead and match. It just feels modern” (*GQ* USA, August 2016).

Trench coat: Tempting and modern (*Esquire* Turkey, May 2015, p. 144).

Style: Modern and City Soldiers (*Esquire* Turkey, November 2015, p. 104).

“A modern touch on classical designs” (*Men’s Health* Turkey, April 2016, p. 173).

“For a modern and sophisticated look, combine your clothes with black or brown shoes” (*Men’s Health* Turkey, May 2015, p. 162).

“A Modern Touch on Sporty Smartness” (*Men’s Health* Turkey, September 2016, p. 122).

“The Password of the Modern Chic” (*Men’s Health* Turkey, July 2014, p. 134).

“With the designs in which classical pieces are combined with modern touches” (*Men’s Health* Turkey, December 2014, p. 168).

“Modern designs are ready for your safari tours” (*GQ* Turkey, May 2016, p. 115).

Here, these magazines give the message that ideal stylish man should be *on trend* in his pursuit of having the best style. The word modern also invokes notions of continuous change. The readers of these magazines are expected to internalize the changes and adapt to the new ideas of the current time. In this sense, modernity is intimately related to hegemonic masculinity. By agreeing with Connell (2005, p. 77), Reeser states “...masculinity is not static...it changes by virtue of interactions in space and time” (2010, p. 41). While the hegemony of masculinity is relatively constant, hegemonic masculinity itself evolves. Therefore, in order to emulate the archetypal figure of hegemonic masculinity, a man needs to keep his practice and performance up to date with the current norms. That is why being modern is presented as a desirable characteristic for the ideal man.

#### **4.9. BELIEVE IN YOURSELF.**

“I think what we wear gives us strength” writes the editor-in-chief of *Esquire* USA, March 2014 (p. 42). Thus the link between style and self-confidence is clearly demonstrated here. *GQ*, *Esquire* and *Men’s Health* provide all these style tips and create the ideal stylish man, so it seems, in order to encourage self-confidence in their readership.

Considering the definition of confidence, it can be argued that by encouraging the development of a personal style among their readers, who can also, as a consequence, improve their self-confidence, these men’s lifestyle magazines want to create an ideal man who is sure that he can achieve anything he wants to achieve and that he has the required potential to do so. This “being certain of his capabilities” may help the ideal man

to strengthen his dominant position over other people. The following quotations demonstrate how frequently the idea comes up across the magazines:

“It is amazing the confidence that clothing can confer” *Esquire* USA the Black Book Fall-Winter 2014, p. 22).

“This season, men are more confident, strong and fearless than ever” (*GQ* Turkey, March 2014, p. 114).

“Learn how to keep people’s eyes on you with the designs that reveal the man you are, with your self-confidence, modernity and fitness” (*Men’s Health* Turkey, December 2016, p. 134).

“A business suit that radiates confidence” (*GQ* USA, October 2016).

Considering the slogans above, style seems to be presented as the language through which a man conveys and justifies his confidence in himself. In that sense, through his style, a man can show the people around him he has the potential to reach his life goals. This drive towards achievement is one of the fundamental characteristics of men who strive to take control of the world around them.

#### **4.10. BREAK THE RULES AND BE BRAVE IN YOUR STYLE.**

*GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men’s Health* (both in USA and Turkey versions) invite their readers to become braver when it comes to their style:

“You are the Limit: Spring-Summer men’s wear has never been so limitless...” (*GQ* Turkey, April 2014, p. 111).

“With some brave first steps, you can master your own color palette” (*Esquire* Turkey, January 2014, p. 44).

“Command major respect this spring, break the pattern, be a force of nature” (Nygaard, 2015a, p. 77).

“It Requires Courage to Be Different” (*Esquire* Turkey, March 2014, p. 125).

“In these days of every-man-for himself-ism, the guy who takes over is the one is not afraid to break the rules” (*GQ* USA, November 2016).

“Be the boss of business casual: learn to divide and conquer, step in the right direction, make the little things count, don’t be afraid of the dark” (Nygaard, 2015b, pp. 59-62).

“Break rules, turn heads” (*Men’s Health* USA Style Guide, September 2015, p. 3).

Suggestions to men who “want to take brave steps in their style” and “show their true colors” (*GQ Turkey*, July 2015).

“Make brave touches on your style and look more eye-catching” (Orgül, *Esquire Turkey*, January 2015, p. 49).

“...Mark Kelly has been recognized for his courage and determination” (Breitling, 2016).

“Brave smartness” (*Men’s Health Turkey*, May 2015, p. 182).

“Accept No Limits” (*Esquire Turkey*, July 2016, p. 131).

“Dressing Well Requires Being Brave” (*Esquire Turkey*, December 2016, p. 128).

“Be a little bit brave this season and leave the dark colors aside” (*GQ Turkey*, May 2016, p. 87).

“It is Time to Be Brave in Your Style” (*Esquire Turkey*, January 2016, p. 92)

“Brave and Assertive” (*Esquire Turkey*, February 2016, p. 59)

“If your general look is simple and classic, then you can be brave while choosing these accessories (hat, scarf, gloves, boots, shoes) (*GQ Turkey*, January 2014, p. 81).

“Continue to be Brave and Free with your Colors” (*Esquire Turkey*, April 2016, p. 76)

“Don’t be afraid of the rainbow” (Schube, *GQ USA*, January 2016).

“Let’s remind each other that the bravest forms of trends won their places on stages and magazines” (Işık, *GQ Turkey*, March 2014, p. 112).

This “encouragement” by the magazines can be interpreted in two ways. First, it is a method for magazines to assure their readers that new style items that may look “marginal” or foppish can actually be worn by heterosexual men and there is no need to “be afraid of the rainbow”. Secondly, bravery can be evaluated as a personal trait the ideal man of hegemonic masculinity must have. If the readers are to be brave, they must also be brave in their style, and this will allow them to be regarded as real men. In that sense, the magazines try to encourage their readers to be brave not just in their style but also in their life. Hence, the ideal man is depicted as courageous and self-confident.

#### **4.11. THE LADIES' MAN.**

All these aspects of style in these magazines together with the adjectives that describe the ideal men of hegemonic masculinity not only create the ideal stylish man but also purport to help men in their relationships with women. In other words, having good style is portrayed as an asset for the heterosexual womanizer. That is why *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health* all remind their readers to be careful about their style:

"Nearly seven out of ten women look at men's clothing for signs of his potential as a suitable mate...Before you even open up your mouth, your clothes speak for you... nearly half of the women surveyed said they closely examine your [men's] footwear" (a match.com survey) (*Men's Health* USA, November 2015, p. 90).

"...the men who prefer bowties are found to be more romantic by women" (*Esquire* Turkey, January 2016, p. 46).

"Things that make her go mmm. The shoes. The watches. The ride" (*Esquire* USA, November 2016, p. cover).

"According to a questionnaire done by *Women's Health*, women tell the accessory that reveals most about a man is his pair of shoes" (*Men's Health* Turkey, April 2015, p. 163).

"My Womanizer: If you are a typical man of the night or the wanted name of weekend escapes, you should have this combination..." (*Esquire* Turkey, May 2015, p. 64).

The extracts above show that women are used as a motivation for men to be more stylish. As is explained in the previous chapter titled "Men with Women", *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health* encourage their readers to be ladies' men. In this sense, style is shown as another tool to make men's job easier while they are having relationships with different women.

#### **4.12. HAVING STYLE MEANS A PROSPEROUS CAREER.**

According to *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health*, a good style not only helps men to have relationships with different women, but also increases men's success in their careers: "You will have everything to look good after you have a fit body and you renew your wardrobe. You just need to take the necessary actions immediately. Time will tell you

what benefits such style can bring” (Büyükbayrak, 2016b, p. 12). The same idea is repeated in different issues of *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men’s Health*:

“How to Upgrade Your Life & Your Look” (*GQ* USA, October 2016).

“The benefits of being a stylish man both at home and at work are increasing day by day. The women who claim that “men should not care too much about what they wear are now in their sixties and forgot to share this information with the next generation. In short, it is not just your body that you should change to have the best summer” (Büyükbayrak, 2015a, p. 16).

“What you wear is important for your career development” (*GQ* Turkey, December 2015)

“The scent of the successful man” (Montblanc)

“Consider our suggestions –they will raise your rankings” (*GQ* Turkey, January 2016, p. 22)

“How to Succeed by Changing your Style” (*GQ* USA, June 2016)

These extracts show that style is presented as an empowering force that will help men to reach the higher rungs on their career ladders. In other words, the men’s lifestyle magazines claim that having style can bring with it financial success, which of course means more power for the man concerned. In a broader sense and in Connell’s terms, style is symbolic of the “patriarchal control of wealth” (*Masculinities* 85). Evidently, this control, in terms of the archetype of hegemonic masculinity, means greater financial capital and domination over other masculinities and women in working life.

#### *CHAPTER SUMMARY*

All the three magazines examined in this study give style tips and make product recommendations to their readers in both their Turkish and USA versions. The magazines all advise men to develop a personal style that is reflective of their own character. In this sense, individual style is portrayed as the *sine qua non* of the ideal man. While enabling men to become more stylish, the magazines actually idealize the powerful man of hegemonic masculinity. The magazines claim that a man can display his unique individuality through his style choices. However, a contradiction exists in that they present only a limited selection of clothing and accessories that are affordable to the majority of their readership. The magazines also cultivate associations of elegance,

masculinity, rebelliousness, modernity, self-confidence, and bravery with their figure of the ideal man. All these features aim to create a powerful man who dominates over marginalized masculinities and women. Having style is also presented as rewarding. The magazines emphasize that having style means having the power to attract women and the success in climbing the career ladder.

## CHAPTER 5

### GOOD-LOOKING MAN

If style is one important dimension of the physical performance of the ideal man, grooming is the other. *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health*, both in their USA and Turkey versions, give advice about how to groom, how to get rid of wrinkles, how to maintain one's hair and encourage regrowth, how to remove body hair and how to look after one's skin:

The January 2014 issue of *GQ* Turkey sets out the grooming stall:

Now, it is not just women that are supposed to be well-groomed. It is the era of equality. Have a look at yourself. Unless you are as well-groomed as her, you start the game 1-0 down... Modern men are supposed to look well-turned-out. Yet, we know that women also like the macho image that is created by a 3-day-beard, so it may be better not to meet her with a bare face" (2014).

This quotation reflects *GQ's*, *Esquire's*, and *Men's Health's* laying off the ground for the publications' advertising and encouraging the use of various cosmetics. The following quotes demonstrate the emphasis on personal grooming:

"Our Annual Guide to Grooming Awesomeness: Trust Us, We Tested a Lot of Creams" (*GQ* USA, November 2016, p. cover)

"It's 2015, and men have embraced moisturizer, indulged in beard oil, and hijacked our girlfriends' eye serums. What we haven't wrapped our faces around yet is the peel, despite promises of looking younger and shinier in ten minutes or less" (Schube, 2015, p. 22)

As Frank claims, although taking care of one's looks has been a matter for the "previously female and gay male-dominated beauty market", today all these men's lifestyle magazines offer free products and methods for a better look (289). In other words, grooming, which was once accepted as a feminine issue, is now practiced by the heterosexual archetypal ideal man who has been cultivated by men's lifestyle magazines, and the heterosexual male readership is now the target audience for the cosmetics marketplace of Featherstone's following description:

Advertising, feature articles and advice columns in magazines and newspapers ask individuals to assume responsibility for the way they look. This becomes important not just in the first flush of adolescence and early adulthood, for notions of 'natural' bodily deterioration and the bodily betrayals that accompany ageing become interpreted as signs of moral laxitude. The wrinkles, sagging flesh, tendency towards middle-aged spread, hair loss

etc. which accompany ageing should be combated by energetic body maintenance of the part of the individual with help from the cosmetic, beauty, fitness and leisure industries. (1991, p. 178)

“Responsibility” is the key word which shows that a practice which was considered feminine in the past has now transformed into a responsibility the heterosexual man is expected to carry out. Featherstone also shows that men attempt to challenge nature with the help of grooming products. By publishing certain personal care products and methods, men’s lifestyle magazines call upon their readers to fight against the natural ageing process. The other powerful motivating factor that the magazines play into is the notion that signing up to be a customer of the beauty industry helps to keep one young. All these three aspects raised by Featherstone feed into the hegemonic masculinity branded by these magazines. Hegemonic masculinity, which as we have seen is based on a certain discrete group of men’s dominance over other marginalized masculinities and women (Connell, 2005, p. 77), creates an ideal man who, via utilizing his financial capital to purchase various grooming products, which, in turn, grant him the ability to turn back the body clock and prove his power over nature by staying young. This is a conscious tactic by the magazines, and by the cosmetic companies, to defeminize the industry’s messaging, and in the process, change the symbolic language to one of power and defiance, even in the face of the natural law of aging. Thus physical appearance is elevated to the stage of an elemental battle, and products are presented as vital necessities in that battle. A last note on symbolic sales language: men are encouraged to “take responsibility for their physical “well-being”, playing into traditional masculine notions of care-taking. Just as hegemonic masculinities of the past including the breadwinner who took care of the family, now the responsibility is to take care of the self.

### 5.1.THE MAN WHO WANTS TO LOOK YOUNGER



Fig. 5.1. A snapshot from *Men’s Health USA*, February 2016.

In her article examining the USA versions of *Men’s Health* and *Esquire* and their presentation of male depilation (hair removal), Frank claims that bodily depilation is branded as proof that men can conquer nature (2014, p. 288). She claims that the

magazines present body depilation as a “technological innovation” that can be used to practice “power” and “self-control” and “the maintained body” represents “culture and technology”, whereas the natural body represents “chaos” (2014, p. 288). From this perspective, man’s control over his body actually means control over nature. Similarly, defying the aging process can also been interpreted as a rebellion against nature. By maintaining youthful looks, a man can essentially prove his power over nature.

In *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men’s Health*, it is always the young men who are promoted:

“Nobody looks like an old man before he has to” (*Esquire* USA, March 2014, p. 124).

“How to Look Well at Every Age” (*GQ* Turkey, November 2015).

“Everybody is After Youthfulness” (Çekin, *GQ* Turkey, April 2014, p. 190).

“It is Time to Look Younger” (*Men’s Health* Turkey, June 2014, p. 78).

“6 Ways to Stop Aging” (*Men’s Health* Turkey, August 2014, p. 38).

“The Fully Updated *Esquire* Guide to Aging”: “Gentlemen, we implore you, don’t fall into the trap. You can disrupt your aging process naturally” (*Esquire* USA, January 2015).

“Get younger in 60 minutes: men are more likely to have surgeries to look more vigorous and feel better. In the article, it is also said “thanks to these applications that are not easy to understand without experiencing them, you will look at the mirror with more self-confidence” (Dinç, *Esquire* Turkey, April 2015, p. 34).

“Men do it as well: men also have plastic surgery to lose weight, to get rid of purple circles around their eyes and to look younger” (*GQ* Turkey, April 2015, p. 147).

“Even if you are older and already have wrinkles, anti-aging lotions can still make your skin look younger and healthier (Cutler, *Esquire* USA, May 2015, p. 68).

“Everything About Botox”: “Maybe do not tell but men have Botox almost as frequent as women (*GQ* Turkey, October 2015).

“Do You Need More Testosterone?”: “Yeah, aging is bitch. But does it have to be?...It (testosterone supplementation) has become a big business-I am sure you have noticed ads in *Men’s Health*-as middle-aged guys seek to retain or even regain their youthful edge” (Phillips, *Men’s Health* USA, October 2015, p. 12).

Considering the extracts above, the men’s lifestyle magazines seem to offer a lot of options to their readers from simple creams to medication to botox to plastic surgery, all in the effort to keep them young. This abundance of slogans proves that keeping men younger is always on the agenda of these men’s lifestyle magazines. The reason is that

the man who maintains his youthful appearance wins the war against nature and proves he is powerful. In this way, the magazines make their readers believe that they can still have the good appearance and strength that enables them to become a part of the club, which is hegemonic masculinity. In other words, by maintaining his youthfulness, the ideal man of hegemonic masculinity reinforces his power that ensures his control over women and marginalized masculinities.

When *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health* use an image of an older man, it is generally a famous man or a very well-groomed man who appears young for his age. For example, in the July 2015 issue of *GQ* Turkey, the editor-in-chief refers to the famous football player David Beckham who had just turned 40. The editor-in-chief claims that they chose Beckham as that month's cover guy as "he exemplified charisma with the wrinkles on his face" (*GQ* Turkey, July 2105, p. cover). When an older man is famous, or has some other qualities that will compensate his advancing years, he frequently becomes *charismatic*, and therefore has sufficient aspirational capital to be worthy of an appearance in men's lifestyle magazines.

## **5.2. BALDNESS IS A BIG PROBLEM.**

Like old age, baldness is also a problem that the readers of *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health* are expected to fight against. The following sources material demonstrates the repeated emphasis on preventing hair loss:

"Don't let your hair be gone (Prozinc, 2015).

"How can you be bald in 2016?" (Estetik International, 2016).

"Adventure begins with one step in the right direction. So does a full head of hair." (Nutrastim, 2015).

A reader's question about hair loss treatment: "I want to try a hair loss treatment but I heard it could make me impotent" (Woods, 2016, p. 54).

A new hair transplant method is explained (*GQ* Turkey, March 2016, p. 192).

"Everything About Hair Transplantation" (Demirciler, *Men's Health* Turkey, December 2014, p. 18).

Historically, hair has generally been understood as part of the construction of women's sexual attractiveness (Etcoff, 1999). However, as the extracts from the magazines show,

the new hegemonic man which these lifestyles magazines are involved in construction is also required to take care of his hair and to use various products so that he does not lose his hair. Various reasons are given for magazines to warn their readers against allowing themselves to lose their hair. First of all, like body and style, hair is also accepted as an expression of personality. In that sense, hair is both a reflection of appearance and of character: This explains the reason why men attribute certain values to hair, its shape, color and, most importantly, its existence; and why hair loss is portrayed as a big problem for men by the magazines.

Secondly, hair is associated with attractiveness and self-esteem (Ricciardelli, 2010). While introducing hair products, all three take care to emphasize this link, as can be shown by the following extracts:

“You cannot show your self-confidence fully just with your clothes, perfume or body language...” (Karan, 2015b, p. 67).

“The best grooming is confidence” (*GQ USA*, November 2016).

As Ricciardelli argues, a man with bad hair is thought by others to feel less self-confident and to have more negative sense of self (2010, p. 196). Self-confidence and a positive sense of self are two crucial elements of the archetypal man of hegemonic masculinity. In her article in which she interviewed 14 Canadian men exploring the relationship between masculinity and hair, Ricciardelli states “.... hair loss or balding may decrease well-being and/or self-esteem as men may feel they cannot meet... idealized standards of masculinity” (2010, p. 196), which, for our purposes, we can understand as hegemonic masculinity. In other words, a bald man will, according to this logic, necessarily lack self-confidence and will be unhappy in himself and so emulating the archetype of hegemonic masculinity is impossible for him. Ricciardelli puts forward the idea that a full head of hair is also seen necessary for a man to be successful. She contends that “[t]here is an idealized appearance associated with hegemonic masculinity. Respondents appeared to associate success, an attribute of hegemonic masculinity, with a full head of hair” (2010, p. 196). This shows that a bald man actually lacks three crucial characteristics of the ideal man of hegemonic masculinity: self-esteem, a positive sense of self, and success.

Fighting against hair loss can also be interpreted as a man versus nature simulation, according to Frank (2014, p. 288). By keeping his head hair longer than expected or by having a hair transplantation, men can triumph over nature. This power over nature can

signal power over others, which we have seen is a crucial component of hegemonic masculinity.

### 5.3. HAIR IS REWARDING.

All the methods suggested by *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health* to “cure” hair loss send the readers the message that they should maintain their hair. Moreover, if they have already lost their hair, then it is implied that they ought to replace it immediately. Increasing the anxiety levels of men in order to encourage them take action against their hair loss, *GQ*, *Esquire* and, *Men's Health* also reminds the reader what a man can gain if he is not bald, as the image from *GQ* and the following comment from *Men's Health* demonstrate:

“Women look at your hair” (Estetik International, 2015).

Thus men are called upon to fight against hair loss if they want to ensure that their appearance is appreciated by women. Not only *Men's Health*, but also *GQ* and *Esquire* seem to be making the same claim, if we take into consideration the scant number of bald men who feature in the images on the magazines' pages. Therefore, hair loss becomes an unacceptable feature for the ideal man of hegemonic masculinity as it may prevent a man from having a relationship the women he wants to and may create a weakness that may lead to a failure in affecting and dominating women.

According to men's lifestyle magazines, there are also other benefits of having hair. To highlight the positive effects of hair loss treatment, men's lifestyle magazines often relate the experiences of men who undertook treatment for hair loss, either through an operation or medication. In one example, a man who has had a hair transplant operation tells the interviewer of the positive effect the treatment has had on his self-esteem:

It's not that people treat me any differently, but I feel better anyway. I finally understand what women mean when they say they're wearing makeup or getting a boob job for themselves and not for male attention. It's like the zits in high school that other people won't notice: You're still walking around with anxiety that they might. I have the relief of once again not thinking about my hair. I am, once again, a guy who doesn't think of himself as vain. (Stein, *GQ USA*, January 2015, p. 40)

Unlike the general reminder of men's lifestyle magazines to their readers that women look at men's hair, this man states that the primary benefit is personal, rather than social. In other words, he claims that in the past he had felt so anxious due to his hair loss to the extent that he felt worthless. His anxiety certainly demonstrates the power that hair has

come to have in the symbolism of masculinity. The man in the article clearly felt that he was not a real man without his hair. When this example is considered alongside all the advertisement of products against hair loss, it is possible to see it serving to increase the anxiety levels of the male readership who have been losing or have lost their hair. Thus it acts as a reminder and warning for other men, as without feeling like a real man, a man cannot be a part of hegemonic masculinity.

A similar message can be seen in the advertisement of a hair loss product in *Men's Health* USA, which details the story of a man who made use of the medication. He states "... I now have more hair, giving me the confidence to go after my future with the intensity that I see in myself" (Rogaine, 2015). Although this is an advertisement and therefore not necessarily reliable as a "real life experience" story, his words are still important as they are seen as the message that will make the readers buy this product. The product promises to give back the confidence which men can lose with their hair. In this formula, hair means confidence. Confidence is an important dimension of hegemonic masculinity since it helps a man to believe in himself and his potential. As hair is also associated with confidence, the ideal man of hegemonic masculinity definitely is expected to keep his hair on his head!

#### **5.4. COSMETICS ARE NECESSITIES.**

While promoting youthfulness, magazines are careful about not crossing the line of heterosexuality. All the suggestions made in a way that ensures they are still addressing the heterosexual men. The extract below is a good example of this approach:

"Is it metrosexuality or a treatment?" The question heads an article is about plastic surgery, specifically rhinoplasty. The article relates that "among the most popular plastic surgeries that men have are nose, liposuction for the fat around the belly, gynecomasty (breast reduction), eye lift, face lift, botox and hair transplant..." To assuage fears that cosmetic surgery may in fact be feminizing, the doctor claims they apply certain measures while doing a nose surgery "in order not to cause a feminine appearance" (*Men's Health* Turkey, May 2016, p. 63). Indeed, men's lifestyle magazines differ from their counterparts aimed at women in that they tend to present their suggestions related to looks as health rather than beauty tips. It is clear that framing personal grooming as a beauty

regime cannot be acceptable as a concern of the heterosexual man. That is why men's lifestyle magazines present their recommendations regarding physical maintenance within the frame of health.

To confirm their message that it is appropriate for a heterosexual man to use cosmetics, *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health* present them as necessities rather than as frivolous beauty products". To lower reader anxiety, the magazines also reminds their readers that as time passes, expectations related to gender also evolve. In June 2014 issue of *Men's Health* Turkey, the editor-in-chief states

The other area in which the most drastic change has happened is personal care. Ten years ago, a man who attached importance to his personal care was the one who had a shower every day, brushed his teeth and used moisturizers from time to time. Now, everything has changed. There is not a huge difference between men and women in this sense. The time, money and effort we spend on our personal care are increasing day by day. We would make fun of the man who buys face cleansing gel, under eye cream, anti-aging cream in the past. Now we ask if they work or not. The same issue happened in fashion. Matters such as "creating your signature style" or "being smart" used to be problems for women, but now they are also important for us. If you do not adapt these changes, that means you cannot catch up with your era...It is never too late...And you are lucky, as you have a magazine that gives you tips in these matters every month. (Büyükbayrak, 2014, p. 12)

This statement proves Connell's point about hegemonic masculinity. Connell claims that hegemonic masculinity is not same in every culture and in every phase of history (2005, p. 77). This means that it is something changing and evolving. For that reason, although ideal man of masculinity might not be expected to use cosmetics, for today's notion of the hegemonic masculinity produced by these lifestyle magazines, a man using grooming products is definitely appropriate. In *Esquire* Turkey the same message appears, as they announce "[i]t is 2016. Now, the cosmetics world serves men as well as women... The most important thing is not to stray far from naturalness. Don't forget; as long as you use products that are suitable for your skin, you will look more well-groomed, alive, and most importantly younger (Cutler, *Esquire* Turkey, January 2016, p. 50). Significantly, cosmetics are not connected to being handsome. They are presented as the products of a modern era that men should incorporate into their well-being routine in order not to be outdated. Looking "well groomed" and especially "not [straying] too far from naturalness" are the key phrases that aim to make men feel that there is nothing feminine about using cosmetics.

The same ideas appear in different issues of *Esquire* Turkey and USA:

“Now big cosmetics companies have started to present various beneficial products as they not only cater to women’s personal care but also men’s. In short, men’s personal care products are not limited to cologne, perfume and aftershave lotion” (Karan, 2014a, p. 25). “Guys are vain. We don’t like to admit it, but it is true. We want to stay hip. We want to look young. We want to seem relevant. And it is not just about the type of jeans we wear. It is about the way we style our hair and take care of our skin” (*Esquire* USA, March 2014, p. 125).

Reminding men that there are specific cosmetics that are produced for men in addition to cologne, perfume and aftershave lotion and that caring for one’s skin is no different to combing one’s hair gives the message that cosmetics are not a threat to men’s masculinity. The extracts from *Esquire* also show that cosmetics are presented as a way for modern men to stay updated, which also ensures that men comply with the current norm of hegemonic masculinity, remembering that, as Connell claims, it is a historical concept that may change in time (2005, p. 77).

*Men’s Health* Turkey also claims that investing in cosmetic care is not about handsomeness, but about feeling well. In the June 2016 issue of *Men’s Health*, David Beckham is interviewed about his being the new face of a cosmetics brand. When he is asked why it is important for men to be interested in skin care, he claims that it is important for both women and men. When asked why men generally neglect skin care, he says men believe they don’t have enough time to invest in a skin care routine, but he himself has been spending time on his skin care. He also adds being well groomed is not just about how you look, it is also about how you feel. On the next page, the brand is presented with the slogan “The Brand of Heroes” (Biotherm Homme, 2016). Using the slogan “The Brand of Heroes”, it seems that cosmetic companies generally echo the messaging of the lifestyle magazines and want to give the message that their products are for masculine men. However, in a way, it is also ironic that Beckham, who is a legendary handsome footballer, is used in the advertisements. *GQ* and *Esquire* also include advertisements that use words revealing the dominance of hegemonic masculinity:

“Hercules also has skin care down” (*Esquire* Turkey, July 2015, p. 32).

In men’s lifestyle magazines, to emphasize the need for cosmetics, most of the time a product is presented as a cure for a problem:

Problem: “cuts and scrapes”. Solution: “Repair Cream”; Problem: Sweaty Feet – Solution: Bromi-lotion” (*GQ USA*, July 2016).

“For the skins with acne, don’t neglect your eyes, detox for your skin...” (Düzyol, 2014, p. 151).

“I am always dry! I need lotion on my hands at least three times a day. You gotta stay smooth with it” (*GQ USA*, September 2016).

“We Want to Protect Your Skin” (Karan, 2014b, p. 34).

“Unless you are actually trying to look like this guy, you know you need to integrate sunscreen into your daily grooming ritual” (*Esquire USA*, June-July 2016, p. 69).

With this problem versus solution approach to cosmetics, *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men’s Health* remind their readers that cosmetics are not the products to make them beautiful but in fact necessities to facilitate a broader sense of well-being. The aim of cosmetics is generally better skin. However, as the above extracts show magazines can even claim men need cosmetics for success in love or business.

#### *CHAPTER SUMMARY*

With their Turkey and USA versions, *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men’s Health* all idealize the good-looking man who works to maintain his youthfulness and a full head of hair. While working to stay young, men fight against nature and keep their power that nature wants to take away. This control over nature can be read as symbolic of a repressed desire to wield power and control over marginalized masculinities and women. One important asset in this fight is men’s desire to preserve their head hair. *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men’s Health* all advise men to take care of their hair and prevent premature hair loss. The reason is that hair is depicted as necessary for greater self-confidence and sense of well-being which are two vital assets the archetypal man of hegemonic masculinity must possess. Hair is also associated with success, which compounds his need to maintain a good head of hair for as long as possible. All the magazines imply that hair may bring success in business and in one’s relationships. While staying young with a full head of hair, men need to use the methods and cosmetics that are presented by *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men’s Health*. So as to prevent readers from associating these products or methods with

femininity, the products are presented as essentials for heterosexual men, rather than luxury items simply to make a man “beautiful”.

## CHAPTER 6

### WHITE HETEROSEXUAL MAN VERSUS INVISIBLE MEN

#### 6.1. HETEROSEXUALITY IN MEN'S LIFESTYLE MAGAZINES

A close look at the Turkey and USA versions of *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health* shows that these magazines are written exclusively for heterosexual men. The articles and photos in these men's lifestyle magazines are designed considering the heterosexual norms.

To guarantee heteronormativity in their issues; *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health* make use of women. The photos of women who pose in "sexy" clothes, bikinis or nude are used to give the message that these men's lifestyle magazines are for heterosexual men who enjoy looking at women, and as we saw in Chapter 3, the objectified female body is a major feature in all these publications; however, the emphasis is most pronounced in the both versions of *Men's Health*.

Waling argues that the images of women serve to justify and neutralize the ubiquity of images of "ripped" male bodies that appear on each and every cover of *Men's Health* alongside pages filled with half-naked men: "The ripped male body can then be seen as a result of hard work and not an object of sexual desirability as a way to differentiate it from similarly objectified representations of female bodies. In doing so, it reinforces the expectation of heterosexuality as integral to the achievement of an idealized masculine identity" (2017, p. 441). Edwards agrees with Waling, stating that "[b]y including women in this way, these magazines that incorporate contested expressions of masculinity are reaffirming themselves as communicating appropriate and new masculinities amid the fear of femininity" (1997, p. 2003). Together with the male models and bodybuilders, frequently presented topless, the magazines objectify the female body so that their heterosexual readers feel comfortable reading these magazines and that their sexuality is in no way challenged by consuming images of half-naked men.

Magazines do not just make use of photos of women to prove that they are published for heterosexual men. As stated throughout this dissertation, in *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health*; physical power, sexual power, relationships, style are all presented from a heterosexual perspective. In this way, the womanizer who has a strong body, sexual power, and his own supposedly individual but in fact carefully contrived style is depicted

as the ideal man for women. This heterosexual man is also the ideal man of hegemonic masculinity, as Alexander claims: “Kimmel (2001, p. 35) suggests “Homophobia is a central organizing principle for our cultural definition of manhood”. Masculinity, then, stems from the fear of being seen as sissy, feminine, or anything less than a man” (as cited in Alexander, 2003, p. 537). In other words, homosexuals are not considered as “complete men” in terms of masculinity. With this in their mind, *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men’s Health* publishers idealize the heterosexual man and contain very little content about, or directed to, homosexual men.

That being said, cultural difference plays a role here. When the Turkey and USA versions of the magazines are compared, the American versions of the magazines emerge as more “tolerant” to homosexuality. *GQ* USA contains interviews with men who openly state that they are gay. In the March 2016 issue of *GQ* USA, an interviewee says “I never realized that I had a bad style until I moved to NYC a year ago. I am a gay man, and it is affecting my dating life...” (March 2016). This extract proves that the USA publishers consider their general readers to be more “understanding” in terms of homosexuality. Moreover, the editor-in-chief of *GQ* USA is gay and he is open about criticizing issues surrounding the legalization of gay marriage in the USA and the lack of official alternatives for those who would like their commitment recognized but choose not to marry: “Take me. I’ve been with the same person for 22 years, but because we’re gay and we choose not to get married, I still have to mark “single” on virtually every official application. No word for what we are. Nor what we are to each other. What do I call him? He’s a lot more interesting than *my boyfriend*, less corporate-sounding than *my partner*, and legally not quite *my husband*. I’d say he’s my soul mate, but there’s no IRS form for that” (*GQ* USA, December 2016, p. 40). The fact that the editor-in-chief can express openly that he is gay shows that a cultural shift in the USA has taken place, despite the archaic versions of hegemonic masculinity that are promoted by the magazines, and that readers of men’s lifestyle magazines in the USA are now more ready to accept homosexual men to a certain extent and are presumed to be able to empathize with the editor’s personal life.

Nevertheless, the content of the magazine is still designed considering heterosexual men, and thus mainstream acceptance of homosexuality can be assumed to be limited to safe

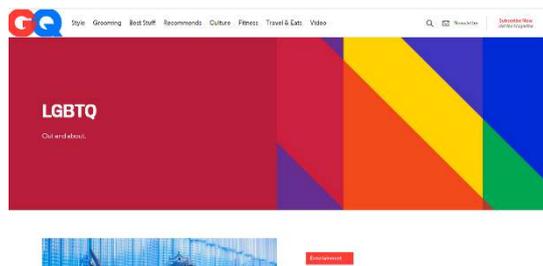
areas. While writing about the legalization of gay marriage in the USA, the same editor-in-chief also celebrates that:

2016 marked the first calendar year in which marriage equality has been the law of the land. So quickly has the idea been embraced, so wildly uncontroversial has it become that we almost have to remind ourselves: Last year's Supreme Court decision allowing it was epic, heroic, a rare crying-in-the-streets moment. Unless you're a homophobic baker upset about the fabulous cakes you have to bake for gay couples, I think we can all agree: It has made us a kinder, better nation. (*GQ USA*, December 2016, p. 40)

That the readers are naturally included in this consensus that the USA is a better nation since it legalized gay marriage shows the editorial team seems confident that the readers of the magazine would largely agree with this statement. Even with an editor-in-chief who is openly gay, the magazine's bottom line would be the consideration of its reader profile for sales-related purposes. By designing the magazine considering the heterosexual norms but showing itself not to be afraid of mentioning gay issues from time to time, *GQ USA* perhaps can be seen to idealize heterosexual men who are secure enough in their masculinity and sexuality to say no to homophobia.

However, this does not mean that homosexual men can be accepted into the zone created by hegemonic masculinity branded by *GQ*. It is still heteronormativity that is highlighted in the photos and articles of the magazine. The readers are expected to "accept the existence of homosexuals" and homosexuality is a topic that can be mentioned in the magazine, but homosexuality itself is not a primary issue and potential gay readers of *GQ* are not prioritized in terms of editorial or image content. Considering the printed issues examined in this dissertation, *GQ USA* provides much less content related to homosexuality compared to the content the magazine provided for its heterosexual readers. Indeed, behaviors that might easily be understood as homosexual are in fact viewed through a heterosexual prism, as in the case of the May 2015 issue of *GQ USA*, where the magazine claims that straight men "often" have sexual relationships with other men. The magazine does not interpret this behavior as a sign of homosexuality, but rather insists that "[s]traight men will often seek out sex with other men". Their explanation tends to be that it is quicker and infinitely easier than finding sex on demand with a woman. Eli Coleman, an American sexologist who has studied this phenomenon, is quoted in the article as arguing that while some of these men are working out conflicts about their sexuality "... some are not. Instead, he says, they may have other, intricately tangled motives: to express self-hatred through behavior they may regard as debasing, to

subjugate a partner they regard as more physically powerful than a woman, to feel desired by and intimate with a father who was emotionally distant” (Penn, 2015, p. 76). In other words, having sex with other men actually functions for some heterosexual men as a particularly dark reinforcement of their masculinity. While some are indeed potentially working out repressed homosexual urges, others are indulging in heightened playing out of the hegemonic masculinity we have seen throughout this dissertation. Moreover, focusing on this phenomenon can also be interpreted as an oppression of gay masculinity, as even in an article which covers men having sex with men, the homosexual act is occluded. Rather, by putting a physically powerful man in a passive position in a sexual relationship, these uber-masculine men feel satisfied. From this perspective, the heteronormativity branded by the hegemonic masculinity in *GQ* does not undergo any harm.



**Fig. 6.1.** A snapshot from [gq.com/about/lgbtq](http://gq.com/about/lgbtq), 2018.

In addition to its occasional references to homosexuality in its print version, *GQ* USA has a section titled LGBTQ on its website ([gq.com/about/lgbtq](http://gq.com/about/lgbtq)). The page (fig. 6.1) does not have a direct link from the homepage of the magazine ([gq.com](http://gq.com)). In that sense, it is not very easy to reach it. On this page, one can access 46 articles

published between November 2015 and May 2018. Some of the articles are directly linked to the life of homosexual people. Some titles are “Don’t Be a Complete Jerk on Gay Dating Apps” (Levine, 2018a), “Why TV Needs More Gay Characters” (Kheraj, 2018), “How to Cope When You are Gay and Lonely” (Levine, 2018b), “How to Survive and (Win) a Gay Breakup” (Kheraj, 2017). These articles apparently aim to give advice to homosexual readers of the magazine. Other articles feature homosexual singers, gay-themed movies and homosexual sports personalities. The existence of this page on the *GQ* USA website proves that the magazine provides some content for its homosexual readers, and shows that the publication is aware of the fact that it has homosexual readers. Nevertheless, it can also be seen as merely paying lip service to this constituent part of its readership, as considering the low number of articles published in almost three years, *GQ*

USA clearly seems to prioritize its position concerning heteronormativity. The magazine is still mainly published targeting the heterosexual reader.

*Esquire* USA displays a similar tendency concerning homosexuality. The magazine “mentions” homosexuality from time to time. In the December 2015-January 2016 issue of *Esquire* USA, athlete Michael Sam, says “If I want to kiss my boyfriend, I am gonna kiss him”. He is one of the people who *Esquire* asked for advice in that specific issue and what he learned from 2014. Publishing this interview shows that the editors do not think that the majority of readers would be disturbed by reading an interview with a gay man and proves the magazine expects its readers not to be homophobic. During the same period, *Esquire* USA also features a news file about transsexual people and the violence they are exposed to. In the article titled “Trans Trend: An Assessment”, Stephen Marche writes:

Loathing and fascination run side by side in the currents of American sexuality, which is why to be transgender in America right now is to be threatened and worshipped at the same time. The U.S. Department of Justice, not an institution prone to exaggeration, described the level of sexual violence faced by trans people as “shockingly high... Half of them will be the victims of such violence, and hate crimes against transgender men and women rose by 13 percent last year. Transphobia is brutal and spreading; its spread has been accompanied by sweeping cultural transphilia. (Marche, December 2015- January 2016, p. 38)

Considering the heteronormativity on show in men’s lifestyle magazines, this article in *Esquire* USA can be interpreted as part-confession. By directing attention to the problems that trans people have had, the article accepts that gender is not necessarily conditioned by biological sex –the penis or the vagina, therefore undermining its focus on the male sex organ in connection to hegemonic masculinity elsewhere. However, in terms of general content, *Esquire* USA together with *GQ* USA does not approach gender from that perspective. The magazine just gives the message that men do not need to be homophobic to be real men.

In the November 2015 issue of *Esquire* USA, there is another article including interviews with 5 transgender people. Those interviewed provide a great deal of insight into what it means to be transgender in the United States during post-1960s. By doing so, the magazine seeks not only to show its own approach towards American sexualities, but also reveals the problems trans people living in the USA have had. In the article, female-to-male trans, Jamison Green (2015, p. 130), offers his own analysis: “we are such a paternalistic and male-focused culture that a man willing to cut off his dick is sort of fascinating to people. But then if a woman wants to become a man—well, that’s

expected.” The suggestion is that gender reassignment surgery is not so problematic for society at large when it is female to male; however, when it is the opposite, the hegemonic masculinity created by society shows its allergy to femininity and people are caught off guard by a male’s decision to become female. In the same article in *Esquire USA*, Richards, aged 81, suggests that his own story is a typical one for his generation:

In my day, of course, everything was done secretly and quietly, and if somebody went through the transformation, they did it privately. It was called ‘woodworking’: You merged into the woodwork after your transformation and you tried to lead a new life without people knowing what your previous life had been. And that’s what I tried to do. I changed my name, I moved three thousand miles away, I started my new life. (2015, p. 130)

Richards’ words show the oppression that trans people who have had reassignment surgery have faced. He had to abandon all the memories that he had collected in his previous life so that he could be accepted by the new people around him. This fear of Richards and the drastic changes that he had to experience show that the American society is still not very welcoming to transgender people. By interviewing Richards, *Esquire USA* shows its willingness to voice the problems that transgender people have experienced. Yet this does not mean that the magazine accepts trans men as within the “category of man” while preparing the content of *Esquire* which claims to be “a men’s lifestyle magazine”. In the same article in *Esquire USA*, Kylar, aged 52, states

Being me was a problem, and when I lost my job and went job hunting, as soon as they found out who I was, nobody was willing to give me a job. I never thought I would live beyond the age of thirty-two or thirty-three. Because being trans, living a trans life, is very difficult, and my life has been in danger several times. (Dorment, November 2015, p. 135)

The article suggests although openness towards transgender people has increased somewhat over recent years, transsexuals continue to experience problems and they are not easily accepted by the society in which they live. Many still feel that their life is in danger, and that they could be killed any time, and *Esquire USA* shows this fear is well-founded by highlighting the shocking numbers of violent attacks in the issue quoted above. It could be argued that *Esquire USA* is seeking to convey to its readers that violence against trans people has no place in *Esquire* masculinity –that readers should not behave transgender people in a hostile way. This approach definitely shows some effort in aiming to raise the problems of transgender people. However, similar to *GQ USA*, considering the issues examined in this dissertation, the print version of *Esquire USA*

includes few articles that address those who would consider themselves outsiders to social heteronormativity.

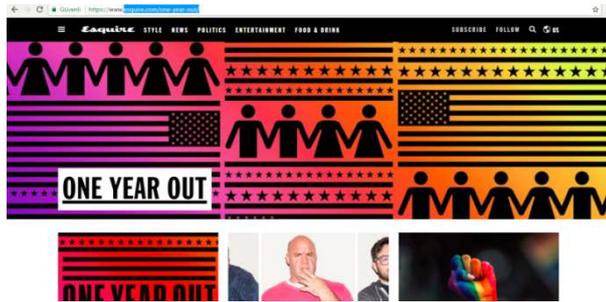


Fig. 6.2. A snapshot from [esquire.com/one-year-out](http://esquire.com/one-year-out), 2018.

By contrast to *GQ*, *Esquire* USA did not celebrate the passing of law allowing homosexuals to get married across the USA in its printed version, despite the fact that it was a piece of American news with international interest. Nevertheless, the magazine did prepare a webpage after the legalization of gay marriage in the

United States ([esquire.com/one-year-out](http://esquire.com/one-year-out)). The page (fig. 6.2) includes 22 articles about the experiences of homosexual men in the USA, singers and sports people and the recent problems LGBT community have faced. The first article entitled “One Year Out”, written by the American actor Dave Holmes, celebrates the legalization of gay marriage with the repeated exclamation “we won”. The article also contains photos of 50 couples who got married after the law was passed. Yet despite the fact that *Esquire* USA designed a webpage that directly addressed the legalization of gay marriage together with the challenges homosexual people have experienced, this emphasis does not play out in its printed version and cannot change the reality that the magazine fundamentally is published for heterosexual people.

In contrast both to *GQ* USA and *Esquire* USA, the USA version of *Men’s Health* does not have a section or page on its website to address homosexual men. *Men’s Health* failed to publish an article related to the legalization of gay marriage in the USA in its print version, despite its international interest. However, the magazine did publish an article entitled “The Best Time to Be Gay in America: Right Now” on June 27, 2014 on its webpage ([menshealth.com](http://menshealth.com)). The article argues that the legalization of gay marriage is great success but there is a long way to go in terms of gay rights. Other than this article, there were very few references to homosexuality in *Men’s Health* issues published between 2014 and 2016. There is an article titled “6 Things to Say During the Talk” (Talking to your kid about sex). One of the suggestions is “Whichever way you lean, I will always love you”. The writer states “...make some acknowledgement of

homosexuality to show you are OK with it” (*Men’s Health* USA, May 2015, p. 84). While similar to *GQ* USA and *Esquire* USA, *Men’s Health* mentions homosexuality only rarely and seems to expect its readers not to be homophobic, with the sex advice for heterosexual couples it publishes in every issue and the photos of women and heterosexual couples that fill its pages, *Men’s Health* emphasizes heterosexuality as a norm.

From this we can say that the limited content related to homosexuality included in all three USA versions of the magazines functions in order to carve out another aspect of the ideal man –heterosexual but anti-homophobic. The magazines occasionally celebrate achievements in gay rights, notably mostly after the fact of wide social or legislative endorsement, and therefore the establishment of a new societal norm –and mention the problems experienced by homosexual people in order to promote an image of saying no to homophobia. In the main, these men’s lifestyle magazines continually endorse heterosexuality through articles, promotions and images.

In the Turkey versions of *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men’s Health*, some articles addressing LGBT issues are included. For example, the 2014 January issue of *GQ* Turkey contains article called “Football is just like life itself”. In the article, the writer finds a link between gender and sexuality perceptions in football and the inequality between genders and sexualities in life. Referring to the story of Halil İbrahim Dinçdağ, a referee who lost his job when it was revealed that he was gay, Ebru Çapa links this incident to how sexist Turkish football is and how it reflects the gender bias in society. Çapa also has an interview with Burcu Karakaş who is the co-writer of a book depicting Dinçdağ’s story. Karakaş comments that just “[a]s the military is seen as the most important base for building masculinity, football is regarded as the zone in which more bricks are added to masculinity. For that reason, at least in Turkey, gay men do not have a place in the football world because, simply, “they are not masculine enough” (2014, pp. 64-67).

Continuing to detail the sexism in Turkish football, Çapa also refers to the term “match without audience”, which, in Turkey, means match without (adult) male spectators, as women and children are allowed to watch the match in the stadium in “matches without audience” (2014, p. 67). At the end of the article, Çapa comments that “it is difficult to be a woman in the world, and being a woman in this country [Turkey] is something that could only be understood by those who suffer it” (2014, p. 67). A significant news item in its own right, another article about Halil İbrahim Dinçdağ appeared in *Esquire* Turkey

(January 2014, p. 16). The article argues that what Dinçdağ had been exposed to is discrimination and it is not acceptable. The article rounds on the idea that because of the discrimination against Dinçdağ, his life together with his career is ruined. In this sense, *GQ* Turkey and *Esquire* Turkey say no to homophobia, but as they refer to homosexuality very rarely, these two magazines still construct heterosexuality as a norm for the hegemonic masculinity they have branded.

*Men's Health*, unsurprisingly, is less accommodating. An article titled “6 Things You Should Never Say to a Gay Man” (Juzwiak, 2015) which both the USA and the Turkey versions ran, is a case in point. Right from the title, it can be seen that gay men are marginalized. There are two sides in the title: “You” and “a Gay Man”, implying that the “you” of the readership is by definition heterosexual. The highlight of the article reads “a gay writer gives right answers to our wrong questions”. The first of these questions is “Who is the man in your relationship?”—with the answer—“It is nice to hang out with whoever and whenever you like”. In this question, the magazine reminds the readers that based on its research, it seems that most gay men, like heterosexual men, prefer to have a monogamous relationship. The next statement from the implied readership is supposedly “I have gay friends too, I am sure you like them”; after which comes: “Are you sure you are gay? You have not had sex with a woman before” before “Ohh, I didn't realize it before. You don't look gay”. The article critiques such attitudes, cautioning “understanding a man is gay by just looking at him is possible only when he is having sex with another man”. The last question hangs in the air “Wait a Second. If you are gay, how can you be...? (Fill in the blank)” (Juzwiak, 2015).

In *Men's Health* USA, July-August 2015 (Juzwiak, 2015, p. 104), the same article appeared. The highlight similarly states “We asked one gay writer to address our misguided inquiries-so we can all just move on” (Juzwiak, 2015, p. 58). Again, the magazine discriminates, this time between the editorial team—“we” and “a gay writer”—the other, thus implying that the USA version of *Men's Health* has an exclusively heterosexual team of writers. Moreover, just as before, creating two opposite sides and implicating the reader in the pronoun “we”, the magazine implies that the readers to are regarded as heterosexual.

Compared with their USA versions, the Turkey versions of the three magazines all include less content related to homosexuality in the issues published between 2014 and

2016. However, the difference is not considerable. Both the Turkey and USA versions of the magazines design their magazines based on heterosexuality which public discourse, in both nations, takes for granted (Connell, 2005, p. 148). Moreover, considering the discourse of man as a womanizer, the hegemonic masculinity branded by these magazines turns into a tool that produces heterosexuality as a norm in the magazines. Thus homosexuality and other identities that exist outside the established roles of heteronormativity become invisible in these men's lifestyle magazines.

## **6.2. WHITE MAN VERSUS BLACK MAN AND ASIAN AMERICAN MAN**

“Race” is another important aspect of the ideal man of hegemonic masculinity because race and gender are overlapping notions (Reeser, 2010, p. 145). In his book titled *Masculinities in Theory*, Reeser explains the relationship between these two concepts. He suggests that the stereotypical characteristics that are attributed to a race can also create bias regarding the gender ideals (2010, p. 145). Thus he claims that an Asian bodybuilder may catch the attention of a person who is surprised by the combination of an Asian body and muscularity (2010, p. 145). In other words, Reeser suggests people have some bias related to masculinity based on different races and that they automatically evaluate the masculinity of certain races considering these stereotypes. This perception of people proves the connection between masculinity and race.

When Reeser refers to “gender visibility”, he puts forward that “whiteness as a racial construct related to masculinity” is a notion which needs to be considered (2010, p. 145). He suggests that white bodies are presented as raceless because they are colorless (2010, p. 145). In other words, while socially constructed whiteness is presented as the benchmarking race, it is done in a way that intends to hide the discrimination it operates on. White is presented as normal and general. Reeser also contends that “if a key morphology of masculinity is implicitly defined as white, any hegemony or advantage assigned to that masculinity can be attributed to the category of whiteness, while non-white bodies are made into another masculinity.” (2010, p. 145). In a way, if hegemonic masculinity implicitly idealizes the white man and enables him to enjoy wielding power over others in society, hegemonic masculinity at the same time marginalizes other masculinities, such as Asian men and black men.

In the Turkey versions of *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health*, it is not easy to discuss the ideal white man from this perspective: firstly it is difficult to identify the ethnicity of men in the magazines, and the history and operations of racial power are different in Turkey. Although there are different ethnicities in Turkey, it is difficult to visually identify which man belongs to which ethnicity. However, in the USA, with its history shot through with racial tensions, race figures differently and is interpreted through much more visual markers. Thus in the USA versions of these men's lifestyle magazines, ethnicities are marked out as easier to identify and so the idealized white man is more visible as he can be compared with black men. This means that the ideal man in the USA versions of *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health* is the white man. As Waling claims, black men are not presented in idealized masculine terms in men's lifestyle magazines:

Whiteness has been noted by a number of theorists in the representations of masculinity in men's lifestyle magazines...Although magazines sell the idea that anyone can achieve the advertised physique, the images they promote suggest that no matter how much effort black men invest in their bodies, they will be unable to replicate masculine ideals. (2017, p. 440)

Considering the men who appeared with the greatest frequency in the USA versions of *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health*, the hegemonic masculinity branded by the magazines seems connected to whiteness. Although black men sometimes appear, both inside and on the covers, white men are still much more common on the cover, which represent the face of the magazines and the first thing that welcomes the readers before they embark on the content. While surreptitiously conveying this message, the magazines are also considering the ideal man that they want to brand. Covers are vital components of magazines as they are all chosen and designed by the publication itself, unlike the advertisements which are produced by companies. That is why an analysis of the covers can be understood to reveal the approaches of the magazines towards ethnicity.

The table on the next page shows the number of white men and the black men appeared on the cover of the three magazines in three years (2014-2016):

**Table 6.1.** The number of white men and the black men appeared on the cover of the three magazines in three years (2014-2016)

<b>Magazine</b>	<b>Total number of issues published between 2014 January-2016 December</b>	<b>Black men</b>	<b>White Men</b>
<i>GQ</i> USA	36	8	22
<i>Men's Health</i> USA	30	4	26
<i>Esquire</i> USA	31	4	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>68</b>

The numbers prove that *GQ* USA, *Esquire* USA, and *Men's Health* design the vast majority of their covers displaying the bodies of white men. Considering 97 issues of three magazines in total, the white man is much more visible compared to the black man. The visibility of black men on covers is important as it gives a lot of insight into the mentality of a magazine regarding different ethnicities. “McCracken (1993, p. 14), in her study of women’s magazines, explains that their covers accomplish two purposes. First, they are “windows to the future self,” in that they serve as “selective frames that color both our perceptions of ideal femininity and what is to follow in the magazine.” Second, they are themselves advertisements that increase the publisher’s sales and, perhaps more important, the sale of the products and services promoted inside” (Alexander, 2003, p. 541).

In the light of McCracken’s statements, there may be two reasons why black men do not feature as frequently as white men on the covers. The men’s lifestyle magazines may think that they cannot sell the magazines if they put the photos of black men on their covers, as research on their readership has revealed that they are writing to a primarily white audience who, because of the visual scripts upon which American society operates, are unable to visualize their “future selves” in the body of a black or Asian man. The other reason relates to the concept of hegemonic masculinity promoted by these magazines. While producing their notion of hegemonic masculinity, the magazines may prefer

idealizing the white man, despite the fact that they are aware of the discrimination against black men. The extract from *Esquire USA* demonstrates this awareness:

For black Americans, claims of equal opportunity have, of course, been false from the founding. They remain false today. The chances of being stuck in poverty are far, far greater for black kids. Half of those born on the bottom rung of the income ladder (the bottom fifth) will stay there as adults. Perhaps even more disturbing, seven out of ten black kids raised in middle-income homes (i.e., the middle fifth) will end up lower down as adults. A boy who grows up in Baltimore will earn 28 percent less simply because he grew up in Baltimore: In other words, this supersedes all other factors. Sixty-six percent of black children live in America's poorest neighborhoods, compared with six percent of white children... Race gaps in wealth are perhaps the most striking of all. The average white household is now thirteen times wealthier than the average black one. (*Esquire USA*, December 2015-January 2016, p. 156)

These figures show the extent of disadvantage black men in the USA suffer. Black men are getting poorer and poorer as they earn less compared to their parents. The percentage of the children who live in deprived neighborhoods highlights the realities of racial inequality. Moreover, *Esquire USA* also explores the problematic of representation and visibility in November 2015, in an article titled "Where's Black Rocky?". Here, the writer claims that although many black men do boxing, we don't see these black sportsmen in movies. The writer states "boxing movies are beloved and lucrative because they promote the goodness and the indomitability of the white American male spirit through the physical dismantling of other men. They proffer the theory that black athletes reach their station by superior and, more important, natural athleticism, while white athletes work their way to theirs through effort, dedication and will". Touching on the historical trope that sees the black body as "naturally" more physically adept than the white body, *Esquire* questions the racial normativity at work in movies like *Rocky*, where the white man triumphs through brute effort, and supposedly against the odds of natural prowess. It also implies that such coding is problematic and leads to racial discrimination both in the film industry and in wider society.

*Esquire USA* also purports to embrace diversity, asking its readers to welcome differences both in terms of race and in terms of sexuality: "If you don't know someone black, you need to meet someone black. If you don't know someone white, you need to meet someone white. If you don't know someone Hispanic, if you don't know someone gay or lesbian... You need to meet somebody that is different than you..." (Fussman, 2015). In a way, the magazine invites potentially racist or homophobic readers to rid themselves of their biases by meeting someone different from themselves. A news file in

the same magazine features a story on Michael Brown's shooting<sup>6</sup> and uses the tragedy to highlight and condemn police brutality towards black men. Brown's case is used to highlight several other similar cases where black men were killed by the US police. Thus *Esquire* highlights the racism existent in USA society, and stands against it, but equally can be said to also play with racial stereotyping in its presentation of the ideal man, which, as we have seen, is, for these magazines, a white man.

*GQ* USA has a similar approach to *Esquire* USA regarding race and representation. We can see from the figures that *GQ* has a greater frequency of black men on its covers than *Esquire* or *Men's Health*; however, the percentage is still pretty low at just over 26%. Like *Esquire*, *GQ* prepares news files condemning racial inequalities and again, given the news cycle, highlights in particular the institutional racism of the police. With these articles, the magazine criticizes the racial divisions of American society and denounces organizations such as the police for showing racial prejudice. Thus in the August 2016 issue, an interesting article titled "The Boy They Buried Twice" explains the failure of the prosecution process of two policemen who shot a twelve-year-old black boy named Tamir Rice: "Maybe you saw the news and wondered: How does a 12-year-old boy with a toy gun on the playground get shot to death on-camera by the police without anyone getting charged? Put another way: How does a small group of government officials make the case disappear without a trial? Here's how" (Flynn, 2016). The previous year, the magazine had also highlighted the case of the "Invisible Man", which told the story of the shooting of Charley Leundeu Keunang (Sharlet, p. 88). These two articles are cases of police brutality against black men, each of which resulted in the death of the victims. They claim that the police had no need to shoot these people, let alone shoot to kill, and draw attention to the structural racism people of color face in the USA. In that sense, *Esquire* USA and *GQ* USA acknowledge the racial divisions in America, condemn them but recognize their own role in racial identity construction only partially, only occasionally displaying non-white males bodies for idealization purposes on their covers. Unlike *Esquire* USA and *GQ* USA, *Men's Health* USA does not provide any content that shows the disadvantageous position of the black men in the US society. This can be put down to the fact that the tendency of *Men's Health* is to include material that only focuses

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<sup>6</sup> Michael Brown was an unarmed 18-year-old black man shot by a policeman in Ferguson Missouri in June 2014. The shooting sparked a spate of protests against police brutality towards the black community in America.

on the male body, physicality, sex and relationships. Public interest stories do not feature in the magazine. Nevertheless, its focus on the male body does not immunize it from issues of race. In many ways, the “Black Rocky” dynamic discussed in *Esquire* pertains here. In discussing racial representation, bell hooks has argued that black men have historically been seen as “animals, brutes, natural born rapists” (2003, p. xii) and “stereotyped via racism and sexism as being more body than mind” (2003, p. 33), which, she argues, is a primary reason for white fear against blacks, despite the support of a patriarchy based on capitalist white society (2003, p. xii). bell hooks also adds that, because of that fear, white men and women feel that they have to “arm themselves to repress” (2003, p. 51). In this way, bell hooks suggests that the racism of white men against black men comes from that fear.

Stefan Lawrence agrees with bell hooks in terms of the presentation of the racialized body in the media, arguing that it is invariably presented as “spectacular, violent, and hyper masculine” (2014, p. 777). Lawrence examined *Men’s Health* UK’s representation of race across 11 issues published in 2010, concluding that while black men appeared much less frequently than white men in the magazine, when they were featured they were often depicted as “having bodies not minds”. Helped by photos that emphasized their hyper masculine bodies, he concluded that while the black body was seen as possessing sheer brute strength, white men were portrayed as the ones who had *earned* a strong body by using sheer determination and their cognitive skills (2014, pp. 792-793). Thus, the black body was objectified, while the white body was seen as representing subjectivity with positive personal attributes. According to Lawrence, by presenting a muscular white man as one who expends time, energy and money in order to have a strong body, *Men’s Health* claims that by doing so, white men can gain superiority over black men. That is also the reason why the strong bodies of white men are included much more compared to the bodies of black men on the covers of *Men’s Health*. The magazine gives the message that the hegemony operates through the white man, so long as he spends enough time, effort, and money.

There is another ethnicity which has less visibility compared to black men on the men’s lifestyle magazine covers. The table on the next page shows the number of Asian American men who appeared on the cover of the three magazines in a year:

**Table 6.2.** The number of Asian American men who appeared on the covers of the three magazines in a year

<b>Magazine</b>	<b>Total number of issues</b>	<b>Asian American Men</b>
<i>GQ</i> USA (2014)	36	0
<i>Men's Health</i> USA 2016	30	0
<i>Esquire</i> USA 2015	31	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>0</b>

From the table it is evident that none of the three magazines has a cover with a stereotypical Asian American man. Reeser claims that some physical traits attributes to certain races may also create an analogy between race and masculinity and suggests some groups like Asian Americans may labelled as feminine because of “perceptions of small size, hairlessness, or timidity” (2010, p. 147). That may be the reason why the USA versions of *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health* do not want to use Asian American men on their covers. With his physical traits, an Asian American man is not regarded “manly enough” and thus be marginalized by the hegemonic masculinity branded by these magazines. Nevertheless, the effect is to render the Asian American man invisible in these men's lifestyle magazines.

We have seen that the approach of the USA versions of *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health* towards race idealizes white man by marginalizing black men and Asian American men. As Reeser suggests, when the black man is presented as hyper masculine and the Asian American man is portrayed as effeminate, the white man turns into the ideal man of masculinity “with the right or perfect amount of masculinity” (2010, p. 150). This vision of whiteness is incorporated into the presentation of masculinity in the USA versions of *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health* and is a constituent part of the ideal man that their notion of hegemonic masculinity works through.

## CHAPTER SUMMARY

While idealizing the white heterosexual man, *GQ*, *Esquire* and *Men's Health* marginalize some other masculinities, often rendering them invisible in their issues. Both the Turkey and USA versions of the three magazines idealize heterosexual men and design their issues considering heteronormativity as the fundamental principle. This is reflected in both the articles and the photos that appear in these magazines. All three magazines occasionally celebrate steps forward in gay rights and mention the problems that homosexual people encounter, but focus on gay issues in general is limited and often ends up in special content sections online. By providing this limited content, the magazines suggest that the ideal man is the heterosexual one who does not include homosexual, bi or trans men as real men but who nevertheless opposes homophobia.

When the USA versions of the three magazines are examined from the perspective of race and ethnicity, whiteness is idealized and its strength considered to be gained through personal qualities, such as will, determination and logic. By contrast, other racially constructed bodies are presented either as not masculine enough to be visible or as hyper masculine. This perspective of the magazines portrays the white man as the only one capable of having exactly the right type and amount of masculinity.

## CONCLUSION

Since 1980s, masculinity has been the focus of the academia. That was also the time, second wave feminism challenged the sex role theory which claims that the difference between men and women come from their bodies. In 1990, in his book *Masculinities*, Connell suggested hegemonic masculinity as a framework to study masculinities. He defined hegemonic masculinity as the dominance of a certain group of men over men and marginalized masculinities. As each hegemonic masculinity would have its own description of ideal masculinity in its own context and time, academia has focused on different contexts. One of the contexts through which hegemonic masculinity is produced is men's lifestyle magazines that become popular in 1980 in Britain first and then in other parts of Europe and the USA. This dissertation aims to analyze the characteristics of the ideal man who is created by the hegemonic masculinity branded by the Turkey and USA versions of *GQ*, *Esquire* and *Men's Health*.

Chapter 1 explains how the body of the ideal man should be. Both the USA and Turkey versions of *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health* share a similar kind of body depiction through the hegemonic masculinity produced and branded by them. The male readers of the magazines are advised to work for strong or at least fit bodies. Among the three magazines examined in this dissertation, *Men's Health* is the magazine who idealizes the muscular and fit body most both in its USA and Turkey versions. However, that does not mean that *GQ* and *Esquire* do not praise the fit and muscular body. Instead of concentrating on the beauty of the muscular and fit male body, these men's lifestyle magazines suggest that a fit body is needed for better health. Additionally, the magazines promise their readers that bigger muscles mean more power and dominance over others around them. This is the reason why the image of the muscular man becomes a dimension of hegemonic masculinity which basically aims to oppress women and other marginalized masculinities in society. The readers are asked to work for more muscles to gain the necessary power to control others. While exposing this power through the nude male body, the magazines utilize some strategies that turn the photos of half-naked men into a different performance. In contrast to the women who are objectified in the photos, men are put in an active position to prevent male body from being regarded as beautiful because a heterosexual man would not be liked to be gazed or to gaze other men because of his "beauty". To

stress the heterosexuality of the ideal muscular and fit men, the magazines also takes photos of men with women next to them.

Chapter 2 focusses on the sexual power of the ideal man. In their Turkish and USA versions, *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health* claim that it is not enough to have a strong body without sexual power. Even though all these magazines refers to sexual power through some articles, photos and advertisements, *Men's Health* is the magazine that concentrates on sexual power most in both its Turkey and USA versions. In these magazines, sexual power is generally associated with strong erection and it focusses on penis itself. Ideal normal man is presented as the one who should never have sexual dysfunctions. That is why men's lifestyle magazines present the measures and treatments related to these illnesses. Men are expected to perform high and have strong erections if they do not want to be called failure. As erected penis is the representation of sexual power, the size of it is the other issue that is raised in men's lifestyle magazines. Readers are provided with the ways of enlarging their penises. *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health* links this sexual power to heterosexuality through female orgasm. They claim that a real man needs to know how to make "his woman" happy. This kind of relationship puts women in an inferior position in which they wait men to please her. At the same time, this relationship reinforces heterosexuality which gives the "active role" to man and the "passive role" to women. In short, sexual power turns into hegemony over women in bed.

Chapter 3 focusses on the relationship between the ideal man and "his women". *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health* portrays men as heterosexual womanizers who would like to have relationship with numerous beautiful and sexy women. This beauty is defined by these men's lifestyle magazines and it generally describes thin women who have the body of top models. The magazines present these beautiful women as the women only real men can have relationships with. Moreover, All the magazines examined in this study objectify woman body while taking attention to her "beauty". However, magazines present these objectified bodies in a way that assumes all readers agree on the beauty of them. The magazines also promise their readers to help them to reach these beautiful women. In that sense, these women are presented as mystical beings that are difficult to be solved by men in order to give the message that men need advice. With their advice, the magazines aim to support men on their ways to joyful relationships in which men are active and men prove their heterosexuality. The magazines encourage men to cheat on their lovers and

portray marriage as something to be afraid of. All these put women into an inferior position by objectifying the female body. On the other hand, *GQ* and *Esquire* include articles calling for equal rights for women. However, these two magazines also continue objectifying female body. *Men's Health* does not refer to feminism at all and even claims men have an inferior position by pointing to lower life expectancy of men. It seems that *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health* are all aware of the inequality experienced by women but their approach suggests that they still apply the norms of hegemonic masculinity which oppresses women.

Chapter 4 depicts the stylish man idealized in Turkey and the USA versions of *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health*. All the magazines give style tips and make product recommendations. While enabling men to become more stylish, the magazines actually idealize the powerful man of hegemonic masculinity. The magazines all advise men to develop a personal style that is reflective of their own character. The magazines claim that a man can display his unique individuality through his style choices. The magazines also cultivate associations of elegance, masculinity, rebelliousness, modernity, self-confidence, and bravery with their figure of the ideal man. All these features aim to create a powerful man who can suppress marginalized masculinities and women. The magazines also emphasize that having style means having the power to attract women and the success in business.

Chapter 5 idealizes good-looking man who takes care of his look. With their Turkey and USA versions, *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health* all idealize the good-looking man who works to maintain his youth and head hair. While working to stay young, men fight against nature and keep their power that nature wants to take away. This control over nature is a reference to control over marginalized masculinities and women. Another important asset that men want to preserve is head hair. *GQ*, *Esquire*, and *Men's Health* advise men to take care of their hair and prevent hair loss. The reason is that hair is depicted as a need for more self-confidence and well-being which are two important aspects of the ideal man of hegemonic masculinity. As hair is also associated with success, the ideal man is expected to have full head hair. The men's lifestyle magazines claim hair may bring success in business and relationships. While staying young with full head hair, men need to use cosmetics and ways that are presented by *GQ*, *Esquire*, and

*Men's Health*. Not to make readers associate these products or methods with femininity, the products are presented as need for heterosexual men rather than items that would make a man "beautiful".

Chapter 6 shows how white heterosexual man is idealized in men's lifestyle magazines. While idealizing the white heterosexual man, *GQ*, *Esquire* and *Men's Health* marginalize some other masculinities and make the representative men of these masculinities invisible in their issues. Both the Turkey and USA versions of the three magazines idealize heterosexual men and design their issues considering heteronormativity as the fundamental principle. This is reflected in both the articles and the photos appear in these magazines. Magazines rarely celebrate the rights homosexuals and mention the problems that homosexual people encounter. By providing this limited content, the magazines suggest that the ideal man is the heterosexual one who does not consider homosexual men as real men but says no to homophobia. When the USA versions of the three magazines are examined from the perspective of race and ethnicity, white man turns into ideal man as the Asian American Man is presented not masculine enough while the man of color is presented as hyper masculine.

In short, the Turkey and USA versions of these men's lifestyle magazines idealize the man who is white, heterosexual, muscular, good-looking and stylish. As men's lifestyle magazines always interact with the society they are produced in, they definitely affect the people in this society and are affected by them. Although there has not been done any comprehensive research on this relationship between the men's lifestyle magazines and Turkish people and how they affect each other, it is highly probable that the effects of men's lifestyle magazines in Turkey will be revealed through different social and clinical studies in the future.

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<b>2015</b>	ITI İstanbul & Cambridge University <i>DELTA (Diploma in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages)</i>
<b>2008</b>	Bilkent University, Ankara Graduate School of Education <i>MA in English Language Teaching</i>
<b>WORK EXPERIENCE:</b>	
<b>September 2016 - Present</b>	<b>Özyeğin University School of Languages, İstanbul</b> Instructor and Team Leader (In addition to teaching, I work with 12 teachers in my team. I observe their lessons, give feedback to them, design individual CPD plans for them and support them during the course.)
<b>September 2015 - August 2016</b>	<b>Özyeğin University School of Languages, İstanbul</b> Instructor and Assessment Specialist (In addition to teaching, I was responsible for the design and administration of various assessment tasks.)
<b>September 2014 - August 2015</b>	<b>Özyeğin University School of Languages, İstanbul</b> Instructor and Course Facilitator (In addition to teaching, I worked with the teachers of the elementary level to ensure the smooth and effective running of the course.)
<b>September 2013 - August 2014</b>	<b>Özyeğin University School of Languages, İstanbul</b> Full Time Instructor
<b>September 2008 - July 2009</b>	<b>İstanbul Bilgi University Preparatory School, İstanbul</b> Full Time Instructor

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**PRESENTATIONS:**

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<b>April 2017</b>	<b>IATEFL-Glasgow</b> (Presentation is about quality management at universities in relation to EAQUALS accreditation)
<b>April 2017</b>	<b>EAQUALS Annual Conference</b> (Presentation is about the process of getting accredited by EAQUALS)

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**SKILLS AND COMPETENCES:**

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<b>Computer</b>	MS Office Applications (Word, PowerPoint, Excel)
<b>Languages</b>	Proficient in English