

# REPRESENTATIONS OF HOMOSEXUALITY IN SLOVENIAN PRINT MEDIA

MANCA CERAR

AN EXTENSION OF THE ANALYSIS BY ROMAN KUCHAR (2003)  
FROM 1970-2000 TO 2010



LUCIA VERLAG

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# Introduction

Heterosexuality is a norm embedded in virtually all aspects of modern life. It is institutionalized as a form of practice and relations and it appears as something natural, normal, fixed, and stable. In contrast to the prevailing sexual orientation (heterosexual), any different sexual orientation is characterized as unusual, immoral, abnormal, or unnatural. Plummer (1996) notes that what separates homosexuality from what is perceived as 'normality' is the social reaction to this type of behavior. In other words, the author states that the traits ascribed to homosexual persons (such as that they "exhibit pathology", "are promiscuous" or "exaggeratedly effeminate"), "may not reside in the homosexual experience per se, but rather in the hostile reactions surrounding it – which lead for example to self-devaluation and despair, and inhibit stable relationships." (Plummer, 1996, p. 65).

The main subject of Roman Kuhar's study (2003), which served as an inspiration for this paper, is the construction of homosexuality in the public space. The research is based on the analysis of the representation of marginalized groups and the related discourse on homosexuality in Slovenian print media from 1970 to 2000. It places the representation in a historical context, placing the analyzed texts in the history of mainly gay and lesbian activism in Slovenia.

At the beginning, the author systematically defines an important term used in the study – a discourse – as a combination of statements that have meaning, power, and specific effects in some social context. Kuhar starts from the premise that we are constituted as social subjects through the discourse and his study, therefore, uses the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) methodology to identify the principles behind the constitution of homosexuality as a social subject. Since CDA, just like any other form of discourse analysis, is primarily an interpretive and qualitative sociological method, the author draws attention to an important element of the analysis. Kuhar (2003) stresses that there is no uniform or "correct" answer to the question "what does this image mean?" or "what does this advertisement communicate?" (p. 17). The findings and conclusions of a study based on this method are thus inevitably an original work of the author, warns Kuhar (2003). Additionally, he is aware and emphasizes that homosexuals as a subject have been co-shaped by a series of other parallel discourses, not only the one aspect of the constitutive discursive practice, i.e. print media representations used in his study.

Before the author embarks on discourse analysis to show how the media construct homosexuals as a (stigmatized) social subject, he examines the discourse in relation to the historical context in which it appears. The author undertakes a linear historical presentation of the media's writings about

homosexuality through the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, highlighting those historical moments that influenced the media's records.

Kuhar (2003) continues with an explanation of the statistical analysis of the material and a presentation of the sample, which consists of 644 texts (more precise parameters will be stated and explained in the continuation of the seminar assignment). This is followed by the division of the media image of homosexuality into five basic categories: stereotyping, medicalization, sexualization, secrecy, and normalization. It describes each of the categories separately and gives examples used in practice.

The author concludes that “in the period 1970-2000 media reporting on homosexuality was generally sympathetic or neutral. Yet this general positive trend within media representations contains ingredients that enable the perpetuation of the negative attitude of public opinion towards this phenomenon” (Kuhar, 2003, p. 7).

To determine the further discourse created around the topic of homosexuality, and especially the trend in reporting on the mentioned topic in Slovenian print media, I decided to extend the author's analysis for the next decade. I was mainly interested in whether the representations continued in the same vein, regardless of the change in the socio-cultural environment, which is nowadays less hostile to homosexuality and since the medium of print (the newspapers specifically) has developed a sort of a standardized way on how to deal with such topics. Furthermore, it is also possible that the representations changed, despite such "protocols" or customary ways of usage of the medium.

For comparability purposes, I used the same method (CDA) as Kuhar (2003) did in *Media Representation of Homosexuality* for analyzing the print media space in the thirty-year period prior to my analysis. I focused on journalistic reporting itself, with a more modest emphasis on the content, which enabled a better understanding of the social, political, and economic background of the era. I was searching for similarities and contrasts in media reporting, as well as elements of Kuhar's division of the recently referenced five primary classifications (stereotyping, medicalization, sexualization, secrecy, and normalization).

First, I will briefly describe Kuhar's findings and trends that are reflected in the media coverage by individual decades. I will continue by highlighting the turning points or key moments that led to the media coverage of homosexuality during this time. From that point forward, I will explain the statistical analysis of the materials and describe the sample used in this study, then continue by presenting the five key classifications of reporting and through them analyze the author's examples of this type of reporting (1970-2000) and examples found in media reporting from 2001 to 2010.

# 1. The Representation of Homosexuality in the Print Media in Slovenia 1970-2000

## 1.1. Early Discussions of Homosexuality

According to data from the book *Media Representation of Homosexuality* (Kuhar, 2003), the first newspaper article addressing homosexuality in Slovenia was published in 1921 in *Njiva* magazine. In it, the anonymous author argues for the removal of the law that punishes "every act by which the offender sought or found sexual satisfaction in the body of a person of the same sex" (Mozetič, 1990, p. 55). Such a liberal spirit was soon joined by opposing voices, especially those which characterized homosexuality as unnatural and, in the spirit of medical science at the time, as a disease or a mental disorder. Medicalization of homosexuality became the focal point of media representations of homosexuality in the 1970s. It was also present in the 1980s and 1990s when the medical discourse was generally superseded and replaced by the discourse on human rights.

### 1.1.1. The Seventies

During the first decade of Kuhar's analysis from 1970 to 1980, print media, as well as general media coverage of homosexuality, is characterized by **silence**. According to the author, a bit more media space was at the time intended for discussing the meaning of the second paragraph of the Yugoslav Penal Code law, according to which "unnatural act of unchastity between persons of the male sex" (p. 24) was **a criminal act**. Despite the Criminal Code not recognizing any kind of unnatural impurity among women, this should not be interpreted as special liberal attitude towards female homosexuality. The invisibility of "female love" is a consequence of the patriarchal understanding of sexuality and love, according to which sexual relations between two women are less problematic or, due to the absence of a male genital organ, impossible and therefore non-existent (Kuhar, 2003, p. 24). Slovene psychiatrist Janez Rugelj comments that two women may be actively joined by a man, hence such relationship is **at least** potentially reproductive, while the sexual act between two men essentially excludes this option.

The first journal entry about homosexuality in the 1970s was titled "A Long Interview With a Homosexual", accompanied by the subtitle "An Intellectual From Zagreb Reveals his Genetic Mistake" (*Problemi*, 1971) and it is an excellent outline of the discursive frameworks within which media representations of homosexuality were formed in the following years. It sets heterosexuality as the point of departure and as the only healthy sexual practice, whereas any other form of sexuality is assessed as pathological and is consequently considered **a medical issue**.

### 1.1.2. The Eighties

In the eighties, the number of texts touching on the issue of homosexuality increased. The greater concentration of texts was created in 1984 on the occasion of the first Magnus festival, which in its consequences not only marks the beginning of the first organized gay and then lesbian movement in Slovenia, but in some way introduces the topic of homosexuality into Slovenian (and Yugoslav) mass media. Magnus is also important because it **de-medicalizes** homosexuality as a topic of media discourse and places it in a different framework, initially primarily within the framework of culture, but then also politics. Simultaneously, however, the festival brought a greater intolerance towards homosexuals, mainly because of the increase in **AIDS** infections, for which two stereotypes apply. The first stereotype suggests that AIDS is a disease from abroad and the festival would attract foreign participants who could potentially bring AIDS to Slovenia; and the second stereotype presumes that AIDS is a disease exclusive to homosexuals, with every participant being a potential carrier of the virus. With that, an equation between homosexuality and AIDS had been made, and is “thus reduced to **sexuality**, a construction based on the assumption already suggested by the media in wider,” says Kuhar. (2003, p. 31). In one of the reader’s letters published in *Delo* in 1988, we can also detect the idea of homosexuality being nothing more but “a fad, a transitory state that could prove to be an obstacle for young people once they become serious and want to begin normal life, that is to say, heterosexual life” (p. 35).

We should not persecute homosexuality, but neither should we advertise or place special stress on it. ... Do you forget the fact that in our country the age of majority is 18 when young people still have a long way to go before they attain physical and social maturity? And do you forget that the recognition of homosexual marriage would become a fad among people still so very young and that it would later embitter their heterosexual partnerships, perhaps even make these impossible, once they become fully mature and capable of such a relationship. (*Delo*, 1988, p. 23)

### 1.1.3. The Nineties

Kuhar (2003) explains that with the diversification and pluralization of the media in 1990s, homosexuality was in many aspects re-introduced into the media and often laced with **sensationalism**. Reporting on homosexuality was often surrendered to the scandalmongering tabloid press and other newcomer magazines. One of these scandals was particularly pompous – in 1994, the gay and lesbian organizations were celebrating the tenth anniversary of their existence and the party was planned to take place in Ljubljana castle, only to be banned a few hours before its scheduled start. The scandal was covered by all mainstream media in Slovenia and the general public demanded that the authorities take responsibility for their homophobia.

A ban on the homosexuals' party that was to take place in Ljubljana castle is the work of intolerant conservative groups within the town authorities. ... This event makes Ljubljana even more of a village than it was before. So our piece of advice to the town notabilities is to publish an announcement stating "No entry to the castle for Blacks, Faggots, Lesbians, and Turks." (*Delo*, 1994, p. 65)

Despite, once again, turning homosexuality into a fad, a peculiarity, a highly stereotyped, and in many ways confined to the same frame of reference as in the past, one significant change took place in the nineties: it was increasingly **de-medicalized**. Kuhar (2003) states that although the media coverage of homosexuality in the 1970s was characterized by citing opinions of mostly "qualified" professionals (psychiatrists, criminologists, judges, etc.,) and the same trend, with rare exceptions, continued into the 1980s, the discourse of the 1990s was co-created by gays and lesbians themselves. It was also increasingly treated as a **human rights issue**, with two topics promoted by the gay and lesbian movement gaining particular importance: registered partnerships and adoption rights.

## 2. Statistical Analysis of the Materials and Description of the Sample

For comparative purposes, I tried to follow Kuhar's (2003) procedure and analysis criteria as much as possible.

### 2.1. Statistical Analysis of the Materials and Description of the Sample (1970-2000)

Roman Kuhar, the author of the book *Media Representation of Homosexuality*, gathered his information from texts about homosexuality that appeared in various newspapers and/or magazines in the thirty-year period from the clippings of *Roza Slon*, *Magnus*, and *LL*. The sample he used for his research includes **644 texts**. The criterion for including the text in the sample he analyzed was the basic theme of the text: **homosexuality in political, social, cultural, and other dimensions**. He did not include short trailers for gay and lesbian films that appeared in weekly TV programs and similar.

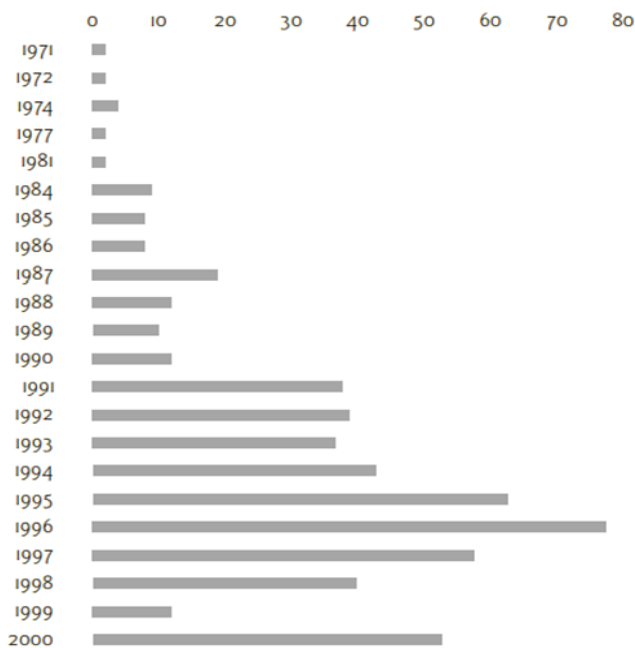
61% of the texts in the sample were published in a daily newspaper and 39% in magazines. The majority of the texts included in Kuhar's analysis appeared in *Delo* (22.4%), followed by the *Mladina* (17.5%), *Dnevnik* (13.2%), *Slovenske novice* (8.1%), *Telex* (5.4%) and so on. Kuhar notes that "the number of texts dramatically increased in the 1990s, primarily because of the diversification of the media space which led to a whole range of new print media. Homosexuality as a subject of media coverage entered



the mainstream in the 1990s, which was another reason for the increase in the number of texts about homosexuality” (2003, p. 43).

Kuhar notices an increase in media coverage until 1996 when Slovenian media extensively wrote about homosexual marriages, followed by a sudden decline in 1999, which he attributes to a database shortfall, as shown in the table below.

**CHART 1: The distribution of texts on a time scale (1970-2000)**



Kuhar divided the gathered materials into **13 categories** (2003, p. 44) of subjects covered by the media to get a better overview of the content and frequency of reporting on specific topics by decade. Here they are listed in alphabetical order:

1. **AIDS** (texts about AIDS and similar issues).
2. **Celebrities** (texts about the public or private lives of famous gays and lesbians).
3. **Crime** (texts that appeared on crime pages and the coverage of various criminal offenses committed by gays and lesbians).
4. **Culture** (ratings and announcements of cultural events, e.g. gay and lesbian film festival, reviews of films, books and so on).
5. **Europe and the World** (texts about gay and lesbian activism, events, legislation, and policies in the EU and other countries).
6. **History** (texts about the global history of homosexuality or the history of gay and lesbian movements in Slovenia).
7. **Lifestyles** (texts about homosexuality as a lifestyle, about homosexuality itself, and “pink money”).

8. **Politics** (texts about discrimination, equality, tolerance, legislation and the like; including reports from various conferences, round table discussions, and camps organized by gay and lesbian associations).
9. **Registered Partnership** (texts about the legislation pertaining to registered same-sex partnerships, homosexual marriages, and adoption rights at home and abroad).
10. **Scandals** (texts about the Magnus festival, the termination of financial aid to *Revolver* magazine, a ban on the celebration of the tenth anniversary of homosexual activism, the publication of the leaflet *Sexuality and Aids*, etc.).
11. **Scene** (texts about the gay and lesbian scene, events in clubs like K4 which ran a gay disco on Sundays, and similar).
12. **Cure and Causes** (texts in which journalists seek the causes of homosexuality and report on various “treatments” that allegedly cure homosexuality).
13. **Other** (the same text was often classified under more than one category since longer articles covered more than one of these categories).

**TABLE 1: Texts by subjects and decades**

| Nº. TOPICS               | THE 1ST DECADE (1970-1980) |            | THE 2ND DECADE (1981-1990) |            | THE 3RD DECADE (1991-2000) |            | TOTAL     |            |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|------------|----------------------------|------------|----------------------------|------------|-----------|------------|
|                          | FREQUENCY                  | PERCENTAGE | FREQUENCY                  | PERCENTAGE | FREQUENCY                  | PERCENTAGE | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
| 1 SCENES                 | -                          | -          | 10                         | 11.9       | 43                         | 9.2        | 53        | 9.4        |
| 2 AIDS                   | -                          | -          | 27                         | 32.1       | 13                         | 2.8        | 40        | 7.2        |
| 3 EUROPE, THE WORLD      | -                          | -          | -                          | -          | 53                         | 11.3       | 53        | 9.5        |
| 4 CRIME                  | -                          | -          | 1                          | 1.2        | 23                         | 4.9        | 24        | 4.2        |
| 5 CULTURE                | -                          | -          | 15                         | 17.8       | 122                        | 26.0       | 137       | 24.5       |
| 6 POLITICS               | 2                          | 33.3       | 29                         | 34.5       | 136                        | 28.9       | 167       | 29.8       |
| 7 REGISTERED PARTNERSHIP | -                          | -          | -                          | -          | 79                         | 16.8       | 79        | 14.1       |
| 8 SCENE                  | -                          | -          | 1                          | 1.2        | 60                         | 12.8       | 61        | 10.9       |
| 9 LIFESTYLE              | 3                          | 50.0       | 27                         | 32.1       | 108                        | 23.0       | 138       | 24.7       |
| 10 CURE AND CAUSES       | 4                          | 66.6       | 7                          | 8.3        | 22                         | 4.7        | 33        | 5.9        |
| 11 HISTORY               | 1                          | 16.6       | 4                          | 4.8        | 14                         | 2.9        | 19        | 3.4        |
| 12 CELEBRITIES           | -                          | -          | -                          | -          | 11                         | 2.3        | 11        | 2.0        |
| 13 OTHER                 | -                          | -          | 4                          | 4.8        | 40                         | 8.5        | 44        | 7.8        |
| TOTAL (BY DECADES)       |                            | 6          |                            | 84         |                            | 469        |           | 559        |

In the first decade (the 1970s), the texts published in magazines and newspapers mainly looked for the causes of homosexuality and the possibility of treatment for this type of sexual practice. In the second and third decades, the topics are mainly political. In the 1980s, this topic appeared as a result of new social movements and gay and lesbian activism that arose at that time. In 1990s, general events in the world, especially in the field of anti-discriminatory legislation, contributed to more frequent reporting (Kuhar, 2003).

## 2.2. Statistical Analysis of the Materials and Description of the Sample (2001-2010)

I personally obtained the data for research purposes from an internal platform of a Slovenian company, which must remain anonymous for legal reasons. Excel exports of media content 2001-2010 contain

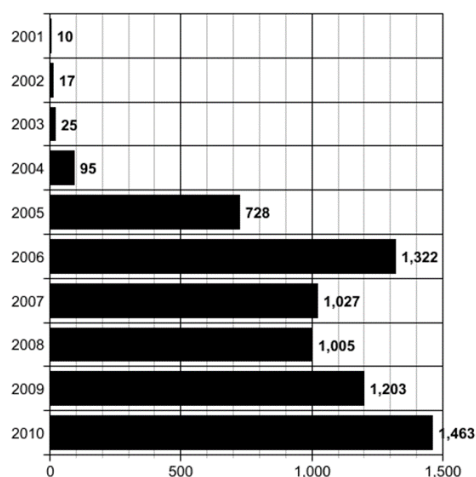
articles in Slovenian print media with the keywords *homoseksual\**, *gej\** and/or *lezbij\** (trans. Homosexual\*, gay\* and/or lesbian\*).

Out of the total received materials, which comprise 6898 media texts, I included **207 texts** in the sample. In the first four years considered, there is a noticeable deficiency in the database; therefore, I included almost all available texts from those years. In the following years, however, my criterion on including texts into the sample was the relevance of the article. I chose articles of which the title itself already indicated addressing the topic of homosexuality and did not just briefly mention the words *gay\*/lesbian\*/homosexual\** within the coverage of other topics.

Within the sample, texts published in *Večer* (16.4%) appear most often, followed by *Dnevnik* (13%), *Delo* (12.6%), *Indirekt* (10.6%), *Žurnal* (9.2%), *Primorske novice* (4.8%), *Mladina* (4.3%), *Demokracija* (2.4%), and the rest of the percentages are mostly evenly distributed among other magazines and newspapers.

As previously mentioned, due to the limited range of media, there are significantly fewer articles in the set of the first years of analysis (2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004), compared to the set of texts in the later years of my research and the earlier years of Kuhar's research. I assume that Kuhar had a more accurate set of texts available for analysis, either because of financial resources or other possibilities. Despite the shortcomings of the sample in my analysis, I decided to additionally study the distribution of texts on a time scale.

**CHART 2: The distribution of texts on a time scale (2001-2010)**



The biggest leap in media coverage of homosexuality is noticeable in **2005**. The increase in reporting jumped by as much as 642.9 % of mentions of homosexuality in print media compared to the previous year. I attribute such a drastic increase to insufficiency in materials in 2004, finally normalizing in

2005. In the following year, media coverage of this topic increased by 81.6%, compared to the previous year. That could be attributed to the larger debate that developed around the **adoption of the Act on the Registration of Same-Sex Partnerships** in 2006 (ZRIPS) a year earlier, which came into force in the said year. A somewhat greater increase in the use of media space with the topic under discussion can also be detected in 2009 and 2010, which could be attributed to the discussion evolving around the **proposal of the new Family Code**, that, among other things, redefines marriage as a life union of two persons. With this, the bill enables same-sex couples marriage and make them equal in the field of adoption.

Just like Kuhar (2003), I myself have arranged the topics that journalists report on most often into categories, more precisely into 11 categories. Most of the categories remain the same, or rather I recognized the topics in the same way as Kuhar (**AIDS, Europe, and the world, crime, politics, registered partnership, scene, cure and causes, celebrities, other**). I left out the categories, such as **culture, lifestyle, and history**; but that does not mean that such topics did not appear in media coverage during the researched period. In fact, many texts contained elements of various topics, though, for each category I focused on a maximum of three topics that dominated the texts. Thus, in many cases of texts that covered history, lifestyle, and/or culture, another theme prevailed. In the years that I have researched there were many homosexual movie trailers that I intentionally avoided for the sake of determining the way of journalistic reporting. However, I have added the categories **Catholic Church** (the category includes reports on the Roman Catholic Church in connection with homosexuality – most often disapproval and persecution of it) and **family issues** (this category includes texts dealing with the new family legislation), since these topics often appear in media coverage.

**TABLE 2: Texts by subjects (2001-2010)**

| YEAR<br>2001-<br>2010 | TOPICS               | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE | YEAR OF MOST<br>FREQUENT<br>REPORTING ON<br>TOPIC |
|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------|------------|---|
|                       | POLITICS             | 90        | 43.5       | 2008  |
|                       | EUROPE, THE<br>WORLD | 37        | 17.9       | 2007  |
|                       | AIDS                 | 21        | 10.1       | 2006  |
|                       | CRIME                | 17        | 8.2        | 2006  |
|                       | THE FAMILY ISSUE     | 16        | 7.7        | 2008  |
|                       | CELEBRITIES          | 16        | 7.7        | 2007  |
|                       | CATHOLIC CHURCH      | 13        | 6.3        | 2009  |
|                       | SCENE                | 12        | 5.8        | 2005, 2007  |

|       |                        |     |     |            |
|-------|------------------------|-----|-----|------------|
|       | REGISTERED PARTNERSHIP | 9   | 4.3 | 2005, 2006 |
|       | CURE AND CAUSES        | 7   | 3.3 | 2007       |
|       | OTHER                  | 6   | 2.9 | 2004       |
| TOTAL |                        | 287 |     |            |

**Note:** 1. In his table, Kuhar (2003) arranged the categories in alphabetical order of the topics. In my table, the categories are arranged in descending order of the frequency of occurrence of the topics in the texts. 2. To compare the results with Kuhar's results, look at page 45 in the book *Media Representation of Homosexuality – An Analysis of the Print Media in Slovenia, 1970-2000* by Roman Kuhar, 2003)

As mentioned above, several different topics can be found in each text, but I limited myself to a maximum of three main ones for each. The sum of frequencies and percentages can therefore be higher than the number of analyzed texts.

### 3. Content Analysis

In the following chapters, I will, the same as Kuhar, translate the findings of the statistical analysis into a content analysis and thus try to determine how homosexuality is constituted in the analyzed period. I will present the five main groups into which Kuhar classified the researched texts dealing with homosexuality, which are: stereotyping, medicalization, sexualization, secrecy, and normalization. Through the texts that had already been analyzed by Kuhar, I will look for connections, similarities, and differences with the fourth researched decade, which is 2001-2010. In doing so, I will be primarily interested in whether there are still texts appearing in this period that could fit into one of these five classifications, if the way of reporting has changed, and if so, how it has changed.

#### 3.1. Stereotyping

Gill Branston and Roy Stafford (2001) state that stereotypes are always present, although their constituent parts change over time. Kuhar (2003) addressed the matter as well:

A characteristic of a stereotypes is that it includes both the categorization and the evaluation of the group to which it refers. A stereotype consists of simple, easily memorized, and generally recognized properties of certain people or a group. Everything connected to such people or groups is reduced to these properties, both exaggerated and simplified by a stereotype. It fixes these properties as unchangeable and eternal. (p. 48)

Hall (1997, p. 258) argues that stereotyping “reduces, essentializes, naturalizes and fixes “difference”. Furthermore, he suggests that “stereotyping is the attempt to set up a social frontier between the "normal" and the "deviant"; what "belongs" and what does not or is the "Other", between "insiders" and "outsiders", Us and Them”.

Kuhar (2003) points out an eye-catching article, published by the popular women's magazine *Jana* in 1989: "Is Your Son a Homosexual?" (*Jana*, 1989). In the article, "concerned" parents could find an instant answer to their dilemma, whether the identity of their sons is "correct" (heterosexual). This "psychological test," whose presumable credibility rested on the claim that its "co-creators were young homosexuals among others," actually listed several stereotypical feminine traits that pandered to a common-sense image of effeminate gays and of a "woman's soul in the man's body" (*Jana*, 1989).

1. "Does your son practice excessive body care? .... 2. Does he perhaps apply discreet make-up? ... Or dye his hair? ... 3. Does he have a very keen sense for fashion? ... 4. Would you describe his room as "tasteful and elegant" rather than "youthfully practical?" 5. Which types of TV programs does he watch? Does he prefer tearful love movies over brutal westerns? ... 6. Does he avoid tests of courage, for example, tree climbing and window breaking? ... 7. What do his gestures look like? Is his walk soft, springy? ... Does he prefer self-invented dance when in a disco? ... 8. Does he meet many sweet girls but all of them, without exception, have one mistake – none is suitable? ... 9. When he sees a picture of a naked woman, does he say "she's ok" without even looking at it closely? ... 10. Do you have an indefinite feeling that your son has been hiding something from you? Five "yes" answers do not yet "prove that your son is different." In an ultimate situation, if no other solution is possible, the best the parents can do is "let the child know that they appreciate and accept him regardless of his erotic preferences. (*Jana*, 1989, p. 28)

Such claims produce strict distinctions within media representations, where gays appear as effeminate and lesbians as masculine, resulting in disappointment when these images are proven false in direct contact with gays and lesbians, says Kuhar (2003). "There is no obvious sign that these two women are different; they do not "emanate" anything that could warn you that "something different" is involved there" (*Jana*, 1989). Even in articles published after 2000, somewhat expectedly, stereotypical reporting on homosexuality is still present. This is confirmed by an article published in *FHM* magazine in 2008, in which the anonymous author questions whether or not scooters are gay, adding the subtitle "Proof That a Vespa Purring Between Your Legs Will be the Last Feminine Thing to do so" (p.16). The author notes that when riding a Vespa, a person uses a feminine wrist movement, while driving a car requires a masculine posture. The following argument mentions the famous British chef Jamie Oliver, who, as the owner of the Vespa at the time, is also proof that these are intended for gays, as he is said to be gay himself. The magazine strongly stereotypes gay men as effeminate, which is also indicated by a section that describes the storage basket on a Vespa as "useless unless you want to fit a chihuahua purse in it" (*FHM*, 2008, p.16).

Another issue that is repeatedly addressed by the interviewers of gays and lesbians is the division of social roles between homosexual partners. "Some are capable of accomplishing superbly a man's work and like to take the lead. Others remain shy and tender and retreat among their cosmetics. This

resembles a man-to-woman relationship, but, in the given example, a man is a woman" (7D, 1988, p. 26). "Doesn't one of the partners take on the role of a man?" (1989, p. 29), interested a journalist of the magazine *Jana* at the end of the 1980s. A similar stereotype and thinking continue in the newly researched period, where the interviewee confides to *Nedelo* magazine that she is most bothered when asked who is the "man" in their relationship and how they divide roles and tasks. In doing so, she wonders, "but why should I look for a man in a woman if I don't like men" (*Nedelo*, 2006, p. 19).

"If two lesbians want fertilization and a child, let's say I accept it conditionally," says an SDS deputy in the evening newspaper *Večer* in 2001. Even Jasna Magič, in the article "*Homosexuality Remains a Taboo*" agrees that male homosexuality is more difficult to accept than lesbianism (*Celjan*, 2007): "There are several reasons for this," she says, "but the most classic example is the fear that male homosexuality is the right one, while lesbians are still waiting for the right man, which is a classic societal prejudice" (*Celjan*, 2007). Even though it seems that there is more tolerance towards lesbians, which is also assumed by the *Večer* journalist in 2004, Miha Lobnik, president of the Legebitre Association, explains that tolerance is greater only at first glance. "In England, a hundred years ago, only male homosexuality was sanctioned because women were not recognized anyway. Therefore, lesbians are discriminated against twice: first as women and second as homosexuals" (*Večer*, 2004, p. 2).

### 3.2. Medicalization

According to Kuhar (2003), medicalization is the process of finding medical solutions for deviant behavior in society, which consists of various elements. Just as in the beginnings of writing about homosexuality, medicalization remains an important category of media representation – the only difference is that "the medical and psychiatric discourses first constituted the homosexual as an (incurable) mental patient, and then, in the 1990s, began to affirm the opposite viewpoint – that homosexuality was not a disease" (p. 58); however, journalists still tried to put forward various theories about the cause of homosexuality. The range of presumable causes of homosexuality is varied, says Kuhar (2003). While some claimed that homosexuality was the first sign that "humankind as a species is moving towards its extinction" (*Problemi*, 1971, p. 1), others blamed possessive mothers who "enshrine their sons with deep emotions, enclose them in their excessively emotional women's world, which prevents them from becoming independent and achieving recognition through their male role" (*ITD*, 1974, p. 4). In 2006, an article published in the magazine *Antena*, titled "Mothers Are to Blame for Gays," wrote about the theory that "the more brothers you have, the more likely you are to become

gay." Here, the author directly expresses his views by saying that this theory made him shiver, as he has two brothers, which would thereby mean he is twice as likely to **become** gay, based on this theory. Through the article, the author establishes what must have gone "wrong" in the upbringing of a child for him to become homosexual. "Too much attention is not okay, too little attention turns you gay!.... So, act wisely," he suggests (*Antena*, 2006).

In the 1980s, media representation of homosexuality was closely related to the issue of AIDS. The media often reported on the disease as a problem exclusively for the risk groups, which were homosexuals. This filled the heterosexual community with a kind of hope that AIDS was just a disease of "those who are different". "In our country, the groups that are infected are risk groups – drug addicts, homosexuals, and hemophiliacs. So far we haven't had a case that could be regarded as "purely ours" (*Teleks*, 1985, p. 67). In the 1990s, the intertwining media representation of AIDS and homosexuality continued, often being inseparable even as an element of homophobic practice. In 1993, *Slovenske novice* noted that there were "still too many prejudices against difference, and homosexuality is still seen as something abnormal that also became dangerous with the spread of AIDS" (1993, p. 60).

As already shown in the analysis above, it can be seen that AIDS continues to be one of the more frequent topics appearing in texts from the new researched period; It occupied 10.1% of the space among the covered sample of researched texts and the highest frequency was detected in 2006. Although the media still hardly passes by the topic of AIDS without emphasizing the connection between the disease and homosexuality, in the new era more texts that raise awareness of the universal danger of AIDS are being published. Texts frequently address the unselective nature of AIDS, it "not choosing its victims" and therefore the possibility of affecting anyone, not only homosexuals. Articles that report on AIDS are visibly more informative, educational, and encouraging the protection against the disease, as well as an open discussion about it. With headlines appearing in print media, such as "AIDS - Prevention Is the Best Medicine" (*Gorenjski glas*, 2005), "Fundamentally About AIDS" (*Naša lekarna*, 2006), "Aids Is a Disease That Does Not Choose" (*Žurnal*, 2006), "Aids Does not Choose. You can!" (*Primorske novice*, 2007), it seems that the media intend to encourage people to take precautions, without looking for the "culprit".

### 3.3. Sexualization

Although in the 1980s homosexuality progressed to the context of culture and politics as opposed to its media representations in the 1970s, when it was almost exclusively sexualized and medicalized, completely explicit sexualization was still present in the first half of the eighties. The centralization of



the representation of homosexuality around sex has constituted the subject – i.e. homosexuals (almost exclusively male) – as essentially or primarily sexualized beings who hide their actions because they are doing something sinful (the Church), criminal (the police), or pathological (psychiatry). This is also how the code of correct heterosexual sexual practice is established. Sex in a public space, recreational sex, sex with multiple partners, and especially promiscuity and hedonism are all sexual behaviors that are attributed to (male) homosexuality and thus constitute it as an exclusively sexual issue. A clear distinction is made between the right and wrong use of sexual pleasures. With this, the question is transferred beyond morality and ethics. Such examples also appear in the cases of my analysis, where in the previously mentioned article “Homosexuality Remains a Taboo” (Celjan, 2007), the interviewer points out that there are many rumors that homosexuals, **especially men**, change partners more often.

**PICTURE 1: Sexualizaion (Slovenske novice, 1992)**



If sexualization generally withdrew from the text in the 1990s, it was transferred to the pictorial material that accompanied the text in newspapers and magazines. When researching these, Barthes' (1993) model of representation with a denotative and connotative level of meaning comes in handy, but of course, meaning can be ambiguous, unclear, and contain several possible interpretations. An important role here is played by the caption, as it reduces the possibility of different interpretations of the picture. Kuhar tried to illustrate this with examples, one of them being “The Right To Be Different,” a title featured in *Slovenske novice* in 1992. In the article, the author discusses homosexuality from the point of view of human rights, but a different message is delivered by the pictorial material, which shows oral sex between two men. Even though the image is slightly blurred due to the direct orientation towards the light and this partially "cleanses" it of its pornographic nature, the entire connotative level of the graphic equipment is of course clear: the sexualization of homosexuality.

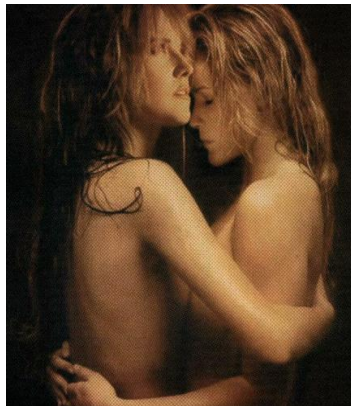
If we follow the pattern, as expected, the sexualization of homosexuality in the print media does not disappear from media coverage in the newly analyzed period (2001-2010); however, I did not detect many overly sexualized images. There are still some examples of sexualization even in pictorial material, though they are rare. In the magazine *Indirekt* in 2008, for example, an unknown author published a photo (picture 2) of the cover of the magazine *Slon*, which is supposed to be a magazine for homosexuals. In the photo, a lesbian and a gay couple are kissing, which the author of the article describes as: "a very interesting contact of the human body," adding that "a heterosexual might come

to think that it would be more interesting to be there in between," (Indirekt, 2008, p. 12). Two theories emerge to me when analyzing this photography and they are both sexualized. What could be meant by "being in between" probably refers to a (hidden, latent) heterosexual fantasy of becoming a part of homosexual intercourse (e.g. a male heterosexual imagining himself to be between two lesbians having sex, or a male heterosexual fantasizing to be in homosexual intercourse as a third person). What could also be meant by the comment is that it would be more interesting to be somewhere between a lesbian and a gay couple, that is, between a man and a woman who make up a heterosexual couple. Another example of the sexualization of a homosexual relationship can be found in the already mentioned article "Homosexuality Remains a Taboo" from 2007, published by the weekly *Celjan*. At the beginning of the article, there is a photo (picture 3) of a naked lesbian couple. In my opinion, this serves the purpose of sensationalism and attracting readers.

**PICTURE 2:  
Sexualization  
(Indirekt, 2008)**



**PICTURE 3:  
Sexualization  
(Celjan, 2007)**



Apart from rare cases of sexualized media images, in most articles I noticed some symbolic images and real photos from various events (e.g. pride parade) with various material symbols alluding to homosexuality (e.g. LGBT pride flag).

### 3.4. Secrecy

Homosexuality is interpolated into media representations with certain elements of the already described techniques of stereotyping, medicalization, and sexualization, as well the secrecy. According to the author of the book *Media Representations of Homosexuality* – Roman Kuhar, the greatest measure of the mystification of homosexuality as a secret occurs through media silence. In the analyzed media representations, homosexuality as a secret also appears in the form of anonymous interlocutors, in the changed names of the interlocutors, in the media reproduction of the closet, the choice of titles, pictures, and the like (p. 81).

Another constant way of pointing to secrecy (shame, guilt, crime) is the recurrent use of the verb “admit” in connection with someone’s coming out, says Kuhar (2003). For example, the article published in *Jana* in 2000 describes Elton John as a “popular Briton who in the 1990s finally admitted that he was gay...” (p. 100). It is also present in texts published after 2000. Countless articles still use the word “admit,” which strongly alludes to something you are ashamed of or guilty of. In the magazine *Smrklja* (2002), we can read that Will Young, the winner of the Pop Idol competition and favourite of the British audience, publicly admitted that he is gay a few days ago. “By saying this out loud, he seriously jeopardized his future career, but it shows that the inhabitants of the island are quite open-minded and did not blame him for his sexual orientation” (*Smrklja*, 2002, p. 1). In this article, homosexuality is shown as something threatening, even worthy of reproach. The people who accepted Will’s confession are revered as open and good people, because they did not **blame** him for his sexual orientation, although, according to the tone of the text, they could have.

As Kuhar (2003) established in his previously mentioned book, photographic material, especially in 1990s, sexualizes homosexuality, while in the 1970s and part of the 1980s, the connotative level of photographic material is mainly characterized by mystery and concealment. Interview with judge Šinkovac “*Between Morality and Freedom*” from the year 1974 is, for example, equipped with a picture of a dark tunnel (picture 4), at the end of which one can see a silhouette of a man. Homosexuality seems to be represented in the image as something hidden (should be hidden), which belongs to dark and undefined spaces. A similar principle of the image with the same connotative message (a person pictured through the tunnel, only visible as a silhouette) appeared in *Novi tednik*, published less than twenty years later, in 1990, says Kuhar (2003). Despite the sixteen-year gap, homosexuality still evoked the same images of mystery in media representations.

PICTURE 4: Secrecy  
(ITD, 1974)



PICTURE 5: Secrecy  
(Vestnik, 2007)



In the newspaper *Vestnik*, in 2007, we read an article titled “*A Girl Who Likes To Look After a Girl*,” which is subtitled with the sentence “*She Admits To The Surroundings That She Is a Lesbian*”. In

addition, in this article we find several elements of secrecy, including that the article is signed only with the initials, as well as the published pictorial material (picture 5), which only shows the silhouette of a female figure with prominent light in the background, which could also have the purpose of hiding the interviewee's identity.

Aside from these cases, I did not perceive a more visible mystification of homosexuality. As mentioned, many articles are still signed only with the initials of the author or the author is unknown. The usage of the word "admit" is still very common. Nonetheless, homosexuality is reported frequently and openly. Despite the article published in 2007 titled "*Homosexuality Remains a Taboo*" (Celjan, 2007), only a year later an article reporting that homosexuality is no longer a taboo topic has been published. A more open society was certainly not established within a year; therefore, I attribute the drastic change in reporting to individual authors who probably have different perceptions of society's openness to homosexuality – either because of the environment they are exposed to, their views, different sources or other reasons. I think that both journalists are right; homosexuality remains a mystified and a taboo topic and yet it is gradually coming out of hiding and is being written about more transparently. It is, I believe, influenced by the nature of the magazine or newspaper, and/or individual journalists and their personal opinion.

The frequently observed topic of reporting on homosexuality has evolved from the more visible promotion of tolerance, acceptance, and advertising of homosexual life. The pride parade, whose roots go back to 2001, was a response to the impatient and insulting behavior of the staff towards the Canadian poet Jean-Paul Doust and a Slovenian gay activist Brane Mozetič. The security guard forbade them from entering the cafe, saying "just get used to the fact that the bar is no longer for this type of people" (Velikonja, 2011, p. 16). After the incident, the LGBT community demanded that the state authorities react to intolerance and condemn the bar and the behavior of the security guard, whose action was excused by the owner of the bar. Despite the expectation that the city authorities would condemn the act, nothing happened; which is why the activists started organizing the first spontaneous pride parade in Slovenia, called "*march against homophobia.*"

Since the first parade, various invitations and reports on pride parades have been appearing in the media every year. Although most journalists report on the matter neutrally or positively (e.g. "...the Ljubljana Gay Pride Festival... will brighten up the streets of Ljubljana again this year" (Indirekt, 2008, p. 2), there are individual articles that try not only to prevent such events but also to exclude such topics from media, thus mystifying them.

In 2008, the parade ended with several incidents, which indicates that “intolerance is still very present in our country”, according to Marjan Jerman, the author of the article published in *Dobro jutro* (p. 2). He continues by stating that the organizers and participants of such events should be more critical of themselves and that they may also be to blame for some of the incidents. He goes on to criticize the various banners that are carried at the event, e.g.: "Is it really necessary to show off and write on the banners “I'm glad I'm gay”? I'm glad I'm not gay, and I'm not organizing any parade to promote "I'm glad I'm not gay" (*Dobro jutro*, 2008, p. 2). Activist Simon Maljevac explains that “with such events, we only confirm our existence” (*Dnevnik*, 2008, p. 7).

### 3.5. Normalization

The normalization Kuhar (2003) is talking about “fell like a canopy” over the previous images of the homosexual as a criminal, a mental patient, etc. At the end of the 1990s, in media representations, a homosexual becomes a completely ordinary person who can live his homosexuality just as fully as others live their heterosexuality.

In 2005, in the newspaper *Štajerski tednik*, under the heading Mental Health, we read an article about an elderly gentleman who, after 15 years of confinement, realized that he could no longer hide his inclination towards men. He wonders how he should tell his wife and children, to which clinical assistant Bojan Šinko answers. Šinko suggests that he follow his inclinations and emphasizes that homosexuality is not a mental disorder or disease, thus normalizing his situation. It seems as if the representations want to show that it is possible to live without hiding sexual orientation. However, the normalization of the subject we are talking about is a "heterosexual" normalization. Homosexuals are more accepted in society, the more they are "heterosexual" in their appearance, physically, behaviorally, and socially. The media representation of normal homosexuality is actually a media representation of homosexuality tailored to the heterosexual, which does not threaten his (heterosexual) world. For the victim (within the concept of victimization), this means that he continues to be in a non-autonomous and subordinate position, since it depends on the (good) will of the one who is supposed to be tolerant. There is a great gap between tolerance and acceptance. Kuhar (2003, p. 90) explains that “She or he who is tolerated is not free. He (and it is more often a “he” than a “she”) who tolerates has all the power and the right to graciously grant concessions to the tolerated one as long as he sees fit.”

We must understand the process of normalization as a trend, under which ideas about abnormality, unnaturalness, pathology are still simmering. The carpet covering the (media) garbage dump of ideas about homosexuality is raised once again in the debate about the right to marry and especially the right

to adopt children. The homosexual community's demand for equality of the homosexual marriage and adoption was first mentioned in the media in Slovenia in a public notice issued by the *Roza club* and published in *Delo* on October 4, 1990. Before that, there had been initiatives for equality, but the issues of homosexual marriage and adoption, even if implicitly present in these initiatives, were not the center of media attention. In the 1990s, the media space became widely open to these topics (Kuhar, 2003).

The forms of homophobic media representation that are frequently present in the media in the form of pro and contra marriage and adoption arguments focus on two issues: family and children. (Kuhar, 2003). Failure to recognize the diversification of family forms as equal is only a framework within which homosexuality is again labeled as an **unhealthy** (moral category) or **unnatural** (biological category) social fact. Swords cross especially when it comes to children. Children's rights are placed before the rights of adults and the argumentation ranges from popular psychology to morality. Those who argue against adoption advocate naturalness, according to which a child needs both a father and a mother (disqualification of all other forms of the family). Those who advocate adoption, stress the problematic nature of the "natural" family form, which can be dysfunctional and hence unsuitable for children (Kuhar, 2003, p. 92). "Children's rights," continues Kuhar, "are thus exploited by two diametrically opposite currents. Although these appear to be in the foreground, it is actually the arena of old ideological conflicts between supporters and opponents of homosexuality, and ideological conflicts about naturalness and normality of homosexuality". A high increase in writing about this type of issue can be seen after 2005 with the adoption of the Act on the Registration of Same-Sex Partnerships. Already here, two poles are created between those who oppose the act, as they strive to curb the rights of homosexuals and those who, while striving for more rights, criticize the act as hypocritical, since the law greatly restricts the rights of gays and lesbians. Although the law recognizes some rights and eliminates the previously completely lawless position of same-sex partners, they state as a drawback that the law does not grant same-sex partners the status of relatives. As a result, couples in same-sex partnerships remain without rights in the field of social, health, pension, and other insurances (after their partner). There is more shortcomings, such as claiming the partner as a dependent family member, the right to absence from work, the right to compensation for the care of a family member, and so on. The author of an interview in the newspaper *Dnevnik* was interested in knowing how the registration of a same-sex partnership registration differs from marriage, to which Simon Maljevac replied that, to begin with, the difference is already known on a symbolic level. "If you are registered, you feel like a car" (Dnevnik, 2007).

Most of the reporting on registration of same-sex partnerships focuses on discrimination against homosexuals and people's reactions to it (e.g. "Registration Is Discrimination!" (*Večer*, 2005), "Registration And Its Minimum Rights" (*Delo*, 2005). At the same time, however, the reporting also covers various intolerant opinions of people, especially from political circles, who are extremely opposed to this step forward.

After September 2009, with the proposal of the new Family Code, which defines marriage as a life union between two persons of the same or different sex, and the legalization of adoption, similar polarization took place. With the previously mentioned proposal, however, the discussion focused primarily on biological (ab)normality and child welfare. On one hand, acceptance is growing; on the other, hostility is intensifying.

The public debate on the new Family Code, with rare exceptions, according to Kuhar (2015), was "almost a "circus" performance". Thus, we find articles in the database that already in the title express disagreement with the proposal to redefine the concept of family: "*A Family Is Just One Husband And One Wife*," (*Inderekt*, 2008); "*To The Sanctity Of The Concept Of Family With a Petition*," (*Dnevnik*, 2008). As well as those who support it "Basically, Just an Ordinary Family," (*Inderekt*, 2008), and those who are somewhere in between "Equal Families!?" (*Demokracija*, 2008).

The proposal of the new Family Code also allows same-sex partners to adopt children. That brings to the fore the discussion about the child's well-being, which creates polarization in the discourse. The sharpest opposition to the code can be seen in the Slovenian Catholic weekly newspaper *Družina*, which in several articles promotes disagreement with the new code, e.g. "*New Family Code: an Experiment With Children*" (*Družina*, 2009), and openly promotes homophobia: "*Homophobia as a Fighting Slogan*," (*Družina*, 2009). As Bojan Macuh states, "only what is divine is sacred for the church," (*Večer*, 2009).

The public debate led to a new role for the Roman Catholic Church, which once again became an increasingly important civil-societal actor in the discussion of citizenship sexuality issues. The association CIDPO (Civil Initiative for the Family and Children's Rights) operated under its auspices, which strictly opposed the new Family Code. Since, according to them, homosexuality is constructed as a problem, the solution to the problem lies in the removal of homosexuals. They published their demands (solutions) on the website 24kul.si, which is a potential subject of further research, should someone want to extend the research from print to online media.

In addition to the opinions the Church has already expressed, the main arguments addressed to the child's welfare are that by enabling adoptions by same-sex partners, the child would be confused, stigmatized from an early age, and put in a difficult situation. "The child will have a mother and a father in the context of a same-sex partnership in mother and mother and father and father. Complicated, of course. We, adults, find this definition hard to understand, let alone a child - when friends ask him about it in kindergarten, at school, on the street, in society," continues Macuh (*Večer*, 2010, p. 25).

Such dilemmas are answered by many studies on same-sex families and the differences between hetero- and homosexual parents. Sociologists Judith Stacey and Timothy Biblery stated in 2001 that children from same-sex families are no different psychologically, behaviorally, or sexually than children from heterosexual families. "These children are indeed more often exposed to homophobia. But because their parents prepare them for a homophobic society, they are psychologically very strong and do not show differences in self-confidence and anxiety," explains Kuhar in a different study *Everyday life of gays and lesbians* (2003).

In several articles from other sources, journalists merely objectively report and inform the public about the proposed code. Surprisingly to me, however, a large number of texts appear that report positively on this topic, encourage openness to the code and share personal stories of homosexual persons who already live in a same-sex relationship and have children - e.g. "Two Dads can be Better Than None," (*Jana Zarja*, 2010). In an interview published in the same magazine, the interviewer asks the grandmother of a girl, who lives with two fathers, if she thinks that the feminine principle might be missing in the family. To this, the interviewee, Maja Lupša, replies:

The children of our homosexual sons and daughters do indeed have parents of the same sex, but they also have grandfathers and grandmothers, uncles and aunts, friends and girlfriends. When our little girl comes home, she will be in our extended, in a slightly unorthodox family, in which there are especially many women, she will be able to find a role model that she likes best (*Jana Zarja*, 2010, p. 6).



## 4. Conclusion

The author of *Media Representations of Homosexuality* (2003), Roman Kuhar, concludes his book by wondering where within the media representations there are attachments for maintaining a negative opinion of the phenomenon in question, what are the elements in the media reporting that maintain a negative perception of homosexuality. He then notes that part of the answer lies precisely in the categorization of the media representations he analyzed. Stereotyping, medicalization, sexualization, secrecy, and ultimately also normalization are those points, those attachments in media representations that preserve and reproduce negativity about homosexuality, even though they generally want to change this relation. In my research, I discovered and perceived examples of each of these five categorizations, which indicates a similar way of reporting that continues throughout the early 2000s, though I do believe that the method and content of reporting have changed to a certain extent in the newly researched period (2001-2010).

Although the subject of both (Kuhar's and mine) analysis of the media construction of homosexuality was partly limited, since we analyzed only print media, our findings indicate the direction of the attitude towards the phenomenon in question. Since I, unlike Kuhar, did not analyze public opinion, it is difficult for me to conclude what kind of attitude towards the discussed topic developed during the considered period. By drawing conclusions based on a few parallels between Kuhar's research and mine - which are, among others, the possibility to categorize articles in the same five main categories (stereotyping, sexualization, medicalization, secrecy, normalization) - that indicates that the trend of this type of formation of public discourse, where these topics are suppressed, repressed, hidden in stereotyped images continues. The strict criteria of these categories is, however, noticeably "watered down" or softened. Homosexuality, while it remains slightly mystified and taboo topic is gradually coming out of the hiding and is being written about more transparently.

I have noticed that the frequency of reporting increases with more scandalous moments related to homosexuality. Registration of Same-Sex Partners (2005) and the proposal for a new Family Code (2009) polarized the general public the most. Naturally, different opinions always existed and were present and expressed through reports, however, these two events, in my opinion, had the most visible impact on radical expressions of opinion in the media space. At this point, electronic media also had a great influence in shaping the discourse, though, this is the subject of further research.

Another thing I have noticed in comparison to Kuhar's analysis is that the difference between media coverage of gays compared to lesbians has decreased. Even though the author of the *Celjan* newspaper

warned in 2007 that gays are more exposed and are still more recognizable in the media than lesbians, I do not perceive a major difference between the two in the reporting and notice that homosexuality is written about much more inclusive of both gays and lesbians towards the end of the newly researched period.

If medicalization was still noticeable in the coverage of homosexuals at the beginning of the new researched decade, it almost completely disappeared towards the end of the decade. The coverage no longer looks for reasons for homosexuality, but the coverage of AIDS continues, if not even increases. The difference is that AIDS is not only equated with homosexuals, but rather makes people aware of the universal danger of the disease, which does not choose its "victims". The emphasis is therefore on informing people about the disease and not on stereotyping and stigmatizing.

Furthermore, I also noticed a greater openness to the topic in journalistic reporting and a greater emphasis on the personal stories of homosexuals, thereby informing heteronormative society about the homosexual lifestyle, situation, and experiences. Though it is possible to see an improvement in the situation, the media, in my opinion, still did not remain completely neutral, and thereby, influence people's perceptions and opinions on homosexuality.

Although many homophobic articles still appear in the newly researched period, I would attribute this type of reporting to individual authors and not to the "nature" of the magazine or newspaper. Often, in the same paper, we can see both a homophobic article and an article opposing intolerance and discrimination against homosexuals, just a few days apart (with the exception of the newspaper *Družina*, which strictly opposes and rejects homosexuality throughout the whole researched period).

A standardized way of reporting on homosexuality therefore continues even into the newly analyzed decade. Individual elements from Kuhar's analysis are strongly noticeable even in the first years of my analysis, some even later. However, towards the end of the decade, these elements significantly "soften" or change the direction of reporting. In my opinion, the Internet and digital media also have a great influence on this, which at that time gained in usage and perhaps enabled a more global insight into the topic, thus causing societal changes.

The existence of homosexuality cannot be denied, due to changes in most societies, the taboos associated with it are also slowly diminishing, and therefore it is being talked about more (Kuhar, 2008). And even though in 2010 they believed that "*Homosexual Families are not to be Expected Soon*" (*Naša žena*, 2010), I am happy to conclude my seminar assignment with the fresh decision of the Slovenian Constitutional Court, which this year (2022) became the 15th EU member state to finally legalize same-

sex marriage and adoption. What happened in the media from the endpoint of my analysis to the point where we are today is also the subject of further research.

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### 5.2. The List of Newspaper and Magazine Texts About Homosexuality Referred to in This Study

1. Aids – preventive je najboljšo zdravilo (Aids - prevention is the best medicine), Željko Jakelič, Gorenjski glas, December 13, 2005
2. Aids je bolezen, ki ne izbira (Aids is a disease that does not choose), M.K., Žurnal, December 1, 2006
3. Aids na Voglu (Aids on Vogel), Mojca Kaučič, Slovenske novice, August 30, 1993
4. Aids ne izbira. Ti lahko! (Aids does not choose. You can!), Jasna Arko, Primorske novice, November 27, 2007
5. Aids: nevarnost narašča (Aids: an increasing danger), Die Zeit, Teleks, No. 35, August 29, 1985
6. Beg pred žensko?, Psihiater dr. Jože Lokar o homoseksualnosti (Fleeing from women? The psychiatrist Dr. Jože Lokar on homosexuality), Janko Lorenci, I.T.D., March 5, 1974
7. Dekle, ki rado pogleda za dekletom (A girl who likes to look after a girl), B.Z., Vestnik, August 23, 2007
8. Do svetosti pojma družine s peticijo, (To the sanctity of the concept of family with a petition), Lucija Dimnik, Dnevnik, March 7, 2008

9. Dolgi pogovor s homoseksualcem (A long interview with a homosexual), Primož Žagar, Problemi, No. 108, December 1971
10. Drhtenje lokvanjev (pozdrav penskam, ki ljubijo penske 4) (The trembling of water lilies, greeting women who love women), Miroslav Slana, 7D, No. 38, September 22, 1988
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