

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with the results of a qualitative and quantitative comparison of language use in two local magazines, namely, *Female* and *Men's Review*, which have a gender specific audience in mind. The results of the analysis are presented in this chapter.

The analysis of the magazines was divided into five parts. First, an analysis of the various topics covered in both magazines was conducted. This was followed by an analysis of several articles on male-female relationships that appeared in both magazines. Then, articles on female and male celebrities were analyzed. The next part of the analysis involved a questionnaire that was made up of two main sections. In the first section, respondents identified terms of references for women and men as having either a positive, negative or neutral connotation. The findings of this section that involved the analysis of the questionnaire was presented as part of a paper entitled "Sexism in Local Magazines" that this researcher co-presented at the MICOLLAC '99 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE organised by Universiti Putra Malaysia on 12<sup>th</sup> May 1999 at the Mines Resort, Kuala Lumpur. In the following section of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to indicate whether

they thought the selected sentences were sexist. They also had to identify the gender of the writer.

The findings of the analysis are presented in this chapter.

**4.1 Topics**

A total of 456 articles that appeared in *Female* and *Men's Review* were studied and grouped into fourteen (14) categories. Of the 456 articles that appeared in these magazines from October 1997 to March 1998, 286 were from *Female* and 170 were from *Men's Review*. This researcher determined these categories after having analyzed the articles that appeared during the period of study. For example, all articles related to topics such as restaurant and book reviews, vacation spots and hobbies were categorised as "Entertainment." Articles that touched on home décor and recipes were categorised as articles related to the "Home Front." For a detailed analysis of the selection criteria, refer to pp.39–40. The fourteen (14) categories are presented in alphabetical order in Table 4.1 on p.61.

Table 4.1 shows the breakdown of all the articles that appeared over the six-month period. The table indicates that the three (3) articles that appeared most frequently in *Female* were on Fashion (23.4%), Cosmetics/Beauty Care (21.7%) and Entertainment (17.5%). In contrast, the three (3) articles that appeared most

Topic	Mag.	Month		OCT	77	NOV	77	DEC	77	JAN	98	FEB	98	MAR	98	TOTAL		AVERAGE	
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Business/ Economy	F	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	MR	2	6.7	0	0.0	4	13.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	4.0	7	4.1	1.2	4.2
Cosmetics/ Beauty Care	F	11	23.4	10	20.8	11	22.4	11	22.4	11	22.9	11	18.6	8	22.8	62	21.7	10.3	21.6
	MR	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	3.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.6	0.2	0.7
Current Affairs	F	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	MR	2	6.7	2	6.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	3.7	2	8.0	7	4.1	1.2	4.2
Entertainment	F	9	19.1	9	18.8	8	16.3	8	16.3	8	16.6	10	15.9	6	17.1	50	17.5	8.3	17.4
	MR	8	26.6	10	33.3	14	46.6	6	21.4	7	25.9	7	25.9	7	28.0	52	30.6	8.7	30.5
Fashion	F	9	19.1	10	20.8	12	24.4	12	24.4	12	25.0	17	28.8	7	20.0	67	23.4	11.2	23.5
	MR	2	6.7	3	10.0	3	10.0	4	14.3	4	14.3	4	14.8	4	16.0	20	11.8	3.3	11.6
Health	F	4	8.5	3	6.3	4	8.2	2	4.2	2	4.2	4	6.8	1	2.9	18	6.3	3.0	6.3
	MR	1	3.3	1	3.3	0	0.0	2	7.1	2	7.1	2	7.4	0	0.0	6	3.5	1.0	3.5
Home Front	F	3	6.4	3	6.3	3	6.1	3	6.3	3	6.3	3	5.1	3	8.6	18	6.3	3.0	6.3
	MR	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Machines	F	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	MR	3	10.0	3	10.0	2	6.7	3	10.7	3	10.7	2	7.4	4	16.0	17	10.0	2.8	9.8
Male-Female Relationships	F	1	2.1	4	8.3	1	3.3	1	2.0	2	4.2	7	11.8	2	5.7	17	5.9	2.8	5.9
	MR	1	3.3	1	3.3	1	3.3	1	3.6	4	14.8	1	4.0	9	5.3	15	5.3	1.5	5.3
Outdoor Activities	F	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	MR	2	6.7	1	3.3	1	3.3	2	7.1	1	3.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	4.1	1.2	4.2
Personalities	F	4	8.5	2	4.2	4	8.2	3	6.3	3	6.3	3	5.1	1	2.9	17	5.9	2.8	5.9
	MR	6	20.0	6	20.0	1	3.3	3	10.7	2	7.4	4	16.0	4	16.0	22	12.9	3.7	13.0
Self-Improvement	F	1	2.1	1	2.1	2	4.1	2	4.2	1	1.7	2	5.7	9	3.2	15	3.2	1.5	3.2
	MR	0	0.0	1	3.3	1	3.3	1	3.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	1.8	0.5	1.8
The Opposite Sex	F	3	6.4	5	10.4	3	6.1	3	6.3	2	3.4	2	5.7	18	6.3	30	6.3	3.0	6.3
	MR	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Others	F	2	4.3	1	2.1	1	2.2	2	4.0	1	1.8	3	8.6	10	3.5	17	3.6	1.7	3.6
	MR	3	10.0	2	6.7	3	10.0	5	17.9	4	14.8	2	8.0	19	11.2	32	11.2	3.2	11.2
TOTAL NUMBER OF ARTICLES	F	47	100	48	100	49	100	48	100	59	100	59	100	35	100	286	100	47.6	100
	MR	30	100	30	100	30	100	30	100	28	100	27	100	25	100	170	100	28.5	100

Key:  
Mag.  
F  
MR  
Freq.  
%  
Magazine  
Female  
Men's Review  
Frequency  
Percentage

Table 4.1 Topics covered in *Female* and *Men's Review* from October 1997 to March 1998

frequently in *Men's Review* were on Entertainment (30.6%), Personalities (12.9%) and Fashion (11.8%).

#### **4.1.1 Stereotypical Topics in *Female***

The frequency with which articles of a particular category appeared indicated the segmented audience that the publishers had in mind. Table 4.1 shows that over the six-month period of study, 129 of the 286 articles (or 45.1%) that appeared in *Female* involved cosmetics, beauty care and fashion. This suggests an emphasis by the editors of *Female* on the outward appearance of women. This researcher feels that such emphasis only pressures women to work hard at looking good, and this means attempting to look as picture-perfect as the models that appear in the magazines. Media researchers have suggested that when women are constantly fed with an uninterrupted procession of perfect but unattainable looks that confront them daily, women will tend to feel oppressed (Ivy and Backlund, 1994:114).

Besides putting a lot of pressure on women to strive for that perfect look, *Female* also constantly published articles that portrayed women as traditional helpmates and caregivers. This is evident based on Table 4.1 which shows that articles on the "Home Front" and "The Opposite Sex" appeared consistently in every issue of *Female*. Articles such as "Smart Alecs" (*Female*, November 1997:150) suggested ways for women to update their "man's look" by introducing the latest fashion in men's wear. In the January 1998 issue of *Female*, an article entitled "Cookie



Monster” offered recipes for baking that “a girl’s gotto know”(1998:208). Such articles that appeared constantly suggest the need for women to place their duty as a homemaker and a caregiver very highly on their list of priorities. At the same time, *Female* interspersed such articles with ones on career development and self-improvement. For example, the October 1997 issue of *Female* featured the following articles:

1. **SELF: Greed Is Good Again** Back in fashion again, a little ambition goes a long way
2. **HOME: Smart and Simple** Odd angles make this flat special
3. **COOKBOOK: Speaking Hokkien** Six obscenely tasty recipes

[Note: The punctuation marks in the topics appearing above are presented as they appeared in the cover page of the magazine. The words that are capitalized are the titles of regular features. The phrases in bold are the titles of the article that appeared under that regular feature and the phrase that follows it is a short explanation of what the article is about.]

While the first article was about the importance of being ambitious at the work place, the following two articles were about home décor and cooking. Table 4.1 (p.61) shows that articles on “Self-Improvement” and the “Home Front” appeared regularly over the six-month period. The concoction of articles appears to suggest that women needed to burden themselves with a dual role of being caregivers and career women if they were to succeed. It seems that *Female* may actually be instructing women as to what they should worry about. In other words, they are setting out an agenda for women.

The agenda that *Female* appears to be setting for its female readers is one in which they have to be ambitious to climb up the corporate ladder, without forgetting the vital role that they play as traditional helpmates and caregivers. *Female* appears to suggest that women need to aim for a perfect balance between career and family. Such suggestions would be putting a tremendous amount of pressure on women to play a dual role that is dictated to them.

*Female* also contained many articles that gave women suggestions on how to do things. One good example of this was a new feature that began appearing in the February 1998 issue entitled "Joyce of Sex". This feature was an advice column that gave women advice on sex-related problems such as how to deal with desires to have sex in public places and acceptable ways of showing affection in public (March 1998). Interestingly, even this feature involved women wanting to know what they could do to improve their relationship with men.

Articles on the opposite sex appeared in every issue of *Female* but no parallel was found in *Men's Review*. Articles on "The Opposite Sex" included articles that suggested the need for women to know what men thought of women. Such articles are likely to instill a belief in women that they need to work hard to please men. Examples of articles of this type include:

1. **STYLE: Dress Sense Of A Woman** Four men pick out their idea of a well-dressed woman

(*Female*, December 1997)

2. **GUYTALK: Who's Afraid Of The '90s Woman?** Five men give their verdict on today's woman

(*Female*, January 1998)

3. **HE SAYS SHE SAYS: Why Men Hate Babydoll Dresses** They do, they really do

(*Female*, February 1998)

[Note: The punctuation marks in the topics above are presented as they appeared in the cover page of the magazine. The words that are capitalized are the titles of regular features. The phrases in bold are the titles of the article that appeared under that particular feature and the phrase that follows it, is a short explanation of what the article is about.]

The articles above are examples of typical articles that appeared regularly in *Female* between October 1997 to March 1998. The topics above appear to suggest that women have to make a serious and conscious effort to understand and please men. Every article mentioned above dealt with men's views on how women needed to dress and behave in order to please men.

*Female* seems to suggest that if a relationship went wrong, the inclination is that it could possibly be the woman's failure in understanding the man and what he wanted her to do. Therefore, articles such as those mentioned seem to serve as vital guidelines in understanding the male psyche. In fact, *Female* had a whole section entitled "Male" in every issue. *Men's Review*, however, had no such parallel. The suggestion here could be that it is solely up to women to make a relationship work. In the March 1998 issue of *Female* magazine, for instance, an article entitled, "**RELATIONSHIP: Why Men Have Affairs**", suggested that it was a woman's responsibility to make sure that men did not have affairs:

Despite the many and varied reasons for a man being unfaithful, there are ways of making him affair-proof, says Botwin.

(*Female*, March 1998:158)

This excerpt was taken from a three-page article entitled "Why Men have Affairs." After this sentence, the article went on to spell out eight suggestions on what women should do to keep their men from straying. Among the implications suggested was that if a man has an affair, a possible reason could be that the wife did not take the necessary steps in stopping him from doing so. The wife is somehow seen to be at fault, not the husband. Again, the pressure appears to be on women when it comes to making a relationship work. Articles such as the one mentioned above suggests that women need to educate themselves about men in order to ensure a relationship is successful.

Articles on men's fashion also appeared in *Female*. For example, in the February 1998 issue of *Female*, an article entitled "**MENSWEAR: Real Men Do Wear Sandals** Fashionable British men baring their toes" discussed the appropriateness of wearing sandals. This article seems to encourage women to be aware of men's fashion in order to fulfill their role as nurturers. Therefore, not only was *Female* encouraging its female readers to dress well, it was also appearing to suggest that women are responsible for making sure that men, that is, their husbands or boyfriends, are dressed well. A possible reason for this could be that society at large traditionally views women as being responsible for how their spouses dress.

Articles in *Female* portrayed women as nurturers who are responsible for caring for men. This included knowing how to groom men and how to dress them. An example of this is an article entitled “**GROOMING: Grooming For Idiots** What are guys doing wrong? Ask the girls.” that appeared in the March 1998 issue of *Female*. Although the writer worded the title of the article as if it was for a male audience, the fact remains that it is a magazine targeted at a female audience. The inclusion of such articles indicates that *Female* considered this as something that should be of concern to women.

#### **4.1.2 Stereotypical Topics in *Men's Review***

The most frequently appearing articles in *Men's Review* were ones on entertainment. In fact, Table 4.1(p.61) shows that in an average publication, 30.5% of articles in *Men's Review* were on entertainment. This focus on entertainment in *Men's Review* seems to suggest that men do not have to concern themselves with more serious issues such as those relating to relationships and sustaining a happy marriage. *Men's Review* appeared to suggest that as hardworking breadwinners, men needed only to concern themselves with how to find time to relax and pamper themselves.

Among the many regular features that were categorised under the category of Entertainment, one particular feature that stood out was the section that featured comic strips. This was a feature that had no parallel in *Female*. The appearance of a regular cartoon strip in every issue of *Men's Review* during the six-month period of

study, appears to indicate an attempt to keep the magazine light and enjoyable. The suggestion here appears to be that men do not like to be told what to do. They do not pick up a magazine hoping to get advice on how to deal with a marriage on the rocks or how to move up the corporate ladder. The lack of articles on “how to” seems to support the magazine’s stance that men did not need to be told how to handle such situations as they were capable of doing so without any help.

**4.1.3 Comparison of Topics in *Female* and *Men’s Review***

Table 4.1 (p.61) shows that there is a clear difference in the choice of topics that appeared regularly in both magazines over the six-month period. The topics that appeared exclusively in either *Men’s Review* or *Female* have been selected from Table 4.1 and are presented below in Table 4.2:

Magazines	Topics	Freq.	%
<i>Men's Review</i>	Business/ Economy	1.2	4.2
	Machines	2.8	9.8
	Outdoor Activities	1.2	4.2
<i>Female</i>	Homefront	3	6.3
	The Opposite Sex	3	6.3

**Key:**  
Freq. : Frequency

**Table 4.2** Gender specific topics found in an average publication of *Men’s Review* or *Female*

Table 4.2 shows that the magazines suggest stereotypical roles for women and men. This conclusion is based on the following observations. Table 4.2 shows that several topics appear to belong to an exclusive gender based domain. Over the six-month period, there were no articles on topics such as business or economy, current affairs, machines or outdoor activities in *Female*. However, these topics made up an average of 18.2% in a typical issue of *Men's Review*.

Table 4.2 also shows that although articles on home décor and cooking appeared consistently in every issue of *Female*, they never appeared in *Men's Review*. A possible reason for this could be that the editors of the magazines assumed that women and men had different interests. The editors of *Female* probably assumed that it was not possible for women to be interested in cars or the country's economic situation. Similarly, *Men's Review* made the assumption that it was not possible for men to be interested in cooking or decorating the home. By making such assumptions these magazines were in fact setting an agenda for the women and men who read them. The editors of both magazines appear to point out what should be of concern to a typical man and a typical woman. Therefore, the suggestion is that a man who may be interested in cooking or a woman who may be interested in Four-Wheel Drive expeditions would be an exception to the norm.

Clearly, the interests of women and men are thought to be different. This is shown in Table 4.2 (p.68). *Men's Review* had regular issues on "Outdoor Activities" and "Machines" ranging from articles on yachts to audio units while *Female* had regular

articles related to the “Home Front” such as recipes and home décor. For example, in January 1998, *Men’s Review* included the following articles in its edition:

1. **Driven**  
Ferrari spur their stallion with F1 tech, *Russ Swinnerton* says yeeha!  
[An article about a car]
2. **Ridden**  
*Russ Swinnerton* looks in the mirror at 5 o’clock and sees Honda’s shadow  
[An article about a motorbike]
3. **Infidelity**  
*Fidel T Beauson* straddles Imperial American supercruisers  
[An article about amplifiers]

[Note: The topics above are presented as they appeared in the table of content. Words in bold are the titles of the regular articles that appeared in *Men’s Review* over the six-month period of study. Each title is accompanied by a short description of the content of the respective article.]

In contrast, the January 1998 issue of *Female* had the following articles in its edition:

1. **HOME: Mixed Pairs** Everything comes in twos in this HDB apartment  
[An article looking at ways to decorate an apartment]
2. **DETAILS: The Shoe Store** Seven ways to store your shoes  
[An article suggesting ways to store your shoes]
3. **COOKBOOK: Cookie Monster** Six festive cookies even a child could make  
[A section on recipes for cookies]

[Note: The punctuation marks in the topics above are presented as they appeared in the cover page of the magazine. The words that are capitalized are the titles of regular features. The phrases in bold are the titles of the article that appeared under that particular feature and the phrase that follows it, is a short explanation of what the article is about.]



The articles above that appeared separately in the two magazines exemplify the clear difference in the choice of topics available to the readers. The magazines seem to suggest very stereotypical roles for women and men. The assumption is that while women are supposed to concern themselves with the home, men are supposed to focus on fast cars and mechanical contraptions. Even though there are a large number of female drivers on our roads, not a single article on cars was found in *Female*.

The layout of both magazines appears to suggest that a woman's place is in the home. Kramarae (1981) notes that magazines such as these suggest that separate publications for men and women are necessary, thus emphasizing gender as a factor in information gathering and dissemination. The articles in these magazines seem to instill the idea that certain topics are typically gender exclusive domains. As such, separate publications are necessary to cater for these diverse interests of women and men. However, these separate publications with topics that are gender exclusive may actually be encouraging the practice of stereotyping women and men.

#### **4.2 Articles on Male-Female Relationships**

On comparing studies done on magazines for teenagers, Kramarae (1981), notes that while articles in magazines for females were concerned with love and relationships, magazines for males were concerned with people and things not assumed to be intimately related to the reader.

On comparing the February 1998 issues of *Female* and *Men's Review*, this researcher made some interesting observations. There was a significant change to the layout of both magazines. The reason for this change appeared to be because "Valentine's Day" is celebrated during this month. As "Valentine's Day" generally conjures up thoughts of romance and relationships, this researcher felt that both magazines would provide significant data that could be used to prove or disprove Kramarae's (1981) suggestion that while women are concerned about relationships, men shy away from this issue.

#### 4.2.1 Articles on Male-Female Relationships in *Female*

This researcher observed that *Female* had a whole section entitled "Valentine's Day Special" that was made up of the articles listed below. (Please note that the explanation appearing below in [ ] are remarks made by this researcher after reading each article.)

ARTICLE	TOPIC AND TITLE
1.	<b>Cover Story: Zoe's Love Stories</b> Zoe Tay on romance, marriage and leading a romantic life. [An Asian actress talks about her ideas on romance and marriage]
2.	<b>Forever Love</b> A Valentine's Day story in clothes [A section on fashion with ideas on what to wear for Valentine's Day]
3.	<b>Picture Perfect</b> Looking great on that hot date [Another feature on fashion with suggestions to look like the perfect couple]

4.     **Accessories: Red Alert** Romantic underthings for that special night  
[A section containing pictures of women's lingerie for Valentine's Day]
5.     **Special: True Love Stories** The most inspiring love stories happen all around us.  
[True stories of three married couples relating how they met, fell in love and how they are handling married life]
6.     **Sex: Sexual Signals** Are you giving off the right ones, lover?  
[An article on understanding what men want in a relationship based on how they behave in bed]
7.     **Love: 20 Things He/She Will Never Tell You** Get the facts right.  
[A list of things that men and women never tell each other]
8.     **Joyce of Sex** Starting this romantic season, our resident sexpert.  
[A section that deals with letters written by readers on questions about sex]

[**Note:** The punctuation marks in the topics above are presented as they appeared in the cover page of the magazine. The phrases in bold are the titles of the article and the phrase that follows it is a short explanation of what the article is about.]

Every article mentioned above appears to suggest that women have to work hard at a relationship. Articles 2, 3 and 4 suggested that women needed to dress well for "Valentine's Day" and these included suggestions on lingerie. The implication here is that a woman's outward appearance plays a crucial role in making a relationship work because a woman's appearance must be pleasing to a man. Again, the magazine appears to be setting out an agenda for women in which they should take the lead in making a relationship work.

Besides making suggestions on what women should wear to appear attractive for that romantic night out, Article 3 also gave suggestions on what men should wear so that

they could look like the “perfect couple.” This article appears to emphasise the role of a woman as a nurturer and caregiver because besides dressing well herself, she also needed to concern herself with how to dress her husband or boyfriend.

Articles 1 and 5 dealt with true stories of romance. While Article 1 focused on a female celebrity and her relationship with her husband, Article 5 was about three (3) couples who talked about “how they met, how they fell in love and how they work at love that lasts” (*Female*, February 1998:122). These articles appear to indicate that *Female* tells its female audience to take the issue of romance and relationships very seriously by providing examples of relationships that are successful.

Article 6 entitled “Sexual Signals” gave detailed guidelines to women for interpreting what men wanted out of a relationship based on how they slept in bed. For example, a man who slept on his stomach was said to be someone who would insist on being in charge when having sex (*Female*, February 1998:130). An article like this appears to tell women that they even need to interpret what men want from the way they sleep. The wording of articles such as this appear to stress the vital role women play in pleasing men sexually without much regard for their own satisfaction.

This researcher feels that an article such as this only places more pressure on women in making a relationship work. Similarly, Article 7 entitled “20 Things He/She Will Never Tell You”, is yet another article that wanted to inform women of men’s needs.

For example, in the list of twenty (20) things that a man would never tell a woman, this article stated that a man would never tell a woman to wear a matching bra and underwear although he desires it (*Female*, February 1998:133). Articles such as these appear to take a humorous tone since they touch on topics as trivial as the way men sleep. However, this researcher feels that the publication of such an article reflects the emphasis in *Female* on educating women about their responsibility in understanding men in order to please them.

Article 8 entitled "Joyce of Sex" made its debut in the February 1998 issue and went on to become a regular feature in the following issues of *Female*. The article was made up of letters sent by women relating problems that they faced with men. Among the issues discussed were ways of dealing with men who wanted "to talk dirty" in bed (*Female*, February 1998:136). Again, this magazine seemed to encourage women to take responsibility in making a relationship work by finding solutions to problems they faced in a relationship. The analysis of *Men's Review* revealed that there were no articles that dealt with the issue of male-female relationships in a similar way. This seems to suggest that dealing with relationship issues were more the responsibility of women. Taking responsibility in a relationship is something that should be encouraged. However, when such responsibility is emphasised repeatedly in *Female* and ignored in *Men's Review*, the burden of making a relationship work appears to rest solely on women.

#### 4.2.2 Articles on Male-Female Relationships in *Men's Review*

Although the February issue of *Men's Review* also had its contents revamped, the term "Valentine's Day" was never used. A possible reason for this could be because the editors assumed that the term "Valentine's Day" would bring to mind ideas such as romance and men are universally assumed to feel uncomfortable with discussing such issues in the company of other men (Ivy and Backlund, 1994). Instead, *Men's Review* had a section called "Love, Sex and the Universe." The seven articles that appeared under this section are presented below. (The explanation appearing below in [ ] are remarks made by this researcher after reading each article.)

1. **Hidden Assets** The burgeoning undie movement, unhooked for public viewing.  
[An article on lingerie]
2. **Crossing the Rubicon** Camping in the mainstream consciousness  
[An article on transsexuals]
3. **A Matter of Taste** Charting the rise and rise of rubber  
[An article on condoms and safe sex]
4. **A Brief History of Sex** Renowned physicist Jo Kukathas hawks her theories of our known universe.  
[An article on sex in Malaysia]
5. **Looking For Love In All The Wrong Places** Taking a running leap into the mosh pits of Mat Sallehs and SPG's is Andrew Leci.  
[An article on lonely expatriates in Kuala Lumpur and the local women who befriend them]
6. **Boys on the Side** Heidi Fleiss tells of hunted and hunting joins.  
[An article on gigolos in Malaysia]

7. **Scoresheet** Who's a clever boy, then?

[A questionnaire testing reader's understanding of terms ranging from "autoeroticism" to "voyeurism"]

[**Note:** The punctuation marks in topics above are presented as they appeared in the cover page of the magazine. The phrases in bold are the titles of the article and the phrase that follows it is a short explanation of what the article is about.]

A quick survey of the topics clearly indicates a different approach taken by the editors of *Men's Review* as compared to the editors of *Female*. The element of humour appears to be an underlying element of every article that appeared in the revamped section of *Men's Review*. For example, while articles in *Female* seriously discussed the theme of love and relationships, *Men's Review* had articles such as "Crossing the Rubicon" (which looked at the plight of transsexuals) and "Boys on the Side" (which looked at gigolos). Issues of transsexuals and gigolos are not likely to relate to the majority of men and at a time when typically heterosexual relationships are celebrated, *Men's Review* chose to publish articles that were not related to the issue of male-female relationships. This strongly supports Kramarae's (1981) view that men tend to distance themselves from topics that are directly related to them.

It is also interesting to note that while articles in *Female* placed a lot of importance in trying to understand the male psyche and encouraging women to know all that there is to know about men, *Men's Review* encouraged men to be concerned only about themselves. For example, the article entitled "A Matter of Taste" was published to remind men about the importance of protecting themselves by using a

condom. While such an article is praiseworthy when seen in isolation, the choice of such an article to coincide with the celebration of "Valentine's Day" appears almost inappropriate when compared with the articles in *Female*. The reason for this is that while articles in *Female* were stressing the importance of romance and commitment through its articles, *Men's Review* appeared to advocate that men should have a good time and need only be concerned about protecting themselves:

The first mass-produced condoms were designed as part of a soldier's survival kit. Thoughtful bureaucrats thought that boys at war deserved some **inconsequential nocturnal romps**.

(*Men's Review*, February 1998:63)  
[ Emphasis by researcher]

The articles in *Men's Review* steered clear of any serious discussions on relationships, which was a clear contrast with the articles in *Female*. It appeared that the pressure was on women when it came to sustaining a relationship. Interestingly, even the articles in *Men's Review* appeared to put pressure on women. For example, the article entitled "Hidden Assets" that recommended lingerie as suitable presents for women, suggested that women needed to look good for men:

Here's some advice that I think all women can benefit from: make sure you get the correct size. Even a size 10 looks terrible squeezed into something that is too small!

(*Men's Review*, February 1998:59)

Furthermore, all articles that appeared in this section of *Men's Review* were related to the theme of sexuality and sexual pleasures. Unlike the articles in *Female*, there



were no articles that dealt seriously with the issue of male-female relationships. All of the articles appeared to inject some form of humour. This consistent pattern of injecting humour seems to suggest that the issue of male-female relationships is not something for men to be too concerned about:

He soon realises that the only thing which will make his life complete is an appendage to call his own; a little local flavour, if you like; someone to keep him warm on a cold winter's night, to shave his back and treat him like the kind of man he had always hoped he would one day become, someone different from those bitches back home, all lesbians mostly. . . .

(*Men's Review*, February 1998:69)

Although the above quotation is taken from an article that technically discussed the issue of male-female relationships, the way the article was written did not reflect any form of serious discussion on the issue. This supports Kramarae's (1981) observation that men supposedly prefer articles that are not intimately related to them. Both magazines discussed the common issue of male-female relationships. However, there was a clear difference as to the way the issue was approached. While *Female* appeared to suggest that women immerse themselves in serious discussions on practical ways of making a relationship work, *Men's Review* took on a light-hearted approach to the same theme.

#### **4.3 Portrayal of Celebrities**

To further support the findings on the role of local magazines in stereotyping women and men, two regular articles in *Female* and *Men's Review* were analysed. *Female*

featured a regular article entitled “Swoon”, while *Men’s Review* featured a parallel article entitled “Woman of the World”. Both “Swoon” and “Woman of the World” featured articles on personalities such as musicians, actors and supermodels. “Swoon” always featured a male celebrity while “Woman of the World” featured a female celebrity.

After looking at all the articles on celebrities that appeared in the magazines over the six-month period, this researcher observed a pattern in the pictures that accompanied the articles. With the exception of the December 1997 issue of “Swoon”, all male celebrities were pictured fully clothed in conservative attire. (Refer to Appendix E for a sample picture of a male celebrity in *Female*). The December 1997 issue featured David Chokachi who played the role of a lifeguard in a popular television series. He was pictured bare chested at a beach, appropriately fitting the role he played on the show. In contrast, every female celebrity in “Woman of the World” was pictured scantily dressed and in very provocative poses regardless of the role they played as an actor. (Refer to Appendix F for a sample picture of a female celebrity in *Men’s Review*).

Another rather striking difference between the two regular articles was the length of the articles that accompanied the visual images. Although “Woman of the World” always featured a full-page picture of the female celebrity, the article itself was barely a paragraph in length. Therefore, nothing much was actually said of the female celebrities. This seemed to suggest that there was nothing really noteworthy

to mention about them. The focus was on the picture of the scantily dressed women. On the other hand, the articles on male celebrities in *Female* could run into several pages in length with detailed information about each celebrity. Table 4.3 below provides the approximate word count of "Swoon" and "Woman of the World" between October 1997 to March 1998.

Month	"Swoon" ( <i>Female</i> )	"Woman of the World" ( <i>Men's Review</i> )
Oct-97	1497 words	180 words
Nov-97	936 words	160 words
Dec-97	740 words	136 words
Jan-98	1157 words	250 words
Feb-98	1543 words	275 words
Mar-98	1884 words	214 words

**Table 4.3** Approximate word count of "Swoon" and "Woman of the World" between October 1997 to March 1998

Table 4.3 shows that the articles on male celebrities in *Female* were consistently longer than the length of articles on female celebrities in *Men's Review*. A possible reason for this is that the editors of *Men's Review* probably felt that the male audience of the magazine would more likely be impressed by the visual images of the female celebrities than by anything that could be said about them in writing.

In the December 1997 issues of "Swoon" and "Woman of the World", two actors who played similar roles in the same television show were featured. "Swoon" featured David Chokachi, an actor who played the role of a lifeguard in the popular

television series *Baywatch*. The article, "Woman of the World", featured Traci Bingham who also played the role of a lifeguard on the same show.

Both articles gave a physical description of the celebrities. Chokachi was described as "sweet-faced, blond, bronzed, handsome and fit". Bingham, on the other hand was described as a "beautiful, black, big-breasted bodacious Baywatch babe". The physical description of Bingham is clearly crude because of the uncalled for references to the female anatomy. Besides the crude physical description, the only other information given about Bingham was her interests that included jet skiing, aerobics, sewing and interior design. Interestingly, the last three interests mentioned were typically female activities. The mention of these activities seems to further encourage the practice of stereotyping women into traditional moulds in which they are expected to be interested in sewing and decorating the home.

Chokachi's interests were also mentioned but included stereotypically male interests such as mountain biking and going to concerts. In addition, Chokachi was also described as a "dedicated party animal" which gave him the typical macho image associated with men. However, the article on Chokachi did not stop there. It went on to inform the readers of his academic achievements which included a degree in Political Science and his concern for poverty in the Third World Countries. In fact, the writer of the article even suggested that Chokachi could very well be presidential material:

Now, he wants to build on his acting career, move into film. But not forgetting that Political Science degree, there's no reason why, at some time in the future, he couldn't run for President.

*(Female, December 1997:213)*

One might suggest that the stark contrast between the articles about Chokachi and Bingham could simply be because the former might have achieved more in life than the latter. However, a quick survey of all the "Swoon" and "Woman of the World" articles over the six-month period suggested otherwise. There was a clear pattern in the way the male and female celebrities were portrayed. One good example was the November 1997 issue of "Woman of the World" that featured model Vendela Kirsebom. The article drew attention to the fact that she was a spokesperson for UNICEF and then immediately drew attention to her breasts:

She was recently named as the new spokesperson for UNICEF, **had her tits done** and landed the part of Mr. Freeze's wife in Batman and Robin.

*(Men's Review, November 1997: 166)*

[Emphasis by researcher]

The wording of this sentence made the fact that she was a spokesperson for an organization under the United Nations almost trivial when it was juxtaposed by a comment on her anatomy. In contrast, David Chokachi's degree in Political Science put him in the running for President.

Both magazines appeared to promote stereotypical images of female and male personalities. The male personalities were portrayed as typically macho whilst the female celebrities were portrayed as sex symbols. This researcher feels that the pattern that forms when any two individuals are portrayed differently simply because of their gender will have a detrimental impact on readers of such magazines. Ivy and Backlund (1994) contend that portraying individuals in that manner leads to confusion because readers of such material become confused as to the proper way to treat men and women. The readers may begin to wonder if men want to be recognized as macho symbols and if women enjoy being looked at as sex symbols.

#### **4.4 Sexist Terminology**

The present study is interested in analyzing sexist terms that were used in *Female* and *Men's Review* during the six-month period of study. This researcher listed all terms used to refer to women and men that were found on the cover page and the table of contents over the six-month period. In addition, this researcher also identified similar terms of reference in four (4) selected articles.

All the terms were presented to forty (40) respondents in a questionnaire as part of the present study. The respondents were asked to identify each term as having either a positive or a negative connotation. If the respondents felt that the term carried neither a positive nor a negative connotation, they were asked to identify the term as neutral. The results of this survey are presented in Table 4.4 on the following page.

When referring to a man:	Connotation			When referring to a woman:	Connotation		
	positive	neutral	negative		positive	neutral	negative
Bastard			100%	Bimbo			100%
Feminist rat			100%	Bitch			100%
Fly-on-the-wall			100%	Cyberfloozzy			100%
Fool			100%	Ditz-head			100%
Fruit bat			100%	Dumb blonde			100%
Idiot			100%	Dummy			100%
Moron			100%	Hot and cold running amah			100%
Neanderthal			100%	Idiot			100%
Nerd			100%	An appendage		7%	93%
Piss Artist		7%	93%	Female species		7%	93%
Geek God		12%	88%	A little local flavour	8%	4%	88%
Kiddo		12%	88%	Sarong Party Girl	5%	7%	88%
Madman		13%	87%	Blond bombshell	13%		87%
Boyo		15%	85%	Lesbian		13%	87%
Beefheart	40%		60%	Creature		15%	85%
Boy		45%	55%	Dusky little maiden	10%	5%	85%
Menfolk		50%	50%	Thing		15%	85%
Sexual Barbarian	40%	18%	42%	Baby	7%	10%	83%
Old chap	30%	30%	40%	Ego stroker		22%	78%
Pedigree chum	25%	38%	37%	Kitchen Goddess	12%	10%	78%
Bloke		65%	35%	Fry by night	10%	15%	75%
Rogue	40%	30%	30%	Attention seeker		30%	70%
Big burly man	13%	62%	25%	Babe	20%	10%	70%
Dreamboat	75%		25%	Mysteries of the universe	25%	13%	62%
Hunter	50%	25%	25%	Belle	25%	25%	50%
King of Slick	75%		25%	Millenium Ms.	30%	40%	30%
Mat Salleh	13%	62%	25%	Sweet young thing	58%	12%	30%
Sweet Baboo	62%	15%	23%	Cover Girl	13%	62%	25%
Babe Magnet	70%	12%	18%	Girl		75%	25%
Cowboy	40%	62%	18%	Model Mum	38%	37%	25%
Godfather	40%	42%	18%	Supermodel	60%	15%	25%
Dude	23%	62%	15%	Saviour	68%	12%	20%
Guy		85%	15%	Social butterfly	40%	42%	18%
Stallion	87%		13%	Oriental women	23%	62%	15%
Male teller		88%	12%	Actress		88%	12%
Boyfriend	45%	55%		Female teller		88%	12%
Buddv	40%	60%		Lady	63%	25%	12%
Father		100%		Wife		88%	12%
Grandad		100%		Pretty local girl	75%	15%	10%
Hero	75%	25%		Goddess	93%		7%
Hubby		100%		Movie Queen	75%	20%	5%
Husband		100%		Daughter		100%	
Man/Men		100%		Female		100%	
Prince	15%	85%		Girlfriend	25%	75%	
Protagonist	55%	45%		Grandmother		100%	
SNAG*	75%	25%		Princess	10%	90%	
Wizard	75%	25%		Star	70%	30%	
				Superstar	20%	80%	
				Wizard	75%	25%	
				Woman/Women		100%	

\* SNAG - Sensitive New Age Guy

**Table 4.4** Respondents' opinion on the connotation that each term has.

The basic assumption here is that if a respondent identifies a term as having a negative connotation, then this would be because the respondent has found the term to be offensive. If the term was identified by the respondents as offensive, then the present study considers the term to be sexist because a sexist terminology is generally thought of as being offensive. If the respondents felt that the term had neither a positive nor a negative connotation, they identified it as neutral.

Table 4.4 lists a total of 47 terms that were used to refer to men and 50 terms that were used to refer to women. The table shows the opinion of forty (40) respondents on the connotation that each term carries. Terms were listed according to the number of respondents who felt that the term was negative. Terms that were thought of as having a negative connotation by the largest number of respondents were listed first. The findings show forty-one (41) terms referring to women were considered as negative by at least one respondent. In contrast, only thirty-five (35) terms referring to men were considered to be negative by at least one respondent. This is an indication that there were more offensive terms for women than there were for men.

However, it is interesting to note that although some terms were identified by some respondents as being negative, these very terms were identified as being neutral or even positive by other respondents. This includes terms such as "A Little Local Flavour", "Sarong Party Girl" and "Blond Bombshell". This indicates that a term of reference that was regarded as offensive by one respondent, was seen to be perfectly



acceptable by another. This is an indication of how divided people can be in regarding a term as sexist or otherwise.

A total of 13% of the respondents found the term “Blond Bombshell” to have a positive connotation and 20% of them found the term “Babe” to have a positive connotation. A possible reason for the acceptance of terms such as “Blond Bombshell” and “Babe” by some respondents could be because of the widespread use of these terms. When people see the frequent usage of such terms in published works such as magazines and novels, they begin to assume that it is acceptable to use them. Some may even be misled into thinking that women might be flattered when they are referred to by such terms.

Based on Table 4.4 (p.85), some interesting variations were observed between what the respondents deemed as derogatory and what have been documented as sexist by other researchers. Two good examples are the term “girl” and “lady”. Feminists such as Lakoff (1975) and Miller and Swift (1988) contend that the term “girl” and “lady” are euphemisms that bring to mind frivolity, immaturity and conformity. However, Table 4.4 (p.85) shows that only 25% of the respondents felt that the term “girl” was negative and only 12% felt that the term “lady” was negative. In fact, 63% of the respondents felt that the term “lady” had a positive connotation. This indicates a difference of opinion between the respondents of the present study and Western feminists. A possible reason for this could be the widespread use of these

terms by speakers of English today. As these terms are commonly used without the intention of offending women, most respondents do not see them as being offensive.

One must remember that the usage of terms of reference in the English language is determined by its users and not by a group of linguists and feminists. If speakers of English do not find a term such as “lady” offensive, then it is not possible for them to recognize it as sexist. The basic assumption in the present study is that terms that were identified as having a negative connotation were terms that the respondents felt were in some way derogatory and, therefore, sexist.

Based on the findings in Table 4.4, this researcher then picked out terms that at least 70% of the respondents felt had either a negative, positive or neutral connotation. This was then tabulated and presented in Tables 4.5 and 4.6. Table 4.5 on the following page shows terms referring to men that were considered as having either a negative, positive or neutral connotation by at least 70% of the respondents. Table 4.6 that follows Table 4.5 shows terms referring to women that were considered as having either a negative, positive or neutral connotation by at least 70% of the respondents.

Positive:	%	Neutral:	%	Negative:	%
Stallion	87	Man/Men	100	Bastard	100
Hero	75	Husband	100	Feminist Rat	100
Wizard	75	Hubby	100	Fly-on-the-Wall	100
Dreamboat	75	Grandad	100	Fool	100
SNAG*	75	Father	100	Fruit Bat	100
King of Slick	75	Male teller	88	Idiot	100
Babe Magnet	70	Prince	85	Moron	100
		Guy	85	Neanderthal	100
				Nerd	100
				Piss Artist	90
				Geek God	88
				Kiddo	88
				Madman	87
				Boyo	85
7 out of 47 Terms	14.9	8 out of 47 Terms	17	14 out of 47 Terms	29.8

\* Sensitive New Age Guy

**Table 4.5** Terms referring to men which were identified by at least 70% of the respondents

Table 4.5 shows that out of the forty-seven (47) terms used to identify men in both *Men's Review* and *Female*, only seven (14.9%) were thought to carry a positive connotation by at least 70% of the respondents. In contrast, twice as many terms (29.8%) were identified as having a negative connotation. In addition, 100% of the respondents identified nine (9) terms of reference for men as having a negative connotation. This reveals that these magazines appear to promote the usage of terms of reference that are largely thought to be offensive.

Positive	%	Negative	%	Neutral	%
Goddess	93	Bimbo	100	Daughter	100
Wizard	75	Bitch	100	Female	100
Movie Queen	75	Cyberfloozy	100	Grandmother	100
Pretty Local Girl	75	Ditz-head	100	Woman/Women	100
Star	70	Dumb blonde	100	Princess	90
		Dummy	100	Wife	88
		Hot and Cold Running Amah	100	Actress	88
		Idiot	100	Female Teller	88
		An appendage	93	Superstar	80
		Female Species	93	Girlfriend	75
		A Little Local Flavour	88	Girl	75
		Sarong Party Girls	88		
		Blond Bombshell	87		
		Lesbian	87		
		Creature	85		
		Dusky little maiden	85		
		Thing	85		
		Baby	83		
		Ego stroker	78		
		Kitchen Goddess	78		
		Fry by night	75		
		Attention Seeker	70		
		Babe	70		
5 out of 50 Terms	10	23 out of 50 Terms	46	11 out of 50 Terms	22

**Table 4.6** Terms referring to women which were identified by at least 70% of the respondents

Table 4.6 shows that only five (10%) terms of reference for women were thought to carry a positive connotation by at least 70% of the respondents. In contrast twenty-three (46%) terms of reference for women were thought to carry a negative connotation. Therefore, almost 50% of all terms of reference used to refer to women in *Men's Review* and *Female* were thought to be offensive by the respondents.

Basow (1992) says that using animal terms to refer to people is a form of deprecation. The data in tables 4.5 and 4.6 reveal that this is not necessarily the case. Table 4.6 shows that 100% of the respondents agreed that the term "bitch" had a negative connotation when used to refer to a woman. However, Table 4.5 (p.89) indicates that 87% of the respondents felt that the term "stallion" carried a positive connotation when used to refer to a man. It appears that even animal terms were somehow seen to carry a more positive connotation by the respondents when used to refer to a man. Clearly, the term "stallion" that is sexist, according to definitions given by Basow (1992) and Ivy and Backlund (1994), was not thought of as being sexist by the majority of the respondents surveyed in the present study.

A possible reason for this could be the ideas that these terms evoked in the minds of the respondents. The respondents most probably associated the term "stallion" with the symbol of strength and virility. Furthermore, the stallion is a symbol of one of the Lunar Years of the Chinese calendar and this could be a possible reason why the respondents viewed this term as positive. On the other hand, the term "bitch" has no such association and was therefore regarded as very insulting.

This analysis also revealed that there were a fairly large number of terms for men that the respondents felt were negative. Table 4.5 (p.89) shows that the majority of the respondents identified 29.8% of terms referring to men as being negative. Nevertheless, the number of derogatory terms for women was still much greater with

Table 4.6 (p.90) showing 46% of terms used to refer to women as having a negative connotation.

Another interesting fact that was revealed in this analysis was that sexist language appears to be growing to accommodate elements of Asian culture. The best proof for this was the usage of the term “Sarong Party Girl” which was found in both *Female* and *Men’s Review*. The coinage of this term has its roots in Asian culture as the “Sarong” is defined in the *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English* (1987) as the national garment of Malays. This term was used in both magazines to refer to local women who frequently patronize popular nightspots in the city.

As the English language continues to be widely used in many Asian societies such as in the Malaysian society, this researcher feels that it is highly probable that more such terms may be coined to accommodate the non-native speakers of English. In this way, non-native speakers of English may actually be contributing to the pool of sexist terms that already exists in the English language.

Another term that supports this researcher’s observation is the term “Cyberfloozy” that was found in *Female* magazine. This term is actually the title of a regular article that appeared in this magazine. The articles touched on issues related to computers and the Internet. This researcher is puzzled as to why a magazine that has a female audience in mind would want to use the term “floozy” at all. According to the

*Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (1987), “floozy” is defined as a “slovenly woman, especially a prostitute.” One would assume that having a regular article on computers in a female magazine is something positive that should be encouraged especially in a time when our nation is striving to become the frontrunner in Information Technology in this region. However, the choice of a title like “Cyberfloozy” leaves one wondering if such a title is an intentional choice or just a result of ignorance on the part of the magazine concerned.

#### **4.4.1 Sexist Terminology on Cover Page and Table of Contents**

To determine which magazine carries more offensive terminology, the cover page and the table of contents of each magazine was analyzed separately. Based on what the respondents termed as negative in the questionnaire, all negative terms found in these sections were identified and tabulated in Tables 4.7 and 4.8 on pages 94 and 95, respectively.

In Tables 4.7 and 4.8, terms that were identified as having a negative connotation by at least 70% of respondents in a questionnaire have been listed in alphabetical order first. This is followed by all the other terms that were used in the magazines to refer to women and men.

TERMS FOR MAN/MEN			TERMS FOR WOMAN/WOMEN		
TERMS	FREQ.	NC	TERMS	FREQ.	NC
Idiot	1	Negative	Babe	3	Negative
Babe Magnet	1		Bimbo	1	Negative
Cowboy	1		Creature(s)	2	Negative
Dreamboat	1		Cyberfloozy	6	Negative
Guy(s)	10		Dummies	2	Negative
Hubby	1		Idiot	1	Negative
King of Slick	1		Kitchen Goddess	1	Negative
Man/Men	26		Sarong Party Girl(s)	2	Negative
Prince	1		Thing	1	Negative
Sweet Baboo	1		Actress	2	
Wizard	1		Belle	1	
			Cover Girl	1	
			Girl(s)	12	
			Grandmother	1	
			Lady	1	
			Millenium Ms.	1	
			Model Mum	1	
			Princess	1	
			Star	1	
			Supermodel(s)	3	
			Wife	1	
			Wizard	1	
			Woman/Women	25	
TOTAL	45	1(9.1%)		71	9(39.1%)

**Table 4.7** Terms used to refer to men and women in the cover page and the table of contents in *Female* between October 1997 and March 1998.

**Key:**

FREQ. : Frequency

NC : Terms determined as having a negative connotation by at least 70% of the respondents



TERMS FOR MAN/MEN			TERMS FOR WOMAN/WOMEN		
TERMS	FREQ.	NC	TERMS	FREQ.	NC
Bastards	1	Negative	Babes	1	Negative
Fly-on-the-wall	1	Negative	Sarong Party Girl(s)	2	Negative
Fools	1	Negative	Daughter	1	
Geek Gods	1	Negative	Girlfriend	1	
Madman	1	Negative	Goddess	1	
Moron	1	Negative	Movie Queen	1	
Nerd(s)	2	Negative	Saviour	1	
Piss Artist	1	Negative	Superstar	1	
Beefheart	1		Woman/Women	10	
Boys	2				
Buddies	1				
Cowboys	2				
Dudes	1				
Father	1				
Godfather	1				
Grandads	1				
Heroes	4				
Hunters	1				
Man/Men	9				
Rogues	1				
Sexual Barbarian	1				
Stallions	1				
TOTAL	36	8(36.4%)		19	2(22.2%)

**Table 4.8** Terms used to refer to men and women in the cover page and the table of contents in *Men's Review* between October 1997 and March 1998.

**Key:**

FREQ. : Frequency

NC : Terms determined as having a negative connotation by at least 70% of the respondents

Table 4.7 shows the terms used to refer to women and men in the cover page and the table of contents of *Female*. Being a magazine for women, there were naturally more terms used to refer to women as the articles in *Female* focused predominantly

on women. Similarly, Table 4.8 has a longer list of terms for men as these terms were taken from *Men's Review*. However, what this researcher would like to draw attention to is the percentage of terms that carried negative connotations.

Table 4.7 (p.94) shows that *Female* had more derogatory terms for women than for men while Table 4.8 (p.95) shows that *Men's Review* had more derogatory terms for men than for women. Table 4.7 shows that 39.1% of terms used to refer to women in *Female* magazine had a negative connotation. Comparatively, Table 4.8 shows that only 22.2% of terms used to refer to women in *Men's Review* had a negative connotation. Table 4.8 shows that 36.4% of terms used to refer to men were identified as derogatory in *Men's Review*. In contrast, Table 4.7 shows that a mere 9.1% of terms used to refer to men in *Female* was negative.

#### **4.4.2 Sexist Terminology in Articles**

The analysis of terms in the cover page and the table of contents supports the view that it is generally acceptable for women to use sexist terminology when referring to women and, similarly, it is acceptable for men to use sexist terminology when referring to men. However, this researcher felt that it was not possible to come up with a conclusion on the usage of sexist terms by merely looking at the table of contents and the cover page of both magazines. Therefore, an identical analysis of four articles written by female and male writers in *Female* and *Men's Review* was carried out to conclusively reveal if there was any marked difference in the number

TERMS FOR MAN/MEN			TERMS FOR WOMAN/WOMEN		
TERMS	FREQ.	NC	TERMS	FREQ.	NC
Neanderthals	1	Negative	Female teller	2	
Boyfriend	1		Females	3	
Guys	7		Girlfriend	2	
Husband	1		Mysteries of the universe	1	
Male teller	1		Wife	1	
Man/Men	6		Woman/Women	13	
TOTAL	17	1(16.7%)		22	0 (0.0%)

**Table 4.9** Terms used to refer to men and women by a male writer in *Female*

**Key:**

FREQ. : Frequency

NC : Terms determined as having a negative connotation by at least 70% of respondents

TERMS FOR MAN/MEN			TERMS FOR WOMAN/WOMEN		
TERMS	FREQ.	NC	TERMS	FREQ.	NC
Bastard	1	Negative	A little local flavour	1	Negative
Feminist rat	1		An appendage	1	Negative
Fruit bat	1		Baby	1	Negative
Blokes	2		Bitches	1	Negative
Mat Salleh	1		Dusky little maiden	2	Negative
Men	3		Hot and cold running amah	1	Negative
Old chap	1		Lesbians	1	Negative
Pedigree chums	1		Oriental women	1	
Protagonist	1		Pretty local girl	1	
			Fry by night	1	
TOTAL	12	3 (33.3%)		10	7 (70%)

**Table 4.10** Terms used to refer to men and women by a male writer in *Men's Review*

**Key:**

FREQ. : Frequency

NC : Terms determined as having a negative connotation by at least 70% of respondents

of sexist terms for women and men. The results of this analysis are revealed in Tables 4.9 to 4.12.

Table 4.9 (p.97) shows that the article written by a male writer in *Female* had only one term (“Neanderthal”) that was negative and that term was used to refer to men. The male writer was probably more careful in choosing his words because he had a female audience in mind. However, Table 4.10 (p.97) indicates that 70% of terms used to refer to women by a male writer in *Men’s Review* were negative. The data suggests that the male writers were more comfortable with using sexist terms when they had a male audience in mind. In this case, Table 4.10 shows that the male writer in *Men’s Review* had a male audience in mind and was therefore more ready to use sexist terms while the male writer in *Female* (as indicated in Table 4.9), had a female audience in mind and was therefore more cautious.

With female writers, the results were shockingly similar to their male counterparts. Table 4.11 on the following page shows that 62.5% of terms used by a female writer to refer to women in *Female* had a negative connotation while none of the terms used to refer to men were deemed negative by the respondents. Table 4.12 (p.99) shows that the female writer used sexist terminology to refer to both women and men. Table 4.12 shows that 60% of terms used to refer to men had a negative connotation and 50% of terms used to refer to women were negative. The fact remains that female writers in both *Female* and *Men’s Review* used a substantial amount of terms that had a negative connotation when referring to women.

TERMS FOR MAN/MEN			TERMS FOR WOMAN/WOMEN		
TERMS	FREQ.	NC	TERMS	FREQ.	NC
Big burly man	1		Attention seeker	1	Negative
Blokes	1		Blond bombshell	1	Negative
Guys	2		Ditz-heads	1	Negative
Hero	1		Dumb blonde	1	Negative
Men	2		Ego stroker	1	Negative
Menfolk	1		Girl	2	
SNAG*	1		Social butterfly	1	
			Sweet young thing	1	
TOTAL	9	0 (0.0%)		9	5 (62.5%)

\* Sensitive New Age Guy

**Table 4.11** Terms used to refer to men and women by a female writer in *Female*

**Key:**

FREQ. : Frequency

NC : Terms determined as having a negative connotation by at least 70% of respondents

TERMS FOR MAN/MEN			TERMS FOR WOMAN/WOMEN		
TERMS	FREQ.	NC	TERMS	FREQ.	NC
Boys	1	Negative	Female species	1	Negative
Kiddos	1	Negative	Your last babe	1	Negative
Neanderthal	1	Negative	Woman/Women	5	
Men	1		Your lady	1	
Sexual barbarian	1				
TOTAL	5	3 (60%)		8	2 (50%)

**Table 4.12** Terms used to refer to men and women by a female writer in *Men's Review*

**Key:**

FREQ. : Frequency

NC : Terms determined as having a negative connotation by at least 70% of respondents

The analysis of the four articles suggests that both female writers and male writers used derogatory or offensive terminology when referring to women and men. In conclusion, the analysis of the cover page, the table of contents and the four selected articles shows that there were a greater number of sexist terms in use for women than there were for men in both of the local magazines.

#### **4.5 Usage of Sexist Language**

Twenty (20) sentences written by female and male writers were presented in a questionnaire to forty (40) respondents. For the list of sentences, refer to pp.48-54. The respondents first had to identify the sex of the writer based on the given sentences. They then had to evaluate the degree of sexism of each sentence by using a Richter Scale ranging from one to four. The respondents evaluated the sentences as follows:

- 1 – for a sentence considered non-sexist
- 2 – for a sentence considered quite sexist
- 3 – for a sentence considered sexist
- 4 – for a sentence considered very sexist

(Refer to Appendix D for a sample of the questionnaire)

Sentence	Respondent's Answer				Degree of Sexism							
	Female Writer		Male Writer		Non Sexist		Quite Sexist		Sexist		Very Sexist	
	Freq.	(%)	Freq.	(%)	Freq.	(%)	Freq.	(%)	Freq.	(%)	Freq.	(%)
<b>S1</b>												
Fw in F	32	80%	8	20%	29	72.5%	9	22.5%	2	5%		
<b>S2</b>												
Mw in MR	2	5%	38	95	8	20%			24	60%	8	20%
<b>S3</b>												
Mw in F	4	10%	36	90%			6	15%	14	35%	20	50%
<b>S4</b>												
Fw in MR	5	12.5%	35	87.5%					15	37.5%	25	62.5%
<b>S5</b>												
Mw in MR	7	17.5%	33	82.5%			10	25%	17	42.5%	13	32.5%
<b>S6</b>												
Fw in F	32	80%	8	20%	24	60%	16	40%				
<b>S7</b>												
Mw in F	36	90%	4	10%	24	60%	12	30%	4	10%		
<b>S8</b>												
Fw in MR	6	15%	34	85%			3	7.5%	13	32.5%	24	60%
<b>S9</b>												
Mw in MR	7	17.5%	33	82.5%			8	20%	12	30%	20	50%
<b>S10</b>												
Fw in F	24	60%	16	40%	24	60%	12	30%	4	10%		
<b>S11</b>												
Fw in MR	13	32.5%	27	67.5%	20	50%	16	40%	4	10%		
<b>S12</b>												
Fw in F	40	100%	0	0%	40	100%			-			
<b>S13</b>												
Mw in MR	0	0%	40	100%					8	20%	32	80%
<b>S14</b>												
Mw in F	37	92.5%	3	7.5%	17	42.5%	23	57.5%				
<b>S15</b>												
Fw in MR	9	22.5%	31	77.5%			4	10%	16	40%	20	50%
<b>S16</b>												
Fw in F	40	100%	0	0%	22	55%	14	35%	4	10%		
<b>S17</b>												
Mw in MR	8	20%	32	80%			7	17.5%	24	60%	9	22.5%
<b>S18</b>												
Fw in MR	8	20%	32	80%			23	57.5%	13	32.5%	4	10%
<b>S19</b>												
Mw in F	23	57.5%	17	42.5%	20	50%	15	37.5%	5	12.5%		
<b>S20</b>												
Mw in F	36	90%	4	10%	24	60%	12	30%	4	10%		

**Table 4.13** Respondents' identification of the writer's sex and the degree of sexism of selected sentences

**Key:**

Freq. - Frequency

S# - Sentence number as appearing in the questionnaire

Fw in F - Female Writer in *Female*

Fw in MR - Female Writer in *Men's Review*

Mw in F - Male Writer in *Female*

Mw in MR - Male Writer in *Men's Review*

The result of the survey is tabulated in Table 4.13 on p.101. Table 4.13 lists the twenty (20) sentences that were identified by the forty (40) respondents as having been written by a female or male writer. The table also shows how the respondents evaluated each sentence in terms of the degree of sexism. This researcher carefully selected every sentence that was presented to the respondents via the questionnaire. The sentences were chosen because every sentence contained some form of sexist element as defined by western linguists and feminists. Reasons for the selection of the sentences were presented in Chapter Three (pp.48-54).

However, Table 4.13 clearly shows that many respondents did not view all the sentences as sexist. More than 50% of the respondents identified **S1,S6,S7,S10,S16** and **S20** as non-sexist. Terms of reference for women that were contained in these sentences included “bitchy” (**S1**), “lady” (**S6**), “girls” (**S7**) and “underhanded cow” (**S10**). **S20** was a sentence that referred to a man as a “dishy hunk”. According to guidelines set out by feminists, these terms should be regarded as sexist as they refer to animal and food terms (Ivy and Backlund:1994). The majority of the respondents however did not share similar views.

The first possible reason for this could be that the respondents are unaware about terms that should be regarded as sexist. However, the ability of the respondents to identify other sentences in the questionnaire as “sexist” (3 on the Richter scale) and “very sexist” (4 on the Richter scale) indicates that the respondents are able to discriminate between the degree of sexism in those sentences. As terms of reference