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GENDER-SPECIFIC BEHAVIOURS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

By Lindsay Wong

You may not have noticed, but men and women use social media platforms in totally different ways, highlighting gender-specific behaviours. When scrolling through networks like Instagram and Facebook, men use different language and post content that is completely different from women. So how do you identify this gender-specific behaviour?

REASONS FOR USING SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is a great way for people to stay connected. Women use it more for this purpose while men tend to use it as a means to achieve certain goals. Women generally use social media to maintain existing relationships, while men usually use it to create new ones, according to a 2018 study. Social networking site Pew found that:

- 65% of women use Facebook to keep in touch with friends.
- 54% of men use Facebook to network with friends.

According to research from Facebook, women tend to share more personal news, such as relationship and family issues. Males prefer to discuss more abstract and sometimes controversial issues like politics, but when females do so, they often receive more abuse and endearing comments when expressing their opinions online.

A Twitter experiment by British journalist Martin Belam found that male and female celebrities were less trusted when their opinions were expressed online. When women tweeted, there was a significant change in how they were perceived online.

DIFFERENCES IN LANGUAGE

Gender-specific language on social media is similar to contextualized language face-to-face. Because of language differences, it’s possible to identify the gender of someone online based on how they write.

Men tend to use more formal speech, offensive words, and possessive language (e.g., using the pronoun ‘my’ when mentioning their wife or girlfriend) than women.

As males are more prone to sharing opinions online, they also use words with negative connotations or offensive words more often. On the other hand, women are more respectful about their language online and tend to use more emoticon-like words like excited and love. They also use more positive language with personal pronouns (e.g., you made me smile) and tend to use or write more negatively biased language (e.g., they made me smile) and intend to use fewer emoticon-like words like excited.

A Twitter analysis from Oxford University also found that:

- Men use the expressions "OMG" and "LOL," while "yeh" is more associated with men.
- Women use the expressions "OMG" and "LOL," while "yeh" is more associated with men.

REFLECTING TRADITIONAL GENDER STEREOTYPES

Females usually gravitate more towards visual and colorful content, while males tend to be more content-driven. According to Psychology Professor Mark Griffiths, they do so as a way to attract attention.

Online trolling is commonly done by men, and women are more likely to report it to Facebook, according to Psychology Professor Mark Griffiths. They do so as a way to attract attention.

This preference for social media could explain why females tend to receive more likes on their posts, while males tend to receive more comments.

A study at the University of California, Berkeley, found that men tend to post more attractive photos, while males prefer stories related to risk-taking, death, or sex.

MEN ARE TO DOCTORS AS WOMEN ARE TO

BY NINA GAN

MEN ARE TO DOCTORS AS WOMEN ARE TO

WHY A.I. IS SEXIST

As our lives are changing through digital transformation, our smartphones, smart homes, and smart cities now influence how we live. All of this is driven by technologies like artificial intelligence (AI), which is a main driver of automation and is being used in medical diagnosis and treatment.

HOW DOES AI BECOME SEXIST?

Artificial Intelligence is a product of machine learning, which is the ability of computer systems to learn from data and improve their performance. AI can be biased because it learns from data, leading to gender bias.

The problem is that when an AI’s algorithm is biased, it will also be biased in its predictions. Artificial Intelligence, or AI, can learn from data, but it doesn’t have the same ethical problems that humans do.

HOW DOES IT AFFECT YOU?

As we move further into an automated world, where we have no knowledge of how it functions, it’s important to understand how AI can affect us. In the future, we might see more jobs being automated, and it’s possible that AI will become a part of our daily lives.

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IN SUMMARY:

The women started the meeting. They worked efficiently.

Outsourcing means we commercialize labor, in front of technological efficiency.

Despite multiple attempts to communicate the algorithm, Amazon scrapped the idea because it could have been unethical.

The hiring process bias is just one example. In the tech industry, machine learning algorithms run the risk of propagating and amplifying existing bias.

Gender bias is still deeply rooted in our society, machine learning algorithms run the risk of propagating and amplifying existing bias. This bias can be harmful and can lead to discrimination in bias selection and hiring practices, as well as the criminal justice system.

With gender inequality, we must work to reduce bias and ensure that our technology is fair and unbiased. In many different decision-making scenarios.
The concept of gender dictates how we live, whether we realise it or not. It's an identity we cannot escape; as sociologists Candace West and Don Zimmerman once said, we don't simply have a gender, we accomplish the act of doing gender everyday.

We hear gender expectations and stereotypes everyday – phrases like “real men don’t cry”, “man up”, “sissy”, “tomboy”, and worse things have been used to describe men and women. These terms are used to shame people into conforming into certain gender expectations, and for a long time now, it appears that these stereotypes have remained relatively stagnant. Despite being counted among the world’s best nations for gender equality, certain gender expectations are still strong in Singapore.

We are expected to lean towards colours like pink, wear make-up to look more professional at work, be more prominent in parenting, and be the stay-home housewife or caregiver. Conversely, men are typically expected to be breadwinners, be stoic and unmoveable people who don’t cry, be good at math or science, enjoy sports and outdoor activities, and so on. The list of expectations is endless – does it hold for every country?

In this passive patriarchy, women in the workforce often face a glass ceiling and struggle to get promoted. They are not expected to work as much as men. When it comes to political representation, women are generally less involved as well, with a ratio of 1:5 in the cabinet. This stems from the idea that once again, women are expected to be domestic caretakers and dutiful mothers. Furthermore, while women are expected to be quiet, demure, and submissive, men are generally expected to be part of the “boy’s club”.

Unfortunately, Japan faces its own set of gender-based problems. It frequently fails to take cases like groping, sexual harassment, and rape seriously. They are commonly overlooked or casually dismissed – many times because “boys” are expected to act like “boys”, and women are expected to be meek about such cases. This is a serious power imbalance that needs to be corrected; change can only happen when Japanese men learn to respect women and not follow in the footsteps of their seniors.

Gender expectations don’t just hurt women – they hurt men too. While gender stereotypes may be an inevitable part of human society, it is high time we put aside preconceived notions of people we meet or see. Thankfully, this era marks a time of increased civil rights movements and heightened attention to how we approach the topic of gender equality. Although we as a society are far from ideal standards, each step is a move in the right direction.
Battle of the Sexes

Differences between Men and Women

They say “men are from Mars, women are from Venus” and sometimes, it does feel like the two sexes are from two species from different planets. We explore some differences between men and women that go beyond the obvious.

Women Identify Colour on a Wider Spectrum

Women typically have a wider, more specific colour vocabulary than men. For example, a woman might refer to a shade of blue as “sea blue” or “eggshell blue,” whereas a man might just call it “blue.”

Men Hold Their Liquor Better

When you go out and socialize with friends, you might find that your female friends sometimes act much more socially than you do. It is due to the fact that women produce less of the enzyme alcohol dehydrogenase, which breaks down alcohol in the body. Women also tend to have naturally higher body fat levels and lower water levels, so alcohol is retained longer in their bodies.

Women Have More Acute Taste

They say always trust a woman’s senses—and there’s some truth to that. Women have a stronger sense of smell, taste, and touch than men. In a study by the National Institute of Standards and Technology, women could detect as little as 0.00001 parts per million of a chemical, whereas men needed 0.0001 parts per million.

Men Have a Better Sense of Direction than Women

The stereotype that women are bad at directions might have some scientific basis. In a study by the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, women and men were given a map and asked to find their way to a destination. Women tended to rely on cardinal directions more than men did, while men tended to use landmarks such as buildings and trees.

Women Are ‘Big Picture’ Thinkers; Men Are Direct

The brain is divided into two hemispheres—the right creative brain and the left logical brain—which are connected by a bundle of nerves called the corpus callosum. The right brain is usually larger than the left brain, meaning they are able to bounce back and forth between feelings and facts easily, making them good at holistic big picture thinking and identifying new connections. Men prefer to think in straight lines, occasionally getting rid of extraneous data and pushing full steam ahead on a task.

Weakened Femininity

The next step to a battle weaponised femininity is to point at its tropes. Action heroes often use femininity to their advantage—they may possess powers or characteristics that define them. It’s a way of engaging in physical combat on our own terms.

It’s a good or bad thing?

Firstly, all femininity is time-consuming and even crippling—the blistered feet and chronic pain from wearing heels—but women are expected to conform to some form of femininity if we want to get anywhere in the world. Women don’t want this to be a choice, and it’s basically a lose-lose situation.

Women are powerful non-feminist women like Amina Wadud, Bronte of Torch, and Amy Basta.

In Disney’s Mulan animation, the protagonist is a girl who just can’t conform to the traditional female role, and because of this, the Matchmakers think she is too independent. However, Mulan does more than just conform—she saves Zhu’s life, and the audience is often left bewildered by her actions. When she combs her hair on the roof of Shang’s house, she is able to grow a sword and save her own life. She combines her military training with the mystery of something feminine (the fans) to gain an edge over her opponent.

It’s a good or bad thing?

The discussion on weaponised femininity is divisive. Some consider it a challenging role for men and women, while others consider this a positive way of combating gender, as a way of breaking free from gender stereotypes. On the one hand, some women kick butt and show their own power, while on the other, these women need to take a certain way to play their roles.

If you’re not sure what ‘weaponised femininity’ is, then please like the previous paragraph and you will find it. If you think that weaponising femininity will give you a lady, then the idea that conforming to patriarchal beauty standards (i.e., narrow hips and big breasts) is radical and that femininity is enshrined in the film industry is depressing.

In a study published in More: A Journal for Women’s Art and Politics, it’s the case where women use the tools of their art to move against gender norms and challenge patriarchal standards.

It’s the case where women use the tools of their art to move against gender norms and challenge patriarchal standards.
BY ZHIQI WANG

Singapore Social

SOCIAL EXPECTATIONS OF MEN AND WOMEN

With the new decade, it’s no surprise that we live in a world that’s changed since the time of our grandparents. Social expectations of different genders have been a long discussed issue, from the waves of female empowerment (e.g. feminism) to the reinforced masculinity that has featured prominently in the press. But some things seem to cling onto the past, especially when it comes to social expectations of both men and women in modern Singapore society.

SOCIAL EXPECTATIONS OF Men

DEFEND THE COUNTRY

The National Service is no doubt a rite of passage for all men in Singapore, temporarily putting aside education or career pursuits for national defence. Men are expected to serve the country without grumbles, even if it means a meagre allowance and lots of discomfort.

BE THE BREADWINNER

Growing up in an Asian household, it seems that expectations for men to gain early independence and financial security is higher than their counterparts. There is greater emphasis on the rhetoric to provide stable income for the family and provide all kinds of opportunities for them, even if it means picking up a job that is not enjoyable (for example, working 100 hours a week for same jobs).

EMOTIONALLY DETACHED

Boys are often told to “man up” and be strong. Changes to overcome toxic masculinity are slow, especially in the acceptance of displaying emotions, like crying or asking for help. As such, levels of stress and incidents of stress are often higher, especially in this global metropolis where economic security is not guaranteed.

SOCIAL EXPECTATIONS OF Women

MAKE SACRIFICES FOR THE FAMILY

Womens, more than men, are still very much expected to sacrifice their career trajectory in order to raise children (this is also partially the reason women aren’t required to serve in National Service). They’re also expected to take care of the household, regardless of whether they have a career, ensuring they tend to do more work within their waking hours. Part of this remains institutionalized in our legal system that provides more maternity leave for working men.

EMOTIONALLY AWARE

It is a well-accepted fact that women tend to be able to relate to others better through emotional awareness, and are sometimes known for being too “emotional”. This could be a function of girls being encouraged from young to be nurturing rather than independent. However, this does not mean women experience more emotions than men do – they simply are more emotionally expressive.

The traditional role of male-female household dynamics is changing, marked by a rise of female breadwinners across Western world. Even though women and men have equal access to higher education in Singapore, this change in household dynamics is still slow to come. Nevertheless, it’s important to understand how each role makes sacrifices to keep our society cohesive and functional – a trait that most Singaporeans hold to great esteem.

BY DARRYL GOH

TO SERVE, OR NOT TO SERVE

Should Females Serve NS?

WHEN I SAW A RECENT NEWS ARTICLE ABOUT A FEMALE JOURNALIST’S NS boot camp experience on Facebook, I knew the comments section was going to be a warzone. The article titled “Not easy at all” drew cynical comments of “what did you expect?” and “why doing this for two years?” seemed to imply that maybe women should be conscripted too.

NS was always promoted as an effective policy because of its strength in numbers. We are able to boast that a large percentage of our male population are ‘always on standby’ to defend Singapore when the need arises.

Having just completed two years of service a few months back, here is my take on compulsory NS for women.

WOMEN SHOULD NOT SERVE

A common rebuttal for the equality argument is pregnancy. Barring the next generation of soldiers, as qualified as National Service, as career sacrifices are often made. There is a glaring difference between NS and childbearing, however – NS is compulsory where pregnancies are not.

A stronger case against female conscription are economic consequences. A vacuum of fresh graduates and working folk would effectively make Singapore a less competitive place for young talent. Take into account 10 more years of reserves, which is already negligible among employers, and this could cause a perfect storm to avert Singapore’s delicate economic ecosystem. By taking such risks on Singapore’s only resource (human talent), some might argue against conscription of females.

REDESIGNING NS

One of the largest criticisms of NS is that it wastes time, get rid of the windily embarrassing yet unproductive culture of “wait until call to war”. No one should serve more than what he or she needs.

One solution could be a massive overhaul of the entire system: get women onboard, reduce NS to a year, and allow for staggered age intake. The idea of having a window to decide when to clear their service liability has its merits, and could be employed in Singapore to reduce economic risks associated with conscripting both males and females.

Ultimately, there is no easy answer to this question – both sides raise valid concerns. With growing political instability in the region and a shrinking birth rate, time may well be running out for the Government to make a decision.
Witches in the Middle Ages

The first people accused of being Witches in early modern Europe were older, independent women, often those over 50 years old and living alone or don’t conform to societal norms. They could be married more than once or never had children, and many past their reproductive age, hence – in the eyes of men – dispensable, since the value of women often relied on their ability to reproduce.

According to historian Stephen Katz, they were considered “the female group most difficult to assimilate” into the male-dominated social matrix. They were feared and reviled because they had taken the power of the will for themselves, and sometimes because they didn’t conform to female beauty standards; some women were tortured simply for being unremarkable enough to be “cute-like”, nagging-tall or fairly lips.

Massive-scale witch hunts took place between 1450–1750 when Christianity took hold over the Western world, since Christian doctrine recognizes witchcraft as a form of Satanic influence. Christianity took hold over the Western world, since Christian doctrine recognizes witchcraft as a form of Satanic influence. Massive-scale witch hunts took place between 1450–1750 when Christianity took hold over the Western world, since Christian doctrine recognizes witchcraft as a form of Satanic influence. Massive-scale witch hunts took place between 1450–1750 when Christianity took hold over the Western world, since Christian doctrine recognizes witchcraft as a form of Satanic influence. Massive-scale witch hunts took place between 1450–1750 when Christianity took hold over the Western world, since Christian doctrine recognizes witchcraft as a form of Satanic influence. Massive-scale witch hunts took place between 1450–1750 when Christianity took hold over the Western world, since Christian doctrine recognizes witchcraft as a form of Satanic influence.

Not all Witches were old—Joan of Arc was a woman who couldn’t be controlled, who defied explanation, who rebelled, and wouldn’t conform, so she was tried for witchcraft (and dressing like a man) and burned alive. This punishment was reserved for Witches – most other people were hanged before being burned – because Christians believed a burned body couldn’t be resurrected, hinting at how fearful they were.

By the 1800s, witch-hunts tailed off, but the centuries-long smear campaign wasn’t enough to snuff out Witches as a threat and a symbol of empowerment.

Witches of fiction

Fairy tales like Sleeping Beauty and Snow White are classic face-offs between the young, obedient princess who’s destined by Prince Charming versus the untamed older woman (the Witch) who’s jealous and vengeanceful enough to kill children or torture animals. Through these stories — written by men — we’re taught that young, innocent beauties should be revered, while older, opinionated women who stand up for themselves are evil and therefore, Witches. We’re taught that men would save young, innocent beauties and slay the old Witches.

But pop culture juggled the caricature of the Witch on screen. We heard of (Or (1939) and the TV series Bewitched (1964) showed that not all Witches were evil old hags created by fairy tales. By the 90s, teen girls – with their coming-of-age struggles to conform to a traditional society – perfectly embodied the Witch persona. The societal context of the Craft (1996) and the teenage Sabrina from that Chilling Adventures of Sabrina (2018) are the faces of young Witches who push back when the going gets tough.

Hallows across the world in Japan, teen Witches are fighting gender norms via ‘magical girls’, a manga and anime genre featuring girls who use their magic or superhuman abilities to fight evil rather than waiting for a male protagonist to rescues them. Tales like Sailor Moon and Cardcaptor Sakura show how feminine characters can also engage in traditionally masculine combat without using brute strength. They represent both the young and innocent, as well as opinionated girls who stand up for themselves.

Modern-day screenwriters are more attuned to the feminist landscape, and they’re starting to retell classic tales that once maligned Witches. Maleficent originally came into this world as Sleeping Beauty’s jealous evil Old Witch, disfigured for her magic which caused fear in the hearts of men. The 2014 film changed that perception by explaining how she became a Witch through the betrayal of men, and how at the end, she emerges her true self by saving the cursed Aurora and fighting by her side. She’s a metaphor for a new era where women stand up and unite against injustice.

Modern persecution of witches

The stigma and fear of old women as Witches still prevails across the world today. Witch hunts still happen when patriarchal communities face social challenges or want to place blame on someone for something they don’t understand.

A large proportion of older women across villages in Nigeria, Tanzania, and India are tortured or murdered because they were named for using “black magic”, and blamed for misfortunes like failed harvests, infertility, or death. Sometimes, they’re simply accused of witchcraft because men want to confiscate their land and goods.

Much like in the Middles Ages, they were a convenient scapegoat because older women – way past their reproductive ages – were seen as dispensable in villages that have not experienced the benefits of modern education.

Modern-day Witches are repositories of knowledge, relational skills, and experience – but they’re portrayed as Witches of evil simply because they’re women who challenged traditional male power and societal norms. Had they been men, they wouldn’t have been tortured or challenged – they would likely be elected into power.

We all know that men with less qualifications have been. In recent years, it seems as if the history of old witch-hunts and the 90s wave of teen Witches are where women gather together and hatch plots, obtaining unthinkable power — are turning the tables on the men in power. Across the USA, neo-pagan Witches are rising up against sexual predators – manifestations of male dominance over women — like Brock Turner, the supreme court justice Brett Kavanaugh, and President Donald Trump himself. Arguably the epitome of old-school patriarchy, Trump has consistently used the word “WITCHHUNT” in caps whenever he felt persecuted.

Whether it’s from Hollywood iconography, religious doctrine or coming-of-age angst, the modern figure of Witches is one of resistance. Sadly, Witches these days have been co-opted into archetypal modern-day “spirituality” — think Wiccans and white magic — but we should not forget that while the Witch has evolved, it says true to its roots: women who are nonconformist, knowledgeable, powerful, independent, and a force to be reckoned with. It’s high time Witches were celebrated, not persecuted.

by YinLoon

THE ICON OF THE WITCH FROM PAST TO PRESENT

Witches as icons of change

Scholar May Beaud argued that stories of Witches dating back to antiquity seek to reinforce the male right to defeat female (abusers) of power, suggesting that women are not entitled to power in the first place. She challenges the fragility of misogynist patriarchy and the traditional roles of womanhood, and therefore, the current power dynamics.

Perhaps a combination of fairy tales and a fear of change is why Western society hasn’t grown out of the habit of portraying powerful older women as evil Witches, especially in politics. In the USA, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Senator Elizabeth Warren and Hillary Clinton are routinely named as Witches. In the UK, former prime minister Theresa May was nicknamed the Wicked Witch of Westminster, and Australia’s ex-prime minister Julia Gillard was viewed as a goddess, childless, unmarried Witch.

These women are repositories of knowledge, relational skills, and experience – but they’re portrayed as Witches of evil simply because they’re women who challenged traditional male power and societal norms. Had they been men, they wouldn’t have been tortured or challenged – they would likely be elected into power. We all know that men with less qualifications have been.

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THE LIST
EXTRAORDINARY WOMEN WHO HAVE SHAPED SINGAPORE

SINGAPORE WOMEN 1ST FEMALE TEAM TO WIN

In 2006, Jone and Vilema, both under 18 at the time, set out to form Singapore's first all-women swimming team. Out of 50 women who responded to the recruitment, six women—all with diverse backgrounds—made it through five years of intense training. Two of them made it to their team's commit—as white, and the rest were from the local swimming community. While Vilema had to turn back because of a chronic knee injury, the other seven swimmers reached the semi-finals on 25 May, 2009, and Jone was the last one to reach the finals. In May 2009, these women showed that the world's highest mountain was not an insurmountable challenge.

THE FIRST ALL-FEMALE TEAM TO WIN

JANIE CUONG

Paralympics Participation in Singapore

She was the first woman to compete in the Paralympics, and she was the first female to win a medal in Singapore. She competed in the 100m freestyle and breaststroke events, and she won a silver medal in the 200m breaststroke.

MIRANDA TAY

First Female Brigade Leader in the SAF

Coming from a humble background, she was the first woman to become a Brigade Leader in the Singapore Armed Forces. After serving in the police force, she joined the SAF, and she went on to become the first female Brigade Leader in the SAF. She was also the first female to be appointed as the commanding officer of the SAF's 3rd Commando Wing.

EATING ACCORDING TO YOUR GENDER

BY YIN LOON

FOODS THAT BENEFIT MEN

CHERRIES

A high intake of cherries can help to reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke, and it can also help to reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes. Cherries also contain anti-inflammatory compounds, which can help to reduce inflammation in the body.

OYSTERS

Men who eat oysters may have a lower risk of heart disease and stroke, and they may also have a lower risk of type 2 diabetes. Oysters are also a good source of selenium, which is important for the immune system.

BROCCOLI

Broccoli is a great source of vitamins and minerals, and it is also a good source of fiber. It can help to reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke, and it can also help to reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes.

SOY

Women who eat soy may have a lower risk of heart disease and stroke, and they may also have a lower risk of type 2 diabetes. Soy is also a good source of protein, and it can help to reduce the risk of osteoporosis.

SALMON

Women who eat salmon may have a lower risk of heart disease and stroke, and they may also have a lower risk of type 2 diabetes. Salmon is also a good source of omega-3 fatty acids, which can help to reduce inflammation in the body.
**Crime and punishment**

In the Monica Baey case, the light sentencing for Nicholas Lim’s crimes sent the wrong message to would-be perpetrators. When filming someone in the shower without their knowledge was simply punishable by a slap on the wrist, it’s no wonder men continued to commit these crimes. It sends the message that these crimes shouldn’t be felt insulted or threatened, and that they don’t have the right to demand proper punishment.

After a lot of media attention, Peeping Toms caught in the act have since been taken to court and sentenced to some form of punishment.

On the flip side of the coin, punishments meted out for insult to modesty only apply if the victims are women.

This was put under the spotlight in the case of Colin Teo, who was only punished for the crime of taking obscene videos, not for ‘outraging the modesty’ of the men he filmed. This is reflective of how society regards the two sexes when it comes to the value of a man’s modesty.

According to District Judge Kenneth Hip who presided over Colin’s case, ‘The fact that male urinals and changing rooms are typically more “open concept” than their female equivalents would speak volumes of a differentiated approach to modesty.”

**Perversion disorder?**

We don’t really know why these male students decided to do what they did, seeing as they are in the prime of their life with no major stresses of the real world, like having to provide for the future. These young men seemed ‘normal’ – none seemed to have underlying psychological issues, or suffered from any abuse. Nicholas Lim even had a girlfriend.

When asked why they did what they did, their only explanations usually revolve around the “I couldn’t help it” excuse, or the “I did it for stress relief.” However, both of these excuses could stem from a voyeuristic disorder (mental health issue).

According to forensic psychologist Dr. Julia Lam, the lifetime prevalence of voyeuristic disorder is estimated to be 12% in males (compared to 4% in females). She views extreme cases of voyeurism as a compulsion, obsession and/or an addiction. Voyeurs are more likely to masturbate or have sexual fantasies while watching someone rather than having sex with them.

Most of these criminal voyeurs who say ‘I can’t help themselves’ have a long history of engaging in excessive masturbation and pornography use. It seems their interest in preying and uncovering the modesty of others stems from adolescence, and that their urges to upskirt for the purposes of masturbation is so overwhelming that they give in to temptation.

Clinical psychologist Joel Yang summarises that the habit often begins with a pornography addiction that becomes state, and in order to obtain the same level of stimulation, some progress to taking the videos themselves to add the thrill of “getting away with something”. These could also be maladaptive ways of coping with stress or boredom.

“Stress relief” was also reported as a reason for voyeurism by one of Dr. Lam’s patients - a male university student who was active in sports. To reduce stress from major sporting events or exams, he masturbated excessively as a ‘coping strategy’. This led to upskirting, where he felt compelled to satisfy his urges even though he didn’t enjoy the act (apparently).

**Urge overkill**

Part of the reason that we’re seeing a lot of university men committing these acts has to do with a few factors. The first is that they’re at their peak of sexual urge, because their testosterone - the hormone associated with sex drive - levels are at their highest in their late teens to 20s. Secondly, men generally get aroused more easily than women when viewing sexually stimulating images, according to researchers at Emory University.

Most importantly, the reason there are so many university guys committing Peeping Toms crimes is because their dorms present them with relatively easy access to female toilets. It’s a crime of opportunity.

The surge in upskirt videos points to two obvious reasons: the prevalence of such videos in porn, and the fact that it’s easy to take one wherever perpetrators are. In some parts of the world, upskirt videos aren’t considered ‘obscene’ simply because it isn’t full exposure since there’s a thin fabric that protects modesty. But what’s clear is that fabric or not, it doesn’t change the fact that perpetrators still react to them.

Voyeurs aren’t a new phenomena – perpetrators have been present since forever. After all, the male brain area for sexual pursuit is 2.5 times larger than the one in the female brain. The only thing that’s changed over the years is access to technology in the last 10 years when smartphones came into the picture. What was once a deed that was difficult to accomplish can now be easily done with a smartphone - this means men can film anytime they feel the urge. This also means that it’s now easier than ever to give in to temptation, even for those who don’t have strong urges to do so.

Where do we go from here?

While the number of cases of voyeurism in Singapore doesn’t compare to South Korea, there’s been a considerable number of Peeping Toms in recent years engaged in filming unlawful videos who were arrested, prosecuted, and incarcerated.

Although victims of voyeurism aren’t physically assaulted, it doesn’t mean that emotional and psychological damage isn’t there. While voyeurs have been around for ages, Peeping Toms these days have modern tools like smartphones that make it easier to commit their crimes. As such, they continue to accrue obscene videos for their own pleasure until they get caught (some voyeurs manage to amass thousands of these obscene videos prior to being arrested).

Is there any hope of redemption for these perpetrators? The good news is that psychiatrists have had success in treating voyeurs with a combination of medication and therapy. However, many offenders struggle with admitting they have a problem in the first place, according to Dr. Cheow Eejun, a consultant at IMH. The reason is simple: admitting to voyeurism means admitting to a mental disorder, and in Singapore, it’s widely considered a social stigma.

Until we all accept that mental illness – no matter what kind – is not something to be joked about, shoved under the carpet, or treated lightly, we won’t be able to give these men the help they need, and vicariously, give women the peace of mind they deserve.
Cheat Sheet #65: Transgender

WHAT IS TRANSGENDER?

Transgender or Trans — a term for people whose gender identity or gender expression doesn’t conform to the sex (male or female) they were assigned at birth. Gender identity is someone’s internal sense of being male, female, or something else, while gender expression refers to the way they express their gender via clothing, voice, body characteristics, or behavior. However, not everyone who has a gender-nonconforming appearance or behavior will identify as a transgender.

CATEGORIES OF TRANSGENDER

- **TRANSSEXUAL:** This term refers to those whose gender identity differs from their assigned sex, and they often describe their bodies through hormones, surgery, or other means to reflect their gender identities. These individuals undergo reassignment surgery to refer to themselves — like transgender (for female to male) and Transsexual (for female to female). However, they would prefer to be referred to as a man or woman rather than transgender.

- **CROSS-DRESSING:** Those who are comfortable with their assigned sex but want to appear as the opposite gender do so by cross-dressing, which is a form of gender expression that doesn’t necessarily lead to an actual sexual orientation. A subcategory involves drag — drag queens refer to men who dress as women for purposes of entertainment, while drag kings refer to women who dress as men for the same purpose.

- **GENDERQUEER:** This refers to someone who identify their gender as falling outside of male and female. They may be somewhere between male and female, or freely identify with a gender outside the binary or none at all. Some genderqueer people don’t identify as transgender.

- **OTHERS:** There are many categories of transgender people, including intersex, genderqueer, gender fluid, third gender, and two-spirit people. These terms often include a sense of blending or alternating genders.

SEX VS GENDER

Gender is what you’re assigned with at birth, like you’re biologically male or female. In rare cases, some babies are intersex (meaning they have an anatomy that doesn’t fit the definitions of male or female). They can appear male, female, or something in between. The idea of female-specific anatomy in the brain, or vice versa.

READER: Are there any social constructs — attributes like behavior, clothing, and roles — that are binary or so entrenched that they influence you as well?

SUGAR DADDIES & SUGAR BABIES

A relationship between a sugar daddy and sugar baby is like a business transaction. Sugar daddies are usually older and wealthier men, while sugar babies seek men older than themselves who enjoy being an older support figure or role model to their sugar babies. Since they don’t usually have the time to date, they turn to sugar babies for companionship when they do.

Sugar babies are young women usually college age — looking to make extra cash and nice benefits, like a monthly allowance, luxury goods, expensive meals, and even free tuition. They’re often used as sugar babies for business travel arrangements, to save money, and to take care of the male partner’s needs.

The Internet has provided an easy platform for sugar daddies to find sugar babies, with websites like SeekingArrangement, Malaysia-based Sugarbook, and Universe Singapore attracting millions of users. The latter even encourages young women to get paid for their curvy bodies. Although many may compare sugar babies to prostitutes or escorts — because it’s a form of compensation for pay — they’re usually involved in an arrangement that’s mutually beneficial, with a certain level of commitment. Some of these relationships can last from a day to over a year.

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The Complications of Love

Frequent interactions between a sugar baby and a sugar daddy could lead to these people balances to develop into real ones. After all, sugar is literally dating.

Gingerbread initial relationship phase can get complicated since the initial setup is usually like a business transaction. Both parties need to have the other’s interest, and a sugar baby would not be interested in her ‘loving girlfriend’ persona she puts on.

This doesn’t mean that real relationships don’t happen, though. A comparison would be like the man dating playing husband and wife, and even marrying his partner in real life after a period of intimacy set.

Open communication is one of the keys to creating a successful sugar relationship. Sugar daddies and sugar babies discuss their expectations and boundaries with each other.

The silver lining in the case of sugar daddy baby relationships is that the age difference would not pose problems, since it’s perfectly acceptable for older men to be interested in young women in any society.

No matter how fast sugar relationships are, communication remains the key to a happy relationship. It’s essential to establish clear boundaries and expectations, as well as maintaining a healthy level of communication throughout the relationship.
Gender fluidity of Greek Gods

Love in the time of Gods

People often blame homosexuality as a modern-day transgression, but in a world where gods were already pretty commonplace thousands of years ago in ancient Greece, it wasn’t just the Spartan warriors who were intimately connected with their fellow men, even Greek Gods were known to dally in homosexual relationships.

There were plenty of same-sex couples in Greek mythology, mostly involving sugar daddy-type relationships. These were based on the custom of paederasty (paederasty), a Greek practice where adult men maintain erotic relationships with adolescent boys. The young mortal men — called erosmenvi — usually end up dead.

Such was the case with a beautiful, young Spartan man called Hyacinthus who was famously known as the lover of the god Apollo. Hyacinthus was accidentally killed when Apollo — in the guise of Apollo’s discus which struck him in the head instead. The distraught Apollo then turned his dead lover into a flower: the hyacinth.

However, Apollo wasn’t Hyacinthus’ first man — he was already in a sort-of relationship with a bard named Thamyris prior to Apollo showing up. Being a god, Apollo easily stole the young man’s love and attention away from Thamyris. And while frolicking with Apollo, Thamyris caught the attention of another male — the god Zephyros, who managed to have a fling with the boy. Hyacinthus was undoubtedly a man-magnet.

There have been many other same-sex relationships between gods and mortals: Dionysus and Ampelos, Hermes and Krokos, Poseidon and Pelops, and many more. Even mighty Achilles was known to have a thing with his wartime companion, Patroclus. The demigod Hercules, while proven virile with the women, had a long, long list of male lovers. Notable lovers include Abderos, who got eaten by horses he was supposed to look after for Hercules; Hylas, who was Hercules’ companion when he sailed on the voyage to Colchis, and Lolaus, who was with Hercules when he chopped off Hydra’s many heads. The relationship with Lolaus was actually entranced in Thessaly, where male couples of the day would exchange vows and pledges as if they were married.

Perhaps the most famous same-sex affair goes back to the philandering god Zeus, who was besotted with the “most beautiful of all mortals” — a Trojan prince named Ganymede (no, not the face that launched a-thousand-ships’ Helen of Troy). He was so beautiful that Zeus turned himself into an eagle and kidnapped him, bringing him to Mt. Olympus to serve as cup-bearer (a sort of fancy teaboy) and, of course, as his lover.

Ganymede is described as being so attractive that he inspired amorous attraction from other males, and is often portrayed as the god of homosexual love. His name means ‘gladdening prince’ or ‘gladdening genitals’, depending on context.

Zeus and Ganymede had a pretty long relationship despite Zeus’ constant infidelity. Towards the end of the era of Gods, Zeus made Ganymede immortal by sending him to the stars as part of the Zodiac constellation where he shines as Aquarius (which means ‘cup-bearer’).

Two-in-one

According to Greek mythology, before the world was created, there was an egg world. That egg would eventually be broken by Kronos (god of time) and Ananke (god of inevitability), and from that egg came Phanes. With two faces and two sexes, this primal god represented the ability to reproduce, and was the one to initiate life.

It probably comes as no surprise then, that even gender neutrality has a god. Hermaphroditus has long been a symbol of androgyny or effeminacy, and in Greco-Roman art was portrayed as a female figure with male genitals. According to some, he was once a handsome youth who attracted the attention of a nymph who prayed to be united with him, and the gods answered her prayers by merging their two bodies into one. Hermaphroditus was the son of the gods Hermes and Aphrodite (goddess of beauty), and his name is a mash-up of theirs. The word ‘hermaphroditus’ is named after him.

Not all intense gods were worshipped. The Greek goddess Aphrodite — an offspring of Zeus — has a body that appeared outwardly feminine, but possessed both male and female sexual organs. Her bisexed body was perceived as a threat to the gods who feared that her body made her so powerful that she’d take over the world, so Dionysus came up with a brutal method to castrate Aphrodite.

All is fair in love

Mortals throughout history have looked to the gods for guidance, reassurance, and acceptance regardless of their sexuality. Tales of Greek Gods are full of what would be considered aberrant behaviour when it comes to these salacious stories. But whether it’s a divine cup-bearer or male lovers on Mt. Olympus, tolerance is often presented as a sign of civilisation’s advancement — and a reading of Greek mythology reveals a greater acceptance of gender identity in ancient Athens than we often see today.
While it’s glaringly obvious that both men and women behave and react differently to the same diseases, many basic medical studies still tend to be conducted on males only because of cost and convenience, since they don’t have to account for variables resulting from women’s estrous cycle. Luckily, clinical trials – ones that result in producing drugs for the general public – require both male and female participation.

Even though diseases are often generalised, healthcare is becoming more specialised and individualised. We can all make better health decisions by taking into account not only someone’s genetic makeup and age, but also their sex and gender.

Nicole Bender’s article on Vital Record explains how diseases affect men and women differently, with data from Dr. Farida Sohrabji of the Department of Neurosciences and Experimental Therapeutics at Texas A&M College of Medicine. She notes that the same disease may biologically present itself in men and women differently, and that sex (being male or female) affects diseases on a biological level, whereas gender (based on behavioral, social, and psychological factors) might impact the manner in which a person responds to such diseases.

Putting aside obvious differences in diseases like prostate cancer (only affects men) and ovarian cancer (only affects women), medical data has historically been affected by gender-biases. This means that the rate of occurrence, mortality rate or symptoms are not the same in men as in women.

GOING HORMONAL
Men and women have different levels of hormones: men have more testosterone, women have more progesterone and estrogen.

Pre-menopausal women often have lower rates of infections because estrogen is an anti-inflammatory compound. However, it also means that women also tend to suffer from autoimmune diseases like multiple sclerosis or lupus at much higher levels. As women progress towards menopause, they will begin to develop diseases – like stroke – as the protective estrogen levels drop. Since women tend to outlive men, these diseases may affect more women than men as they grow older.

THE FUTURE OF MEDICINE
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