

## Gender Issue

Double standards

Age of Consent

Mansplaining





# Man vs. Woman:

## SEX-BASED EFFECTS OF CANNABIS

Just because cannabis use is becoming more mainstream around the world, marijuana is still a psychoactive drug, and any substance-use comes with health risks. Difficulty in speaking and retaining knowledge, inability to problem-solve, and decreased reaction time are just some of the side effects. Many studies have also found taking marijuana increases the risk of death from hypertension and heart attack.

Risks are particularly high for students because their brains are not fully developed until the age of 25. MRI images of the brains of 18 to 25-year-olds show that even casual, recreational use of marijuana changes the size, shape, and density, increasing the chance of stroke. Due to biological differences, men and women also experience the effects of cannabis differently.

## Man

### HIGH RISK OF PSYCHOSIS

Men are twice as likely to develop schizophrenia or psychosis as women, and 4 times as likely to be hospitalised for cannabis psychosis, especially younger men.

Source: Cannabis Psychosis, Gender Matters, 2015



### WEIGHT GAIN

Cannabis gives men serious munchies, which can lead to weight gain, and decreases the capacity for exercise.

Source: Yale University School of Medicine, 2015



### ERECTILE DYSFUNCTION AND INFERTILITY

Regular cannabis use may lead to erectile dysfunction and inhibited orgasm. Studies have also found reduced sperm counts in men who smoked weed. A 2015 Danish study estimated that approximately 15% of the young men in their study might need fertility treatment in the future if they wanted to father a child.

Source: 1. Richard Balon, Wayne State University, 2017 | 2. Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, 2015

### A GATEWAY DRUG

Research suggests that male marijuana users are more likely to take other forms of drugs. Adults who used marijuana are also likely to develop alcohol abuse disorder and nicotine addiction.

Source: National Epidemiological Study of Alcohol Use and Related Disorders

### HAIR LOSS

The study of regular cannabis smokers found that young men in particular were prone to hair loss, especially when coupled with the carcinogenic effects of smoking.

Source: The University of Amsterdam



### MAN BOOBS

Men who regularly smoke marijuana can develop gynecomastia - aka man boobs - due to the hormonal imbalance it causes.

Source: Mayo Clinic and the National Institute of Health

## Woman

### SIGNIFICANT DIZZINESS

Women who use marijuana report significantly more dizziness after smoking up and have greater changes in blood circulation.

Source: British Journal of Pharmacology, 2010

### BAD COMPLEXION

Puffing on a joint can lead to aging skin, conditions like rosacea, eczema, and psoriasis are also worsened. Cannabis use also is linked to acne and increased facial hair in women thanks to hormonal imbalance.

Source: Greenwich Village Dermatology



### DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY

Young women who smoked pot daily were five times as likely as non-pot smokers to develop depression and anxiety.

Source: Columbia University, 2013



### MEMORY IMPAIRMENT

In a study entitled "Sex, Drugs, and Cognition: Effects of Marijuana," researchers found that cannabis affected visuospatial memory impairment in women more than men.

Source: Journal of Psychoactive Drugs, 2010



### DISRUPTED MENSTRUAL CYCLE

Studies show that even 1g of marijuana is enough to disrupt the menstrual cycle. This also impacts fertility as well as fetal development, as it messes with estrogen levels.

Source: Modern Fertility, 2018

### HIGHER CHANCE OF ADDICTION

Females are more vulnerable in developing an addiction to cannabis because they develop a tolerance much faster than men, although it takes less cannabis in the beginning to get women high. Women also have a harder time quitting, with symptoms like irritability and sleep disruption.

Source: Frontiers, 2018 | Washington State University, 2014

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Marketing 101 states that if a product's target audience is everyone, it will end up attracting no one. Gender segmentation is one of the most common ways to plan a marketing strategy. However, what happens when this method is incorrectly used, resulting in halving the product's potential reach by limiting the marketing to target a certain gender?

The billion-dollar video game industry has been male-dominated for much of its history, and gender-targeted marketing is one of the reasons why this is so. At its dawn, the video games were marketed to both genders. This changed after the video game crash of 1983 - advertisers of video games needed to make sure that their marketing would get them out of their precarious financial situations, so they decided to focus on males as their target audience.

Market research justified this move to a certain extent; in the 1980s, more boys played video games than girls, as boys were more inclined to try out new technologies. This did not mean that girls didn't play games - they were just expected to join the club later. As video game companies threw precious advertising dollars to make TV and print advertisements, there was a clear shift in tone geared towards attracting young male audiences. The video game industry recovered, at the cost of video games being generally recognised as belonging exclusively to the male gender.



It seems like in recent years, attempts at gender marketing have mostly failed, some spectacularly, like BIC for Her. However, there was a product that technically succeeded using this method.

Introducing Cards Against Humanity for Her, which is identical to the original game, comes in a pink box (instead of the original black one) and costs \$9 more. Yes, this was how the creators described the game on their site. It was obviously a tongue-in-cheek reference to BIC for Her, except that Cards Against Humanity for Her was intentionally tone-deaf to make a mockery out of gender marketing. Media outlets praised the campaign and proceeds of the sold-out game were donated to a women's rights group.



Looking at advertisements from the 1960s by famous brands might make you cringe in this day and age. Hardee's (Carl's Jr in Singapore) once declared that "women don't leave the kitchen" on a print advertisement, and that if one was a bachelor, he should eat at Hardee's. I understand that fast-food brands have to market their food creatively, but this advertisement clearly once alienated ladies who Hardee's I was unable to find documented during that time. They appear to be socially conservative, they are frequently anti-semitic, and they are marketing to sexist marketing.

In 2010, stationery company BIC launched BIC for Her, pastel-coloured pen sets which feature "a thin barrel designed to fit a woman's hand". The product went viral online as netizens started leaving hilarious fake reviews of the product on Amazon, such as asking if the pens were "safe for my husband to use" or if there were "special pens for that time of the month".



It is truly perplexing how these unisex products, such as burgers and pens, are marketed to convince us that these products are meant for specific genders only.

As gender identities become increasingly complex, gender marketing might become a thing of the past. The 2013 Cassandra Gender Report found out that 60% of millennials believe that the lines of gender have been blurred. Once advertisers change their marketing strategies to reflect more gender-neutral messages, be prepared to see huge changes in retail spaces starting with the infamous blue-for-boys and pink-for-girls toys section.

Perhaps one day we will not have to question why certain products are marketed specifically for one gender, or see that they would only reach half the population due to misguided marketing choices. Perhaps we as consumers should get the ball rolling by defying gender-purchasing norms, so advertisers will follow suit.

By Bhawna Sharma

Women seem to find themselves at the receiving end of inherently sexist attitudes and policies. We are told to not have sex with multiple partners before marriage and have kids before it's too late. There aren't any equivalent prescriptions for men. At the end of the day, it's women who get the short end of the stick when it comes to choosing their career and sexuality.

## THE DOUBLE STANDARDS WOMEN FACE

## Women and careers: Asking for too much?

In Japan for example, attitudes towards women remain unflinchingly paternalistic despite Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's ambitious womenomics plans. In fact, single women in their thirties have been dubbed as *makeinu* ('loser dogs') because even if they have successful careers, they'll always be incomplete until they become mothers.



Even in Singapore, one of the leading countries in terms of gender parity, women face double standards at the workplace the minute they leave work after giving birth. Women who take unpaid leave to care for their children are often seen less committed to work.

If women focused on careers, they're pressured for more family time, but if they chose family, they're effectively severed from the workforce. Few mothers have support like New Zealand PM Jacinda Ardern. Unsurprisingly, having kids seems to leave men's career prospects unaffected.

## Living in the Victorian Era of Virtue

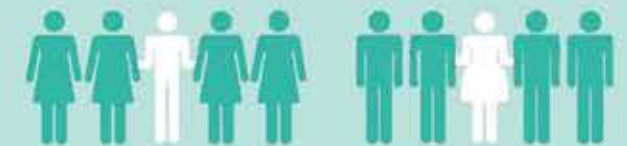
If careers are a double-edged sword women have to balance, then promiscuity is the decisive factor marking their virtue. In Asia, the onus of remaining a virgin before marriage squarely falls on women.

Women who've had sex in Lebanon are undergoing 'reparative' surgeries to make it seem like they're virgins before marriage, and despite embracing transgressors, the Thai society still expects women to remain virgins until marriage.

Disturbingly, popular romantic dramas (*lakorns*) in Thailand rely on a major trope in which rape is a catalyst to love – the hero justifies rape as a legitimate ‘punishment’, the heroine falls in love with her rapist despite feeling ashamed. This is from a country reeling from high rates of teenage pregnancy due to inadequate sex education.

But nowhere is hypocrisy of the sexes as glaring as in India. Sex remains a controversial topic, and a woman's sexual freedom is repeatedly repressed in mainstream media. Whenever a bold film tackling women's desires is set for release, the censorship board creates a ruckus – they even deemed 2016 Oxfam-Award-winning *Lipstick Under My Burkha* too “lady-oriented”.

Nobody makes a fuss with Bollywood song and dance sequences showing scantily-clad women dancing for male pleasure, or men pursuing different women for sex. The stories often involve stalking and eye-teasing (a South Asian term for sexual harassment), which are somehow prerequisites for romance. If the roles were reversed, she'd be condemned for overstepping her boundaries.



### Prince Charming

Whore

## Gender Equality in the West: Fact or Fiction?

The 'liberal' West hasn't achieved true equality either. A slut-shaming culture thrives in high schools across U.K., America, and Australia where young girls are derided for having more than one sexual partner. Guys, on the other hand, are free to wield sex as a symbol of popularity and power (take American Pie, for example).

Sometimes, the school themselves are guilty of victimisation culture: over the years, high schools in cities like Indianapolis and Kentucky have mandated dress codes, implicitly blaming the way girls dress for unwelcome male advances. Consider the tragic case of 17-year-old Lindsay Armstrong who committed suicide shortly after a horrific rape trial in which the defence lawyer forced her to hold her thigh in court to prove that she was "asking for it". Contrast that to the 2017 case of college undergraduate Brock Turner, who was sentenced to just three months in jail for sexual assault.

The truth is that the double standards women have to face are so insidiously enmeshed into our social fabric that sometimes we don't even realise it. How many times have you seen women as props in beer ads or judged the way a girl is dressed?

A gendered society invariably affects everyone – girls have to cut their dreams short and boys become desensitised towards the opposite sex. We have a long way to go in ending the double standards imposed on women. Perhaps the best way to kickstart change is with education, because that's what empowers people to fight for what's right. The journey won't be easy, but we'll reach that mountain someday.



No one wants their trans friends to have a hard time, and even though you may not intend to, there are times when you might accidentally put them in a tight spot through actions and words that you are unaware of. Being a trans person is lonely, depressing, tiring, confusing, and hugely difficult, and even if you can't fully understand or relate, here are some ways in which you can be an effective trans ally.

# Cheat Sheet

By Chong Wen Xuan

## #59 How to be a Trans Ally

I AM A  
TRANS  
ALLY



### NEVER, EVER PAOTOH

It is dangerous to be a publicly trans person, and unless you have your trans friend's direct permission, to 'out' them would be the ultimate act of betrayal, and a huge invasion of privacy. It could potentially compromise their safety, as there are many transphobes out there who could pose a threat.

Exposing a trans person doesn't end at endangering their safety or subjecting them to harassment; you potentially risk their jobs, their social position, their housing, and their relationships as well. If you respect your trans friends, never, ever paotoh.

### UNDERSTAND THE TOPIC BEFORE STARTING A CONVERSATION

The amount of ignorance some people have regarding trans issues is appalling. For instance, many Singaporeans have yet to understand the difference between being effeminate, being gay, being trans, and being in drag, and tend to lump them all together as one - 'ah gua'.

This is ignorant and offensive, and you should always ensure that you truly understand what gender dysphoria is and all the nuances of transgenderism, before starting a conversation.

### DON'T SHOW OFF

No trans person wants to hear you ramble on about how many trans people you know, or go into gory detail about gender reassignment surgery. It reinforces a stereotype, and focuses on only one aspect of their identity. Rather than making them feel accepted, understood, and included, it posits them as an 'object', widening the divide between them and your cisgender world.

### DO NOT USE OFFENSIVE OR DEROGATORY TERMS

This is pretty self-explanatory... Why do people think it's okay to say 'tranny', 'ah gua' or 'she-male'??? Stop, just stop.

### RESPECT THEM BY USING THEIR PREFERRED PRONOUNS

Pronouns - like 'he' or 'she' - are important, and by not using their preferred pronouns, you disregard, invalidate, and disrespect your trans friends' own gender identification. If you're unsure what pronouns to use, listen to how they describe themselves. If unsure, you can use third-party or gender-neutral pronouns such as they / their / them, or even ze / sie / hir.

### DO NOT ASSUME THEIR SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Many times, the biggest fear of transphobes is that a trans person will end up 'liking' them or sexually harassing them.

Firstly, gender identity and sexual orientation are two entirely different things. Identifying as a certain gender does not have any correlation to what gender they're sexually attracted to. And secondly, even if the person identifies as a transgender straight female, and you're a guy, what makes you think that she will be so attracted to you that she sexually harasses you?

### DON'T ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT THEIR SEX LIFE OR GENITALS

Trans people are not oddities for you to gawk at, so why do people make it seem so by asking such intrusive questions? Just make it clear that you are open-minded, and if they want to tell you about it, listen. But never probe!

### UNDERSTAND THAT TRANS PEOPLE ARE INDIVIDUAL

Trans people could choose to transition in the following ways:

- **SOCIALLY** (public identity, dressing, pronouns, etc)
- **LEGALLY** (changing gender on passports and ICs, etc)
- **MEDICALLY** (hormone replacement therapy)
- **SURGICALLY** (gender reassignment surgery)

However, never think that just because a trans individual has not undergone any one of these, means that s/he has not 'fully' transitioned. Not everyone has access to, privilege of, means to, or desire to go through all the aspects of transitioning. Simply accept that if someone tells you they're trans, they are.

### AND MOST IMPORTANTLY... SHOW SUPPORT

Many trans people feel alone in this battle between them and their bodies. They are commonly rejected by their friends, partners, and family members: a report by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention showed that 41% of all trans people have considered suicide - much higher than the 10-20% of the gay, lesbian, or bisexual adults who have attempted suicide.



ARTICLE BY PRIVATE MATTERS SINGAPORE

## EMBARRASSING UTI ISSUES

# More Than a Wee Problem



In a desperate attempt to alleviate the burning pain from yet another urinary tract infection (UTI), Lea (not her real name) consumed antibiotics meant for her dog instead, because her own supply had run out. The 23-year-old explained, "Sometimes you can hold it in, but other times it hurts too bad that you have to resort to doing anything you can to reduce the pain."

Jess, too, had her own share of horror stories: "It happened during my first lecture during my second week in University. There was a sudden pain below my stomach and it got worse throughout." Not being able to stand up or walk properly, she had to be helped to the school's clinic. "I also had fever along with it and vomited several times," she said.

### BEING FEMALE INCREASES UTI CHANCES

Burning sensation when urinating, frequent urges to urinate with little or no urine coming out, or fever are just some of the painful symptoms of UTI, which is an infection in any part of the urinary tract. UTI is mainly caused by the bacteria *Escherichia coli* (E.coli) found in the anus, and occurs when the bacteria travel from the anus to the urinary tract.



*Escherichia coli* (E.coli) bacteria

While males also get UTI, females are more prone to contracting UTI due to the structure of the female anatomy - their urethra (4cm) is shorter as compared to the male urethra (15-20cm). This means that bacteria can easily move from the anus to the bladder, or worse, further up the urinary tract.

**20%**

of Singaporean women from ages 20-65 suffer at least one attack of UTI each year.



1 in 3 women have their first episode of UTI by the age of 24.

Like many other females, Lea has had UTI attacks 'about 10 to 15 times' since she was 18 years old. The high recurrent nature of UTI is what makes the issue even more pressing.

Sometimes, the infection in the urinary system spreads to the upper tract where the kidneys and ureters are, leading to severe occurrences such as kidney infection and failure. UTI was the eighth cause of death last year - higher than diabetes.

### ANTIBIOTICS AND ITS NEGATIVE IMPACT

While antibiotics are most commonly used to treat UTIs, the issue of antibiotic resistance is also on the rise. According to findings published in *Annals of Emergency Medicine*, drug-resistant bacteria caused nearly 6% of urinary tract infections.

Antibiotic resistance poses a serious problem, especially for those who experience recurrent UTI. This will reduce the effectiveness of antibiotics, and lengthen the pain and discomfort sufferers go through.

Economic costs from UTI are also substantial, especially for students. Antibiotics are not cheap - doctors will usually prescribe a course of antibiotics to complete throughout the recovery process.



### UTI PREVENTION

While you can't prevent UTI totally, there are many lifestyle habits you can adopt in order to drastically reduce the chances of contracting UTI.

#### "DRINK-PEE-WIPE" HABIT:



#### DRINK 6-8 glasses of water a day

Drinking water helps dilute your urine and ensures frequent urination, allowing bacteria to be flushed from your urinary tract.



#### PEE 6-8 times a day

Urinating frequently will flush out bacteria. Try not to hold in large amounts of urine for too long, as this increases the body's contact with potentially harmful bacteria built up in the stagnant urine.

FRONT



BACK

#### WIPE from front to back

Wiping from front to back (and not back to front) ensures that you are moving your fecal matter (where E.coli is at) away from the vagina, and thus, the urethra.

#### CONSUME PROBIOTICS

Fermented foods are good for us - they contain beneficial bacteria that help restore the natural balance of gut bacteria which impacts our health fundamentally, affecting digestion, immunity, weight and mental health. Negative changes in the gut flora can lead to chronic diseases like UTI.



KEFIR



KOMBUCHA



SAUERKRAUT



KIMCHI



MISO



YOGURT

#### OTHER GOOD PRACTICES:

- > Urinate before and after sexual intercourse
- > Refrain from douching and using other personal hygiene products as they may cause irritation
- > Wear loose fitting clothes and cotton underwear
- > Change pads and/or pantyliners often to prevent large amounts of vaginal secretion - which contain bacteria - from coming into contact with the skin



# THE LIST

## AMNESIAC FEMME FATALES

### CAPTAIN MARVEL (2019)

Carol Danvers - Brie Larson

The only amnesiac superhero on the list, Captain Marvel - who's either known as Vers or Carol Danvers in the film - has been brainwashed by the alien species Kree, who try to suppress her powers and turn her into a Kree in a bid to conquer the universe. She eventually remembers her past as a test pilot, and being human, which becomes the key to unlocking her hidden power as she transforms into possibly the most powerful superhero in the universe.



### ALITA (2019)

Alita - Rosa Salazar

Rescued by a kindly scientist who found her in a scrapyard, cyborg Alita wakes up not knowing her identity, but soon awakens her hidden martial arts skills after killing a couple of cyborg assassins - and soon discovers that she was once a powerful commando warrior from the United Republic of Mars military. She then goes on to take on the injustices of the dark, corrupt world, changing the world in which she lives.



### GHOST IN THE SHELL (2017)

Major Mira Killian - Scarlett Johansson

The movie follows the exploits of Major Mira Killian, a cyborg member of a counter-terrorism operative who has no memory of her past. After one mission, she is led down the rabbit's hole where it is revealed to her that she was actually Motoko Kusanagi, an anti-augmentation radical who was abducted and used as a test subject to make her into a cyborg. After exacting revenge on those responsible, she continues to be an operative.



### SALT (2010)

Evelyn Salt - Angelina Jolie

While not an amnesiac per se, Evelyn Salt has been a CIA agent for as long as she remembers, but during a random interrogation, she is 'awakened' as part of a ring of Russian sleeper agents called KAs. When she ends up in Russia, she recalls her younger self training in a camp. She then convinces her Russian handlers to have her on the next mission, where she then double-crosses them at the end, and manages to abort a nuclear war.



### LONG KISS GOODNIGHT (1996)

Samantha Caine/Charly - Geena Davis

Small town school teacher Samantha Caine hires detective Mitch Knesessey (Samuel L. Jackson) to discover her past, of which she has no recollection. After an intruder breaks into her home one day, she easily dispatches him bare-handed, and throughout the film she is revealed to be a CIA assassin called Charly, when Charly's daughter gets kidnapped by Daedalus, a rogue agent who plans to stage a bombing with her in it, Charly and Mitch set off to save the day.



Far from being damsels in distress, these women are more than capable of taking care of themselves, and look natural while kicking serious butt. What makes them unique, is that all of these women suffer from some form of amnesia - about their own identity, and about their abilities. While the amnesia thriller is not new - think Bourne Identity and Total Recall - here are some movies from this niche genre featuring amnesiac femme fatales.

# SEXIST BY DESIGN

## AN ENVIRONMENT NOT BUILT FOR WOMEN

BY YIN LOON

The phrase "it's a man's world" succinctly captures today's society, even though half of humanity are women. Sadly, when it comes to designing a world for the betterment of mankind, women are also sorely underrepresented. Whether it's due to oversight, cost, or ignorance, women bear the brunt of the inconveniences in a world designed for men, because those who built it didn't take gender differences into account.

### EVERYDAY INCONVENIENCES

Since women are usually smaller than men, some products may seem a bit unwieldy to use. Just look at smartwatches or smartphones, which are generally too big for most women's hands to easily type single-handedly.

Some women have a hard time using speech recognition softwares - from Google Cloud Speech to car navigation systems on some Ford, Buick, and Volvo models - which have difficulty processing the higher-pitched female voice simply because they were programmed to understand the male pitch.

While these issues are a mere inconvenience, other issues can be downright deadly.

### SAFETY DESIGNS ARE SEXIST

We all know that biologically, men and women differ significantly, but when it comes to designing protective gear, like body armours, many designers fail to account for the sex difference. Hundreds of female police officers in the UK have highlighted many issues - some needed physiotherapy because of the way the vests sat on their body, and many complained about the lack of space for their breasts; one officer even needed breast reduction surgery because of the body armour.

In the automobile industry, the safety features of a vehicle are often based on a male crash test dummy - commonly 1.77m tall and weighs 76kg, with a muscle mass proportion and spinal column of a male. But women have a lower bone density, vertebrae spacing, and different muscle mass distribution.

Body armours don't fit women's bodies

This means that when a woman is involved in a car crash, even as a passenger, she is 47% more likely to be seriously injured, and 17% more likely to die. As women have less muscle in their necks and upper torso, they're up to three times more vulnerable to whiplash in rear-end collisions. Modern car seats throw women forward faster than men because the too-firm seats don't account for a woman's lighter body.

The risk for female drivers is greater since most women drive in different seating positions than men - usually sitting further forward, and more upright. This is not the safest position to drive in by design, as it poses greater risk of internal injury on frontal collisions; it also makes the knees and legs more vulnerable as they are positioned at a wrong angle.

Then there's the issue of seatbelts - a common complaint among women - which are positioned uncomfortably across the chest. It's worse for heavily pregnant women - 62% of them can't use standard seatbelts comfortably.

### UNDER THE SKIN

Medicines may also be less safe for women - you can still find medical researchers who don't include female subjects because they are too "complicated, variable, and hormonal" to be a good vessel. It seems that scientists are also afraid of women's menstrual cycles, because it affects the results of drugs including antidepressants, antihistamines, and heart medication.

Women account for half of the world's population, so companies, researchers, and designers should include them from the get-go. But in designing for women, it doesn't have to be pink, have bling, branded "for women", or lighter - it just has to be better designed for a broader audience.



Some drugs are dangerous for women

Men and women respond differently to drugs, and that is precisely why they should be included. These "complicated" bodies will be taking the drugs anyway. The ignorant assumption that males can represent females in clinical trials has already resulted in 8 out of 10 prescription drugs in the US market withdrawn due to its greater risks for women. Ignoring women can be fatal for businesses too.

The physiological differences also affect the body's acceptable levels of exposure to chemicals and toxins. Currently, it's based on the "Reference Man" - a Caucasian man aged 25 to 30, weighing 70kg. Because women have thinner skin and higher body fat percentage, they have a lower tolerance to exposure, and higher chances of toxins accumulating in their body fat.

While there is plenty of data to inform men about safe exposure to chemicals in industries like mining, there is no similar data for women who work in similarly dangerous environments, such as nail salons where polishes, removers, disinfectants, and adhesives contain chemicals linked to cancer and lung diseases.



The standard crash test dummy is male



# Age of Consent

## GIRLS AND EXPLOITATION

BY RACHEL LIM

Imagine having sex at 11 or getting hitched to someone five times your age. This is normally the case for girls, where their sought-after youth can be a curse for them.

Growing up in a sheltered and relatively conservative nation may have caused many of us to be oblivious to the nonchalant attitudes other

countries have toward protecting their children. To many of us, age is more than just a means to track our physical growth; it has been our protector and even a cause for celebration.

But in the many parts of the world that disregard the significance of one's age, children lay vulnerable to traditions that are forced upon them.

### LEGALLY MARRIED

In many countries, the legal marriageable age is often lower for girls than it is for boys. Some countries – like those following Sharia Law – don't even set an age of consent because marriage is legally required before sex is allowed, which is the case for Iran. However, the legal age of marriage there is 13 for girls and 15 for boys, but children below the legal age can tie the knot with the consent of their father or the permission of the court.

The same applies for Yemen, where child brides are popular. Remember: when an 8-year-old child bride died from internal bleeding after her wedding night with her 40-year-old husband? It's not better in Sudan, where the legal age for girls is "puberty", or as young as 8.

Surprisingly for the USA, there has never been a legal minimum age for girls to marry – in some areas, minors cannot even legally divorce or enter a shelter to escape abuse. The law only started changing from 2016 when some states mandated a minimum marriage age between 16 and 18 years, after some high profile child bride marriages. For example, three 10-year-old girls were married to men aged 24-31 in 2001 in Tennessee, and a 14-year-old girl married a 74-year-old in Alabama. Ew.

Aren't you glad that the legal age to marry in Singapore is 21? Although with a special license, you can actually walk down the aisle at 18, or even 16 if you're a Muslim. The highest legal age for marriage in the world is 22 (men only), for the citizens of China.

Age ain't nothing but a number – in the cases of sex and marriage, they are often much younger and vulnerable to exploitation of those much, much older.

### OLD ENOUGH FOR SEX

In Singapore, the legal age of consent (the minimum age to legally have sex) is 16. But in Nigeria, it is legal for you to have sex once you reach the age of 11 – imagine an innocent Primary 5 kid doing "what mommy and daddy does in the bedroom". It's not much older in the Philippines, where the age of consent is 12.

Japan's legal age of consent is 13, which is odd for a developed country. Interestingly, the country usually only punishes men who have sex with minors, but not the other way round. Even stranger is China – until 2015, sex with girls under 14 was an offence unless the girl was an underage prostitute!

Across Europe, the age of consent is generally between 14 and 18. In Germany, a 14-year-old can have sex, so long as the partner – who can be over 21 – doesn't "exploit" the child.

On the other end of the spectrum, Bahrain has an age of consent of 21, the highest legal age for sex in the world. However, if the girl has her father's permission, she can get married earlier, and therefore have sex.

While the average age of consent worldwide lies in the 16-18 range, some countries practice the Romeo and Juliet Law (the close-in-age exemption). This exemption allows the underaged to hook up as long as their age gap is within a permissible range set by the authorities, which differs for each country (up to 10 years in some cases!).

For example, in Colorado, where the legal age to copulate is 17 but this law allows 16-year-olds to have sex with partners who are less than 10 years older, legally. Minors 15 and below are also permitted to engage in sex with those less than 4 years older... makes you wonder what that age of consent is for, right?



Since its inception in 1901, the Nobel Peace Prize has been awarded to a total of 89 men and 17 women. The fact that there are only 17 female Nobel Laureates suggests a male-dominated prize or even a male-dominated world, with the ratio of female winners to male winners at 1:5.24. Such statistics has engendered discourse over gender inequality but over the past decade alone, five females have already won the coveted prize. This ties them with the number of male winners, also at five, since 2009.

Women in the past have long played second fiddle to men in various aspects of life, hindering their personal progression as a result of falling into that "second class" category in society. Male chauvinism played a role in Nobel Peace Prize nominations in the early years, as the award was exclusively awarded to highly educated, older white men from Europe or the US.

In recent times however, there has been significant changes in attitude and mentality towards women as they are finally being judged based on merit rather than on gender. Recent winners like Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Leymah Gbowee, Tawakkul Karman, Malala Yousafzai and Nadia Murad have become symbols of female empowerment, and this changed perception of women has shown no signs of waning as 16-year-old Greta Thunberg has already been nominated for the 2019 award.

These women are paving the way in the fight to end violence against women, as well as women's access to education. This year's young nominee is fighting for the environment.



BY IAN FOO

# Winning for Peace:

## A more inclusive prize

### NOBEL LAUREATES



#### Nadia Murad, 2018

Nadia Murad is a human rights activist from Iraq who is campaigning to abolish human trafficking and rape on women. In 2014, Murad was kidnapped from her village and held by the Islamic

State (IS) for three months where she was repeatedly abused and raped. After escaping, she founded Nadia's Initiative, an organisation aimed at helping women and children victims of genocide and human trafficking by reintegrating them into communities and rebuilding their lives. She was jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize with Dr Denis Mukwege in 2018 for her efforts in campaigning against sexual violence.



#### Malala Yousafzai, 2014

Malala Yousafzai is a Pakistani campaigner and is currently the youngest Nobel Prize winner, having won it in 2014 at the age of 17. At just 11, Malala began writing a diary for a BBC blog under a

pseudonym, covering what life was like under the Taliban regime in Pakistan. After her identity was revealed, Malala was shot in the head by the Taliban on her way home from school when she was 14 in 2012. The assassination attempt sparked worldwide condemnation of the Taliban. After making a full recovery in the UK, she started the Malala Fund to help girls worldwide get proper education, for which she was awarded a Nobel Peace Prize in 2014.

### NOBEL NOMINEE 2019



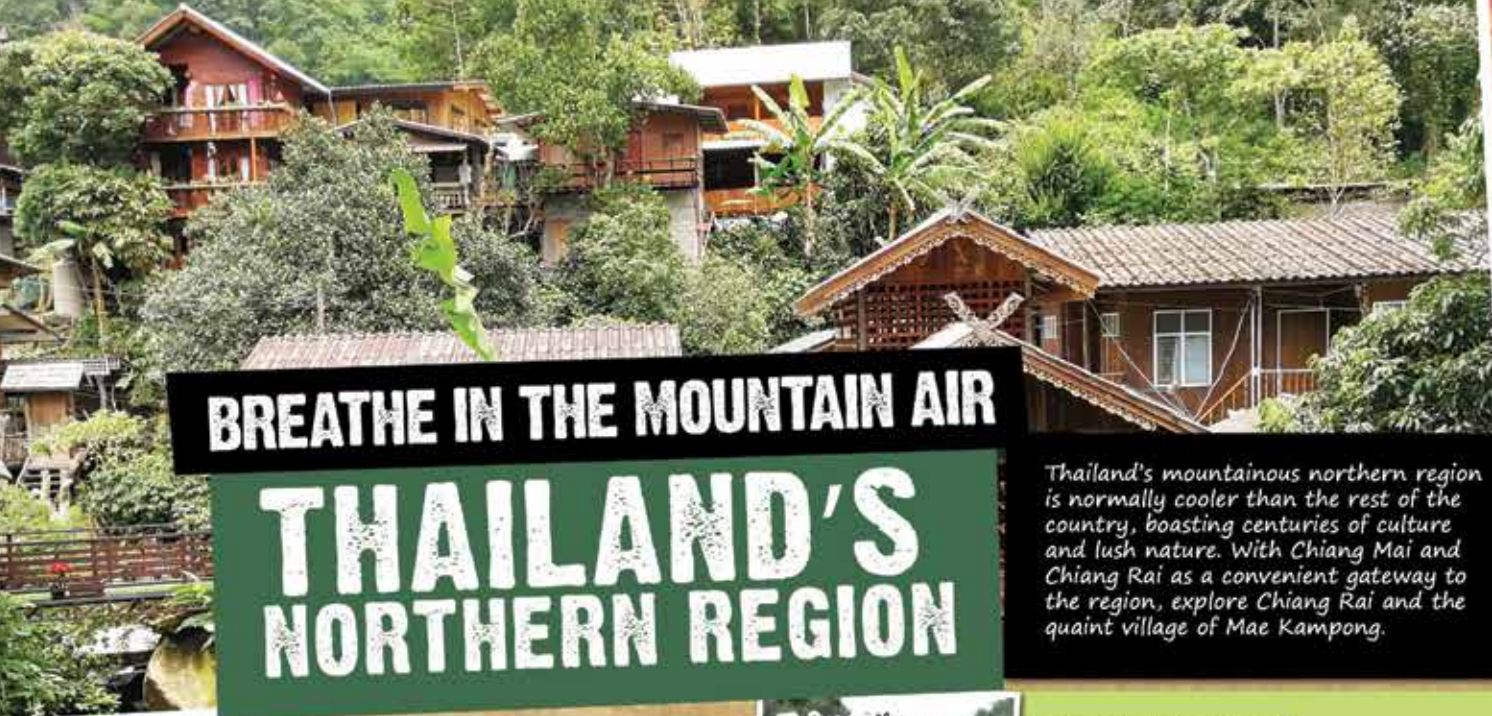
#### Greta Thunberg

Making headlines this year is 16-year-old climate activist Greta Thunberg, whose nomination for the 2019 Nobel Prize has already been made public. Hailing from Sweden, Greta fronted a 'School

Strike for Climate' protest in front of the Swedish Parliament last August, and also started a 'Fridays For The Future' movement, encouraging students from around the world to skip class to strike against climate change. She gained further international prominence by speaking at the UN climate talks in Poland, telling global economic leaders that "On climate change, we have to acknowledge that we have failed." If Greta wins the 2019 Nobel Prize, she will overtake Malala as the youngest recipient of the award.

After all, the Peace Prize according to the will of Alfred Nobel gave no mention of gender preference. With five women winning in the past decade, society is steered in the right direction in terms of achieving gender parity and inclusion by recognising and celebrating their achievements. Awarding this prize solely on merit will inspire more people to do good regardless of their age, gender, race, and religion.





BREATHE IN THE MOUNTAIN AIR

# THAILAND'S NORTHERN REGION

Thailand's mountainous northern region is normally cooler than the rest of the country, boasting centuries of culture and lush nature. With Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai as a convenient gateway to the region, explore Chiang Rai and the quaint village of Mae Kampong.

## BAAN MAE KAMPONG

Situated about 2 hours (60km) from Chiang Mai, Baan Mae Kampong is a small, quaint village tucked in a lush jungle at an altitude of about 1,300m.

At first glance, Mae Kampong looks like a hipster village that's just popped up in the jungle. One main road cuts through the village, which consists of numerous clusters of wooden houses - some are rustic mountain cottages, others open-air cafes, all with magnificent views of the lush mountains.

Established about 100 years ago, most villagers here still cultivate crops. The area is known for tea - especially meeang (pickled tea leaves) - and coffee which is served at the village's cafes.

In the 1990s, Mae Kampong became the first village in Thailand to offer homestays with local villagers, boosting eco-tourism in the area and helping locals preserve the community. Today, these rustic wooden homes that seem to tumble onto the mountainous landscape are not only great for Instagram, they also provide a great ambiance for sipping coffee or staying overnight.



## LANDMARKS

### WAT MAE KAMPONG

The only temple in the village, the main temple, made of wood, is designed in the Lanna style, while the smaller chapel is situated in the middle of the creek.

### WATERFALL

At the end of the village is the 7-tier Mae Kampong Waterfall from which originates the fern-lined creek that runs through the village.



### OPT FOR A HOMESTAY

The 'centre' of this hilly village comprises many rustic homes, connected via modern boardwalks. There are currently about 20 homestay properties with basic accommodation where you can overnight with local residents to learn their lifestyle and culture.

Sharing with a local family costs about 400 baht/person/night, and 40 baht/meal - dinner is a traditional Lanna fare which includes food like gaeng hinlay (pork curry). Check [www.mae-kamponghomestay.net](http://www.mae-kamponghomestay.net) for more details.

### SLING ON A ZIPLINE

A popular activity here is a zipline adventure called the Flight of the Gibbon, where you zip through the forest canopy like a slingshot. It's the longest zipline in Asia, with "zips" ranging from 800m to 1km, shooting you from tree to tree via its 33 stations, 3 suspension bridges, and rappelling points.



## CHIANG RAI

Chiang Rai is considered a sleeper, down-to-earth version of its sister province Chiang Mai about 3 hours away, but it isn't short of historical and cultural attractions of its own. It too shares a strong Lanna identity through its impressive collection of temples, art, cuisine, and music.

If you have a short time to spare you can easily visit some of its attractions in its main town, Muang Chiang Rai (Chiang Rai City). There are numerous temples to visit, in addition to cafes where you can sample locally grown coffee.

## MUST DO

### NIGHT MARKETS

Check out the Walking Streets, which are large weekend open-air markets (from 5-11pm) where you can find a range of food and clothing. The Night Bazaar (from 6pm) is another popular spot for food, drinks, and live music, Thai theatre or comedy. You can also find a market for handmade goods from surrounding villages.



### CAFES

Chiang Rai has no shortage of cafes to Instagram. Choose between colonial bungalow chic cafes like Manorum Coffee or Chivit Thamma Da Coffee House (also a spa) along the scenic Kok River, or a modern farmhouse-style eatery at Some Sunday Magic. Pop to Cat 'n' A Cup and have felines rubbing against you while you sip a decadent marshmallow coffee.

### RIVER BEACH

Located 4km (or a 10-minute songtaew ride) outside of town along the banks of the Kok River, the "beach" is a great place to have a traditional Thai-style lunch in a bamboo hut. You can swim or tube down the river (October to March only), or hire a long-tail boat to take in the scenery.



## OUT OF TOWN

Chiang Rai is also rich with plenty of hiking trails through scenic mountains, as well as plentiful waterfalls and hot springs.

### GOLDEN TRIANGLE PARK

About 50km from Chiang Rai is the spot where Thailand, Laos and Myanmar meet - and where the Mekong and Ruak Rivers intersect. You can look out at the breathtaking views of the rivers and land below, and visit the small Hall of Opium museum which has exhibits on the history of the opium trade.

### HOT SPRINGS

Soak in Pong Phra Soet Hot Spring or Fang Hot Spring (which has geysers!) during the winter months. Both facilities provide private spa rooms.

### WATERFALLS

The most famous is Khun Korn, one of the tallest in Chiang Rai, which you can get to via a 15km walk from the carpark. Lesser known Mae Sai and Huay Kaew are quieter, and located near hill tribe villages.



## LANDMARKS

### CLOCK TOWER

A popular landmark is the intricately-designed clock tower in the centre of town, which shows off with a light show every night at 7pm, 8pm, and 9pm.

### WHITE TEMPLE

Located about 20 minutes out of town, it's the most iconic landmark with an intricate exterior that resembles white marble gleaming in the sun. Although it's a place of worship, it's a privately-owned work of art by artist Chalermchai Kositpipat who took 10 years to build this. While it looks like an ornate temple at first glance, look closer and you'll find unusual decorations like the creepy Bridge of the Cycle of Rebirth that features thousands of hands reaching out from the ground.

The interior is less creepy but quirky - it has intricate floor-to-ceiling paintings of all sorts of movie stars, cartoons, and even politicians.

### BLACK HOUSE

Also known as Baan Dam, it's part museum, part art studio, and home of artist Thawan Duchanee. An eclectic mix of traditional northern Thai and outlandish modern design, there are 40 buildings to explore, each with its odd collection of artifacts ranging from reinterpretations of Buddhist philosophy to bizarre imaginations of human desire.



## MUST DO

### SAMPLE COFFEE (AND TEA)

Dotted along the village's main road are plenty of quaint wooden houses and shacks that double as cafes serving quality Arabica coffee and local green tea. As the area is hilly, some cafes boast dramatic views of mountains and nature; some even offer homestay options.

Chomnok Chommai: Located near the waterfall, this quaint cafe sells tea, coffee and baked goods - with an incredible panoramic view of Mae Kampong Village below.

Kampong Coffee: This quaint cafe is connected to the hilly village via a network of boardwalks and features pretty Lanna carvings.

Pirunya Coffee: Located among a jumble of rustic wooden houses, this colourful cafe has an impressive collection of coffee paraphernalia and coffee beans.

Teddu Coffee: Situated up in the mountains and accessible via boardwalk, you can have coffee and cakes on the deck or lanai of this cafe, which is located right next to a waterfall. Homestays are available in its rustic, romantic rooms.

YLife: Another small cafe with a view, its high position gives it a great vantage point over the village below.

amazing  
THAILAND

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# Heels, Corsets, and Skirts

BY NINA GAN

## THE UNISEX ITEMS OF FASHION

### Well-heeled men

High heels have always been associated with women, even though heels were originally created for men. We're not talking about men with a complex about their height. In 17th century Europe, heels became popular among male aristocrats who wore them to imply their upper-class status – only someone who didn't have to work could afford to wear these impractical shoes. Aristocratic women soon followed suit.

Christian Louboutin's red-soled stilettos were probably inspired by French royalty.

French King Louis XIV only allowed members of his court to wear red heels and soles, as the dye was expensive. Authorities even regulated the height of the heels to denote social rank: half inch for commoners, 1 inch for the bourgeois, 2.5 inches for princes, and so on.

It wasn't until the 18th century during the Age of Enlightenment (when science and logic was prevalent) that men stopped wearing heels – their impracticality and extravagance soon became associated with women instead.



### A tight-laced man

Corsets are often associated with female sexuality and femininity, and have been popular since the 1500s across Europe because even back then, women desired slim waists. But from around 1820 to 1840, the fashionable man should have a "wasp-waisted" figure which meant having a small, nipped-in waist – achieved by wearing a corset – with a rounded silhouette emphasised by padding around the shoulder, chest, hip, and calf.

High fashion for men during those periods also called for form-fitting trousers and jackets, so to avoid looking lumpy under their tailored clothes, some men wore fashion corsets to give themselves a smooth silhouette. In fact, fast forward to today and you can still find corsets for men – designed to "firm the chest, slim the stomach" – fittingly called "shapewear".



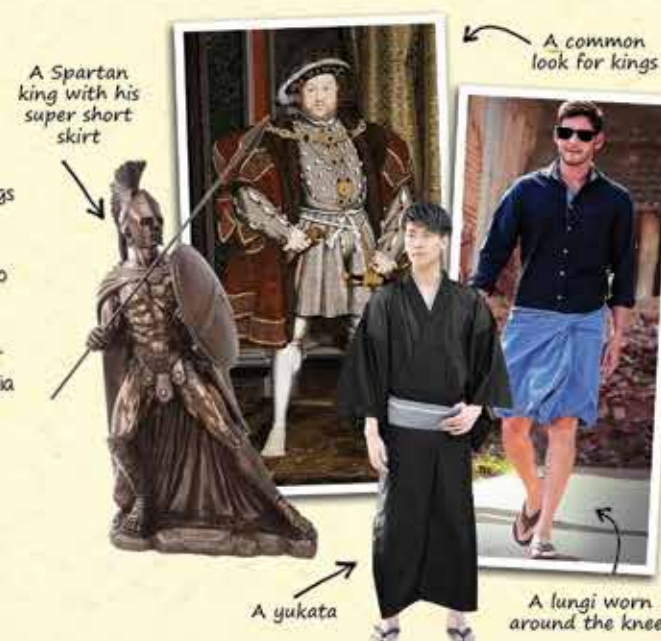
### Men in skirts

More and more fashion brands are sending male models down runway shows in skirts in recent years, but the idea of wearing a 'skirt' is older than you think. (Remember kilts?). Skirts have been worn by men ever since ancient times; togas denoted status in ancient Greece and Rome. Short skirts were even considered proof of virility for Roman soldiers since they allowed swiftness in combat. Ancient Greeks snubbed pants, nicknaming them *thulakos*, meaning 'sacks'.

For a long time, a skirt or tunic was a key part of the male outfit from

15th to 19th century Europe, when they were worn together with leggings – remember Henry VIII's famous portrait? Even when trousers were invented, they were often designed to swell out like skirts.

In this day and age, let's not forget that in certain cultures – from India to Japan and the Middle East – robes and skirts remain completely acceptable wear for adult men. It's not hard to find Japanese men in *yukata* or Indian men in *lungi* (worn like a sarong, or shortened around the knees).



Fashion has long been a part of culture, showcasing a person's status and their gender. These days, we identify skirts with women, and tailored suits with men. But what we normally recognise as feminine or masculine haven't always been the same.

Back in 1918, pink – a stronger colour – used to represent boys, and blue was more a delicate colour that suited girls. After WWII, the colours were reversed, and took hold in the 80s as part of a gendered marketing campaign. Even heels, corsets, and skirts haven't always been worn solely by women, as history shows.

# Big Man Talking

## THE ISSUE WITH MANSPLAINING

By Yuki Koh

Inspired by Rebecca Solnit in 2008 in her essay "Men Explain Things to Me: Facts Didn't Get in Their Way", netizens coined the term "mansplaining". This term is used to describe arrogant men who exhibit a combination of "overconfidence and cluelessness" by needlessly explaining things to women in a patronising manner.

In one case, a man named Steve Santagati proclaims himself to be an "expert" on how women think and feel. On CNN, he boldly "mansplained" in front of two women, claiming that women loved to be harassed and catcalled, regardless of how attractive the man may or may not be.

As it gradually rose to prominence within the feminist community, the term set foot into mainstream media by being featured as one of New York Times Words of the Year in 2010. Following that, it was added to the English lexicon in 2014 by Oxford Dictionaries.

More than just condescending behaviour, mansplaining reveals a long history of suffering under a patriarchal system, where women had to constantly fight to be recognised on par with men. This started with women's suffrage movements that date back to the 19th century, giving rise to strikes into the 21st century as men continue to talk down to women. One case is the Boston protest in January 2017, when millions of women of all races, religions, and sexualities took to the streets to directly protest against Trump's discriminatory laws and call for an end to sexism.

### Is this behaviour exclusive to men?

Not necessarily, but there has to be reason as to how the term "mansplaining" has become popular. Cutting across generations, social pressures have created a standard of masculinity for men, who are expected to be dominant or confident. As such, some men happen to inherit this "overconfidence and cluelessness", which subconsciously manifests in their condescending manner towards women.

While mansplaining is generally characterised in males, it can also be similarly perceived in females as "womansplaining" when they nag at others.

Moving forward, terms like "mansplaining" might ironically reinforce social constructs that we loathe and hope to remove. Given the nature of the word, it can come across as a pejorative or derogatory term for men, as it immediately assumes pompous behaviour like "mansplaining" to be hardwired in their nature and gender-specific to males. Furthermore, while such a term is used to accurately describe some men, it has also been abused to incriminate innocent men for the smallest of things.

In 2017, Mitch Fifield was accused by Katy Gallagher of "mansplaining" during an Australian Senate Committee hearing, leading to a viral backlash against Gallagher for her misuse of the term and for her unprofessional behaviour. Since then, it has raised questions as to whether the term "mansplaining" was necessary, as the unrestrained use of the term may have actually retrogressed the debate on feminist issues and problems.

### Let's clear the air...

Although "mansplaining" is a portmanteau of "man" and the colloquial form of "explaining", it can be used in situations that are entirely removed from gender roles. The term has been copy-pasted in other situations and has even taken on new forms, like "whitesplaining", "womansplaining", "blacksplaining", "momsplaining", and more. Unfortunately, the birth of such terms have compounded tensions and complicated matters against the backdrop of race and gender issues.

Frankly speaking, self-important and contemptuous behaviour should never be accepted anywhere regardless of one's gender, race or religion. Self-censorship will always be crucial for anyone in a civilised society.

Even Solnit feels that the term "mansplaining" might be more harsh and "condemnatory" than she wanted it to be of men, so instead of using the term, more comfortable forms of non-gendered terms have to be used to advance a more mature debate on feminist issues.

Rather than using "mansplaining" or "womansplaining", we can try to provide constructive criticism on a person's behaviour through neutral adjectives such as "arrogant", "rude", and "condescending" instead. At the end of the day, "mansplaining" is less of a gendered issue, but more of a human issue.



# OUT AND ABOUT

## EVENTS

### Singapore International Festival of Arts (SIFA)

**When:** May 16 - Jun 2  
**Where:** Various locations  
**Tickets:** varied

Immerse yourself in diverse works from the local and international creative arts scene. Marking its 42nd edition this year, SIFA 2019 will span across various locations including the Victoria Theatre, SOTA Drama Theatre, and the Drama Centre. This year's headliner is Dionysus, a cross-cultural play adaptation of the Greek tragedy The Bacchae by Suzuki Company of Toga (Japan) and Purnati Indonesia (Indonesia).

## MOVIES

### Pokémon: Detective Pikachu

(May 9)  
**Cast:** Ryan Reynolds, Justice Smith, Kathryn Newton

In the Pokémon universe where man and Pokémon co-exist, former Pokémon trainer Tim Goodman (Smith) travels to Ryme City for work, only to learn that his father, famous detective Harry Goodman, has mysteriously disappeared. While in Ryme City, Tim meets a talking Pikachu (voiced by Reynolds) and together with reporter Lucy Stevens (Kathryn Newton), the three embark on a search for Harry.



### Aladdin

(May 23)  
**Cast:** Mena Massoud, Naomi Scott, Will Smith

Adapted from Disney's 1992 animated classic, this live-action remake brings to life beloved characters like the titular Aladdin (Massoud), the beautiful yet headstrong princess Jasmine (Scott) and the wisecracking Genie (Smith). Follow along as Aladdin tries to win the heart of the princess using three wishes granted by a genie in a lamp while trying to fend off an evil sorcerer who has his eyes on the lamp as well.



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## FESTIVALS



### MAYDAY! SG Festival

**When:** May 1  
**Where:** Zepp@BIGBOX Singapore  
**Tickets:** \$79 - \$99

This festival will feature international and regional pop punk bands and other sub genres of rock and metal acts. The headlining act will be Floridian rock band Mayday Parade, celebrating the 10th Anniversary Edition of their debut album *A Lesson In Romanticism*. On the lineup as well is Australian pop punk band *With Confidence*, as well as local and regional support acts from Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines. The MerchCow Battle of the Band winner will perform during the festival as well.



### Hallyu Pop Fest 2019

**When:** May 25 - 26  
**Where:** Singapore Indoor Stadium  
**Tickets:** \$98 - \$288

The first and largest Kpop festival in South-east Asia, Hallyu Pop Fest is back for its second year with a lineup of some of the biggest and up-and-coming artists in Kpop, including Super Junior, Monsta X, Hyorin and (G)I-DLE. With two showcases on each day, you can get to see your favourite idols up close on the Red Carpet. This year's festival will also be having a HallyuTown with booths offering an array of Korean products, from food to beauty and fashion.

## GIGS

Apr 26 | 8pm  
National Stadium  
Tickets: \$68 - \$248

### Ed Sheeran: Divide World Tour 2019

British crooner Ed Sheeran will be back in Singapore for his biggest show yet. Known for his acoustic folksy sound, this Grammy Award-winner is set to charm the hearts of Singaporean fans again. Sing along to his signature hits like 'Perfect' and 'Galway Gal'. This time, he will be joined by Japanese rock band ONE OK ROCK for the Asian leg of his tour.



May 9 | 8pm  
ZEPP@BIGBOX  
Tickets: \$158, \$168

### Future: Live in Singapore

Atlanta rapper Future is making his way to Singapore for the first time! This Billboard-topping rapper recently released his latest album, titled 'The WIZRD', which features some big names from the hip-hop scene. Be spellbound by tracks off the new album, like 'Unicorn Pup' featuring Young Thug and Gunna, and 'First Off' featuring Travis Scott, as well as some of his other well-known hits like 'Mask Off'.

### Ultra Singapore

**When:** Jun 8 - 9  
**Where:** Ultra Park  
**Tickets:** \$188 - \$328

One of Singapore's biggest outdoor EDM concert is back this year, with a lineup of renowned DJs and EDM artists from around the world, across three stages. This year's lineup will include big names like Skrillex and Martin Garrix, with more names yet to be announced. With spectacular stage production, expect a treat for both the eyes and ears as you party and rave the night away.



## Ed Sheeran



May 3 | 8pm  
The Star Theatre  
Tickets: \$98 - \$258

### Troye Sivan: The Bloom Tour

Following the release of his second album 'Bloom', Troye Sivan will be dropping by Singapore as part of his biggest headline tour in Asia so far. The singer-actor is known for his bold and flamboyant stage presence and his infectious electronic dance-pop hits, so you can be sure there will never be a dull moment at his concert!



May 11 | 8pm  
The Star Theatre  
Tickets: \$98 - \$198

### Jason Mraz: Good Vibes Tour

Soak in the good vibes as Jason Mraz returns to Asia, following the release of his album 'Know.' last year. Sing along to his record-breaking classics like 'I'm Yours' and 'I Won't Give Up', which propelled him to worldwide fame, selling out amphitheatres and arenas and winning him numerous awards. You can expect him to perform some tracks off his latest album as well, which includes a duet with Meghan Trainor called 'More than Friends'.



## PRODUCTIONS

Apr 24 - Jun 8 | varied timings  
Sands Theatre at Marina Bay Sands  
Tickets: \$75 - \$225

### The Phantom of the Opera

This musical classic is the story of a dramatic love triangle between the disfigured musical genius Phantom, the beautiful and talented soprano Christine, and her lover Raoul, full of obsession and jealousy. With the grand musical score by Andrew Lloyd Webber, the beautiful sets and costumes, be transported back to 19th century Paris in this award-winning Broadway musical.



May 10-26 | varied timings  
Drama Centre Theatre  
Tickets: \$25 - \$75

### This Is What Happens To Pretty Girls

Pangdemonium presents the world premiere of *This Is What Happens To Pretty Girls*, written by Singapore playwright, Ken Kwek (award-winning director of *Unlucky Plaza*). Inspired by the international rise of movements like #MeToo and Time's Up, this play explores the stories of eight men and women, each fighting their own inner demons and hiding secrets and truths waiting to be revealed.





Multicultural  
Selena Gomez

Lumbersexual -  
Jason Momoa

Pretty  
"flower boy" -  
Nam Joo Hyuk

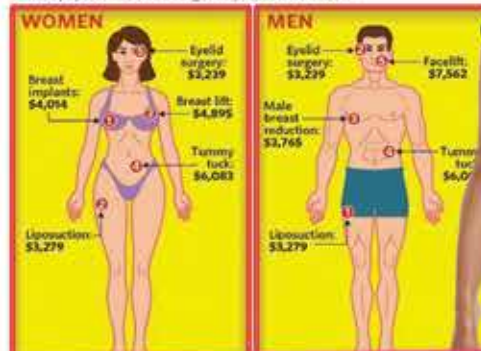
Chocolate Abs  
Sung Hoon

Curvy  
Ashley  
Graham

Best body in  
Kpop -  
Seolhyun

Muscular  
Chris Evans

Where Americans get nipped and tucked  
5 most popular cosmetic surgeries procedures in 2017



Dewy skinned  
Jung Yumi

## Beauty in the Eye of Culture Korea vs the US

By Lydia Tan

They say beauty is in the eye of the beholder, but what actually shapes that perception of what defines beauty? Just travel to any country and you can see how beauty standards and perceptions vary across different cultures. Let's compare two of the biggest beauty players in the market now: Korea and the USA.

### ONE SIZE FITS ALL?

In Western societies, people are more accepting of a wide range of body shapes, especially for women. Words like "curvy", "hourglass figure" and "thicc" are commonly used to compliment a bigger-sized woman's figure, empowering them to feel confident and sexy in their own skin. For example, intimates brand Aerie made headlines in 2014 for their no-photoshop #AerieREAL campaign featuring women with different body sizes.

However, in Asian countries, women are not held to the same standards. Weight is especially a big deal in Korea; it's not uncommon for Kpop idols to lie about their weights listed in their official profiles to fit the strict beauty standards. A recent video by Asian Boss revealed that a girl of any height weighing over 50kg is considered "chubby" in Korea. That video featured Miss Korea 2018, Kim Soo Min, who at 173cm and 58.9kg, was considered by many to be "overweight" and not fit to win the title.

For men, in both cultures, the ideal body size is pretty similar – fit and tall. In the US, muscular builds might be favoured – like Chris Evans as Captain America – although Koreans tend to prefer their guys on the slimmer side, less beefy but with a toned physique comprising of "chocolate abs" and broad shoulders, like EXO's Sehun or actor Sung Hoon.

In the US, skinnier men can come off as weak and are often portrayed as meek characters, like Chris Evans' Steve Rogers before he became Captain America. In American sitcoms, it's common to see skinny guys as

nerds, like Sheldon Cooper in *Big Bang Theory*. It's not the case in Korea, where "skinny" actors play desirable leads; for example, Song Joongki as an army captain in the hit drama *Descendants of the Sun*.

While the US is more accepting of different body shapes, some men and women go through surgery to achieve that ideal physique, opting for liposuction, breast implants, and tummy tucks, according to data from the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery in 2017.

### FACE VALUE

Because the US is multicultural, the definition of beauty varies; examples of beautiful women include Beyonce and Selena Gomez. A study on *People* magazine's World's Most Beautiful 2017 list shows that compared to 1990, there is more diversity in race, attributing this societal shift in perceptions to increased exposure and recognition for people of colour.

For Korea – just like in many Asian countries – women prefer a fair complexion. Another key feature of K-beauty is the "glass skin" (almost translucent) and "honey skin" (hydrated, plump) looks, in line with the "dewy" aesthetic popular among Korean women. Other features include a V-shaped jawline, double eyelids that make the eyes look bigger, and puffy "eyebags" known as *aegyo-sal* that give off a more youthful look.

For the men, in the US, the standards are also varied but generally many prefer chiselled features, like a strong jaw and deep-set

cheekbones. Recently, facial hair has redefined the rugged male beauty, with celebrities like Bradley Cooper embracing the beard – something Korean men shy away from, together with long hair. This is the opposite in the West; actor Jason Momoa with his beard and long hair is the pinnacle of "lumbersexual".

In Korea, the popular phenomenon for young men is the pretty "flower-boy" or *kkotminnam* look. The ideal Korean man has a clean-shaven youthful look, like actors Nam Joo Hyuk or Ahn HyoSeop. It is also not uncommon for Korean men to apply light makeup on a daily basis and pay more attention to personal skincare. In the US, men wearing makeup would be labelled as "effeminate".

It is no secret how big the Korean plastic surgery market is; both men and women seek cosmetic surgery, from jaw reduction surgeries to achieve a smaller jaw, to eye surgeries to get bigger eyes and rhinoplasty to get more prominent noses.

### CROSS-CULTURAL SHIFT

Due to globalisation, beauty standards are changing through cross-cultural influence. K-beauty is becoming more popular in the American market and American makeup brands are also common in Korea. As trends change and cultures continue to mix, it's hard to define beauty in the future. Just like how we look back on beauty trends in the past and wonder "how was that fashionable before?", future generations might think the same of us too.

# SEXLESS AND THE CITY

## The conundrum of asexuality

BY CHAN CHOY YU

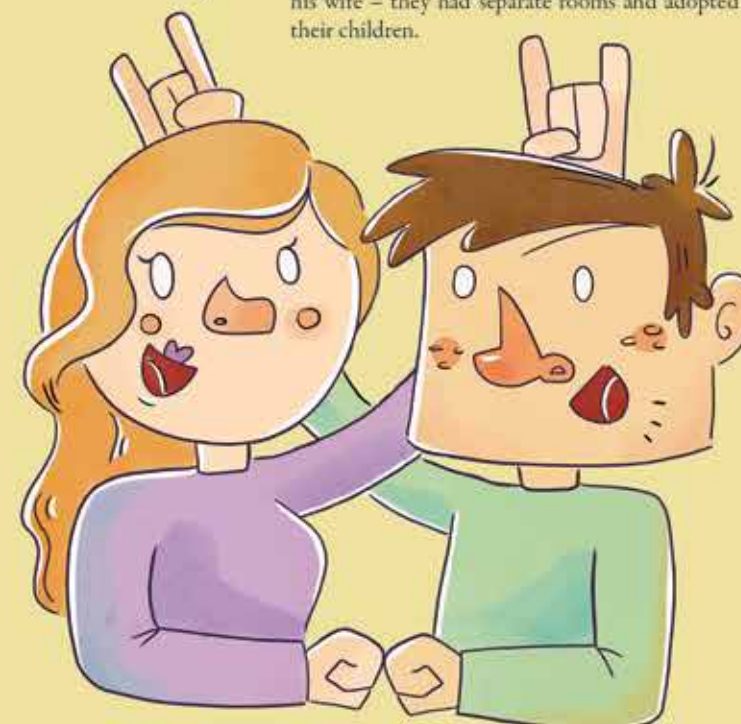
Sex sells. We all know that, hence the over-sexualised posters plastered all over, over-sexualised characters in video games, heck, over-sexualised everything. We can't even eat a hotdog and lick some ice cream without making unintended innuendoes nowadays.

It's fascinating then, to learn that about 1% of the general population actually do not give a single P\*k (pun intended) about sex in a society so otherwise fixated with it. They are known as asexuals, and have only just appeared recently – not because people suddenly decided that they were done with the notion of lust and desire, but because there is finally a definite term for this particular sexual orientation.

### A KNOWN HISTORY

If you doubt asexuality has long been a thing, just consider some of the historical figures who were possibly asexual, such as Nikola Tesla, whose only love might have been science; and Isaac Newton, who according to a biography, hated women and was terrified of sex.

There's also Dr John Kellogg who invented corn flakes to help people abstain from masturbation, which was a taboo in the 18th and 19th centuries. He also believed that sex was so bad for body that he never had sex with his wife – they had separate rooms and adopted all of their children.



### WHAT IS AN ASEXUAL?

Laboratory rats have been classified as "studs" or "duds" according to their levels of sexual interest, although "dud" is a serious misnomer when it comes to asexuals.

What asexuality really means is simply a lack of lustful inclinations towards others. Asexuals – also known as "Ace" or "Aces" – do not experience sexual attraction towards individuals of any gender, although their "equipments" work just fine.

Some feel sexual attraction but not the inclination to act on it. "I am sexually attracted to men but have no desire or need to engage in sexual or even non-sexual activity," quotes a subject in a study by scholar Kristin Scherrer in the journal *Sexualities*. Some Aces have sexual fetishes and do masturbate, but these do not involve other people.

They may have a sex drive albeit not directed at anyone, or they may not. Some are in committed relationships (like being married or having kids), others are more solitary in nature. This complexity is often hard for "normal" folks to wrap their heads around, and as a result, is often perceived as a disorder or medical condition instead of a mere sexual orientation.

### ASEXUALITY IS NOT A DISORDER

The irony is that sex researchers have found that asexuals typically demonstrate neither any disability nor distress from their conditions, making them a perfect control group to diagnose the anxiety, risky behaviours and temporary insanity that afflicts the sexualised majority instead.

Asexuality also decouples romance and sex, which some neuroscience studies now suggest are the product of different processes in the brain, and draws attention to the obsession we have with sex because of the fact that people just don't get it.

In the words of members from community site *Asexuality.org*, they have the same emotional needs as everybody else and are just as capable of forming intimate relationships. Just because someone is asexual doesn't mean they aren't able to have sex (which can happen if the occasion calls for it) or shy away from romantic relationships. Just don't associate them with celibacy, which is a choice; asexuality is a sexual orientation.

In short, Aces may experience love, arousal, and orgasm, but they definitely don't abstain from sex due to religion, trauma, fear of intimacy, or inability to find a partner.

Aces are just as capable of forming intimate relationships like everybody else, and a quick look on the internet reveals that there are plenty of asexuals in happy relationships with partners with "normal" sex drives. At the end of the day, asexuals know that love doesn't necessarily need to equal sex.



BY LYDIA TAN

# All in One Package

## GENDERED PRODUCTS

You see it in on the shelves of your average neighbourhood supermarkets: Pink means products for women, blue means products for men. Gendered packaging is seen in everything from toiletries to even food and stationery. But what exactly defines a "male" or a "female" product?

### What are little boys and little girls made of?

Even from a young age, kids are exposed to gendered products. Baby girls are wrapped in pink blankets, and boys in blue. As they grow, girls are made to be princesses and caring "mothers", and given toys like Barbie dolls, kitchen sets, and dress-up clothes, while the boys are made to be soldiers and superheroes and given Legos, toy cars and dinosaurs.

Even food products for kids are gendered; it's not uncommon to see yoghurt cups and drink cartons separated in pink and blue. Cookies for boys come in shapes of cars or dinosaurs and the ones for girls are shaped like flowers or hearts. But why do they need the segregation?

### Why the differentiation?

Gendered marketing, or market segmentation, segments the target audience into smaller groups so that the marketing can be easily customised to maximise sales.

Another reason for gendered products is that they fit long-established gender stereotypes. For example, household products have been marketed to the housewife demographic from as early as the Victorian era till today. Gendered products also gives users an identity; products that align with your gender feels more like it was made for you.

But do people actually buy into this gender segmentation? A 2015 Canadian study showed that gender marketing does subconsciously affect our product perception and purchase decisions. In the study, the exact same blueberry muffins were packaged four different ways, with the package's image and message as the two variables. Two packages used purely masculine and purely feminine images and messages, while the other two packages mixed the genders of the message and image.

In the purely masculine and feminine versions, subjects were willing to pay more for the muffin and believed they tasted better. With the mismatched packaging, people said the muffin didn't taste as good.



## Stereotypes of gendered packaging

Besides the colour differentiation, other factors insinuate gender in product packaging.

**Male-oriented products** tend to have stronger lines and boxier shapes with graphics that are more science-related with grids and arrows, or sports-related. The fonts are more rigid and boxy. Even male scents for colognes, body sprays and bath products are more musky, woody, and spicy.



**Female-oriented products** have softer curves, with graphics that tend to be nature-related, like floral motifs, leaves and fruit. Female products are also smaller or slimmer, and font-wise, the letters are slimmer and rounder, usually in italics and cursives. Feminine scents are on the floral, fruity and sweet side.

Sometimes, the packaging might not even specify a gender. Result-centric words that denote power — like "fights (odour, hair loss, etc)", "fast" and "extreme" — are usually for men's products. Experience-centric words that represent gentleness — like "delicate", "luxurious" and "silky smooth" — are reserved for women's products, as are food products labelled as "diet", "low-fat" or promote "a trim figure".

### The "Pink Tax" phenomenon

Women's products and services are often subjected to additional costs, known as the "pink tax". In some countries, even sanitary products have a "luxury tax" imposed on them, even though they're not luxury items.



It's not just for personal care products — when the CareShield Life scheme was announced in July 2018, women had to pay \$253 in annual premiums whereas men pay only \$206. The extra cost can be justified — for example, women have additional tests like pap smears and mammograms. In the case of dry-cleaning services, blouses cost more as they tend to come in more delicate materials like silk and require manual ironing.

But some female products are expensive for no difference. Take Gillette's razors. Women pay \$22.90 for a Venus Swirl, while men only pay \$19.90 for a similar Fusion Razor Proshield version.

### Gender-less is more

The thing is, gender is no longer seen as a binary between male and female, and brands — like Aesop and The Ordinary — are moving towards creating gender-neutral product designs to cater to a wider audience.

As long as gender roles exist in society, gendered product marketing is going to stick around. But if the products serve the same purpose, is there really a need to define which ones are for men or women? Maybe we can look past the packaging designs and make smarter purchasing decisions, even if it means buying something different.



BY VALERY THONG

# OF MEN AND CONSOLES

## WHY IS GAMING SO MALE-DOMINATED?



Those who love gaming — whether it is online games, video games or even eSports — will agree that gaming can get pretty aggressive sometimes. Most parents are also likely to tell you that boys game more than girls. For as long as games have existed, gaming has been synonymous with men. But why is gaming so male-dominated?

### THE PINK AND BLUE AISLE

During our early stages of childhood development, we have unconsciously learnt from visiting toy departments about gender from the gender marketing of toys. Such segregation instills deep gender stereotypes, reinforcing the idea that there are rules about whether a toy can be enjoyed by a girl or boy only.

The gender differences do not stop there. As children continue to be indoctrinated with such ideas, the ripple effect causes them to view other forms of toys the same way — violent games are for boys, while those involving candy or farming are for the girls.

### SOCIAL OR BIOLOGICAL?

There is a general belief that technology and gaming are socially or even biologically the domain of men. Game manufacturers took advantage of this, targeting their advertising of video games towards boys and men. This is based on the idea that males are more logical and aggressive to pursue their desires than females.

However, technology hasn't always been the domain of men. When computers were invented, programming was seen as a secretarial work, so it became a job for women. Women not only operated code-breaking machines during WWII, they also dominated the computing industry until the 1960s. In the 1970s, when the government and industry saw the potential of these powerful computers, women's contributions became undervalued by society as they were replaced by men who later became the face of this tech industry.

One of the reasons that gamers seem to be mostly men is the fact that it was mostly men who made the games. A survey of the games at the 2015 Electronics Entertainment Expo found that 32% of them had solo male

leads, while only 9% had solo female leads. The Gamergate Controversy in 2014 exposed a toxic developer community when women developers were harassed after speaking out about sexism and the sexualisation of female characters in games.

Even though society is supposedly more inclusive today, a female gaming can bring about harassment, mainly from male gamers. Studies found that when faced with competition and the need to assert one's dominance, testosterone fuels the aggressive and antisocial behavior in men, who believe that they are more powerful than women. Men are very likely to form "buddy clubs", so when a woman cuts in, she is likely to be sneered at because she doesn't conform to their perceived gender superiority.

### THREATS AND CONTROVERSIES

Toxic masculinity often plays a part in group gaming, particularly in games like League of Legends, Counterstrike, and Overwatch. Male threats like "go back to the kitchen" are common, and a reminder that men who feel threatened resort to outdated sexism. Simply look at Twitch accounts of female players to find sexist comments.

Other insults imply that women gamers are unable to have boyfriends; or if they're attractive, that they would "trick" men. For men, however, insults are typically along the lines of name-calling, like "noob" or "Hanzo main". On the extreme side, some women have also gotten rape and death threats, with men threatening to stalk or follow them home. It's these male players who have made game-playing dangerous for women to participate.

Another reason why gaming is so male-dominated is that society brushes women off as the "weaker" sex and therefore unable to handle violence or play strategic games. Take the case of top-ranking Overwatch player Geguri who was accused of cheating because she was female, but managed to shut down her male accusers by proving her skills on a public livestream, prompting them to quit the game for good.

### CONCLUSION

According to a survey conducted by Google Play, females are driving the growth of mobile gaming — over 50% of mobile games are women, and 35% (and growing) of Twitch streamers are women.

More women are also joining the industry as game developers, thanks in part to the Gamergate attacks. It is still a long, challenging road ahead, but there is hope. Today's games like Tomb Raider, Star Wars, and Horizon Zero Dawn feature more female protagonists and narrative-driven action that appeal to a broader audience, thanks to an influx of women in the gaming industry. As the industry levels up, women will be there to play and stay alongside men.

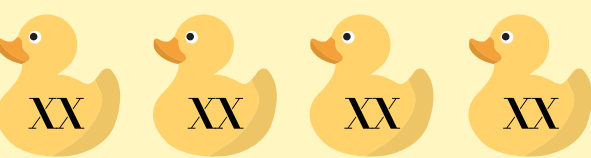




# POINTS OF CONTENTION

## What's Up with Male Nipples?

Much like armpit hair or pubes, putting nipples on men doesn't really seem to serve a purpose except men would look weird without them. However, male nipples may hold the key to helping us see gender equality. Here are some ways that the male nipple has been misunderstood, and perhaps, overlooked in its potential to be more than just pectoral garnish.



### ALL MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL: WE WERE ALL WOMEN

This is truer than you think, because all babies start off as girls: it is a generic human template. Yep, all males start life as females, that is, until their Y chromosomes (the stuff that makes them males) kick in. But it's too late to stop female characteristics to be built in, like nipples.

But that's not all. All males, like females, also develop the 'milk line' – essentially an internal piping from the armpits to the groin that contains milk. Along this 'milk line', females eventually develop breasts, and males just have a pair of nipples.



### TWO'S COMPANY, THREE'S A CROWD

Since the nipples are connected to the milk line, why stop at a pair? By one count, one out of every 40 newborns have extra nipples. **Men are more likely than women to develop a third nipple.** This commonly happens along the 'milk line', usually on the left side of male bodies.

**In 2012, an Indian case study saw a seven-nippled man, and even Harry Styles (the ex-One Direction member) has four nipples! Mark Wahlberg has (only) three.**

Since they're not as fully developed as regular nipples, they often pass off as round, pointed moles (you're going to look at your moles real close now, aren't you?). You can develop extra nipples anywhere, even on your hands or feet!

At least it's better than having no nipples (unless you're a male horse or mouse). Guys are also more likely than girls to have Poland syndrome in which a person is born without one or both nipples.



Nipples are nature's way of making men understand – albeit very slightly – the female anatomy. Sure, they may be less sexy than female versions, but science has proven that they are not as useless as they seem, especially when it comes to proving that men and women are created equal.



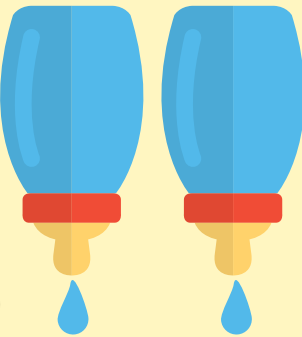
### EQUALITY IN THE HOUSEHOLD, FINALLY!

Many men may be bad at picking up the slack in terms of household chores, but if they wanted to show that they truly understand the inequalities women experience at home, they can help feed the baby. With their own mammaries.

**Guys can lactate too.** Some newborn boys actually leak milk – known as "witch's milk" – from their nipples. Male lactation has been observed in animals like cats and goats, and Charles Darwin, in his 1871 thesis, explained that early man, ably outfitted with mammary glands, divvied up breastfeeding duties with the women.

In an African pygmy tribe called Aka, there have been documented cases of males nursing babies, and in 2002, a Sri Lankan father of two made headlines for breastfeeding his daughters after his wife died. Scientists also documented lactation in male WWII prison camp survivors soon after they received adequate nutrition after months of starvation.

Adult men can experience galactorrhea – when nipples ooze milk – when they stimulate the nipples too much, or if there are disorders or medications that mess up the hormones, or if they're overweight (fat can increase estrogen levels). Cuddling or spending time with a baby has been shown to increase the amount of prolactin (the hormone that stimulates milk production) males produce, while cutting down testosterone. **Combined with the physical stimulus of a suckling infant, men can actually breastfeed (no word on the quality of milk though)!**



It seems that men too have a pair of tools and the power to help achieve true equality with women.

### WITH POWER COMES RESPONSIBILITY

If men have nipples that are dry or chafed (due to eczema, perhaps), they can develop cysts that can lead to cracks that allow bacteria to enter, resulting in mastitis or cellulitis. In a worst case scenario, men can also develop breast cancer when there is a painless lump or thickened breast tissue, or in advanced cases, open sores.

# STRESS RELIEF

How well do you think you know the opposite sex? Take part in this improvised Battle of the Sexes stick game challenge with your friends and see how well you all fare with these gender-based questions! Playing games that flex your knowledge is always a good way to relieve stress, isn't it?

### Rules

1. Game can be 2, 4 or 8 players, split into Men's and Women's teams
2. Men's team gets Men's Sticks; Women's team gets Women's Sticks
3. Read out the questions to the opposite team. One correct answer means the stick is theirs.
4. Take turns asking questions.
5. First team to get all coloured sticks wins the game! (Feel free to make more sticks!)

## Battle of the Sexes

Be the first team to win all 5 sticks!

### WOMEN'S STICKS

- |  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| What is the tagline for L'Oreal?               | Because you're worth it. |
| Name a female hormone.                         | Estrogen.                |
| What's a female horse called?                  | A mare.                  |
| Why do women feel bloated during menstruation? | Water retention.         |
| Name the female Nobel laureate in 2014         | Malala Yousafzai.        |

### MEN'S STICKS

- |                                  |                         |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| What is the slogan for Gillette? | The best a man can get. |
| Name a male hormone.             | Testosterone.           |
| What's a male horse called?      | A stallion (or horse).  |
| Can men lactate?                 | Yes.                    |
| Who won the Nobel prize in 2009? | Barack Obama.           |

Cut out all the sticks



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## Gender Issue

Skirts and Heels  
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