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## IMAGINARY REGISTRATION AND BODYBUILDING PRACTICE

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*João Pedro Santana*

Psychology course, Centro Universitário da Serra Gaúcha, February 7, 2024, Caxias do Sul, RS

<https://orcid.org/0009-0007-3601-9175>

*Cassia Ferraza Alves*

<https://www.escavador.com/sobre/5707942/cassia-ferrazza-alves>

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**Abstract:** Starting from Jacques Lacan's theory, based on Hegel's philosophy, proposing that the psychic apparatus works from three fundamental registers: Real, Symbolic and Imaginary. Focusing on recording the Imaginary, highlighting the formation of the self in the mirror stage, where the child builds his image referenced by the other. Seeking to understand the issues linked to the search for the ideal body, using participant observation and questionnaires applied to bodybuilders. With Bardin's data analysis, we obtained varied results indicating that the practice of bodybuilding is mainly motivated by the aesthetic search and is influenced by the perception of others. Analyzes based on Lacanian theory reveal that body image makes the distinction between the self and the external world, becoming a key element in the search for self-esteem. The concept of "heteroesteem" is proposed as an alternative to the emphasis on "self-esteem", recognizing the importance of the Other in the formation of the image of the Self.

**Keywords:** Self-esteem. Body. Mirror Stadium. Imaginary.

## INTRODUCTION/THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

In 1933 in France, a psychiatrist named Jacques Marie Émile Lacan (1901-1981) returned to Freud's clinical cases and began his theory based on Hegel's philosophy. The great milestone in his theory was the concept that the psychic apparatus works from three fundamental registers: The Real, the Symbolic and the Imaginary. And specifically, in the Imaginary register, we have the construction of our own image, always endorsed by the other.

Using as a reference the imaginary instance of the formation of the self, based on the conceptual scheme of the mirror stage. "Situated between the first six and

eighteen months of life, during which the child anticipates mastery over his bodily unit through identification with the image of his fellow man and the perception of his own image in a mirror" (ROUDINESCO; PLON, 1998, p. 194). In seminar 1, Lacan (1979) creates a very important question for the analytical process, demarcating the time in which the subject forms a relationship with the other. Later, in Seminar 2, Lacan (1985) inserts the difference between two "others". At this moment, the difference arises between the A with the other, the Other that serves to name, and the other with a lowercase letter a, representing the image of the self.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

Considering these aspects, this work aimed to reflect on the problems facing the search for the ideal body, with the proposal to develop the posture of participant observation in order to carry out the relevant theoretical extrapolation. The phenomena that occurred in the environment of a gym, located in Caxias do Sul, were observed and questionnaires were administered to 22 people who practice bodybuilding. Carrying out the Content Analysis, a large category emerged called "self-esteem", which brought together the concepts related to aesthetics and influence in their relationship with others.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

When asked about the reasons that lead them to practice bodybuilding, the vast majority responded that they train only for aesthetics and that their beauty is measured through others. According to Lacan (1975-1986), the moment in which the subject's body image makes a difference between what is of the self and what is of the external world, being the image in the first moment, which allows him to situate what is and what is that is not of the self, allowing him

to visualize as someone other than himself. The aesthetic ideal reverberates contingencies that are trapped in the aesthetic image by a veil of fantasy, by standards dictated by narcissistic society and which are found in identification with the Other, aesthetically naming what actually becomes “beautiful”. Participants believe they train for self-esteem and to be recognized by others. But, for our “self-esteem” to remain “high”, we lack clues that another subject must send. Thus, our self-esteem varies “economically”, and can be high or low, as the other sends us signals, that is, we have the “Other” as a trainer and “fuel” of our own esteem. “The relationship with the Other is essential, since the path of desire necessarily passes through it, but not because the Other is the only object, but to the extent that the Other is the guarantor of language and subjects it to all its dialectics.” (LACAN, 1999, p. 145).

## CONCLUSION

It is concluded that the subject who in the mirror stage constituted himself as a Self through the relationship with the other, continues to be alienated from this Other, re-actualizing his childhood scenes in his social interactions also in the gym environment. The Self continues to be influenced by the Other, now in the dimension of words, through symbolic means. Considering that the Self has the Other as essential to constitute an image of itself, being alienated and affected by several others throughout life, given its formation of “self-esteem”, it would be interesting to think about hetero-esteem. For, the relationship of “self” in the concept of self-esteem, where the subject fixed in the imaginary continues his life seeking (re)cognition of the image of himself in the other. Therefore, new studies on the issue of the body and its relationships in the bodybuilding environment are considered important, bringing new perspectives and conclusions with greater properties.

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