Cultural Differences in the Representation of Women in Indonesian and Australian Internationally-licensed Women’s Magazines

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School of Social Sciences
(English and Cultural Studies)

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to find out how different cultural settings affect the representation of women in women’s magazines. As a product of culture, women’s magazines are expected to carry the gender ideology of the society of the readers of the magazines, while, as economic phenomena, the magazines have to be able to make a profit through sales to consumers and sponsorship from advertisers. My thesis examines the representation of women in internationally-licensed women’s magazines which are published in both Australia and Indonesia. I chose to analyse three internationally-licensed women’s magazines, Cosmopolitan, Cleo and Marie Claire, that can easily be found in Australia and Indonesia. The samples chosen were the publications of every two months from May 2010 to April 2011. I am aware that the samples cannot represent the whole range of publication, but they are expected to represent a brief look of Australian and Indonesian women. I analyse the representation of women in these magazines to understand how the two cultural settings, of Australia and Indonesia, affect the representation of women. Since the magazines are originally ‘Western’ magazines, I am particularly interested to see in what ways the magazines’ Western culture and gender ideology are adapted to the very different cultural setting of Indonesia.

In my analysis, I focus on five major themes found in both editions. They are: relationships, sexuality, beauty, work and home, and travel for leisure. By looking at the images and narratives in the magazines, I also investigate the issue of ‘race’/ethnicity and class related to women in the magazines. My examination of the different cultural settings of Australia and Indonesia within the frame of global cultural flows, shows that although the cultural settings of Australia and Indonesia share few similarities, the women in the two different editions are represented similarly, as free, independent, self-sufficient and empowered individuals who are more bound to their workplaces than to the domestic sphere. The standardised representation of women in these magazines is apparently based on a Western ideal of women rather than the Indonesian ideal. Western women who have a Western lifestyle are presented by the magazines as desirable. I argue that the similar representation of women in the two different settings is due to the magazines’ identification of common target readers: urban, middle-class women who tend to be homogenously characterised as educated, independent, and affluent women. Indonesian middle-class women are characterised as Western-oriented.

The domination of Western culture in the magazines carries the impression of a one-way cultural flow from the West to Indonesia. The way the magazines represent women using the Western standard and discounting the Indonesian social, cultural and religious environment, can be read as cultural imperialism. From an Indonesian perspective, the Western lifestyle that is promoted by the magazines may challenge Indonesian traditional norms and values. It is up to the readers to conform the Western lifestyle, or to resist it. Furthermore, I argue that the tendency of the magazines to follow the Western formula in representing women, and the assumption that the target readers are similar, make the contextualisation of the content to serve local Indonesian needs unsuccessful. However, I find a few examples of appropriated and contextualised content that makes the magazines feel ‘glocal’—global and local at the same time like the issue of inter-religious marriage in Indonesia edition. In a whole, internationally-licensed women’s magazines offer a fantasy and an escape to readers, particularly Indonesian readers. Yet, for some readers, the imaged representations are inspiring.
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Chapter 1 Introduction

After the demise of Suharto’s New Order regime (1966–98) in Indonesia, print media flourished. This burgeoning occurred as a result of the deregulation of the media and the dismantling of the Ministry of Information that formerly had controlled the media in Indonesia. Many new print media began to be published, including internationally-licensed women’s magazines. Following *Cosmopolitan*, which had been published from 1997, other internationally-licensed women’s magazines such as *Cleo, Marie Claire, Elle* and *Vogue* began publication in Indonesia. For the publishers, expanding the market to other countries is a strategy to increase the number of readers. Driver and Gillespie say that the British magazine publishers in the 1980s were encouraged to expand their business to international markets because ‘overseas editions could be launched without the preliminary investment in design and development.’ They say that like other commodities, developing and establishing a new product of publication for the domestic market is more costly and risky than publishing an already well-known product for the international market. According to Driver and Gillespie, there are four broad forms taken by magazines that ‘go international’. The first is the product sold to the international market that is the same as the domestic product. The second is the magazine that is modified to suit the interests of the local market. The third is publishing a local edition with the local language. The fourth is the acquisition of international assets.

For the publishers of internationally-licensed magazines, Indonesia is a new market for their product. The Indonesian editions of these internationally-licensed women’s magazines usually take the third form, that is, they are local editions of these

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1The Indonesian edition of US *Cosmopolitan* was published under the name of *Kosmopolitan* in 1997. See David T. Hill and Krishna Sen, *The Internet in Indonesia’s New Democracy* (Oxon and New York: Routledge, 2005), 152.

women’s magazines in Indonesian. I interviewed Widarti Gunawan, a former editor of *Cleo Indonesia*. She said that, in the beginning, content from the original magazine comprised 60–70 per cent of total content, while the local content was 30–40 per cent. Gradually, the proportion of local content was increased to 60 per cent, with 40 per cent original content. The original content is localised by adapting the original content to suit local interests or by translating it into the local language (Indonesian).

These internationally-licensed magazines add to the already established Indonesian women’s magazines like *Femina* and *Kartini* as well as to the new trend in the publication of Islamic women’s magazines such as *Paras*, *Aulia*, *Muslimah*, and *Ummi*, which target Indonesian Muslim women. The publication of internationally-licensed magazines in Indonesia is commonly characterised by the use of international celebrities as cover models, discussions of sexuality, and the use of many English words and phrases in their articles. As they feature different characteristics, these magazines rely on local women’s magazines to position themselves as modern, cosmopolitan and sophisticated. For example, compared to local women’s magazines such as *Femina* and *Kartini*, these internationally-licensed women’s magazines are more liberal in exposing issues related to sexuality. Since sex education is rarely offered in Indonesian schools, people—especially young Indonesians—turn to sources like these magazines to learn about sexuality. Therefore the open discussion of sexuality in these magazines is unique in the Indonesian context.

Based on Appadurai’s concept of mediascape, these internationally-licensed women’s magazines can be said to have opened Indonesia to wider global cultural flows. As print media which are published globally, these women’s magazines construct

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3 Interview with Widarti Gunawan, former *Cleo Indonesia* editor-in-chief and *Femina* Group editor-in-chief, 19 January 2012.
‘imagined worlds’ through their images and narratives. As suggested by Appadurai, the ‘imagined worlds’ constructed by these women’s magazines are only strips of reality represented by the image and the narratives; therefore they cannot be regarded as reality themselves. In the case of women’s magazines, the ‘imagined worlds’ include the imagined lives of the readers’ own lives and those of other women who live in different places. These worlds are often seen as desirable worlds. Hall says that the media construct reality by actively selecting, presenting, structuring and shaping reality. Women’s magazines in general, just like any other media, are where the ‘real’ is constructed. By representing the ‘imagined worlds’ as ‘real’ and ‘natural’, they shape and construct ‘reality’. The repetitive construction of ‘reality’ by the media, in this case the magazines, is regarded by readers as reality itself.

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Women’s magazines as cultural products

The active role of women’s magazines in constructing ‘reality’ and disseminating it has been discussed in many studies. As cultural products, women’s magazines are texts which represent ideologies of gender, class and race differences. On ‘ideology’ in the women’s magazines, I follow the discussion of Ballaster et al. Ballaster et al. use the ideas of the Frankfurt School as their basis to understand ideology as ‘a set of beliefs about and representations of social reality which serve the interests of a ruling class, imposed more or less intentionally on subordinate groups in order to avert dissent or revolt’. However, Ballaster et al. argue that ‘ideology’ is not homogenously explicable from class interests; ideology can also be constructed by other social divisions such as gender or race. Ballaster et al., then, take Althusser’s essay ‘Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses’ to position ideology as discourses or texts. They focus on Althusser’s idea that ideology is produced and manifested through human subjects. As human

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9 Ballaster et al., *Women’s Worlds*, 21.
10 Louis Althusser, “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses,” in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other*
subjects, Ballastar et al. argue, individuals are ‘hailed’ by ideology:

Our subjectivity is given content—proletarian, female, bourgeois, black—by virtue of being positioned within a social and political formation that seems to ‘recognise’ us as such through ideological state apparatuses such as the family, education, the church, and the mass media. Behind them stand the coercive or ‘repressive’ state apparatuses of police, army, legal system, and state punishment. ‘Reality’, then, is primarily shaped by concept and categories of language [original Italic].

Through discourses or texts employed by women’s magazines, Ballaster et al. argue, people can understand the constructed reality in capitalist or patriarchal society including male dominance or women’s oppression.

One of the central themes of women’s magazines is femininity. Ferguson, in her study of women’s magazines published from 1949 to 1980, found that women’s magazines provided women with instructions and directions to acquire a certain kind of femininity and female world view. She pointed out that women’s magazines repeatedly reproduced themes of women’s beautification, childrearing and housework. Similarly, Winship stated that magazines were about women’s culture and femininity.

By femininity she means ‘motherhood and family life, beauty and fashion, love and romance, cooking and knitting—and therefore romantic novels, cookery books and women’s magazines’. The kind of femininity represented by women’s magazines was considered a misrepresentation of women’s real lives by feminists. Women were often portrayed as passive, male-dominated creatures who are responsible for their family’s happiness through their domestic roles such as cooking, cleaning and being a mother. In


Ballaster et al., Women’s Worlds, 23.


Marjorie Ferguson, Forever Feminine, 185.

Winship, Inside Women’s Magazines, 5.

Ibid, 6


5
New Order Indonesia, local women’s magazines contained a state-imposed ideology of femininity which positioned women as wives and mothers. By representing women and their interest only in terms of their domestic work and sexual attractiveness, Tuchman argued that women’s magazines practise the ‘symbolic annihilation of women’ where women are marginalised and trivialised.

Women’s magazines are often seen as offering a fantasy and escape for the readers. Ballaster et al. say the representation of women in women’s magazines is considered a fantasy and escape used by the readers to run away from the domestic world and its pressures. Similarly, Winship talks about the magazines as an opportunity to escape from women’s limited social spaces:

We escape with them in nervous moments at the doctor’s or during tedious commuting hours. We read them as relaxation at the end of a long day when children have at last been put to bed, or to brighten up the odd coffee break and lunch hour when life is getting a bit tough, or simply dreary.

In addition, Hermes found that for women readers, women’s magazines provide practical information and a temporary fantasy of an ideal self.

Academics distinguish women’s magazines from men’s magazines, which generally cover special interests like photography and film, sports and motor cars, health or computing. However, men’s lifestyle magazines have started to be interested in masculinity and now offer advice about health and well-being, men’s lives and sexual relationships, and about changes at home and work. Women’s magazines are also different from teenage girls’ magazines which concentrate on the themes of boys, female friendship, and popular culture such as music, favourite films and television.

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18 Tuchman, “Introduction: The Symbolic Annihilation of Women by the Mass Media.”
The idea of femininity in these magazines has not always been the same. Feminist criticism of the misinterpretation of women has influenced the representation of women in the women’s magazines. Winship’s study of British women’s magazines in the 1980s found that the women’s magazines brought up the idea of ‘new woman’.25 She said that the idea of the new woman was the result of changes in women’s position in Britain, especially in their financial independence. The new woman was free and independent, an image which borrowed the feminist’s idea of freedom and independence. To represent this idea, Winship said that the women’s magazines featured new topics such as careers, health issues and politics in addition to their traditional coverage of fashion and beauty. However, she argued that in solving the problems related to gender inequality, the approach offered by women’s magazines was often too pragmatic. Women were usually guided to solve problems individually instead of finding the root of the problems in society.

The shift from the feminist idea of collective struggle to individual struggle in dealing with gender inequality is also addressed by McRobbie.26 She says that popular culture and the media use the idea of individual ‘empowerment’ and ‘choice’ to promote values of feminism such as sexual freedom, pay equality and independence. The discourse of self-help and personal responsibility can be seen in the products of popular culture, including women’s magazines. In popular culture, young women are represented as having the capability and opportunity to get everything they want in the way they want it. McRobbie calls it ‘female individualisation’.27 She draws the concept from Beck and Beck-Gernsheim’s work on ‘individualization and women’.28 Beck and
Beck-Gernscheim point out that education and work are fields that influence women’s individualisation. With regard to education, they say that wider access to education provides women with choices for their lives. They explain that the education system which emphasises individual performance teaches women (and men) to ‘make individual judgements and to win through against others’. Through education, women learn to recognise their capacities and restrictions so they can be capable of making their own choices and decisions, asserting their own interests and helping themselves.

On women and work, Beck and Beck-Gernscheim say that when women work, they participate in the external world as an individual person. In the public world detached from their family, women must survive and count on their own judgement when they meet new people and are involved in new experiences. Employment enables women to have more money of their own. As women become more financially independent, they get more ‘self-confirmation, self-confidence, and recognition by others’ that gives them more power and ability to assert themselves.

Beck and Beck-Gernscheim say that the fixed hours of work in the public sphere (compared to the open working hours of domestic work), which draw a clear line between work and private life, provide women with the concept of time of their own. The individualisation experienced by women results in women leaving their ascribed traditional roles and acquiring their own roles.

Beck and Beck-Gernscheim also address the influence of individualisation on sexuality and relationships. They argue that individualisation makes sexuality an ‘individual responsibility’, including the choice to use contraception. They say this responsibility places girls in a difficult situation because they must find their own rules and behaviour with regard to sexuality, without supervision and restrictions from their

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30 Ibid.
31 Ibid.
32 Ibid.
33 Ibid. 70.
parents. The changes in the way individuals deal with sexuality also affect the way they establish their relationships. According to Beck and Beck-Gernscheid, as a result of individualisation, people do not see marriage as their life goal any more. Instead, they focus on their own desires, needs, ideas and plans with the aim of reaching personal happiness.

However, McRobbie argues that Beck’s and Beck-Gernscheid’s idea of individualisation gives the impression that every woman has access to freedom and choice. She says that the words ‘empowerment’ and ‘choice’ replace feminism in the discourse of individualisation. This replacement implies that feminism is out of date because the goal of feminism, that is, to achieve equality, has been achieved. McRobbie also argues that in exercising female individualisation, ‘there is an evasion…of the continuing prejudice and discrimination experienced by black and Asian women’.

On Asian women and individualisation, Kim discusses Korean, Japanese and Chinese women, and says that higher education and assumed empowerment bring the promise of individual autonomy and independence for middle-class women in Asia. These women expect to be able to plan their own life and pursue their personal goals. Unfortunately, according to Kim, the limited opportunities for women in the labour market as a result of gender inequalities prevent these educated and skilled women from exercising their free choice to ‘achieve full economic individualisation’. As these women cannot act on their own in real life, they seek their individualisation by consuming the media. Kim says that media consumption is ‘a key cultural mechanism in creating the emergence of individualised identities, both imagined and enacted’.

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Women’s magazines as economic phenomena

As economic phenomena, women’s magazines have to be able to make a profit and sell the products in their advertisements. To be able to make a profit and sell the products promoted, women’s magazines have to keep up with current trends as well as become trendsetters. While basically following the classic formula to assist women in acquiring their ideal femininity in the fashion and beauty sections, recently women’s magazines have put forward issues related to individualisation such as personal independence and sexual freedom. Self-help and sex-related tips and articles have become common features to attract readers in most women’s magazines. Another topic that is popular in women’s magazines is ‘celebrity culture’. The celebrity represented in the magazines is usually a woman whose achievements are outstanding and who is ideal physically (that is, beautiful).

The lifestyle promoted by the images and narratives in the magazines is based on the presumed ideal lifestyles of the target readers of the women’s magazines. In marketing the magazines, the magazines have to decide their target market. One way to classify the consumers is by their lifestyle. By classifying the consumers based on their lifestyles, the producers can see the consumers’ cultural distinction, their values, their opinions, their beliefs and their motivations. Gough-Yates, in her discussion of the British publishing industry, says that women’s magazines during the 1980s and 1990s targeted young, middle class and mainly White women. These women were considered ‘relatively affluent, upwardly mobile women’ who could help the development of the magazines. Gough-Yates explains that this particular group of women was the group who enjoyed the opportunity to improve their education, which

40 Ibid, 38.
enabled them to access a higher level of employment. With their improved financial autonomy, they were self-sufficient and independent. This group, which was a minority of women, became the symbol of femininity during the 1980s and 1990s, as they were considered to have ‘greater cultural and symbolic power’.41 This group also attracted advertisers to put their products in the magazines. From the mid-1980s onwards, UK women’s magazines have used lifestyle segmentation in magazine marketing and advertising. Lifestyle segmentation is based on qualitative research on the market by using interviews and surveys to divide people into typological consumer groups.42 One example of lifestyle segmentation is the classification by ACORN in Britain. ACORN divides UK households into five large categories: wealthy achievers, urban prosperity, comfortably off, moderate means and hard pressed.43 The lifestyle of each category is surveyed to get the general idea about the lifestyle. For example, the consumers in the urban prosperity category are described as having professional and managerial roles; going out often to restaurants and bars; enjoying the cinema, theatre and the arts; reading the news online; reading magazines about film, music, or computers; and spending time travelling on holidays. Each category is broken down into groups. For example, urban prosperity is broken down into prosperous professional, educated urbanites, and aspiring singles. This group, then, is divided into different types. Educated urbanites, for example, are divided into five types: affluent urban professionals who live in flats, prosperous young professionals who live in flats, young educated workers who live in flats, multi-ethnic young who live in converted flats, and suburban privately-renting professionals.

Women’s magazines clearly target a certain group of women as their specific readers. Gough-Yates in her discussion about British women’s magazines mentions that

42 Ibid., 60–64.
Cosmopolitan and Marie Claire in the UK use lifestyle segmentation in their marketing and advertising. The target readers’ social class is constructed through the images and narratives offered by the magazines. From the lifestyles portrayed in the magazines, those women’s magazines focus on the culture of White, middle-class, heterosexual women.\textsuperscript{44} The lifestyle portrayed in Australian and Indonesian editions of Cosmopolitan, Cleo and Marie Claire also shows that they target middle-class heterosexual women.

It is important to mention that the term ‘White’ cannot be easily defined. Frankenberg says that the idea of ‘White’ is associated with West European colonial exploration.\textsuperscript{45} Frankenberg argues that in order to understand ‘Other’ societies and cultures, the West Europeans had to construct their own ‘self’.\textsuperscript{46} She mentions that within this framework, the West Europeans positioned themselves as ‘White Western’ self. As it was the West European who set the standard, ‘White Western’ self became the stable standard in opposition to ‘other’ non-White. Frankenberg points out that in this position, the idea of ‘White’ becomes homogenised, universalised and sometimes falsely generalised. Dyer, in his book White, argues that whiteness is a social construction and is not homogenous.\textsuperscript{47} In his discussion of whiteness, he shows the complexities of White identity, whether British, Irish or Jewish. That ‘race’ is indeed a social construction whose classification is unstable is shown in Ignatiev’s How the Irish Became White.\textsuperscript{48} Ignatiev analyses the transformation of the Irish from an oppressed group in their homeland and the poorest immigrants in America to defined Americans. When they were oppressed and poor, the Irish were referred to as the ‘White Negro’ but when they are successful they are classified as only ‘White’. From Ignatiev’s analysis we can see that the idea of whiteness is not only attached to ‘race’ but also to class.

\textsuperscript{44} See Ballaster et al., Women’s Worlds; Friedan, The Feminine Mystique; Winship, Inside Women’s Magazines.


\textsuperscript{46} Frankenberg, White Women, Race Matters, 16.


The term ‘White’ used by scholars such as Ballaster, et al., Winship, and Friedan in discussing the target readers of the women’s magazines is a generalised and universalised idea of whiteness which does not refer to any specific subcategory of whiteness. Those scholars used the term ‘White’ in opposition to the term ‘Black’ which also has complicated definitions. In my understanding, when a magazine that is published in the UK states that it targets ‘White’ women readers, it means that the targets are English, Irish or Welsh women as opposed to ‘Black’ African, Asian or Caribbean women.

Shifting back to the magazines, the representation of class is shown by, for example, advertisements for expensive and exclusive branded products associated with the lifestyle of the affluent class. Most women represented in the magazines live in urban areas, not in rural areas. This can be seen from the jobs they have and their daily activities. Furthermore, in the Indonesia context, women are usually the ones who are responsible for domestic work, since in many regions men are traditionally forbidden to get involved in such work. Working women’s burdens are double, as they have to be responsible both for their public work (for money) and their domestic work. For those who are financially strong, the domestic work can be handed over to their domestic workers. In Java especially, it is common for middle-class women to have maids or helpers to cook, clean, shop or mind the children, sometimes on a live-in basis.

In general, the ‘reality’ represented by the women’s magazines is the reality of only a minority of women—especially in Indonesia, where half the population is still ‘rural’. The representation of women in the magazines consequently excludes the experience of women from working and low socio-economic classes, women from other ethnic groups, lesbians, and women from rural areas. However, the magazines also attract readers other than their target readers. The non-target readers are those who view

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49 Mansour Fakih, Analisis Gender Dan Transformasi Sosial, Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2012, pp. 75-76
urban, White, middle-class women as their aspiration.\textsuperscript{50} According to Ballaster et al., publishers and editors recognise that their readers aspire to a higher social class. My interview with Widarti Gunawan, a former editor-in-chief of \textit{Cleo Indonesia}, also showed the editor’s recognition of the ‘aspire-type’ of readers. She said that the readers who came from the middle-upper class probably constituted only 30–40 per cent of the total readers; the rest of the readers (60 per cent) are the ‘wannabes’ who bought the magazines for aspirational reasons.

**Different cultural settings: Australia and Indonesia**

I frame my work in the way global cultural flows affect the representation of women in internationally-licensed women’s magazines. I analyse editions of women’s magazines published in different cultural settings, Australia and Indonesia. Below I provide some basic statistics about population, growth rate, ethnicity/race, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita, marriage, cohabitation, divorce, age at first marriage, fertility rate, religion and overseas travel, sourced from the Australian and Indonesian Bureaus of Statistics. Since these two bureaus present their data differently, the statistics from the two countries cannot be compared directly; they are provided here to give an insight into the two different settings.

Based on data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), the total population of Australia at 31 March 2012 was 22 596 500.\textsuperscript{51} The population grew by 1.5 per cent during the year; natural growth comprised 43 per cent of this increase and migration 57 per cent.\textsuperscript{52} As a result of immigration, Australia consists of people coming from various countries. Historically, the majority of immigrants came from Europe, countries such as the United Kingdom, Ireland, Italy and Greece, but later immigrants

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{50}See Ballaster et al., \textit{Women’s Worlds}; McRobbie, \textit{The Aftermath of Feminism}.


\textsuperscript{52}Ibid.
\end{footnotesize}
come from Asian countries such as China and India. The Australian GDP per capita was $60,642 in 2011. With regard to family, in 2009, 51.8 per cent of Australians were legally married, 10.4 per cent were living in a de facto relationship, 5.3 per cent were divorced and 4.9 per cent widowed. The Australian Bureau of Statistics states that the proportion of de facto relationships for people aged 20–29 has doubled since 1992. This type of relationship also includes those living in a same sex relationship—around 46,300 in 2009–10.

According to the Bureau, the average age at which Australians first marry has increased over the last twenty years. In 2010, the median age at first marriage for men was 29.6 years and 27.9 years for women. The Bureau explains that the pursuit of higher education, the associated delay in labour force participation, the increasing social acceptance of cohabitation before marriage and children moving out of the family home later in adulthood were the likely factors that affect the age at which Australians first marry. Australia’s Total Fertility Rate (TFR) was 1.89 babies per woman in 2010. It had not changed much from 1990 when the total fertility rate was 1.90 babies per woman. However the age at which women have their first babies has changed from 27.5 years in 1990 to 28.9 years by 2010. The data show the trend of later child bearing.

According to the 2011 census, 61.1 per cent Australians were Christian (Catholic, Anglican, Uniting Church, Presbyterian and Reformed, Eastern Orthodox,

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54. GDP is the sum of gross value added by all resident producers in the economy plus any product taxes and minus any subsidies not included in the value of the products. See explanation in http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD
58. Ibid.
Baptist, Lutheran, Pentecostal, other Christian) and 7.2 per cent were non-Christians (Buddhist, Muslim, Hindu, Jews, other non-Christian). People reporting ‘no religion’ increased from 15 per cent of the population in 2001 to 22 per cent in 2011.\textsuperscript{59} A comparatively low rate of marriage and a high rate of divorce are usually associated with a high level of secularisation.\textsuperscript{60}

Because travel and holidays feature in women’s magazines, here I present some relevant data. Based on 2010 figures, in Australia, 82 per cent of overseas trips of less than 12 months were for holidays, while 17 per cent of the trips were for business in the year ended June 2010. In per capita terms this is equivalent to 31 trips overseas for every 100 Australian residents.\textsuperscript{61} The ABS explained that the greater affordability of overseas holidays and accommodation as a result of the strength of the Australian dollar and the increasing competition among airlines, and also the greater marketing and online facilitation of booking and travel information were factors that increased overseas travel.

In Indonesia, based on the data from Central Bureau of Statistics (\textit{Badan Pusat Statistik}/BPS), the population in 2010 was 237,641,326.\textsuperscript{62} The population growth rate of Indonesia in 2010 was 1.18 per cent, decreasing 0.04 from the previous year; Indonesia does not have a significant immigration component in its population increase. Indonesia is considered a multi-ethnic society with more than 1000 ethnic/subethnic groups.\textsuperscript{63} Based on the Indonesia Census of 2000, the five biggest ethnic groups are the Javanese (41.7 per cent), the Sundanese (15.4 per cent), the Malays (3.4 per cent), the Madurese

\textsuperscript{60}Ibid.
(3.3 per cent) and the Batak (3.0 per cent). Data from the World Bank showed that the Indonesian GDP per capita was $3495 in 2011. With regard to marriage and divorce, 59.22 per cent of the total population were married in 2010, 1.82 per cent were divorced, and 5.94 per cent were widowed. The Census of 2010 recorded that the mean age at first marriage (SMAM) in Indonesia was 22.3 years for women. The SMAM increased but not significantly compared to the figure for 1990, which was 21.6. The Indonesian TFR in 2010 was 2.15 babies per woman. In terms of religion, according to the census of 2010, 87.1 per cent were Muslim, 6.9 per cent were Protestant, 2.9 per cent were Catholic, 1.7 per cent were Hindu, 0.7 per cent were Buddhist, 0.05 per cent were Confucian (recently recognised as a religion in Indonesia), 0.1 per cent were ‘other religion’, and 0.06 per cent and 0.3 per cent did not provide any answer or were not asked. With regard to overseas travel, 6,594,231 Indonesians travelled overseas in 2011; this was estimated to comprise 3 per cent of the total population. It should be noted that in the statistics of people travelling overseas, a person travelling twice or more in the time of the recording will be counted as two or more people.

Comparing the Australian and Indonesian statistics, we can see that Indonesia’s population is much larger than Australia’s. Although the population growth rate in Indonesia is lower than that of Australia, because the total population is ten times bigger than Australia’s, the effect of the population growth in Indonesia is more significant than the growth in Australia. On cultural diversity, most of the ancestors of the current population in Australia came from Europe, which means that they brought with them

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64See Suryadinata et al., Indonesia’s Population, 7.
their European cultures. Later, immigrants coming from different countries in Asia brought Asian cultures to Australia. On the other hand, Indonesian culture is diverse because of the cultures of many local ethnic groups that live in Indonesia.

Based on the data on the GDP per capita, the Australian population is definitely more financially secure and comfortable than the Indonesian population. The Australian Bureau of Statistics recorded that in 2005-06, 51.1 per cent of Australian enjoyed a middle income (with mean disposable household income of $53,709); this group is considered as middle class. In Indonesia, the data from the Asian Development Bank show that in 2009, 42.7 per cent of the total Indonesian population is middle-class; it increased 17.7 per cent from 25 per cent in 1999. The same source records that in 2009, 1.1 per cent was upper-middle class with per person expenditure per day of $10-$20, 10.8 per cent was mid-middle with per person expenditure per day of $4-$10, and 30.9 per cent was lower-middle with per person expenditure per day of $2-$4.

Discussing middle-class group in Indonesia, Gerke says that most Indonesian people who are categorised as middle-class based on their education and occupation, actually have a low income. Since they are financially limited, this middle-class group does what Gerke calls ‘lifestyling’. Gerke defines ‘lifestyling’ as ‘the display of a standard of living that one is in fact unable to afford’. Most middle-class Indonesians, according to Gerke, are involved more in ‘virtual’ consumption than in real consumption. Gerke gives an example of Indonesian middle-class living rooms which are decorated with objects associated with overseas cultures to demonstrate ‘international travel’.

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70 The amount of money that households have available for spending and saving after income taxes have been accounted for.
74 Gerke, “Global Lifestyles under Local Conditions”, 152.
75 Ibid., 137.
class membership, then, is not based on income but on lifestyle. On the media industry, Gerke points out that the representatives and employees of this industry position themselves as ‘the arbiters, hawkers and interpreters of lifestyles’ and the trendsetters.\textsuperscript{76}

In terms of marriage, cohabitation and divorce, we can see quite different trends in these two countries. One of the reasons that marriage is more common in Indonesia is that cohabitation is unacceptable in Indonesia. In Indonesia, the only way for a man and a woman to be able to live together and be a family is by marriage. The unavailability of data on same-sex couples in Indonesian statistics is because Indonesians do not acknowledge same-sex couples. On the statistics of age of first marriage, we can see that the age at which Australians first marry is older than Indonesians. The data show that the average Australian gets married when they are over 25 years while the average Indonesian woman gets married when they are below 25 years. On women’s fertility rate, the Australian and Indonesian total fertility rates do not show a significant difference. However, the effect of the fertility rate is more significant in Indonesia because of the large total population. On religion, the majority of Australians are Christians while the majority of Indonesians are Muslims. However, Australia is quite a secular country. Since, according to the law, Indonesian citizens must have a religion, no one reports that they have ‘no religion’ in the census, although interestingly the 2010 census in Indonesia also recorded a number of people who gave no response to the question of religious affiliation. Finally, on overseas travel, because of their higher income, Australians can travel overseas more often than Indonesians. In general, Australia and Indonesia share few similarities in their cultures, demographic characteristics and economic well-being.

\textbf{Research method and theoretical framework}

There are three main points that can be drawn from the discussion above. First, the

\textsuperscript{76} Gerke, “Global Lifestyles under Local Conditions”, 146.
magazines as a product of culture carry the ideology which lives in the society. One example of the ideology in the women’s magazines is the femininity ideology where a woman is defined by her role as a wife, a mother and as the ideal of beauty. However, the focus of the magazines on the representation of White, urban, middle-class women means the magazines offer fantasy and escape. Especially in the Indonesian context, where the socio-economic gap between the lower class and the middle class is wide, these ‘desirable lives’ are not representative of ordinary women’s lives. Second, magazines as economic phenomena produce profit through sales to readers and by selling advertisements to advertisers. The target readers of the women’s magazines are urban, middle-class women and other women who aspire to the lifestyle of urban, middle-class women. To be able to attract new consumers to buy magazines, the publishers need to develop new products or open up new markets. In the case of internationally-licensed women’s magazines, the publishers chose to embrace more readers by opening new markets in foreign countries. In the Indonesian context, the freedom the Indonesian media enjoy in the post-New Order era facilitates the publication of more internationally-licensed magazines, including women’s magazines. The magazines which are originally published in other countries are adapted into local editions by modifying the content to fit local needs and adding local content. Third, the difference between the two settings, Indonesia and Australia, should influence the content of the magazines. The content of the magazines may be contextualised to serve particular local needs.

In my thesis, I compared internationally-licensed women’s magazines published in Australia and Indonesia. Australia and Indonesia are located in the same region, the Asia-Pacific, and are next-door neighbours. However, Australia and Indonesia are economically and culturally very different. Economically, Australia is categorized as a developed country while Indonesia is categorized as a developing country. The general
standard of living is much higher in Australia, and the size of the population is less than 1/10th that of Indonesia. Due to sustained economic growth over decades, Indonesia is now classified as a lower middle income country. The middle class is expanding rapidly, and is expected to reach 135 million people by 2020.77 Growing inequality is a major issue. Culturally, Australia is primarily secular and ‘Western’, although recent Asian immigrants have brought Asian cultures to Australia. Indonesia is a Muslim-majority country made up of the cultures of local, mainly Austronesian, ethnic groups. The nearness in location yet differences in economy and culture between Australia and Indonesia made me interested to see how women are represented by the internationally licensed women’s magazines in these two countries.

_Cosmopolitan, Cleo_ and _Marie Claire_ are the women’s magazines used in my thesis. These magazines are published monthly. I particularly chose those three magazines because these magazines are published as local editions in both Australia and Indonesia so they can be compared. On the circulation and readership, data are only available on the circulation and readership of Australian editions of the magazines and the circulation and readership of the Indonesian edition of _Cleo_. In the first half of 2010 (January 2010-June 2010), the circulation of Australian edition of _Cosmopolitan_ was 151,213; the circulation of the Australian edition of _Cleo_ was 120,051, and the circulation of the Australian edition of _Marie Claire_ was 110,873.78 The circulation of the Indonesian edition of _Cleo_ was 75,000.79 The readership of the Australian edition of _Cosmopolitan_ was 594,000 (3.3% of the population) in 2009 and 557,000 (3.1%) in 2010; the readership of the Australian edition of _Cleo_ was 381,000 (2.1%) in 2009 and 416,000 (2.3%) in 2010; and the readership of the Australian edition of _Marie Claire_

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78 Audit Bureau of Circulations Audit Bureau of Circulations, _Australian Magazines Circulation_ (Mumbai, 2010).
was 473,000 (2.7%) in 2009 and 521,000 (2.9%) in 2010. The readership of the Indonesian edition of Cleo was 85,000 (approximately 0.03% of the population) in 2010. In Australia, the circulation and readership of Cosmopolitan, Cleo and Marie Claire were surpassed by two other women’s magazines: Women’s Weekly, with a readership of 2,184,000 (12.35%) in 2009 and 2,228,000 (12.3%) in 2010, and Women’s Day with a readership of 2,056,000 (11.6%) in 2009 and 1,999,000 (10.9%) in 2010. However, Women’s Weekly and Women’s Day do not have Indonesian local editions. With regard to the circulation and readership figures, those for Indonesia are not as indicative of actual readership as those for Australia. The figures for Indonesian can be bigger than the ones recorded because magazines in Indonesia are often re-sold in traditional markets, and handed around informally among families and neighbours. In general, the circulation and readership of those magazines were not high compared to the size of the population – especially the magazines published in Indonesia. But I consider those magazines adequate to demonstrate the way women in both countries are represented in the magazines because the magazines are magazines featuring women’s interests that are specifically targeted at women.

Cosmopolitan was originally published in the United States. First published in 1886 as a family magazine, it is now a top rank, international women’s magazine with 58 international editions published in over 100 countries. The original publisher of this magazine is Hearst magazines and in Australia, this magazine is published by ACP magazines. The magazine focuses on women’s lifestyle—with staples such as fashion, beauty, body and relationships. The core target readership of the magazine is 18 to 34-year-old women. According to Roy Morgan Research, from October 2009 to September 2010

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82 Roy Morgan Ltd, Roy Morgan Readership Results for the Year Ending December 2010.
83 http://www.fashionmodeldirectory.com/magazines/cosmopolitan-Indonesia accessed on 5 November 2010
2010, the readership of the magazine was 81.2 per cent women and the largest age group of readers were 18 to 24-year-old women (39.8 per cent). Most readers are professionals/managers and white collar workers. Unfortunately, there are no data on the Indonesian readership.

*Cleo* originated in Australia. It is published by ACP magazines. The core target readership is 18 to 30-year-old women. The readership is 83.3 per cent women, and the largest age group is women between the ages of 18 and 24. The majority of the readership comes from white collar and professional/manager workers. *Cleo Indonesia* was launched in 2007 under the Femina Group. From the beginning, its main focus has been on cool, liberated, energetic and optimistic young women between the ages of 25 and 29 years. It claims to provide ‘guidance for women who are concerned about their fashion, beauty, lifestyle, career, and relationships’. The same source mentions that the expected readers are ‘highly aspiring, style and beauty conscious, outspoken, confident and open minded, and affluent’.

*Marie Claire* is an international magazine with 35 international editions. It covers fashion (45 per cent), beauty (19 per cent), entertainment and culture (13 per cent), work and life issues (11 per cent), global affairs/domestic news (6 per cent), and food/nutrition/health (6 per cent). The magazine claims that the target readers are ‘those who love style and adventure’. The median age of the readers is 34.5 years; 71 per cent of them come from a professional/managerial background. There is no information about the exact readership in each country; Australia and Indonesia.

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87 Ibid.
88 Ibid.
90 Ibid.
91 Ibid.
Six issues of Indonesian versions of *Cosmopolitan*, *Cleo* and *Marie Claire*; and six issues of Australian versions of *Cosmopolitan*, *Cleo* and *Marie Claire* were selected. The samples were taken every two months in both countries from May 2010 to April 2011. Since the aim of my study was not to find representations of Australian and Indonesian women at a particular time, the sample dates chosen were based on the availability of the magazines at the time of the study. In short, the publication period of the women’s magazines chosen as the samples for my study was not particularly significant historically – i.e. there were no historically important events then, and the date range was not chosen to show any particular changes. The samples present a glimpse of Australian and Indonesian women at an uneventful time.

To help me analyse the magazines, I used qualitative content analysis. According to Krippendorf, originally content analysis was a quantitative method developed to find out ‘the truth about newspapers’. The method used in this quantitative content analysis was the measurement of the column inches that newspapers used to cover a particular subject. Like other types of quantitative methods, content analysis converted the data into frequencies and drew a general pattern of news coverage. As content analysis has evolved, it now includes qualitative procedures which can be used to analyse written text, spoken text and visual images in which the media represent people, events, and situations.

I chose to use qualitative content analysis because, as suggested by Leeuwen and Jewitt, qualitative content analysis is the most basic way to study the media’s meaning. It also allows a general statement to be drawn about aspects of representation in a way that the public can understand. According to Krippendorf, qualitative content analysis involves ‘a systematic reading of a body of texts, images

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and symbolic matter’. It requires a close reading of relatively small amounts of textual matters which are interpreted and re-articulated into ‘new (analytical, deconstructive, emancipator, or critical) narratives’.  

In doing my analysis, as suggested by Altheide, I studied women’s magazines as documents, ‘to understand culture or the process and the array of objects, symbols and meanings that make up social reality shared by members of a society’. Altheide says that documents can help to ‘place symbolic meaning in context’ and ‘track the process of its creation and influence on social definitions’. Using qualitative content analysis, an in-depth interpretation of the image and the theme is done by looking at ‘various modes of information exchange, format, rhythm and style’.

To begin the analysis, I determined a unit of analysis. The units of analysis were the title of the articles printed on the front cover, the letter from the editor, letters from the readers, features, and beauty advertisements. These units were chosen because they supply information about issues thought to be the most popular and important for the readers at the time of publication. The units chosen for analysis were thoroughly and critically read, many times. I prepared a spreadsheet where I made notes about the keywords of each article in the unit of analysis while reading the magazines. Based on the spreadsheet, I looked out for the most frequent keywords shown in my units of analysis and grouped them under several possible themes. From the groupings, I found five dominant themes: relationships, sexuality, beauty and body image, work and home, and travel for leisure. Using the themes as guidelines, I focused my analysis on women’s roles, class and ‘race’/ethnicity, and the local contexts. I was aware that my method in deciding themes had some limitations, in that I may have overlooked some important topic covered by the magazines over a period of time, or I may have

\[^{99}\text{Krippendorf, } \textit{Content Analysis}, 3.\]
\[^{98}\text{Ibid., } 17\]
\[^{97}\text{David L. Altheide, } \textit{Qualitative Media Analysis} \text{(Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications., 1996), 2.}\]
\[^{96}\text{Altheide, } \textit{Qualitative Media Analysis}, 12.\]
\[^{95}\text{Ibid., } 16.\]
subjectively highlighted or overgeneralised some specific themes into broader themes. To assist me analyse the themes found in the women’s magazines, I read, broadly and critically, many theoretical approaches. Some of the theories I used were from feminism, post-colonial studies, anthropology, media studies, cultural studies and literary studies.

As my research deals mostly with power asymmetry, inequalities between women and men, and inequalities between ‘the West’ and Indonesia, I engage with feminist theory and post-colonial theories. For example, I use the works of feminists like Ferguson, Winship, and Ballaster, Beetham, Frazer, and Hebron to talk about women’s magazines. In my discussion about relationships (Chapter 2) and sexuality (Chapter 3), I use Evans’ feminist criticism on the separation of love, marriage and sexuality. I use Suryakusuma’s feminist standpoint to talk about women in Indonesia. In analysing ‘the imagined West’ and ‘the imagined East’ in my chapter on sexuality (Chapter 3), I use Said’s post-colonial theory of Orientalism. In Chapter 4 on beauty, I use Williamson’s and Ahmed’s post-colonial feminist theories. I use McRobbie’s post-feminist theory in discussing women and individualisation in Chapter 5. In the discussion on women’s work and home, I also use feminist criticisms provided by Probert on the ideology of domesticity and Campo on ‘having it all’. In my discussion about travel for leisure in Chapter 6, I use Bordo’s feminist discussion on disciplining the body.

Arguments

I argue that, despite the obvious and large differences between Australia and Indonesia, the different cultural settings contribute very little to differentiate the content of the Australian and Indonesian editions, because they have similar target readers. Both Australian and Indonesian women’s magazines target urban, middle-class women. In the case of Australia, the representation also emphasises White women. In general,
women’s magazines both in Australia and Indonesia represent the imagined world of a specific group of women. These women are represented as empowered, independent, self-sufficient, and free individuals. This group is a minority—particularly in Indonesia, where the GDP per capita is low—but their life is portrayed as desirable and even ideal. The ideal represents a potential to which the readers can aspire. By focusing on this group, the magazines automatically exclude women from different classes and ethnicity/races. I also argue that, in the Indonesian case, the lifestyle offered by these magazines is a Western lifestyle. It emphasises female individualisation which is almost Utopian for Indonesian women, who are still bound to social, cultural and religious controls.

According to Harding, ‘Western lifestyle’ is a term to talk about a lifestyle that is thought by Indonesians to originate in ‘the West’ (*Barat*).<sup>100</sup> Like the idea of ‘whiteness’ discussed earlier in the chapter, the term ‘the West’ is a homogenising term. Said in his work *Orientalism* criticised the inaccurate representations of ‘the East’ by ‘the West’.<sup>101</sup> Said argues that ‘the East’ is actually an imagined construction which is produced by imperialist societies. The imperialists, who came from Western European cultures, established ‘the West (Europe)’ as the cultural norm. As a result, ‘the East/Orient’ has been represented as irrational, inferior and barbaric as opposed to the rational, superior and civilised ‘West’. The constructed East represents Asia in general and the Middle East in particular, while the constructed West represents Western Europe. The production of an imagined East is not only done by Westerners: Easterners – in this case Indonesians – are also involved in producing and circulating their own national imaginaries. Indonesians create their imagined national cultures which generalize and homogenize Indonesia’s diverse cultures and traditions. These generalities are obviously not sufficient to account for the wide range of Indonesians, but they are necessary in

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<sup>100</sup> Hardin, “The Influence of the ‘Decadent West’”
order to discuss social structures and cultural trends.

Harding says that the term ‘West’, as well as its opposite, ‘the East’, create two imaginary culture regions, simplifying ‘vast, heterogeneous, complex and diverse regions’ into false unities. Harding argues that what is perceived by Indonesians as a ‘Western lifestyle’ is not the West’s actual lifestyle, even insofar as there is anything that could be glossed as a single Western lifestyle. Based on Harding’s discussion about the way Western media are consumed by Indonesian youth, it seems that Indonesians’ understanding of ‘Western lifestyle’ is mostly formed by American movies and television programs which are very popular in Indonesia. According to Budianta, the presence of America in Indonesia can be seen not only in movies and television programs, but also in franchised retail centres such as Tops, Sears, Seven-Eleven, Disney’s shops, Woolworth; fast food industries such as McDonald’s, Kentucky Fried Chicken, Pizza Hut, Sizzler, T.G.I. Fridays; and American theme-food chains, the Hard Rock Café and Planet Hollywood.¹⁰² Budianta argues that the appeal of these popular culture products and places are their being American. The often unrealistic and false representation of ‘Western lifestyle’, especially shown in the movies and television programs, is considered by Indonesians as the representation of an actual single Western lifestyle.

I argue that the Indonesian editions of the magazines do not succeed in contextualising and appropriating the content of the ‘Western’ magazines for specifically Indonesian consumption. Australia and Indonesia share few, if any, cultural similarities. As suggested by Iwabuchi, formatting a program to fit local interests is easier when two countries share similar cultures.¹⁰³ He gives the example of the

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adaptation of a Japanese TV program. The manager of the TV station who he interviewed said that when Western buyers bought a Japanese TV program, they often faced difficulties in adapting the program because of cultural differences. On the other hand, the same manager said that producers from countries with similar cultural backgrounds, like Korea and Taiwan, do not have the same problems because they can easily understand the ‘original’ intention of the program.\textsuperscript{104}

Although I am uncomfortable with the term ‘cultural imperialism’, the Western lifestyle which can be seen clearly in the Indonesian editions of \textit{Cosmopolitan}, \textit{Cleo} and \textit{Marie Claire}, can be read as cultural imperialism. The idea of cultural imperialism is not what I intend to explore in my thesis, for I was looking for the opposite: the ways the internationally-licensed magazines localized their content in Indonesia. However, the fact that I found many more similarities than differences in the representation of women in Australian and Indonesian editions of \textit{Cosmopolitan}, \textit{Cleo} and \textit{Marie Claire}, despite Australia’s and Indonesia’s different cultures, raises the question of cultural imperialism through the media.\textsuperscript{105}

The idea of cultural influence from the West is not new for Indonesians. The Dutch colonisation of Indonesia from the seventeenth through to the mid-twentieth century introduced varieties of Western culture to Indonesia like food, fashion, religion, the education system and law. In contemporary Indonesia, the internationally-licensed women’s magazines which are originally published in the United States, Europe and Australia are often assumed to promote a Western lifestyle. The ‘Western lifestyle’ has contradictory meanings for Indonesians. ‘Western lifestyle’ is viewed as modern, as progress from the traditional way of life, but it is also associated with extreme individualism and sexual freedom, which are seen to threaten Indonesian moral and

\textsuperscript{104}Iwabuchi, “Feeling Glocal”, 32.
\textsuperscript{105}It should be noted that the scope of my thesis does not extend to analysing the way the magazines influence Indonesian society.
religious values. The most feared Western influence which is famous in Indonesia is *pergaulan bebas* (free socialising). *Pergaulan bebas* is a term used to describe moral panic about young Indonesians’ negative behaviours and social interactions which are considered ‘outside of the norms of society’ or ‘free of rules’. Examples of *pergaulan bebas* are premarital sex, the use of illegal drugs, alcohol consumption and pornography consumption. The traditionalists and religious preservationists claim that this Western negative influence destroys the morals of Indonesian people, especially the youth. They tell the young generation to protect themselves with religious education and to avoid ‘Western’ sexual practices.

During the New Order era, the government, through the Ministry of Information, warned the Indonesian mass media not to publish or broadcast any materials which had a negative impact on the national culture and local values. The materials which brought a negative impact were often associated with Western culture. Budianta’s discussion of the *Kompas Year of Arts and Culture* campaign in 1998 shows how Western culture is seen as a threat to the nation. The campaign analysed by Budianta is an advertisement showing two shadow images, an image of Mickey Mouse’s ears and an image of a *wayang* figure, with a text running across the picture: ‘He [Michael Jackson] is rich in style. We [*wayang* shadow puppet] are rich in culture.’ By interpreting the image of Mickey Mouse’s ears as a ‘foreign’ popular culture icon and

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109 For a further discussion on how Indonesian New Order government control the media, see William Atkins, *The Politics of Southeast Asia’s New Media* (Surrey: Curzon Press, 2002).

the image of a wayang figure as ‘Indonesian’ cultural heritage, Budianta says that the campaign served as a warning about the negative effect of Western culture brought by globalisation, and a reminder of Indonesia’s rich culture. As the campaign appeared in the year of national crisis, Budianta argues that the campaign expressed the need to defend the nation which suffered from national inferiority in the time of the crisis. Interestingly, Budianta points out the irony in the campaign when the non-traditional pose of the wayang figure (which imitates the pose of Michael Jackson, ‘one hand on top of the head, another one covering the crotch’) implied the Indonesian desire for Western style.

In the post-New Order era, the government gives more freedom to the mass media to express themselves. According to Press Law no. 40/1999, the Press Publication Enterprise Permit (SIUPP/Surat Izin Usaha Penerbitan Pers) is no longer needed for a print publication. Article 4 clause 2 of this Law also guarantees that the government will not censor, revoke, or ban the national press. Article 15 of the Law mentions that the authority to control a publication or broadcast is given to the independent Press Council (Dewan Pers).

However, the press freedom enjoyed by the mass media in the post-New Order era does not automatically include freedom of expression in terms of sexuality. The draft of an anti-pornography bill, which was made known to the public around 2005, raised heated public debates in 2005–06. The draft was titled RUU-APP (Rancangan Undang-Undang Anti Pornografi dan Pornoaksi) which roughly means ‘Draft of the...
Law against Pornography and Pornoaction.\textsuperscript{113} The debates revolved initially around the
definition of pornography and pornoaction. The original Draft covered a wide range of
products and activities that were considered to be pornography and pornoaction such as
pornographic materials (films and photos), nudity, erotic dance and movement, (female)
body display, and ‘indecent’ activities (such as kissing in a public place). Those who
were against this Draft suspected that it was the conservative Islamist groups attempt to
introduce syariah (Islamic law). Protests came from religious and ethnic minorities such
as the Hindu Balinese and Christian Papuans, who were concerned about the
domination of Islam and of certain ethnic groups if the Law were implemented. They
were afraid that the Pornography Law would be used not only to control public morality
but also to homogenise religion. Objections also came from Indonesian feminists who
viewed this Draft as discrimination against women. For example, article 25 of the Draft
says, ‘Every adult is prohibited from revealing certain sensual parts of the body’.\textsuperscript{114}
Although it did not clearly refer to women’s bodies, it was widely interpreted as a
restriction on what women could wear. Many Indonesian women, including Muslim
women, saw the draft as syariah-based law which regulated how women should behave
and what they could wear in public places. On 30 October 2008, the Pornography
Law\textsuperscript{115} was finally passed. The final Law omitted the most controversial parts.
However, according to Pausacker, the definition of pornography in article 1 of this Law
is not clear.\textsuperscript{116} It says,

\textquote{… pornography is pictures, sketches, illustrations, photos, writing, voice, sound,
 moving pictures, animation, cartoons, conversations, movements of the body, or
 other forms through a variety of communication media and/or performances in
 public which contain obscenity or sexual exploitation which violates the moral
 norms in society.}

\textsuperscript{113}The draft can be viewed in www.djpp.depkumham.go.id accessed on 24 October 2012.
\textsuperscript{114}The explanation of sensual parts of the body can be found in the Draft of the explanation of article 4
 which says, ‘What is meant by sensual body parts are, among others, genital, thighs, hips, buttocks,
 navel, female breasts, either partly or fully exposed’.
\textsuperscript{115}The Pornography Law No. 44/2008 (Undang-Undang No. 44 Tahun 2008 tentang Pornografi).
\textsuperscript{116}Pausacker, “Indonesia’s New Pornography Law,” 121.
She argues that the definition vaguely includes some controversial activities found in the Draft. For example, the Law mentions ‘movements of the body’ and ‘performances in public’ without any specific explanations. Therefore, the interpretation of what constitutes pornography is open to individual interpretation.

The case of Playboy Indonesia is an example of how the debates on sexuality (which is associated with the West) affect the media. Playboy Indonesia’s office in Jakarta was attacked by FPI (Islamic Defenders’ Front/Forum Pembela Islam) on 12 April 2006, only a few days after Playboy was launched on 7 April 2006. FPI is a hard-line Islamist group. It accused Playboy Indonesia of violating public decency. The editor of this magazine, Erwin Arnada, was arrested and tried by the court for publishing pictures of scantily clothed women which were considered to violate ‘the predominantly Muslim nation’s indecency laws’. He was sentenced to two years’ imprisonment in 2010 but was acquitted after serving nine months in prison.

However, unlike Playboy Indonesia, internationally-licensed women’s magazines such as Cosmopolitan and Marie Claire which often put raunchy models on their front covers; do not attract the same attention from Indonesian hard-line Islamist groups. In her study of Indonesian men’s lifestyle magazines, Handajani argues that Playboy Indonesia caught the attention of hardliner groups because of Playboy’s international reputation and the extensive media coverage. She states that other Indonesian men’s lifestyle magazines (FHM Indonesia, Maxim Indonesia, and Esquire), which were launched before Playboy Indonesia, are able to be published without any incidents, even

though their content is similar to, if not more revealing than, that of *Playboy Indonesia*. The timing of *Playboy Indonesia*’s launch, which coincided with the debates on the Draft of the Pornography Bill, meant that *Playboy* attracted more attention than would have been expected normally.

The Indonesian editions of these internationally-licensed women’s magazines evidently show ‘Western’ culture in their images and narratives. It is obvious that the global, modern culture in Indonesia is associated with Western culture. The emphasis on the individual, and comparative neglect of the social, cultural and religious norms in Indonesia, brings a supposedly ‘international’ taste to Indonesian readers and hides the local content behind the westernised formula of the magazines. As the representatives of the global network, the magazine editors and advertisers promote Western culture as highly desirable, although there are concerns about the negative effect of this Western culture. In short, the one-way flow of culture from the West to Indonesia represented by these internationally women’s magazines can be read as imperialism.

However, cultural imperialism does not necessarily happen. Instead, as suggested by Iwabuchi, what may happen is global localisation when the global material is localised, or local globalisation when the local aspect of a culture is taken into consideration in the global market.123 The attempt of Indonesian editions to give a local flavour to the magazines by reporting stories about Indonesian women and discussing Indonesian women’s issues from local perspectives can be regarded as producing global localisation.

**Thesis structure**

The thesis is divided into seven chapters. Chapter 2 explores the way the magazines represent women’s relationships in two different settings, Australia and Indonesia. I discuss the way women’s magazines represent women’s quest for Mr Right. Romantic

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123Iwabuchi, “Feeling Glocal”, 34.
love occurs as an alternative to the pursuit of personal happiness. I focus my discussion on the various options—marriage, the de facto relationship, the gay relationship, and staying single—offered by the women’s magazines. I argue that Australian and Indonesian editions represent relationships similarly in terms of romantic love and personal happiness. In this chapter, I discuss some Indonesian local issues surrounding relationships, such as inter-religious marriage and Indonesian single women.

Chapter 3 examines the representation of sexuality in Australian and Indonesian editions. This chapter is divided into two sections. In the first section, I discuss the way the women’s magazines present tips about sexuality as a popular *ars erotica* (the art of the erotic) as a result of mass production. In discussing *ars erotica*, I present Foucault’s and Rocha’s arguments about *ars erotica* as an art from the Orient/East versus *ars erotica* as a constructed Oriental/Eastern art. I argue that tips about sexuality as an imagined art of the erotic of the Orient/East are sold as Western sexuality in Indonesia, in order to negotiate Indonesian local cultural norms and regulations which restrict the public discussion of sexuality. In the second section, I discuss sexuality as academic knowledge, using Foucault’s frame of *scientia sexualis* (the science of sexuality). I argue that presenting sexuality as academic knowledge enables the magazines to maintain decency and avoid taboo. In my discussion about women’s confessions, I show that women’s sexual experiences and women’s views about sexuality in Australia and Indonesia are represented similarly by the magazines. The absence of religion in the confessions of Indonesian women proves that the magazines do not take into account Indonesian local perspectives on sexuality. I argue that these internationally-licensed women’s magazines tend to promote a Western idea of liberated modern women and avoid addressing religion in their discussion of sexuality. By doing so, Indonesian women who make confessions about their sexual practice in the magazines, can be considered as practising *pergaulan bebas* (free socialising) which, in the Indonesian
context, is a negative influence of the ‘Western lifestyle’. In the last section of the chapter, I discuss Krondorfer’s claim that written confession is a gendered activity. I show that the written confession is not a gendered activity because women are as capable as men of writing confessions. However, the lack of access to the means of publication limits the publication of women’s confessions.

Chapter 4 shows the representations of beauty and body image in Australian and Indonesian editions. In the first section of the chapter, I discuss the idea of diversity represented in the magazines. I show how the beauty industries create stories of modernity, class privilege, healthiness and wealth to expand their market. I show how image editing techniques help the beauty industries and the magazines to create beauty for a specific target market. I argue that the beauty industries and the magazines still position whiteness as a privilege. In the second section, I discuss the representation of naked ordinary women’s bodies in the magazines and the effects of that representation on real women. I argue that the publication of ordinary women’s bodies can enable women to construct a positive view of their own bodies as well as have a negative view of their bodies. I also show the role of existing concepts about beauty and body shape in a society to determine the readers’ or markets’ acceptance of the image presented and the products sold.

Chapter 5 is about the representation of women’s work and home in Australia and Indonesia. I show that basically women’s work and home are represented similarly in Australian and Indonesian editions of these women’s magazines. I reveal that these women’s magazines represent women as middle-class working women who pursue their careers at the managerial level. There are no culture-specific problems faced by these women at work. In this section, I discuss the self-help discourse, which can be found more often in Indonesian editions. I argue that the self-help discourse presents a fantasy for women about independent and self-sufficient women workers. In this chapter, I also
deal with women’s ability to be mobile as a sign of women’s empowerment. The representation of women who travel for work to other cities or countries is as free and independent as for those individuals who do not travel to work for economic necessity but for personal satisfaction. In the section on ‘home’, I explore the way women deal with balancing work and home responsibilities. I argue that the magazines offer women dreams and fantasy in the representation of celebrity as a supermom, and as an independent individual who can balance work and home responsibilities.

Chapter 6 aims to find out how the magazines represent Australian and Indonesian women in association with travel for leisure. The discussion is divided into two sections. In Australian magazines, I explore the representation of the ‘beach body’. I argue that the beach body represents holiday, wealth, healthiness, the act of body display, and the act of disciplining the body. I show that the beach as the background also has multiple meanings. In the advertisements which employ the beach body, I argue that the complex meanings of the beach body and the beach are simplified by the advertisements to sell commercial products. In the second part, I talk about travel stories written in the form of personal narratives in Indonesian editions. I discuss the way women represent themselves as tourists by taking different positions in their personal narratives and relate the narrators’ discussions to Indonesian public narratives. I argue that while the ‘holiday’ is seen as a moment of empowerment by the narrators of the travel stories, the travel stories themselves are fantasy and dreams for most Indonesians. However, travel stories shared by the women writers may also inspire the readers to travel.
Chapter 2 Relationships

Cosmopolitan, Cleo and Marie Claire are full of tips and articles about relationships. These magazines offer the idea of romantic love with the implied expectation of marriage as the goal of a relationship. Marriage has different importance for Australians and Indonesians. Marriage for Indonesians is still expected as the final goal of a relationship. One of the factors that makes marriage important is that sex can only happen within marriage. Although the notion is not as strong as it used to be in the past, marriage in Indonesia is still related to the reproduction function and commitment to the family instead of only to a certain individual. It is imposed by the state through Marriage Law No. 1/1974 which mentions that the head of the family is a man. As a consequence, officially women cannot be the head of the family. Yet, marriage is not simple for Indonesians because marriage is also ruled by religious and adat (customary) laws. These laws often make inter-ethnic and inter-religious marriage difficult. For example, although a marriage between Muslims and non-Muslims is actually possible according to the Marriage Law No. 1/1974, the fatwa\textsuperscript{124} of the Indonesian Ulama\textsuperscript{125} Council (Majelis Ulama Indonesia, MUI) 1980 followed by the Compilation of Islamic Law (CIL) forbid this kind of marriage. Another factor which makes marriage important is the status of the widow/divorcée in Indonesian society. A widow/divorcée has a stigma in Indonesia as a seducer of other women’s husbands and has a lowly position in society. Therefore a widow/divorcée often remarries to avoid the stigma\textsuperscript{126} Australians, on the other hand, can live together (cohabit) without tying themselves into

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\textsuperscript{124}A fatwa is a religious opinion, often intended as a ruling or decree, usually issued by a body of religious scholars or an individual scholar, or even a mosque imam, with or without sanction by the State, see Ziba Mir-Hosseini and Vanja Hamzić, Control and Sexuality: The Revival of Zina Laws in Muslim Contexts (London: Women Living Under Muslim Laws, 2010), ix.

\textsuperscript{125}Ulama is a Muslim religious leader.

a matrimonial relationship, even when they have children—an option that cannot be had by Indonesians since cohabitation is not accepted by society. Therefore, although marriage is still a goal of a relationship for Australians the status of marriage is not as important as for those in Indonesia.

The tips and articles in both Indonesian and Australian editions provide various discussions related to relationships, including the choice to stay single. Being single is quite an issue in the women’s magazines. The magazines send mixed messages on this issue. The first message is that a woman should do anything to have a partner. The second message is that if a woman cannot find the right man, she had better stay single and be happy. Basically, the magazines endorse a woman seeking a partner, but they also try to promote that being single is desirable. The conflicting messages reflect the changes in society where women tend to postpone their marriages for reasons other than just not having ‘found ‘Mr Right’ like pursuing higher education or a career.127. In the Indonesian context, singles can be found more in urban areas and among the better educated and ‘wealthier segment of society’. 128

Moreover, the magazines present stories about gay relationships. The discussion about gay relationships is more open in Australian editions than in Indonesian editions. Nowadays, homosexuality is accepted, discussed and displayed publicly in Australia. Still, gay people in Australian editions talk about their difficulties in coming out. In Indonesia, traditionally homosexuality is tolerated as long as they keep their lives private to avoid conflict. However, the attacks by some radical Islamist groups on homosexuals can be seen as the development of political homophobia in Indonesia. The secrecy of homosexual lives in Indonesia and the development of homophobia make...

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discussions about gay relationships in Indonesian editions more covert.

This chapter explores the way the magazines represent relationships in two different settings, Australia and Indonesia. I use Giddens’ and Evans’ discussions on romantic love as a framework to analyse the relationships in the magazines as the magazines tend to set the discussion of relationships in the quest to find Mr Right. I also use Evans’ theory on the separation of sexuality, marriage and love to discuss the disappearance of values attached to marriage. In this theory, Evans argues that when marriage is no longer seen as a goal of love and when sex can happen outside marriage, marriage becomes unattractive. Evans says that besides romantic love, women have started to take account of personal happiness to decide the continuation of a relationship. The inclusion of personal happiness in women’s considerations is the result of people’s awareness that romantic love alone does not guarantee everlasting love. According to Evans, when women feel that their personal happiness is at risk, they prefer to postpone marriage or stay single, or if they are married, they choose a divorce.

At the same time, Giddens proposes the idea of confluent love which puts sexual pleasure as a key element in deciding the continuation of a relationship. Giddens says that in confluent love, a couple will keep the relationship as long as they feel they benefit from the relationship. Giddens sees the couple’s relationship in confluent love as being like a relationship between ideal workers and their workplace, in which a relationship is regulated by a negotiated contract.

In this chapter I use the discussions about finding Mr Right in romantic love and the pursuit of personal happiness to analyse how relationships are presented by the magazines and the options offered by the magazines on relationships. The options are getting married, having a de facto relationship, or having a gay relationship. When none of the options fit the women, they can choose to stay single. During the discussion I also use other theories to help me analyse whether the options are influenced by
different cultural settings. I argue that the magazines oscillate between the idea of romantic love and personal happiness in presenting relationships. On the one hand, the magazines promote romantic love with marriage as the expectation. On the other hand, the magazines emphasise the idea of personal happiness as an important aspect in deciding the continuation of a relationship. I argue that the magazines mostly represent relationships similarly in terms of romantic love and personal happiness in Australian and Indonesian editions. Particularly in the representation of single women in Indonesia, the magazines portray urban middle-class women who view being single as desirable and believe that marriage is not a must anymore. However, the magazines, especially Indonesian editions, also try to address local issues; for example, there is an article on inter-religious marriage in Indonesia.

Marriage, love and sexuality

Giddens in *The Tranformation in Intimacy* and Evans in *Love: An Unromantic Discussion* discuss the idea of romantic love. Giddens and Evans say that before the nineteenth century, marriage was aimed toward procreation and reproduction. It was about having and taking care of children. In this kind of marriage, eros and desire or ‘love’ was not necessarily needed since marriage was part of the social order, a sacrament and a contract not just with another party but with God. It was not only a personal contract but also a social contract which included financial consequences, because it was common for women to get married to secure their financial needs. From the eighteenth century onwards the notion of marriage was changed by the emergence of romance. Giddens explains that the discourse of romance started as a result of modernity when reason began to replace mysticism and dogma so that emotional life

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131 Evans, *Love*, 76.
was also reordered.\textsuperscript{132} He mentions that marriage started to be seen as a collaboration between a man and a woman themselves, not only as a connection with God. Similarly, Evans says that the idea of romantic love in marriage was a part of the modernising process when love was not love for God anymore but secular love between human beings.\textsuperscript{133} Furthermore, Giddens argues that the separation between home and the workplace affected the way women and men valued romantic love. He says that because women were bound to home, a place which was supposed to provide emotional support for people who work,\textsuperscript{134} and women were also seen as the provider of emotional warmth in childrearing as mothers,\textsuperscript{135} they were more inclined to foster love than men. From then on, Giddens and Evans say, marriage was understood to be formed through ‘love’ and maintained by it. The introduction of love into the discourse of relationships made ‘love’ a significant element in finding a partner. It started the tendency to find a partner to love instead of a partner to marry, including the search for all romantic things related to ‘happily ever after love’.

Giddens says that the idea of romantic love emerged at the same moment as the rise of romantic novels and stories in the late eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{136} He says that the search for a partner was associated with finding ‘Mr Right’. He argues that although the idea of finding ‘Mr Right’ was shallow, literature represented romantic love in that way. He explains that in contrast to the women in medieval romantic tales, the women in modern romantic novels were mostly independent and spirited. He says that in the modern romantic stories, the conquest was different from the male version of love conquest because ‘the heroine tames, softens and alters the seemingly intractable masculinity of her love object, making it possible for mutual affection to become the

\textsuperscript{132}Giddens, \textit{The Transformation of Intimacy}, 40.
\textsuperscript{133}Evans, \textit{Love}, 100.
\textsuperscript{134}Giddens, \textit{The Transformation of Intimacy}, 26.
\textsuperscript{135}Ibid., 42.
\textsuperscript{136}Ibid., 41.
main guiding-line of their lives together. Giddens claims that in real life the production of these stories becomes a creation of a mutual narrative biography, a ‘history’ of two individuals who are in a relationship, with marriage as the ultimate goal. As romantic stories were mostly consumed by women, the romantic fantasy of finding ‘Mr Right’ became more women’s fantasy than men’s. The idea of romantic love presented by contemporary media such as women’s magazines also makes women more inclined to have an expectation to marry ‘for love’. This expectation encourages women to postpone their marriage or make women choose to stay single when they think that they have not found ‘Mr Right’.

Besides becoming the goal of romantic love, Evans suggests that marriage was a solution to unite love and sexual desire. She discusses Jane Austen’s novels where love was confused and intertwined with sexual desire. According to Evans, Austen clearly shows that love was what was needed in a relationship because sexual attraction was not a guarantee of long-term happiness. At the same time Austen acknowledged that people did need physical contact and the pleasure of the physical expression of love and desire. So marriage was seen as a way to unite love and sexual desire. However, the idea of unity between sexuality and love in a marriage cannot survive the nineteenth century’s ‘loss of God’ where marriage was secularised such that it could be done outside the church by a civil authority. The ideal of marriage as the union of sexual desire and love is further challenged in the present when Western people can accept the idea of having sexual relationships without having to get married first. At this point, Evans says that the ties between love, sexuality and marriage have collapsed such that

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138 Ibid, 46.
sexuality is separated from love as well as from marriage. In the past, the goal of love was to get married and sex could only be practised within marriage. When sexual relationships can happen outside marriage and even outside love, without constraints and prohibitions, marriage ceases to function as an institution to regulate sexual relationships. Now, marriage is a way to get public recognition of a relationship between two individuals and to provide security for children.

Evans suggests that when the ties among marriage, sexuality and love disappear, the ‘pursuit of happiness’ substitutes legal and social norms. Love is more and more attached to personal fulfilment. She says that in marriage, love is an important part in which internal personal satisfactions will decide the continuation of the relationship. People construct a personal agenda in their search for love in the private world. Marriage becomes a bond between two individuals only with personal happiness as the priority. As a result, Evans says that, when people think that they are not ‘in love’ with their partner any more, they can end the relationship. With regard to the idea of personal fulfilment, Giddens proposes what he calls confluent love. In his concept of confluent love, there is equality in emotional give and take by the two individuals involved. It is when each individual is ‘prepared to reveal concerns and needs to the other and to be vulnerable to that other’. Different from romantic love, which puts sublime love over sexual pleasure; confluent love puts sexual pleasure as its key element. It is the achievement of reciprocal sexual pleasure which decides whether a relationship is sustained or dissolves. The continuation of the relationship depends on how each individual involved in the relationship perceives the benefit they gain. As long as both still think they get sufficient benefit from their relationship, they will sustain the relationship. Giddens categorises confluent love as a pure relationship which is not

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139 Evans, Love, 55.
140 Ibid.
141 Giddens, The Transformation of Intimacy, 61–64.
142 Ibid., 62.
necessarily monogamous and is not exclusively heterosexual. In confluent love, every individual has the chance to become sexually accomplished.

On the idea of confluent love, Evans claims that Giddens does not acknowledge structural inequalities in relationships between women and men in his discussion. According to Evans, heterosexuality in Giddens’ concept exists in a social world where women and men are treated equally. In this equal world, the issues of the care of children and other dependants, domestic violence and economic deprivation do not exist. Smart criticises Giddens for not taking children into consideration when he talks about confluent love. She says that in Giddens’ view of relationships only two individuals exist in the negotiation of the relationship, the couple. When the couple decides to divorce, they will have a ‘clean break up,’ leave their past behind and start a new life. Smart argues that in reality the presence of children influences couples in dealing with divorce. She says that children are the reason women stay in marriage or a relationship even though it may lack fulfilment; children are often the reason parents do not form new relationships; and they are the reason many parents keep in contact with their former spouse. In short, the idea that each partner in a relationship should be legally and socially equal is a condition which is difficult to achieve.

According to Evans, Giddens’ idea of ‘democratic’ patterns of heterosexual sexuality might be applicable to urban professionals but not other disadvantaged groups. In Giddens’ concept of democratic relationships, people in marriage or in relationships are like ideal workers who live their personal lives the way they live in a workplace where their lives are arranged by negotiated contract. This contract regulates how individuals can behave and can achieve. Evans gives the example of what happens in the US where the idea of a marriage contract such as a prenuptial contract replaces

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143 Evans, _Love_, 125.
the traditional organisation of property and sets of personal expectations and aspirations. A similar situation happens in Britain where women may choose to get a divorce or live alone when they could not accept situations and circumstances which do not conform to a legalistic and predictable pattern. Evans notes that women’s choices are influenced by women’s financial independence and women’s autonomy.

Evans’ and Giddens’ discussions show that the idea of love substitutes for the idea of marriage in Western people’s discourse. Romantic love is deemed perfect as an ideology but this idea is confusing in practice. Firstly, for women, romantic love is narrowly understood as finding ‘Mr Right’ who will become a partner with whom to spend the rest of one’s life. It has the idea of being everlasting and has long-term life objectives. However, the idea that romantic love is forever has brought more disappointment and loss in relationships than happiness. Romantic love cannot guarantee an everlasting relationship in marriage. There are many external factors which should be considered such as family loads and responsibility to the children. Home, which should ideally be a place to turn to from the burden of the workplace, as Evans says, might become an oppressive place with its domestic demands or abuse/violence. Secondly, the disappearance of the bonds of sexuality, love and marriage creates changes. Increasing sexual permissiveness where sexual relations can happen outside marriage and outside love makes marriage and love become meaningless. Marriage is not needed as an institution to control sexuality any more and romantic love becomes a more abstract concept that is difficult to attain as it puts sublime love over sexuality. As noted above, Giddens has even proposed the idea of confluent love where sexuality is a key to decide the continuation of a relationship. Thirdly, people now focus on pursuing personal satisfaction and fulfilment in their relationships. Since both women and men can see that romantic love cannot guarantee security, foreversness and personal happiness, they postpone marriage or choose to stay
single. To ensure individual happiness, some people even treat marriage like a job, where everything is regulated by making a contract such as a prenuptial contract. These points show that romantic love as a concept is problematic and demanding. However, the fact that romantic love is difficult to attain increases people’s interest in searching for romantic love. The role of women’s magazines in promoting romantic love and in guiding readers to find the right partner and to survive a relationship is discussed in the following section.

**Love and the pursuit of personal happiness in women’s magazines**

In my study, both Australian and Indonesian editions of *Cosmopolitan, Cleo* and *Marie Claire* focus on the concept of romantic love in their tips and articles about relationships while at the same time emphasising the importance of the pursuit of personal happiness. In their tips and articles, the magazines idealise both love and personal happiness. They offer dreams and fantasy about ideal romantic relationships based on love. Tips on relationships often offer love and sexual desire which are wrapped in the fantasy world of romance. Since the target readers of these magazine are women, the fantasy of romance is mainly aimed at women. The tips construct romance, idealised fantasies of romantic engagement and offer solutions for problems on relationships that in reality are difficult to solve.

Australian editions of these magazines offer tips like ‘How to Make Him Fall in Love with You in 90 minutes’ which gives tips on how to quickly establish a relationship with a potential partner. Phrases like ‘perfect man’ and ‘fall in love’ show that the idea of the relationship promoted here is a romantic one, a relationship with ‘Mr Right’.

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A glass of bubbly in your hand, you sit on a bar-stool that’s in the best position to scan the room. Then suddenly, he looms into view: the real-life version of your perfect man. It’s 9:30pm—you’ve got a good hour-and-a-half to get him to talk to you—then fall in love with you. Sounds impossible? It’s not. The excerpt above offers the fantasy of love at first sight and of a romantic love that can be achieved in a very short time, 90 minutes, in a random place like a bar. Apart from the choice of place and the limited time, it is clear that the excerpt describes the crucial moment of getting Mr Right. These tips follow Giddens’ idea of the heroines in the romantic stories at the end of the eighteenth and in the nineteenth century who were represented in the position of power as active participants in the conquest of love. In these tips, women are supposed to be active by making the first move to pursue their happiness. Women have to make men ‘fall in love’ with them and try to get mutual affection. Although making men ‘fall in love’ does not guarantee that they will always be ‘in love’ with the women for the rest of their lives, the way the magazines put it is if once men fall in love with women, mutual affection is developed and the women will be happy ever after. This fantasy simplifies the reality of a relationship which can be very complicated.

Figure 2.1
How to Make Him Fall in Love with You in 90 Minutes
Cosmopolitan Australia, May 2010, 64–65

\[146\] Mullender, “How to Make Him Fall in Love with You in 90 Minutes”, 65.
Despite the fact that these kinds of tips offer only fantasy, tips and articles with similar content can be found easily in almost every discussion about relationships like ‘The 5 best love tips we’ve heard this year: the advice that will help your love stay strong’\textsuperscript{147} and ‘The rules of attraction: what makes us click?’\textsuperscript{148} which offer instant solutions on relationships. In general, the tips and articles about relationships in Australian editions are attached to the idea of romantic love which offers a fantasy of an everlasting relationship. Tips offering instant solutions in relationships seem to present Baudrillard’s idea about ‘instantaneity’ of communication. In his article ‘The Ecstasy of Communication’, Baudrillard talks about how contemporary media (television, radio, advertising) create hyperreality by blurring reality with fiction.\textsuperscript{149} He argues that in the hyperreal world created by the media, reality is ‘miniaturised’ and can be exchanged immediately.\textsuperscript{150} The idea of simplified reality and instant exchange seems to be the focus of the way contemporary media, including women’s magazines, represents ‘reality’. In the case of tips for relationships presented by the women’s magazines, the issue of establishing a relationship is made simple and is represented in an instant way.

Similarly, Indonesian editions have titles like ‘You & Him: Serious or Not?’\textsuperscript{151} (Anda & si Dia: Serius atau Tidak?); with tips on how to know whether one’s partner is serious or not:

\textsuperscript{147}Carrie Sloane, “The 5 Best Love Tips We’ve Heard This Year: The Advice That Will Help Your Love Stay Strong,” \textit{Cosmopolitan Australia}, November, 2010, 84–86.
\textsuperscript{150}Baudrillard, “The Ecstasy of Communication,” 129.
\textsuperscript{151}“You & Him: Serious or Not?” \textit{Cleo Indonesia}, September, 2010, 79–81.
Once again the tip above relates the idea of romantic love with finding ‘Mr Right’ and establishing a long-term relationship. The tips above are a little different from the instant tips to start the relationship discussed earlier, as the content of the tips also expresses the idea of establishing a permanent relationship. For example, the men are supposed to introduce the women to their friends or to treat the women’s friends nicely. However, the tips above still present a simplified reality by providing the readers with a list to tick to decide whether the men they like are the right ones. The tips draw a clear line between Mr Right and Mr not-Right by putting them in opposite columns without any possibility of swapping some of the characteristics. The construction of Mr Right versus Mr not-Right offers a false certainty of ideal romance that will be experienced by the women who find their right partners.

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152 He’s a Stayer!
Anda tahu si Dia Serius Jika Ia:
- mengenalkan anda dengan teman-temannya
- memperkenalkan Anda sebagai kekasihnya
- Menelpon tanpa alasan yang jelas
- Muncul tepat waktu dan menelpon ketika telat
- Bersikap baik terhadap teman-teman Anda
- Menunjukkan perhatian terhadap cerita anda
  – Mencintai anda apa adanya

153 He’s a Player!
Anda Tahu si Dia Hanya Main-Main Jika Ia:
- Memisahkan kehidupan sosialnya dari Anda
- Memperkenalkan anda sebagai kekasihnya
- Kadang tidak menelpon anda selama berhari-hari
- Telat satu jam atau lebih tanpa menelpon/minta maaf
- Kasar dan tertutup di sekitar teman-teman anda
  – Membuat berbagai alasan agar tidak ikut pesta bersama anda
Interestingly, the act of finding ‘Mr Right’ also includes dumping ‘Mr not-Right’. The excerpt below is taken from an article in Cleo Australia about a woman who dumped her boyfriend because she thought her boyfriend cheated on her:

That’s when I knew I had to end it. He was full of excuses as to why she was there, but I wasn’t interested. Lying to me was bad enough, but the fact he was most likely cheating on me as well made it so much worse. I left the house feeling ashamed and embarrassed. It was tough; I’d never experienced so much dishonesty and betrayal in my life.\textsuperscript{154}

Here, the woman considers her boyfriend does not meet the criteria of ‘Mr Right’ because he lies to her and she feels cheated. The excerpt seems to present a fantasy of a perfect world without dishonesty and betrayal; personal happiness can only be reached when that condition is fulfilled. The excerpt shows that personal happiness is the most important goal in a relationship. When the woman felt that her relationship did not guarantee her personal happiness, she chose to leave her boyfriend. The use of the word ‘ashamed’ to express the woman’s feeling when she was cheated implies that being cheated is something disgraceful. Evans mentions that the main reason for women in England to ask for divorce is men’s infidelity.\textsuperscript{155} She says that women and men have different attitudes toward relationships. Women expect exclusivity in the relationship so they cannot tolerate infidelity while men tend to assume they are entitled to have extramarital relationships. She explains further that to keep the exclusivity, rather than staying in a relationship with men who cheat them, women prefer to be alone.

An article in Indonesian Cosmopolitan, ‘Honey, It’s time to go’,\textsuperscript{156} contains tips on how women should end their relationships with men whom they think are not right for them when the relationship cannot guarantee personal happiness. A tweet quoted in the beginning of the article is:

\textsuperscript{154}Jess Martin, “‘That’s When I Knew...’” Cleo Australia, November, 2010, 94.
\textsuperscript{155}Evans, Love, 130–31.
\textsuperscript{156}“Honey, It’s Time to Go”. Cosmopolitan Indonesia, Maret, 2011, 160–62.
They say to love someone is to wait for the one. I say you need to love yourself too, by knowing when to walk away.

@iRespectFemales.

This quote shows the importance of personal happiness in a relationship, even when the personal happiness can only be obtained through a heartbreaking experience. The excerpt from Cosmopolitan Indonesia below shows how personal happiness is won over the continuation of a woman’s relationship when her fiancé’s mother does not agree with the relationship:

Sarah, 27 years old, said, ‘Two months after Donny proposed, his mother still refused to talk to me. At that time, she had her own “candidate” for Donny, so she did not agree if we got married. I had tried hard to make her like me, but nothing worked. Finally, I decided to cancel the wedding. No matter what, his mother would always be in Donny’s life. It was hard enough to build a relationship, even more with a drama which involved the parent-in-law...I would suffer for the rest of my life’. 157

The story above represents a common situation in Indonesia, where having Mr Right alone is not enough to continue a relationship if personal happiness is at risk. In this case, Sarah feels that her personal happiness is threatened by the disapproval of her fiancé’s mother. Parker and Nilan in their research on Indonesian adolescents found that parents play a very important role in the continuation of a relationship. 158 If the parents do not agree with their children’s choice of partners, they will not give their consent to the marriage. As a result, the couple will be left with two choices: break up the relationship or get married without the parents’ consent. The last choice is rarely chosen by Indonesians because family is central to Indonesians’ cultural and religious beliefs and social life and identity. Marriage without the parents’ consent can cut them

157 Sarah, 27 tahun, bercerita, “Dua bulan setelah Donny melamar, ibunya masih tidak mau ngomong sama saya. Waktu itu ia punya ‘kandidat’ sendiri untuk Donny, jadi ia tidak setuju kami menikah. Saya sudah berusaha keras untuk merebut hatinya, tapi tak ada yang berhasil. Akhirnya, saya putuskan untuk membatalkan pernikahan. Biar bagaimana pun, ibunya akan selalu berada di kehidupan Donny. Membangun rumah tangga saja sudah sulit, kalau ditambah drama mertua lagi...saya yang akan menderita seumur hidup.” 

“Honey, It’s Time to Go” Cosmopolitan Indonesia, Maret 2011, 162.

out of the family, a risk that Indonesian couples would rarely take.

The excerpts above show that these women’s magazines alternate between promoting the idea of romantic love with an expectation of an everlasting relationship and promoting the idea of personal happiness, even when it means the happiness is without ‘Mr Right’. Various options provided by the women’s magazines as goals of relationships are discussed below.

**Marry or cohabit?**

One of the choices that women can make in pursuing their personal happiness is to marry Mr Right. These magazines do not impose the obligation to get married but they implicitly bring out the expectation that a relationship will end in marriage. At the same time, the magazines are aware that romantic love itself is not enough to guarantee a happy marriage because with marriage comes other responsibilities such as family and children. As a result the magazines send mixed messages to the readers about marriage. On the one hand they promote the idea of romantic love which is expected to end in marriage; on the other hand they support those who do not want to get married or want to postpone their marriage. Interestingly both Australian and Indonesian editions of these magazines have tips and articles which basically tell women to leave their fantasy and become more realistic before they decide to get married, as can be seen in this excerpt from *Cosmopolitan Australia*:

> The psychologist Sally-Anne McCormack says that there are several questions needed to ask before getting married: ‘Is it because you want a big wedding? Because you’re scared of being alone? Because your friends are getting hitched? If you answer “yes” to any of these, think seriously about your motivations behind wanting that ring. However, if you see a wedding as the start of a long life together, you’re looking at it the right way’. 159

The psychologist’s emphasis on the wedding as ‘the start of a long life together’ not a ‘happily ever after ending’ reminds the readers of the fact that marriage is not an end

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159 Katherine Chatfield, “Practically Married...So Where’s the Ring?” *Cosmopolitan Australia*, September, 2010, 109.
goal but a long struggle ahead.

A similar precaution is addressed by Indonesian editions. An article in Cleo Indonesia gives an example of how marriage is associated with financial consequences. In this article Melanie chooses to endure the pressure to get married from people close to her and keeps postponing her marriage because she and her partner are not financially ready.

Melanie, 25, who has been in a relationship for seven years said, ‘My friends and my family ask me when my boyfriend is going to propose. They ask me on my Birthday, on Valentines Day, even at Christmas! Everybody encourages me to get married. I believe that he is the man whom I want to marry, but now our savings are not enough to cover the wedding. I don’t dream of having an expensive wedding, but we still have to save to get married and to support our life after we are married. I am happy with my condition now’.160

This article reminds people about certain standards that they have to achieve before they get married. Financial security, psychological maturity and established career are some of the ideals to achieve. People should not think of marriage if they have not had a chance to enjoy their life of independence or before they have a fine house and a car.

In the Indonesian context, a long-term relationship means marriage. Living together is not acceptable because Indonesians still believe that people should only have sex within marriage. So, although some studies have found that Indonesians do have premarital sexual relationships, living together without marriage is unacceptable and considered as sin from a religious point of view.161 In this case, Australians have more options as they can choose to get married or choose to cohabit. Marriage is not the only focus in the discourse of relationships in Australian editions because cohabitation is presented as a common and acceptable type of long-term relationship in Australia.


161I will discuss sexuality and marriage in Indonesia in my chapter on sexuality in this thesis.
According to the survey conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in 2009–10, 11 per cent (1.9 million) of people aged 18 and over were living in de facto relationships. However, the number of de facto relationships is still much lower than the number of marriages; 53 per cent of people aged 18 and over were in registered marriages in the same period. From the same source, by 2010, 79 per cent of registered marriages (95 590 marriages) were preceded by a period of cohabitation. The data shows that although in Australia most couples still lead their relationship to marriage, cohabiting is becoming a norm before committing to marriage. Buchler et al. who conducted research on the social and demographic characteristics of cohabiters in Australia divided the cohabiters into four different groups: the premarital cohabiters (not previously married and intending to marry), long-term cohabiters (not previously married and not intending to marry), marriage-renouncing cohabiters (previously married and not intending to marry), and marriage-idealising cohabiters (previously married and intending to marry). The cohabiters presented by the women’s magazines are mostly premarital cohabiters who have not married and intend to marry. The magazines’ focus on this group is understandable since the target market of these magazines is women between 18 and 35 years of age. The excerpt below clearly shows that the typical cohabiters presented by the magazines are under the first category:

If you are in a committed relationship, living with your partner, sharing everything but his name, you’re one of a new breed of ‘nearly-weds’. The phenomenon of women living as ‘Mrs’ but officially remaining ‘Miss’ is becoming increasingly common across Australia.

However, while plenty of women are perfectly happy to cohabit forever, others see living together as a limbo period between dating and getting married. But what if the proposal never comes?

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162 Australian Social Trends, March Quarter 2.
Aline, 24. She has been with her partner for eight years, and they have lived together for the past four. While up to this point, they’re perfectly happy cohabiting, her friends and family have recently started to put doubts in her mind about the fact she’s not yet married. ‘Perhaps if I was married, people might think my relationship is more valid’.  

This article shows that marriage is still perceived as the ideal goal for the woman, even for the happily cohabiting person. Buchler et al. say that for people who have never married before and are now living in de facto relationships, marriage means ‘increased commitment, stability, security and joint investments, and so add value to a relationship and increase satisfaction’. The facts about cohabiting presented by the article offer an alternative other than marriage for women to secure their personal happiness.

The emphasis on personal happiness in a relationship seems to endorse the idea of democratic love proposed by Giddens where the relationship is regulated like work through a negotiated contract. An example of this negotiated contract is presented by the Australian editions in tips and articles like ‘The Smart Girl’s Guide to Moving in with a Guy’, which talks about cohabitation agreements between couples to guarantee women’s security so they can ‘rest easy’ and ‘enjoy their new life together’. The tips consist of things like knowing their rights and realising that couples living together for more than two years have similar rights to married couples. As things can get complicated when a couple splits up, signing a financial agreement is considered necessary to make sure that the women’s assets are protected. Also before moving in, couples have to discuss how to share household bills, food and living costs, and talk about the ‘future’ to avoid disputes after breaking up, which can cost a lot of money. All those items should be formalised in writing and in front of a solicitor if necessary. The contracts to guarantee personal happiness in democratic love contest the idea of romantic love which does not include financial gain.

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164 Chatfield, Practically Married... So Where’s the Ring?, 109.
165 Buchler et. al., The Social and Demographic Characteristics of Cohabitors in Australia, 23.
Gay relationships

The issue of homosexuality distinguishes Australian coverage about relationships from Indonesian coverage. Although the tips about love in these magazines are mostly targeted to heterosexual relationships, articles in Australian editions about women’s real experiences sometimes include stories about homosexual relationships. These stories, although not many, show that women’s magazines acknowledge homosexual relationships. In ‘The rules of attraction: what makes us click?’ there is a sharing from a homosexual couple on what attracted them to their partner:

Sam Marshall Joseph and Rachel Joseph. ‘When Rachel and I met, there was a definite “moment”. Then we became friends on Facebook and have hardly been apart since. I love her style; I know what she likes and we share everything.’

In general, homosexuality is accepted and discussed and displayed publicly in Australia at the present. According to Willet, serious discussion of homosexuality in the

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168This couple’s names are interesting because despite their openness about their homosexual relationship the name ‘Sam Marshall Joseph’ has ‘masculine’ features while the name ‘Rachel Joseph’ has ‘feminine’ features. Their ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’ names remind me of Butler’s discussion about “Butch” and “Femme” in homosexual relationships. For further discussion on this topic see Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York and London: Routledge, 1999).

Australian press was not common until the 1960s although it had been discussed in parliament, in medical journals and in government.\textsuperscript{170} He says that the public discussion or representation of homosexuality was suppressed because homosexuality was seen as ‘the greatest menace’. One of the most interesting examples of public homophobia presented by Willet was when homosexuality was seen as an issue of national security as it was connected with the issue of moral disorder and communist threat in the 1950s.\textsuperscript{171} The Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) even proposed to Federal Cabinet that homosexuals should not be employed in public service positions due to concern that they would leak sensitive national security material. As a result of public homophobia, homosexuals lived in secrecy, away from public attention. According to Willet, they lived in fear and only came out to others of their kind and their chosen and sympathetic friends as they were afraid they would lose their family, their friends and their jobs if they came out.\textsuperscript{172} The negative public opinion about homosexuality influenced their self-perception. They often believed that they were mad or bad or sad, as the public said.

Perceptions of homosexuality have changed quite dramatically since the 1970s, starting from changes in people’s attitudes and then in the law.\textsuperscript{173} According to Willet, the gay and lesbian movement beginning in the 1970s allowed gay people and lesbians to be visible and articulate. They raised issues and demanded changes on homosexuality. From then on, public opinion has changed. At present, as mentioned by Willet, laws against homosexual sex have been reformed, discrimination on the basis of sexuality is illegal, gay de facto relationships are recognised as legitimate by the Federal Government, homosexuals can serve in the armed forces and homosexuals can have

\textsuperscript{172}Willet, \textit{Living out Loud}.
\textsuperscript{173}Willet, \textit{The Darkest Decade}, 120.
custody of children. This changing perception is shown by the discussion of homosexual relationships along with heterosexual relationships in the women’s magazines.

Apart from the fact that homosexuality is increasingly accepted by the society and the state, some articles still present how difficult it is for gay people to come out in Australia. The difficulty faced by a gay person is shared by Emily in the article ‘That’s when I knew...’:

I found myself attracted to women from a young age. I was fascinated by female teachers and the occasional friend of my parents or older sister... When we came out of ‘the closet’, we received mixed reactions from our families and friends, but those responses only prompted us to look for environments where we felt we could express ourselves openly... . Emily, 24

In Emily’s story we can see that she seeks her kind of environment to be able to express herself openly because she received mixed reactions from her family and friends. Below is a similar story shared by Kiri who broke up with her fiancé after he declared himself gay:

The strangest thing is that he hid his sexuality for so long. I mean, we moved in liberal circles and his sister is openly gay. Aaron told me that he didn’t want to be gay and kept hoping the feeling would pass.

Based on Kiri’s story about her ex-fiancé who did not want to be gay, we can see that being ‘normal’ means being heterosexual. In both excerpts, Emily and Aaron are discriminated by the heterosexual matrix suggested by Butler. The heterosexual matrix is:

a hegemonic discursive/epistemic model of gender intelligibility that assumes that for bodies to cohere and make sense there must be a stable sex expressed through a stable gender (masculine expresses male, feminine expresses female) that is oppositionally and hierarchically defined through the compulsory practice of heterosexuality.

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174 Willet, Living out Loud, ix–x.
175 Martin, “‘That’s When I Knew...’” Cleo Australia, November, 2010, 92.
177 Butler, Gender Trouble, 194.
According to this heterosexual matrix, men are masculine and women are feminine. They are differentiated by the practices of heterosexual desire. Those who do not conform to this model are considered deviant or abnormal and receive the disapproval of the community. The excerpts show how Emily and Aaron suffer from this heterosexual model. To deal with it, they choose different ways. Emily avoids disapproval of the community for her ‘abnormal’ practices by looking for a place where she can openly express her homosexuality while Aaron hopes that his homosexual feeling will pass and that he will become a heterosexual masculine in order to be ‘normal’.

The tips and articles about relationships in Indonesian editions of the magazines are mostly about heterosexual relationships. If there is an article which addresses homosexuality, it is more covert and is not mentioned in the title. In ‘The 30’s Tale’, an article which consists of brief stories of 30 women, there is one woman who is in a homosexual relationship.

Afank Mariani, 38 years old, Ardhanary Institute Organisation Coordinator
A dream about a more tolerant Indonesia

I decided not to get married and had a relationship with a woman. This decision is risky. I am opposed by my family and the society. But this is my life. I believe that life is about choice and we are the decision makers. I want Indonesia to accept differences including sexual orientation.178

The excerpt above and the excerpt from an article ‘My Last Three Boyfriends were Gay’ (Tiga Pacar Terakhir Saya Gay), where a woman shared her stories of having three gay men as her boyfriends, describe the struggle of homosexual people with their identity in the context of the heterosexual matrix. Afank Mariani openly admits that she

178 Afank Mariani, 38 tahun, Koordinator Organisasi Ardhanary Institute
Impian untuk Indonesia yang lebih toleran
Dwinanda Inayu, Marissa Anugrah, and Fitria Sofyani. ―The 30’s Tale.” Marie Claire Indonesia, November 2010, 90–96.
has a homosexual relationship despite the disapproval of her family and the society and
the ‘three men’ in the excerpt below had tried to be ‘normal’ by marrying heterosexually
before they came out. Interestingly the woman who shared this story perceived gays as
somewhat effeminate.

I did not feel cheated or used by the three of them. I believe that there was love
between us at that time. When we had a relationship, everything was normal and
special. They might have been in the middle of searching for their identity at that
time. Actually they were all good and kind men and also loving men. Three of
them have come out now, admitted that they were gay, and they did not hesitate
to show their effeminate body language.179

According to Boellstorff, Indonesia is often characterised as tolerant of
homosexuality, bisexuality and transgenderism.180 He mentions that traditionally male
homosexuals or transgenders, have particular roles in some rituals and performance.
However, Boellstroff says that homosexuals do not identify as themselves publicly. As
long as they keep themselves private, they can avoid conflict. Boellstorff argues that
Indonesia is not homophobic but heterosexist. He defines heterosexism as a belief that
heterosexuality is the only natural or moral sexuality. Heterosexism ‘creates a climate
where fear and hatred of non-normative sexualities and gender can take root’.181 As a
generalised belief it is not as strong as homophobia and it only has the power of social
sanction.

Unfortunately, Boellstroff sees that Indonesia has started developing political
homophobia. He points out two incidents against homosexuals, the Solo incident and
the Kaliurang incident, which happened during the post-Suharto era. In both incidents,
homosexuals who publicly proclaimed themselves as homosexuals through performance

179 Saya tidak merasa diperdaya atau dimanfaatkan oleh ketiganya. Saya percaya memang ada cinta di
antara kami, saat itu. Ketika hubungan itu kami jalani, semua terasa normal dan istimewa. Mungkin
saat itu mereka tengah berada dalam masa pencarian jati diri. Toh mereka semua laki-laki baik hati
yang menyenangkan sekaligus penyayang. Ketiganya kini telah come out, mengakui gay, dan tidak
malu2 menyembunyikan bahasa tubuh yang melambai.
180 Tom Boellstorff, “The Emergence of Political Homophobia in Indonesia: Masculinity and National
181 Boellstorff, “The Emergence of Political Homophobia in Indonesia”, 472.
and a press conference were threatened by radical Muslim groups. In the Kaliurang incident, in 2000, they were physically attacked by a Muslim youth group. Even though the threat and the physical violence were conducted by a Muslim group, and Islam has a heterosexist rejection of homosexuality, Boellstorff argues that Islam is not the reason for the threat and the violence.\footnote{Boellstorff, “The Emergence of Political Homophobia in Indonesia”, 470.} According to Boellstorff, Islam only provides the necessary condition for the threat and violence. He mentions that in the threat and the act of violence, the perpetrators did not only express their religious belief but also reacted to *malu*, ‘shame’.\footnote{As suggested by Boellstorff, *malu* is a very complex term in the Indonesian context. Here I follow Boellstorff who translated *malu* as shame.} The perpetrators consider the events should be countered by violence, a normative male response because the events held by homosexuals in Solo and Kaliurang are shameful. The perpetrators regard homosexuals as non-normative men who challenge a nationalised masculinity.

*Malu* as the reason behind people’s rejection of homosexuality, or of non-heterosexist normativity, is presented in an article in *Cosmopolitan Indonesia* entitled ‘They doubt my husband’s gender status’ (‘*Mereka Meragukan Status Gender Suami Saya*’).\footnote{‘Mereka Meragukan Status Gender Suami Saya...’*. *Cosmopolitan Indonesia*, November, 2010, 206–09.} This article is a real story of Jane, whose husband was arrested based on a report filed by her own parents. Jane’s parents accused her husband of faking his gender status. Alter, Jane’s husband, was born as a girl but also has a penis. According to medical examination, he had Klinefelter’s syndrome. In 2006, after consulting medical experts, Alter reconstructed himself as a male. This background was used by Jane’s parents to have him arrested. Here, *malu* is brought up as a reason. Jane said that she thought her parents considered her decision to marry Alter shameful.

From all stories related to homosexuality either in the Australian editions or in the Indonesian editions, we can see that the women’s magazines acknowledge the existence of homosexuals by publishing stories about them despite the magazines’ focus
on the heterosexuals. The stories by the homosexuals show that Indonesian and Australian societies still divide man and woman based on the heterosexual matrix where the normal man should be heterosexual masculine and normal woman should be heterosexual feminine. When they cannot fit into this heterosexual matrix they can be disapproved of by society and have to find communities which accept them, or they will try to be ‘normal’ by practising heterosexuality. Especially in the Indonesian context, the disapproval of homosexuality takes account malu (shame), a cultural condemnation.

It is interesting to note that although Indonesian editions do not openly cover homosexual relationships, their covert reporting on homosexual relationships shows that the magazines acknowledge the existence and voice of homosexuals. The coverage on homosexual relationships shows that internationally-licensed magazines published in Indonesia are more similar to the Australian women’s magazines than to Indonesian local magazines that tend to publish stories condemning homosexuals for violating Indonesian religious and cultural norms.

**Staying single**

Since the idea of romantic love in a marriage or cohabitation does not provide a 100 per cent guarantee for personal happiness, many women choose to stay single or postpone their marriage. Taylor argues that single heterosexual women have become hypervisible in popular culture since the mid-1990s. She gives the example of single heterosexual women in a popular America TV series *Sex and the City* to show that being single has become cultural currency in Western media culture. The excerpt from *Cosmopolitan Australia* below shows that being single is represented as desirable and satisfying:

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Age 30
Grace Cassio is changing careers and moving cities.
In my twenties, I started a photography business taking children’s portraits. It was an instant success. I hired two assistants just to keep up!
After a couple of years, I realised I wanted more—travelling, and a social life—and to take my work in a different direction.
Even though I’m single and don’t have kids, work felt like a marriage—a grown-up commitment. So, a few months ago, I decided to close the business.
My friends think I’m crazy. So many of them have mortgages, kids or both—it’s a different headspace to where I’m at. But my new direction has made us grow closer, rather than drifting apart, as I’m not as busy!
I’m lucky that I don’t have any major financial commitments. I’ve decided to move cities, so I can meet new people and have new experiences. I can’t wait to travel the world taking photos, and see the sights I never saw in my twenties.
Best of all, now I’ll never look back and ask, ‘What if?’

In the excerpt above, career and enjoying the single life without major financial commitments seem to be the reasons for Grace Cassio to stay single. Another reason is that Cassio plans to do more travelling. Travelling as a discourse is increasing in Indonesia but is not as popular as it is in Australia.

With regard to Indonesian single women, an article in Marie Claire Indonesia ‘The 30’s Tale’ captures some Indonesian single women’s reasons for and experiences of being single. These single women’s jobs show that they come from the middle-class group who have high education and are financially independent. They have managerial level jobs. The excerpts are shown below:

Bianca Angelina, 33 years old, Channel Sales Manager
I’m enjoying life!
Not having a partner is not a problem for me. But the ‘pressure’ to get married cannot be avoided. The experience of having to call off my wedding when I was 20 made me more realistic and pragmatic towards life. My focus now is on enjoying what I have and doing my dream job the best I can.

Ria Dewi, 31 years old, PR practitioner
The Breadwinner
With my income, I try to support my family including paying my siblings’ tuition fee. My father has died and as the oldest I have to take his role. In the beginning I was scared. But I always try to make my family happy. I was very touched when finally my sibling graduated from the university: Yes, I did it!

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186 “us” in this excerpt refers to Grace Cassio and her friends.
188 A further discussion about Indonesian women and travel for leisure can be seen in chapter 5 of this thesis.
Eviaty Jenie, 34 years old, Corporate Lawyer
*The happy thirties*
Becoming 30 is my happiest moment. Not only am I financially established, I’ve also found work which matches my passion. In my social life, I am much more mature. Right now I know which are my loyal friends as we have experienced a lot. I am happy for having them.

Anastasia Pritasari, 31 years old, The head of marketing
*Pursuing Career is challenging!*
It would make my parents happy if I got married. But I have a bigger dream. The process to reach my dream becomes a never-ending challenge for me. Finally at this age, my parent realise that getting married and having children is not a woman’s only goal.

Fransisca Dewiana, 31 years old, Brand Manager Blowfish
*Next step: Getting married*
A bitter experience with a man in the past makes me more selective in choosing my life partner. This is why I am still single in my thirties. If I find the one I dream of, I will do the best for me, my partner, and my family, including leaving my work rhythm now.

Melinda Susanti, 30 years old, Marketing Manager
When are you getting married?
I am not worried with the fact that I am still single. But it seems that people around me are more worried. My family, close friends, neighbours, colleagues always ask, ‘When are you getting married?’ this question makes me uneasy and spoils my life. For me, age is not a standard for someone to get married, the most important thing is whether we are ready or not.\(^{189}\)

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\(^{189}\)Bianca Angelina, 33 tahun, Channel Sales Manager.
I’m enjoying life!
_Belum memiliki pendamping saat ini sebenarnya bagi saya bukanlah suatu beban. Tetapi ‘todongan’ untuk segera berkeluarga pun memang tak bisa dielakkan. Pengalaman tidak jadi menikah di akhir tahun 20-an membuat saya lebih realistis dan apa adanya dalam menjalani hidup. Kini fokus saya adalah menikmati apa yang saya miliki dan menjalani pekerjaan yang memang adalah dream job saya ini dengan sebaik mungkin._

Ria Dewi, 31 tahun, Praktisi PR
The Breadwinner

Eviaty Jenie, 34 tahun, Corporate Lawyer
_The happy thirties_
’Usia 30-an menjadi momen paling membahagiakan bagi saya. Tak hanya mapan secara finansial, saya pun menemukan bidang pekerjaan yang sangat sesuai dengan passion saya. Begitu pun dalam kehidupan sosial, saya jauh lebih matang. Saat ini saya sudah tahu teman-teman mana yang selalu setia untuk saya, berkant banyaknya pengalaman yang telah kami alami. Dan saya bahagia karena masih memiliki mereka._

Anastasia Pritasari, 31 tahun, The head of marketing
_Pursuing Career is challenging!_
These women’s stories show us many things. The most important is that their reasons for staying single are various. Their reasons are enjoying life as singles like Bianca Angelina, Eviaty Jenie and Melinda Susanti, becoming the breadwinner in the family like Ria Dewi, pursuing a career like Anastasia Pritasari, or waiting for ‘Mr Right’ like Fransisca Dewiana. All the women do not seem to have problems with being single; those who stay single to enjoy life definitely view their singlehood as desirable. Even Ria Dewi who stays single because she has to support her family including her siblings’ tuition fees does not express resentment for being single.

For these women, being single women does not necessarily mean living alone or in loneliness. Eviaty Jenie states in the excerpt above that she does not worry because she has friends. Many single women find friendship networks are important in providing intimacy and sustaining a viable single life Trimberger, Tan and Situmorang found in their studies that single women had close friends with whom they could share problems and happiness. In their studies, some women reported that they were more

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Adalah kebahagiaan bagi orang tua jika saya menikah. Tapi saya memiliki mimpi yang lebih dari itu. Proses mengejar impian ini pun menjadi tantangan yang tiada habisnya bagi saya. Hingga akhirnya di usia ini, pikiran orang tua pun terbuka, bahwa menikah dan punya anak bukanlah satu-satunya hal yang harus dipenuhi setiap perempuan. Kini, saya merasa begitu bahagia!

Fransisca Dewiana, 31 tahun, Brand Manager Blowfish
Next step: Getting married
Pengalaman pahit dengan seorang pria di masa lalu membuat saya jauh lebih selektif dalam memilih pasangan hidup. Itu yang membuat saya masih sendiri di usia kepala tiga ini. Jika saya menemukan sosok the one yang saya idamkan, saya bertewaikan apa pun yang terbaik bagi saya, pasangan, dan keluarga kelak, termasuk meninggalkan ritme pekerjaan saya seperti sekarang.

Melinda Susanti, 30 tahun, Marketing Manager
Kapan Menikah?


open to their best friends than to their parents or siblings. Most of them said that they
were likely to maintain close relationships with other singles. They relied on their
friends as the primary source of problem-solving assistance. The reason for this,
according to Tan’s finding, was that these women did not want to burden their family
with their personal problems.¹⁹¹

Although the women are happy to be single, none of them states that they do not
want to get married. Most of the women just do not see marriage as a priority in their
lives except Fransisca Dewiana who is ready to sacrifice her career to get married, ‘If I
find the one I dream of, I will do the best for me, my partner, and my family, including
leaving my work rhythm now’. According to Stein, singles are not homogeneous. He
developed a typology of the state of being single based on the criteria of choice
(voluntary vs. involuntary) and permanence (temporary vs. stable).¹⁹²

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<th>Voluntary</th>
<th>Involuntary</th>
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<td>Temporary</td>
<td>Never-married and formerly married who are postponing marriage by not currently seeking mates, but who are not opposed to the idea of marriage</td>
<td>Those who have been actively seeking mates for shorter or longer periods of time, but have not yet found mates</td>
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<td>Those who were not interested in marriage or remarriage for some period of time but are now actively seeking mates</td>
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<td>Stable</td>
<td>Those choosing to be single (never-marrieds and formerly marrieds)</td>
<td>Never-marrieds and formerly marrieds who wanted to marry or remarry, have not found a mate and have more or less accepted being single as a probable life state</td>
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<td>Those who for various reasons oppose the idea of marriage</td>
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Looking at their reasons for staying single, the women in the excerpts above, both in Australia and Indonesia, are under the category of voluntary temporary singles. They are never-married women and are not opposed to the idea of marriage but they postpone their marriage for reasons like enjoying life and pursuing a career. The reasons these women give for postponing their marriage seems to reflect their perception that marriage will make them have no fun or excitement, no travel, and no opportunity for a career. From the excerpt, only Fransisca Dewiana can be categorised as an involuntary temporary single as she indicates that she is actively seeking a partner. Even then she seems to take her single life easily by not rushing into marriage.

The chance of getting married is interesting to point out here, especially in the Indonesian context where, as I mentioned in the introduction, the expected age of marriage is younger than in Western countries. Situmorang found in her study of single women in Yogya, a university city in central Java, and Medan, an industrial city in north Sumatra, that one reason for women to stay single is they had broken long-term serious relationships.\(^{193}\) It means that when they broke up, they had reached an age at which their chance to meet an eligible partner was reduced. Another reason related to chance is career. As these women put their career as their priority, their time and opportunity to seek partners are limited.\(^{194}\)

Comparing the experiences of single women in the Australian edition of the magazines and in the Indonesian edition, it can be seen that the Australian magazines focus their stories in the enjoyment of being single. Australian women mention activities that they enjoy, like photography, going travelling, and doing their hobbies. Stories about Indonesian single women tend to focus on their justification for being single, for example, the Indonesian women explain that as single women they do not

\(^{194}\)Ibid.
feel worried because they have friends, they can support their family, and they can find their dream job. The Indonesian single women need to justify their being single because of the pressure to get married.

Situmorang suggests that the pressure to get married usually comes from the mother, relatives, especially female relatives like married sisters or aunts, and even friends.\(^\text{195}\) This pressure is voiced by the Indonesian women, Bianca Angelina, Anita Pritasari and Melinda Susanti in the excerpt above. Angelina says that ‘the “pressure” to get married cannot be avoided’, Pritasari mentions the pressure from her parents ‘It would make my parents happy if I got married’, and Susanti is disturbed by her family, close friends, neighbours and colleagues who always ask, ‘When are you getting married?’ The pressure, according to Situmorang is more strongly felt by those living with their parents rather than those living outside their parental home. To avoid the pressure, these women are usually stoic and show others that being single can also offer happiness and satisfaction.

Situmorang says that the pressure to get married is actually not exclusively a women’s problem but it is more significant to women who traditionally are expected to be wives and mothers by the norms of the society. In Javanese society, Geertz says that a woman’s access to political affairs of the community and in religious worship depends on her husband.\(^\text{196}\) It means that a woman’s status in society is tied to her husband. Similarly, Hull found in her study that the status of elite and urban-based Javanese wives is linked to their husbands’ occupational status.\(^\text{197}\) Hull gives examples of ‘wives of police personnel, wives of doctors, and wives of railway employees’.

\(^{195}\)Ibid., 288.


\(^{197}\)Hull, “Women in Java’s Rural Middle Class”, 110.
Berninghausen’s and Kerstan’s study on Javanese women found that the status of Javanese women was often determined by their role as a mother.\footnote{Berninghausen and Kerstan, Forging New Paths, 68.} Berninghausen and Kerstan say that for a Javanese woman, the role of a mother gives social prestige as well as a way to be accepted by society as an adult.\footnote{Berninghausen and Kerstan, Forging New Paths, 68.} Berninghausen and Kerstan’s discussion shows that the role of a mother is of high status in Javanese society. Berninghausen and Kerstan point out that the important status of a mother in Javanese society will also oppress those who are not mothers. The view that women’s role as a mother is prestigious was even used by the New Order regime (1966-1998) to socially and politically control Indonesian women by defining them as wives and mothers.\footnote{Julia I. Suryakusuma, “State Ibuism: Appropriating and Distorting Womanhood in New Order Indonesia,” in Sex, Power and Nation: An Anthology of Writings, 1979–2003, ed. Julia I. Suryakusuma (Jakarta: Metafor Publishing, 2004), 161–88.} In the present time, the fact that the society still puts pressure on women to get married and have children shows that the cultural value of a mother as someone who has high status in the society is still strong.

Apart from the pressure they feel from their surroundings to get married, none of the women in *Cosmopolitan Australia* and *Marie Claire Indonesia* talk about the stigma they suffer for staying single. However, it does not mean that the stigma does not exist. In the Indonesian context, singlehood is considered a social failure. Situmorang mentions that a single woman is often stigmatised as ‘an “old maid” who could not get a man because she is unattractive, handicapped or incompetent; or a “city single” who does not want a man because she is highly educated, ambitious, single minded, determined, active and a career person.’\footnote{Situmorang, “Staying Single in a Married World”, 288.} Some would feel sorry for singles while others blame them for being too choosy or too selfish. The pressure to get married from their family, close friends, colleagues, even from people they do not know, implies a negative opinion towards women who stay single.

In discussing Indonesian single women and the pressure they experience to get married, it is important to note that the Indonesian editions I analysed never mention arranged marriages. The absence of arranged marriages in the discussion about Indonesian women shows that the magazines are consistent in promoting the idea of romantic love and women’s personal happiness. Traditionally, Javanese younger people let their parents select their future spouse and never questioned their parents’ choice.\textsuperscript{202} Then, the parents arranged the marriage of the couple. In the present day, more young people choose their own spouse although they still ask for their parents’ consent to get married. Berninghausen and Kerstan note that conflicts between parents and children often happen because of the transformation from old to new norms.\textsuperscript{203} They mention that parents sometimes disown children who get married against their wishes.

In general, the single women represented in the Australian and Indonesian editions view singlehood as desirable and enjoyable. They consider marriage as important but not as their priority. They live normal lives with work-related activities and social relations although they do not conform to the traditional mother-wife role expectation. The single women have pressure to get married from people around them, especially from family and closer friends. Indonesian single women in particular experience more pressure to marry as the expectation to be a wife and a mother is stronger in Indonesia. However, the single women stay positive about their singlehood. As suggested by Evans, the pursuit of personal happiness becomes central in the stories of these single women in the women’s magazines. Apparently they are aware that marriage does not guarantee happiness, so they do not mind postponing their marriage or staying single.

\textsuperscript{202}Geertz, \textit{The Javanese Family}, 55. 
\textsuperscript{203}Berninghausen and Kerstan, \textit{Forging New Paths}, 120.
Marriage, religion and the state in Indonesia

Marriage is a complicated matter in Indonesia. Marriage in Indonesia is not personal, it is a social contract. There is a saying that when Indonesians get married, they do not only marry their partners but also the partner’s family (menikah tidak hanya dengan pasangan tapi dengan keluarganya juga). The idea of ‘family’ in the Indonesian context is also complex; it ranges from the birth family to the whole ethnic group. Marriage is a part of people’s faith, especially for Muslims. According to Munti, marriage is seen as an act of worship and obedience to Allah with the purpose of procreation in Islam. In Islam, sex should only happen within marriage. To comply with this, some Muslims even practise kawin siri, a marriage for honour, which is basically a marriage done in front of religious elders to avoid zina. These people claim that this kind of marriage is legal in the name of God although it is not legal in terms of state law. In this kind of marriage, women are not protected by law and do not have any rights.

Marriage in Indonesia is regulated by the state, but there is also Islamic law and adat (customary law). Marriage becomes a problem not only for individuals but also for families, ethnic groups, religious groups and the state. The following discussion addresses the complication of inter-religious marriage, especially between Muslim and non-Muslim, in Indonesia. I find this issue important to discuss because it is specific to Indonesia.

Chee et al. explain that marriages across ethnic boundaries and across religions were and still are difficult to contract. There are traditionally some problems in Indonesia with regard to inter-ethnic marriage. For example, there is usually an objection when a Chinese is going to marry a Javanese because traditionally people

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205 Zina is sexual intercourse between people who are not married to one another. Zina is a sin in Islam.
believe such a marriage will bring bad luck. However, religion seems to connect believers across ethnic boundaries. So when two individuals have the same religion, even when they come from different ethnic groups, they will face less objection in getting married. It is important to note that in Indonesia, everyone is expected to have a religion.

The case of inter-religious marriage is covered in Marie Claire Indonesia January 2011. The publication of this article shows the magazine’s awareness that relationships are not only about romantic love. This article discusses the restrictions on inter-religious marriage from religion and state law in Indonesia. Through the experiences of three couples, the article offers some ‘success’ stories. From the three, I focus on the case of Lia, a Batak Christian woman, and Abi Abidin, a Javanese Muslim, because their situation is common in Indonesia. In Lia and Abidin’s case, we can see that although their families overlooked the ethnic differences, they were made anxious by the religious differences. In the end, they were able to get married with the help of two famous non-government organisations in Indonesia.

As a woman from the Batak ethnic group, whose family are Christian priests, she was expected to choose a husband who had the same religion and could continue the line of the family. But Lia decided to choose Abi Abidin, a Javanese man whose religion is Islam and who comes from a devoted Muslim family for a reason that cannot be argued against: love. Living in a country where the majority of the people still assume that parents should take part in decisions about their children’s partner, Lia had to face strong rejection from her family. After their introduction to their big families, Lia and Adi could not really be accepted by their partner’s families. In other words, no one in their families approved their relationship.

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208 Religion is part of the state ideology in Indonesia. Pancasila (the state ideology of Five Principles) puts belief in God as its first principle. However, Indonesia only recognises six religions (see below). The pressure to claim membership of one of those religions, at least officially on paper, is evidenced by the fact that after the 1965 coup and the massacre of Communists and Communist sympathisers, anyone not claiming a religion was in danger of being branded a Communist.
Lia’s and Abi’s different religious affiliation angered both families. Islam and Christianity cannot be united. Their families have believed in that for generations. They cannot ignore the different principles. Their marriage would be against their religious teaching and norms, it was a sin, *haram*, unblessed, forbidden, humiliating, against the law and a betrayal to God.

But their love could not be thwarted. After five years together, Lia and Abi decided to walk down the aisle and they performed *ijab kabul* in the beginning of 2005. Without their families’ consent and attendance, Lia and Abi did two wedding processions. The first one was on 7 January 2005 for *Akad Nikah* at the Wahid Institute, Jakarta. The second one was on 11 January 2005 for the wedding ceremony in Sidomukti Church, Salatiga with the help of the Percik Foundation. And they registered the marriage in the Office of Civil Registration in the same city. Uniquely, their marriage was the first inter-religious marriage conducted at the Wahid Institute and the Percik Foundation. So Lia and Abi’s wedding ceremonies were attended by many religious leaders from Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism and other faiths, like a miniature of pluralism in Indonesia.

The objection from Lia’s and Abidin’s families, who said that their marriage was ‘against their religious teaching and norms; that it was a sin, *haram*, unblessed, forbidden, humiliating, against the law and a betrayal to God’, shows how religious differences in Indonesia are still perceived with prejudice. Negative sentiments towards

209 Legally forbidden by Islamic law.
210 Muslim marriage vow.
211 Different term for Muslim marriage vow.
212 Sebagai perempuan suku Batak yang berasal dari keluarga pendeta, ia dituntut untuk memilih pasangan yang seiman dan memiliki marga yang bisa meneruskan silsilah keluarganya. Namun, Lia justru memilih Abi Abidin, laki-laki Java beragama Islam yang berasal dari keluarga yang sangat Islami karena satu alasan yang tidak bisa ditawar cinta. Hidup di negeri yg mayoritas menganut budaya bahwa orangtua harus ikut menentukan siapa pasangan bagi anak-anaknya, membuat Lia harus menghadapi penolakan keras dari pihak keluarga. Sejak awal perkenalan mereka pada keluarga besar masing-masing, dengan tegas baik Lia maupun Adi tidak diterima masuk dalam jajaran keluarga. Dengan kata lain tidak ada satu pun pihak keluarga dari keduanya yang merestui hubungan mereka.


other religions are often not obvious when people from different religions interact with each other. But when it comes to inter-religious marriage, the differences are felt as a big threat. The case above also shows that in Indonesia, a marriage is more than just about love and money as it involves religion and the state as well.

The State regulation related to religion and marriage is Marriage Law No. 1/1974. Article 2 paragraph 1 states that ‘marriage is valid only if done in accordance with the religious laws and beliefs of the parties’. According to Chee et al., marriage in Indonesia should not only comply with legal aspects but also religious aspects. With regard to its religious aspect, every marriage should be performed in front of officials from one of six religions officially acknowledged by the State: Islam, Christianity (which usually means Protestantism), Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism. With regard to its legal aspect, every marriage should be registered in the Office of Religious Affairs (Kantor Urusan Agama, KUA) if the married couple are Muslims, or registered in the Office of Civil Registration (Kantor Catatan Sipil, KCS) if the married couple are non-Muslims. Chee et al. point out that the common interpretation regarding the above article is that marriage should be entered into by two people who have the same religion so the two aspects, religious and legal, should be fulfilled. Based on that interpretation, Chee et al. say that a marriage which cannot fulfil the religious and legal aspects cannot be registered.

Basically, according to the Marriage Law, an inter-religious marriage is possible if an official of each religion approves of the couple getting married. But it is hard to get a Muslim to approve an inter-religious marriage between a Muslim man and a non-Muslim woman, as in the case of Abidin and Lia above. It is easier to get approval when a non-Muslim man and a Muslim woman want to marry. The reason for the objection is

213 “Perkawinan adalah sah apabila dilakukan menurut hukum masing-masing agama dan kepercayaannya itu.”
214 Chee et al., “Muslim-Non-Muslim Marriages, Rights and the State in Southeast Asia.”
that children tend to follow their mother’s religion since the mother is usually the one who is responsible for the children’s religious education. So, when a Muslim man marries a non-Muslim woman, the children tend to become non-Muslim.

Chee et al. mention that marriage as a religion-related issue was made obvious by the MUI fatwa of 1980 against inter-religious marriage. According to the fatwa, a Muslim woman was forbidden to marry a non-Muslim man and a Muslim man was forbidden to marry a non-Muslim woman even though she is of the ahli al-kitab. A woman of the ahli al-kitab is ‘a female Christian or Jewess whose ancestors had entered their respective religions before the Prophethood of Muhammad’ who is actually permitted to be married to a Muslim man. The reason for the fatwa is that inter-religious marriage will bring more possible harm (mafsada) to Muslim society and children than any benefit (maslaha). This fatwa, according to Chee et al., led to many ‘conversions of convenience’, in which, in order to marry a Muslim, a non-Muslim converts to Islam, more often than the other way around because a Muslim is forbidden to leave the faith. Chee et al. point out that ‘conversions of convenience’ can become a problem when the marriage does not work and the converted spouse wishes to leave the religion after the dissolution of the marriage.

Chee et al. mention that the MUI fatwa of 1980 was followed by the promulgation of the Kompilasi Hukum Islam (Compilation of Islamic Law/CIL) in 1991 which is a syariah-based document. According to MB Hooker, the compilation is not a law (undang) but ‘a guide to applicable law for Judges within the jurisdiction of the

216 Hooker, Indonesian Islam, 77–78.
217 Ibid., 77.
218 Ibid., 77–78.
220 Ibid.
Institution of Religious Justice in solving the cases submitted to them’. Chee et al. say that using CIL as a guide, the Islamic courts were expected to produce more uniformity in their decisions, including their decisions concerning marriage. CIL was implemented through a Presidential Instruction, not enacted by the legislature. Chee et al. state that the effect of the implementation of CIL in Indonesia is very strong in marriage because it requires Muslims to marry according to *syariah* regulations.

The promulgation of CIL was not without opposition. Chee et al. mention that CIL was requested to be reviewed in 2001 by the Ministry of the Empowerment of Women. The arguments forwarded by the Ministry were that CIL reinforced social attitudes that contribute to domestic violence which usually victimises women, and that CIL conflicted with the 1948 Universal Declaration on the Rights of Man and the 1990 Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam. As a response, a working group for gender mainstreaming, headed by Siti Musdah Mulia, was appointed by The Ministry of Religion to review CIL. In October 2004, this group proposed a revised version of the CIL called the Counter Legal Draft KHI (CLD-KHI). However, CLD raised great controversy among the Muslim community. Chee et al. mention that some Muslim paramilitary groups threatened acts of violence if CLD were adopted. They were opposed to the point that marriage between Muslims and non-Muslims should be authorised ‘based on principles of mutual respect and esteem for the right of free exercise of religion and belief’ and the point where polygamy should be constrained. These groups claimed that CLD’s principles were influenced by secularism and liberalism. In February 2005, the CLD was withdrawn.

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222 Chee et al., “Muslim-Non-Muslim Marriages, Rights and the State in Southeast Asia”.
224 White, “Gender and the Family,”, 348.
226 According to Chee et al. the term secularism and liberalism are highly derogatory in conservative Indonesian Islamic Parlance.
Interestingly, Chee et al. put ‘love’ in opposition to religion. Marriage in this case is not only seen as a social contract or financial contract but also as the goal of ‘love’. Religion, though, can become one of the constraints in love marriage. Religion which supposedly promotes ‘love’ and as the early (historical) basis of God’s love becomes the opposition of ‘love’ itself. There is an interesting discussion by Lukito about the case of Vony-Andy versus the State where love is used to contest religion.\textsuperscript{227}

The case was brought by Adrianus Petrus Hendrik Nelwan, a Christian, and Andi Vony Gani Parengi, a Muslim, to the general court in 1986. They could not register their marriage in the Office of Religious Affairs and the Civil Registration Office because of their different religions. So they wanted to get official approval for their marriage from the court. The judges from the Primary Court rejected their application based on some legal arguments. The first one was that Marriage Law No. 1/1974 does not regulate marriages between people who have different religions. The second was that the decision of the Office of Religious Affairs and the Civil Registration Office to reject their permission to register their marriage was correct because both offices based their decision on the regulations promulgated on marriage. The third was that an interfaith marriage is prohibited and had no place in Indonesia based on article 2 of Marriage Law No. 1/1974 and the description of its implementation in article 8 of Government Regulation No. 9/1975. Additionally, according to the judges’ understanding of Islamic religious teaching and Christian teaching, inter-religious marriage is prohibited, as can be seen in the Qur’an, verse 2:221, which states that a Muslim woman is prohibited from entering into a marriage contract with a non-Muslim, and in the New Testament, 2 Corinthians 6:14.\textsuperscript{228}

\textsuperscript{227}Ratno Lukito, “Trapped between Legal Unification and Pluralism: The Indonesian Supreme Court’s Decision on Interfaith Marriage,” in Muslim-Non-Muslim Marriage: Political and Cultural Contestations in Southeast Asia, ed. Gavin W Jones, Heng Leng Chee and Maznah Mohamad (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2009), 33–58.

\textsuperscript{228}It is a verse where St. Paul writes, “Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?”
As a response to the rejection by the Primary Court, Vony, a Muslim woman, managed to submit the decision of the Primary Court to the Supreme Court. She herself presented her objection on the decision made by the Primary Court in front of the appeal court. She based her arguments on the fact that article 2 of Marriage Law No. 1/1974 does not actually prohibit inter-religious marriage, it is just that the Marriage Law does not regulate inter-religious marriage, which Lukito calls a legal vacuum. She argued that her intention to marry Adrianus was based on mutual love despite their different religions. She also said that her parents and Adrianus’ parents were supportive of their marriage which, according to her understanding about Islamic teaching, strengthens her intention to marry Adrianus. It took three years for the Supreme Court to decide this case in favour of the appellant. The arguments presented by the Supreme Court were that the Supreme Court acknowledged that although their religions were different, the two parties loved each other and that their relationship was based on mutual affection. Moreover, that the parents of both parties did not oppose the intention of the parties to get married indicated that religion was not an issue when they planned to get married.

With regard to the opinion of the Primary Court on Law No. 1/1974, i.e. that the Law does not regulate inter-religious marriage, the Supreme Court stated that it could be outlawed by article 27 of the Basic Constitution of 1945, which basically states that all citizens are equal in front of the law and the government and they should obey the law and the government. The Supreme Court interpreted this article as all citizens have equal rights to enter into a marital relationship regardless of their religion. Finally, the Supreme Court ordered the Civil Registration Office to register their marriage.

According to Lukito, the decision to register the marriage in the Civil Registration Office and not the Office of Religious Affairs, meant that Vony ‘released herself from
compliance to Islamic law’. Therefore, her marriage could not be registered in the office of Religious Affairs.

I agree with Lukito’s opinion that the Supreme Court understood love as the representation of human rights; and because to get married is a human right, this couple was allowed to get married. In my opinion, the Supreme Court’s argument, placing love above religion in deciding the case, is very interesting. Here we can see that regardless of problems in defining the meaning of love, which includes the fantasy of romantic marriage, the law, in this case the Supreme Court, in Indonesia gives love a legal weight. In the case of love versus religion, the Indonesian Supreme Court ruling meant that love won. Unfortunately, the decision of the Supreme Court only applies to Vony-Andy and cannot be used as a basis for other inter-religious couples. Many institutes which facilitated inter-religious marriage had to stop their facilitation because of many pressures from many parties. Paramadina Foundation stopped facilitating inter-religious marriage in 2005 while the Wahid Institute and ICRP (Indonesian Conference on Religion and Peace) stopped its facilitation in 2006. Percik Foundation is the only foundation left, apart from some other individuals, to fight for inter-religious marriage.

The two cases above show that common representations in the magazines about romantic love and the pursuit of personal happiness are a fantasy for Indonesian women (and men) when they want to marry someone from a different religion. The prejudices over marrying a person who has a different religion, some religious teachings and the interpretation of state law, though not the Constitution, complicate the marriage of two people of different religions. However, these two cases also show that the idea of love,

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229 Lukito, “Trapped between Legal Unification and Pluralism”, 50.
230 Paryati and Dwinanda, “In the Name of God,” 91.
231 Ibid.
no matter how abstract the definition, can be used to challenge religious restrictions and state law associated with marriage in Indonesia.

**Conclusion**

The discussions show that both Australian and Indonesian editions send mixed messages about relationships. On the one hand women’s magazines promote the idea of romantic love and encourage women to search for romantic love by finding Mr Right. On the other hand, the magazines put forward the importance of personal happiness, sometimes to the extent that a relationship could be terminated if it is not fulfilling. The idea of personal happiness is considered important because romantic love does not guarantee security and an everlasting relationship. Although both Australian and Indonesian editions do not directly tell women to get married, the tips on relationships in both editions tend to promote the idea of romantic love by focusing on the quest for Mr Right which implies marriage as the end goal. However the articles discussing women’s real lives express concerns about the fantasy offered by the idea of romantic love and advise women to be more realistic before they decide to get married.

Marriage has different meanings for Australians and Indonesians. Marriage for Australians is not necessarily the end goal of a relationship. The disappearance of values attached to marriage in Western society gives Australians the option to live together without getting married. Discussions on cohabitation can only be found in Australian editions. In contrast, marriage is still assumed and expected as the final goal of a relationship for Indonesians. In Indonesia, a couple cannot just decide to live together because it is unacceptable based on religion. Marriage is not simple for Indonesians, since it includes the individuals’ wish to get married, their families, their ethnic groups, their religions and the state. The case of Lia and Abidin in the discussion about inter-religious marriage above shows that marriage can be very complicated in Indonesia.

Another option of relationships discussed by the women’s magazines is a gay
relationship. Although basically the magazines are targeted to and about heterosexual women, they include gay relationships in their discussions on relationships. From the gay couples’ and the gay women’s stories discussed in the magazines, we can see that gay relationships are acceptable in Australian society. Indonesian editions also address gay relationships although not as often as the Australian editions. The discussions on gay relationships in both Australia and Indonesian editions include the problems faced by gay people to be accepted by the society. For example, the excerpts about gay people who try to look ‘normal’ by having a heterosexual relationship prove that homosexuality is considered deviant.

The focus on personal happiness can be seen clearly in the articles about single women. As discussed earlier, the magazines give women the option to stay single if the women think a (heterosexual) married, de facto relationship, or gay relationship is not suitable for them. Being single for these women is represented as desirable and enjoyable. Consequently, marriage is seen as unattractive since it is expected to restrict women from having a career, enjoying life and having freedom. These women are not against marriage but they do not consider it as a priority. Compared to single women in Australia, Indonesian women experience much greater pressure to get married. This pressure is voiced by the single women in Indonesian editions. For Indonesian women, marriage signals social adulthood, so getting married and having children is often the way to be accepted as a full member of society. Being married determines the status of Indonesian women; therefore a widow/divorcée will often remarry. Despite the pressure, the single women in the magazines are represented as having a positive attitude about their singlehood.

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232 A further discussion about women as mothers can be seen in the discussion about women and home in chapter 5 of this thesis.
Chapter 3 Sexuality

*Cosmopolitan*, *Cleo* and *Marie Claire* address women’s sexual desire and women’s sexual experience in their tips and articles. The Australian and Indonesian editions of these magazines put the topic of sexuality on their covers. This means that the women’s magazines consider sexuality a topic that attracts people to read the magazines. For Indonesians, the magazines are an important source of information about sexuality as a result of the lack of formal sex education in schools.

As I mentioned in my introductory chapter, sexuality is a major concern in Indonesia. Sexuality is part of a moral panic associated with negative Western influences. By practising *pergaulan bebas* (free socialising), young Indonesians are believed to be influenced by the ‘immoral’ practices of Western people, including premarital sex. Despite, and perhaps because of this concern, Indonesians, especially the government, do not provide proper formal sex education for Indonesian youth. To protect Indonesian youth from negative influences, the traditionalists and religious preservationists only encourage more intensive religious education and ask the youth to avoid ‘Western’ sexual practices. Activities related to sexuality are regulated by the state, for example, through Pornography Law No. 44/2008 (*Undang-Undang No. 44 Tahun 2008 tentang Pornografi*).

This chapter intends to find out how sexuality is represented in Australia and Indonesia. When I started to investigate this topic, I expected I would find clear differences in how sexuality is represented in Australia and Indonesia. However, I was surprised to find that sexuality in Australian and Indonesian editions of *Cosmopolitan*, *Cleo* and *Marie Claire* is presented with almost the same degree of openness in the form

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233See Bellows, “Like the West”; Harding, “The Influence of the ‘Decadent West’”; Parker, “Theorising Adolescent Sexualities in Indonesia”; Webster, “Pergaulan Bebas and Gendered Youth Culture in Yogyakarta, Indonesia.”
of sex tips and articles about women’s sex experiences. Later, I found Foucault’s discussion about *ars erotica* (arts of the erotic) and *scientia sexualis* (science of sexuality) very useful to help me understand the way the magazines represent sexuality.

In the section about *ars erotica*, I discuss the way the women’s magazines represent tips on sexuality as *ars erotica*. Using Benjamin’s theory on the losing of aura, the original use value of a material, as a result of mass production, I argue that tips on sexuality are the representation of *ars erotica* without the element of secrecy. Tips on sexuality in the magazines are a popular *ars erotica* as the disappearance of the secrecy element in *ars erotica* is accepted and expected to happen in popular culture. In the section about *ars erotica*, I also discuss Foucault’s and Rocha’s arguments about the origin of *ars erotica*. Foucault categorises *ars erotica* as an art from the Orient/East while Rocha argues that Foucault’s *ars erotica* is an imagined Oriental/Eastern art because *ars erotica* can also be found in Western society. In my discussion, I show how tips on sexuality as an imagined art of the erotic of the Orient/East is wrapped and sold as Western sexuality in Indonesia. I argue that representing tips on sexuality as Western sexual practice and using White women and men as models are techniques used by the magazines in Indonesia to negotiate Indonesian local culture and regulations which restrict the public exposure of sexuality. Indonesians often negatively perceive Westerners as ‘others’ whose morality is more loose than Indonesians’. Therefore, the open expression of sexuality by Westerners is acceptable to the Indonesian public. Thus, two points can be made. The magazines’ tips on sexuality can be seen, according to Foucaultian theory, as ‘Eastern’ *ars erotica*, but ironically, in the Indonesian magazines they shift and are represented as ‘Western’. Secondly, the apparent lack of difference in the representation of sexuality in Australian and Indonesian magazines implicitly points to a difference: that Indonesians allow, and even expect, Westerners to be openly and freely sexual, while Indonesians are constructed as more moral.
In the second section, I use Foucault’s *scientia sexualis* to show how the discussion about sexuality is framed as academic knowledge, such as psychological and medical knowledge, to enable the magazines, especially in Indonesia, to avoid taboo and maintain decency. In my discussion of women’s confessions about their sexual experiences, I use Krondorfer’s theory on written confession to complement Foucault’s discussion about auricular confession. Using women’s confessions, I focus on finding out about women’s sexual experiences and women’s views about sexuality in Australia and Indonesia. Based on the women’s confessions, I show that women’s sexual experience and views in the women’s magazines are represented similarly by Australian and Indonesian editions by neglecting Indonesian local perspectives on sexuality. For example, religion is absent from the Indonesian women’s confessions, even though religion plays an important role in the lives of Indonesians. I argue that the magazines deliberately avoid discussing the issue of religion in Indonesian editions because the magazines are aware that the issue is sensitive. As internationally-licensed women’s magazines, the magazines choose to put forward the Western idea of liberated modern women without taking account of the permitted and the forbidden in religion. The representation of Indonesian women as free and independent individuals in terms of sexuality in Indonesian women’s confessions can be read as a representation of *pergaulan bebas* (free socialising) in the Indonesian context, the influence of ‘Western lifestyle’.

In the last section of the chapter, I discuss Krondorfer’s claim that the written confession is a gendered activity. Although Krondorfer’s concept of the written confession helps me analyse women’s confessions in the magazines, his claim that women are unable to write confessions raises a question. The fact that the women’s confessions in the magazines are written by the magazines’ writers and not the confessants themselves seems to support Krondorfer’s claim. However, I argue that the
written confession is not a gendered activity as suggested by Krondorfer: women are as capable as men of writing confessions. The lack of published women’s confessions is a result of women’s restricted access to the means to publicise their confessions.

**Foucault’s *ars erotica* and *scientia sexualis***

In *The History of Sexuality Volume 1: An Introduction*, Foucault attacks the ‘repressive hypothesis’, an assumption that sexuality is repressed in capitalist and bourgeois society. According to this hypothesis, the word ‘sex’ was muted and controlled at the level of language by censors in the seventeenth century until the twentieth century when the repression was beginning to loosen. Sex was seen as something dangerous, such that the perverse pleasures of an individual could be a threat to the whole society. It was taboo to talk about sex except when it was related to reproduction. In his book, Foucault disagrees with the idea that sex has been repressed and silenced. He argues that starting from the seventeenth century sexuality was transformed into discourse. There were many discussions about sexuality at that time in the form of discourses in specific areas such as education, medicine and law as sexuality was developed into a science of sexuality.

In discussing the science of sexuality, Foucault put forward the dichotomy of *ars erotica* (arts of the erotic) and *scientia sexualis* (science of sexuality). About *ars erotica*, he explains:

In the erotic art, truth is drawn from pleasure itself, understood as a practice and accumulated as experience; pleasure is not considered in relation to an absolute law of the permitted and the forbidden, nor by reference to a criterion of utility, but first and foremost in relation to itself; it is experienced as pleasure, evaluated in terms of its intensity, its specific quality, its duration, its reverberations in the body and the soul. Moreover, this knowledge must be deflected back into the sexual practice itself, in order to shape it as though from within and amplify its effects. In this way, there is formed a knowledge that must remain secret, not because of an element of infamy that might attach to its object, but because of the need to hold it in the greatest reserve, since, according to tradition, it would lose its effectiveness and its virtue by being divulged. Consequently, the relationship to the master who holds the secrets is of paramount importance; only he, working alone, can transmit this art in an esoteric manner and as the
culmination of an initiation in which he guides the disciple’s progress with unfailing skill and severity. The effects of this masterful art, which are considerably more generous than the sparseness of its prescriptions would lead one to imagine, are said to transfigure the one fortunate enough to receive its privileges: an absolute mastery of the body, a singular bliss, obliviousness to time and limits, the elixir of life, the exile of death and its threats.²³⁴

Foucault claims that *ars erotica* can be found in China, Japan, India, Rome and the Arabo-Moslem societies.²³⁵

From my reading of Foucault, I draw four main elements of *ars erotica*: the first is the pleasure itself; the second is the master who teaches the disciple about the art; the third is the mastery of the body as a requirement to control the body; and the fourth is secrecy. *Ars erotica* is the pleasure itself and is detached from the law of the permitted and the forbidden. It can only be understood and passed on by a master. The role of the master as someone who really understands the art is important. As the only one who can teach the disciples about the mastery of the body, the master must tell people what to do and what to show. The mastery of the body will enable people to control their bodies in order to gain pleasure. In *ars erotica*, sexuality is held in the greatest reserve because it will lose its effectiveness and virtue when it is divulged.

Different from *ars erotica* which gives guidance on how to seek the pleasure of sex, *scientia sexualis* is presented in academic language which puts sexuality in academic discourse. Foucault sees the idea of confession as a construction of Western culture. He particularly discusses confession as a form of *scientia sexualis*.

On the face of it at least, our civilization possesses no *ars erotica*. In return, it is undoubtedly the only civilization to practice a *scientia sexualis*; or rather, the only civilization to have developed over the centuries procedures for telling the truth of sex which are geared to a form of knowledge-power strictly opposed to the art of initiations and the masterful secret: I have in mind the confession.²³⁶


²³⁵Foucault, *The History of Sexuality Volume 1*, 57–58.

²³⁶Ibid., 58.
According to Foucault, confession is the evolution of the Catholic pastoral and the sacrament of penance after the Council of Trent. It was used to counsel problems dealing with sins against purity and imposed the rules of self-examination. Questions were formulated by the confession manuals of the Middle Ages and some were still in use in the seventeenth century. Foucault argues that the seventeenth century made it into a rule that everyone had to transform their every desire into discourse because people passed everything related to sex through ‘the endless mill of speech’ as prescribed by Christian pastoral. During confession, people were guided in all insinuations of the flesh: thoughts, desires, voluptuous imaginings, delectations, combined movements of the body and the soul. People had to describe the respective positions of the partners, the postures assumed, gestures, places touched, caresses and the precise moment of pleasure of their sexual acts. Foucault says that through confession, Western people have been so drawn to the task of telling everything concerning their sex for three centuries that at the end they have produced a greater quantity of discourse about sex.

Foucault explains that sex was discussed from its morality side as well as from the rationality side toward the beginning of the eighteenth century. It became a rational discourse which focused on the sexuality of children, mad men and women, and criminals. These figures, who had not been given attention in the past started to step forward and speak. Their confessions about who they were made them condemned but at least people listened to them. Since then the discourse took form in various disciplines such as demography, biology, medicine, psychiatry, psychology, ethics, pedagogy and political criticism. Over the centuries, Western society has developed confession as a procedure to dislodge the truth. As confession spread its effects far and wide, Foucault terms Western man (sic) as ‘a confessing animal’.237

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Foucault argues that confession as a ritual of discourse also reveals the power relationship. In the act of confessing, people need to confess to a partner who has the authority to require the confession, prescribes and appreciates it and intervenes in order to judge, punish, forgive, console and reconcile. People who listen to the confession will get power from the pleasure of uncovering the truth. Foucault points out the case of pleasure and power gained from the medical examination, psychiatric investigation, pedagogical report, and religious and family controls, where the objectives are to counsel and guide people to avoid immoral sexualities. He says that the people who listen to the confessions get pleasure from ‘exercising a power that questions, monitors, watches, spies, searches out, palpates, brings to light; and on the other hand, the pleasure that kindles at having to evade this power, flee from it, fool it, or travesty it’. These people play an important role in reconstructing the act and the thought that accompany it. In short, pleasure and power are two inseparable elements in which people get power from the pleasure of getting the truth and also from the pleasure of being able to manage the power.

To avoid forbidden words and to maintain the decency of the confession, a confession was made scientific. One of the ways was sex was integrated into a scientific discourse where confession and its effects were recodified as therapeutic operations. It means that sex was no longer regarded as error or sin but the normal and the pathological. So, people needed doctors to make diagnoses and cure problems related to sex. Foucault sees the idea of confession as a construction of Western culture. Although in the past confession was seen as a coercive action, now confession is a part of daily life and no longer carries the connotation of constraints upon people. Confession becomes a way of finding truth which liberates people from repressive powers that try to silence them. It transforms sexual desire into speech where sex is something that

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238 Foucault, *The History of Sexuality Volume 1.*, 61
239 Ibid., 57.
should not be done but can be discussed in the form of knowledge. As knowledge, sex is not something hidden, secret and shameful that should be silenced and repressed, it has become an object of knowledge that people can understand, control and use. Sexuality is no longer seen as a matter of morality but as a matter of truth and falsehood. It is not something that people can do for pleasure and fun because as knowledge, sexuality is controlled. For example, students are taught to speak about sex in a technical way to show that they have a proper non-perverse understanding of sex.

In this discussion, Foucault links power and knowledge. According to Foucault, sex was a way to exercise power. In bourgeois society, controls on sex were exercised to foster and preserve life. This was mainly aimed at ensuring people’s health and longevity, especially for the bourgeoisie, in order to maintain the hegemony of power. Later, power was exercised to transform sex into an analytic focus of a discourse to create knowledge and divulge truth. The secrecy of sex attracts people to learn about it. The process of creating knowledge and uncovering the truth about sexuality gives people a new awareness of those pleasures and makes people value sexual pleasure.

**Ars erotica in women’s magazines**

Tips on sexuality can be found easily in both Australian and Indonesian editions of *Cosmopolitan* and *Cleo*. The tips are manuals for women to follow in order to gain sexual pleasure. They tell women to focus on themselves, on their own bodies and to explore their own bodies confidently and freely. Titles related to tips on sexuality are presented in the magazines’ covers. Indonesian editions of *Cosmopolitan* and *Cleo* regularly put these titles in their covers. Some examples of the titles are: ‘Sex Toys to play with’ and ‘77 Tip Sex: Manuver cepat+puas’ (77 Sex Tips: Fast+Satisfying Manoeuvres). Australian editions of *Cosmopolitan* and *Cleo* also put titles related to

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241“77 Tip Sex: Manuver Cepat+Puas (77 Sex Tips: Fast+Satisfying Manoeuvre),” *Cosmopolitan*
tips on sexuality regularly on their covers with similar headings: ‘From Bad Sex to Best Orgasm Ever! The sex tips that will change your love life. Seriously’, ‗Holy Sheet! Sex rules you should be breaking’. The cover titles related to sex in Indonesian and Australian editions of Marie Claire are not about sex tips but mainly about women’s sex experiences with titles such as ‘Exposed: Australia’s Secret Sex Slave Industry’, ‘The Prince and I: Sex Secrets from a Royal Harem’ or they appear in lighter articles about horoscopes such as in ‘Horoscope Special: Love, Sex & Success: What your stars have in store’. However, this does not mean that Marie Claire totally excludes tips on sex, this is shown by a sex tip in Marie Claire Indonesia entitled ‘Tantric Sex: Belajar Seni Bercinta Kuno (Tantric Sex: Learning the Ancient Art of Sex)’. Briefly, I can say that titles related to sexuality are considered assets to attract potential readers of these magazines so women’s magazines both in Indonesia and in Australia choose tips on sexuality to put on their covers.

Using Foucault’s explanation of ars erotica, I found that the tips on sexuality in these women’s magazines could be put under the category of ars erotica. These tips fit into Foucault’s concept of ars erotica because they present the characteristics of ars erotica such as sexual pleasure, the idea of the master and bodily control. The tips on sexuality in the women’s magazines obviously tell the readers that sexual pleasure is the focus of the tips as they guide women step by step to get pleasure. The tips concentrate on sexual pleasure itself without touching the issues of what is permitted and forbidden.

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by the law. They are openly presented in the magazines as a detailed manual. For example, the tip entitled ‘Rumpy Tapas! 99 (Very Spicy) Sex Bites’ in the Australian edition of *Cosmopolitan*:

> These saucy morsels are all 25 words or less—just a little taster before your main course!

1. Drop by his place unexpectedly wearing stilettos, a trench…and nothing else.
2. En route to meet him, text your partner something naughty you want him to do to you once you get there.
3. Rub his nerve-packed frenulum (where the head of the penis meets the shaft) with your thumb using medium pressure.
4. …

Here, the tips are arranged in numbers, from 1 to 99, in the way a manual is arranged. It gives the impression that the sex tips are instructions that should be followed to guarantee success. It is simple and step by step. It is important to note that tips are different from articles. Tips usually offer instant hints or short cuts to do things and advocate action without a context. In the tips on sexuality, we can see that there is no character in the story, no relationship, no sequel and no consequence. Tips on sexuality in Indonesian magazines are also arranged similarly in a way that they offer instant ways to gain sexual pleasure but do not provide a context. For example, the sex tips in *Cosmopolitan Indonesia, ‘77 Tips seks super (Tak Lebih dari 20 kata)’ (77 Super Sex Tips [Not more than 20 words])*:

- **BBM** him now. Say: ‘Tonight’s menu: You, me, whipped cream’.
- To look different, wear a wig during sex. The sensation of having sex with ‘a stranger’ will make the atmosphere get hotter, hotter, hotter.
- Help your partner to wash his car during the weekend. Wear a plain white T-shirt. Without a bra.
- …

249 -- “BBM si dia sekarang. Katakan begini: ‘Menu malam ini: Kamu, aku, whipped cream.’”
250 BlackBerry Messenger, an application for BlackBerry users to send free messages.
From the above excerpt, the characters can be anybody because the tips do not present us with clear information about who the characters are and their background. In general, the above tips, as other tips on sexuality in the magazines, tell women to learn to explore and control their bodies to get sexual pleasure. To be able to control their bodies, it is essential for women to have knowledge about their own bodies since having knowledge about one’s body is having the power to control it. This knowledge is learned through the tips they offer in the women’s magazines. Interestingly, the excerpts above actually show that the tips on sexuality in the women’s magazines also talk about men’s bodies, for example frenulum and penis, and how men are affected by women’s bodies, for example the effect of women wearing no bra on men. The tips seem to suggest that women should extend their knowledge to men’s bodies and how they can control their bodies to affect men with the goal to get sexual pleasure.

By picking up the role of ‘teaching’ the knowledge, women’s magazines actually take up the position of the master in *ars erotica*. The magazines as ‘the master’ transfer the knowledge they have about sexual pleasure to their readers, ‘the disciples’. The only characteristic that does not fit *ars erotica* as explained by Foucault is the secrecy. With the exception of *Cosmopolitan Australia* which put the sealed section back in October 2010, the magazines publish the sex tips openly. Foucault mentions that the *ars erotica* were guarded carefully in ancient society because they would lose their effectiveness if they were exposed. As a product of popular culture, women’s magazines are mass-produced and consumed by many people. So, putting *ars erotica* in the magazines is exposing the art to the mass, allowing the secret of the erotic to be read by many people. Even when it is put as a sealed section, it is still accessible for the public to read. It means that in the magazines, the *ars erotica* start to lose their effectiveness and traditional meaning as sacred practices.
To explain the loss of *ars erotica*’s secrecy as a result of mass production, I follow Benjamin’s theory on the loss of aura. In his essay ‘The Work of Art in the Age of its Mechanical Reproduction’, he states that the earliest artworks were used for magical ritual and religious ritual in a certain tradition. He gives the example of the statue of Venus, which in the Greek tradition was the object of veneration and in the Middle Ages was considered by the clerics as an ominous idol. Benjamin says that the aura of a work of art, the uniqueness, is related to its ritual function, its original use value. The tradition keeps the ritualistic basis preserved for centuries even when it becomes what Benjamin calls ‘a secularised ritual’. According to Benjamin, the rituals lost their values and faced crisis when technology developed, for example, in the history of photography. He says that during the early development of the camera, photography needed an elaborate procedure before a picture was taken. It was a time-consuming and distance-creating procedure which produced only one copy of a picture. As a document, this only picture confirmed ‘the claim to durability of the person captured in the picture’. Developments in the technology of photography have replaced uniqueness and duration with transience and reproducibility. Photographs can now be reproduced easily in mass numbers. This mass reproduction makes the photographs as artworks lose their uniqueness.

The same explanation can be applied to the loss of *ars erotica*’s secrecy. In ancient society, the mastery of *ars erotica* is unique. Elaborate procedures were necessitated in order to master the control of one’s body and the knowledge to master the body could only be transferred from a master to the learners. The development of technology used by magazines changes the nature of *ars erotica* from ancient rituals

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254 Steiner, *Walter Benjamin*, 120.
which had high original values into mass products. The magazines share and provide a guide for the readers to the art of erotics but they lack ‘the intensity, specific quality, duration, and reverberations in the body and the soul’. The knowledge is shared without involving the application of its elaborate procedures. The technology of printing which enables the mass reproduction of women’s magazines make *ars erotica* lose its secrecy and its effectiveness as the art is disseminated to the mass and known by many people. The knowledge about *ars erotica* becomes ordinary, not unique. In the form of sex tips, *ars erotica* becomes the simplification of ancient society’s practice of *ars erotica*.

What is interesting about Benjamin’s theory is the fact that even though he positions technological development as the reason for the crisis in the work of arts, he is not against the changes. Earlier in his essay, Benjamin states that a work of art has always been reproducible. He mentions that ‘replicas were made by pupils in practice of their craft, by masters for diffusing their works, and finally by third parties in the pursuits of gain’. He explains that when a work of art is reproduced, no matter how perfect the reproduction is, it does not possess the uniqueness of the original as a result of the detachment from its original time and space in history. So loss of uniqueness is expected in the work of art, whether because of mechanical reproduction by technology or other factors. In the case of *ars erotica*, although it is true that tips on sexuality in the magazines have less quality and intensity compared to ancient *ars erotica*, this loss of uniqueness is also something expected. The loss is the consequence of the changes and it is unavoidable. The reasons for this expected loss of uniqueness are the remoteness of tips on sexuality from the original values of *ars erotica* in time and space as well as the reproduction technology which reduces the uniqueness into ordinariness. As the loss of

255 Foucault, *The History of Sexuality Volume 1*, 57.
257 Ibid.
ars erotica’s aura is expected and accepted, tips on sexuality can be considered as today’s ars erotica, the popular culture’s ars erotica.

**Ars erotica: East versus West**

Foucault presents ars erotica as an art which can be found in China, Japan, India, Rome and the Arabo-Moslem societies. Most of the ancient cultures mentioned are Asian cultures. I agree with Rocha that Foucault’s examples of the ancient cultures which practise ars erotica are problematic.\(^{258}\) According to Rocha, Foucault describes ars erotica as

…something outside of science and outside of time, away from modernity, eroticism in an open and permissive world; Kama Sutra, Perfumed Garden, pillow books and erotic prints from the floating worlds of China and Japan, or extended treatises on sexual positions, on the sacred transformative power of sex, on the pursuit of pure, intense pleasure. A hedonist garden, a dim candle-lit bedchamber saturated with intoxicating fragrances, limbs entwined.\(^{259}\)

In his paper, Rocha argues that although Foucault probably puts his discussion of ars erotica in the framework of ancient society versus modern society, by mentioning the Oriental countries as examples, the discussion about ars erotica and scientia sexualis becomes the East in opposition to the West. Rocha couches the opposition as ‘they’ in the ‘East’ have an ars erotica and ‘we’ in the ‘Christian West’ have a scientia sexualis. The discussion, then, may fall into the danger of positioning the Orient in opposition to (‘versus’) the Occident. The stereotypical understanding of the Orient by Western people is shown by Said in the speech about Egypt by Arthur James Balfour\(^ {260}\) in front of the House of Commons in England in 1901 and the long essay of Lord Cromer\(^ {261}\) about Egypt in 1908 where both of them described the Oriental as irrational, depraved (fallen), childlike, and ‘different’ as opposed to the European who was

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rational, virtuous, mature, and ‘normal’. Additionally, Rocha says that the West sees the Orientals as mysterious people who have a privileged access to enjoyment, and are more emancipated and enlightened, or even closer to nature. Rocha argues that Foucault’s choice to use Latin terminology, *ars erotica* and *scientia sexualis*, instead of using the English words, arts of the erotic and science of sexuality, supports the atmosphere of mystery and magic attached to ‘the East’. Foucault’s Latin terms imply a myth-like concept similar to the concept of the Orient pointed to by Said as a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes and remarkable experiences since antiquity.

Rocha explains that modernist intellectuals in the West were looking to the East/Orient for inspiration; they were looking to ‘Oriental’ philosophies, exotic religion, age-old, ‘timeless’ wisdom and ‘harmonious’ social structure. These Western intellectuals use the ‘idealised Asiatic other’ to construct the self. The construction of East/Orient as uncivilised, antidemocratic, backward, primitive and barbaric enabled the West to construct themselves as civilised, democratic, superior, and modern. In the eighteenth century when European colonial powers began to expand their control over Africa and Asia, the construction of the East:West opposition above justified the domination and authority of the European colonialists over the colonised regions. Said says that these colonialists’ missions were to ‘enlighten, civilize, bring order and democracy’ to the colonised regions and in order for the mission to succeed, both academic and practical knowledge about these regions such as of their culture, history and traditions, should be acquired. Studies on *ars erotica* by Western intellectuals can be seen

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266 See Said, *Orientalism*.
268 Ibid., 38.
as a way to get scientific knowledge about the ‘non-scientific’ and mystical Orient. This opinion reinforced the division between Western science and Eastern superstition.

Applying Foucault’s *ars erotica* to analyse the tips on sexuality in these women’s magazines raises the question of ‘Whose *ars erotica* are in the magazines: those of the East or those of the West?’ The magazines I analysed are internationally-licensed magazines. *Cosmopolitan* is originally from the US, *Cleo* is originally from Australia and *Marie Claire* is originally from France. Basically those three magazines can be considered are presentation of Western society and culture although they adapt somewhat to the local culture when they are published in other countries. Consequently, in the Indonesian context, the tips on sexuality offered in these internationally-licensed women’s magazines might be thought to represent Western sexuality practices, an opinion which is strengthened by the illustrations accompanying these tips. The models employed to illustrate the tips on sexuality are mostly White models, connoting Western people. So, *ars erotica* represented in these women’s magazines are particularly associated with Western culture. The association of *ars erotica* with Western culture could lead to a generalisation that everything related to sexuality and sexual pleasure is a result of Western influence regardless of the fact that some cultures in Indonesia have some literature which can be categorised as *ars erotica* such as *Serat Centhini* in Java and epic *kakawin* poetry and *tutur* (religious manuals) on sexual yoga in Bali.

I mentioned in my introduction that the issue of sexuality in Indonesia is usually associated with Western culture. With regard to the media, globalisation gives access to

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269 *Serat Centhini* is a Javanese manuscript written in Yogyakarta in the 1930s. This book is basically an instruction manual for would-be husbands to inform the readers about how to choose a good wife/sexual partner (based on physiognomy) and how sex works (based on ‘the etiquette of sexual intercourse’). See Edwin P. Wieringa, “A Javanese Handbook for Would-Be Husbands: The Sorat Candraning Wanita,” *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 33, no. 3 (2002): 431–49.

franchise media owned by Western multinational media to come to Indonesia. In the Indonesian context, globalisation is often limited to cultural Westernisation, which is considered a threat to local norms and values by Indonesians. Munti argues that the opening of press freedom in Indonesia in 1998 gave a way to the media to expose sexuality. She says that both franchise magazines and non-franchise magazines expose sexuality, but the franchise ones such as *Cosmopolitan* and *Her world* are bolder in exposing issues that are considered taboo in this local cultural setting. These magazines also started the trend on the discourse of sexuality where local readers can participate actively.

Munti’s explanation shows that an exposure of women’s sexualities is expected to be found in internationally-licensed magazines. However, I did not expect that the display of sexuality in Indonesian editions of these women’s magazines would be as explicit as that in the Australian magazines due to religion, culture and the state’s regulations in Indonesia. As stated by Ida, Indonesian women’s bodies are assumed to be sensual, erotic and desirable for men. Thus, it is feared that the portrayal of seductive Indonesian women’s bodies in the magazines could corrupt the morals of the nation. However, it seems that these magazines use their position as internationally-licensed magazines to display sexuality to almost the same extent in Indonesian and Australian editions as can be seen in the two figures below. One is taken from the Australian edition of *Cleo* while the other is taken from the Indonesian edition of *Cosmopolitan*.

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272 Munti, *Demokrasi Keintiman*.

273 Magazines which are originally published in other country. In my thesis I use the term internationally-licensed magazines for franchise magazines.

The similar degree of sexual exposure and the use of White models to illustrate the tips on sexuality in internationally-licensed women’s magazines which are originally published in Western countries produce an assumption for Indonesian readers that the sexuality represented in these magazines is identical with Western culture. Comparing Foucault’s concept of *ars erotica* and the magazines’ *ars erotica* as represented by tips on sexuality presents me with two questions. The first is whether the established understanding that *ars erotica* is the art possessed by Eastern culture is true and the second is why and how these women’s magazines adapt the representation of *ars erotica* in their publications.

With regard to the first question, in an interview with Dreyfus and Rabinow which Rocha calls a half-hearted retraction, Foucault admits that he made a mistake in comparing the practice of *ars erotica* with other cultures. He said that he should have compared the science of sex to a contrasting practice in his own (Western) culture. He said that he was wrong in claiming that there were no *ars erotica* in Western culture because *ars erotica* could be found in Greece. However, Foucault says that the Greek and Roman *ars erotica* are different from Chinese *ars erotica*. Foucault suggests that

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among the Greeks there was the idea that the sexual act affected the individual’s body. So when individuals did not practise the sexual act wisely, it might disturb and threaten their relationship with themselves and destroy their integrity. At the end, the unwise sexual act might cause death. As a result, the Greeks saw sexual abstinence as a benefit. On the other hand, the Chinese saw sexual activity as a way to come into contact with the vital principle of the other sex. By absorbing the vital principle of the other sex and internalising it with their own, well-managed sexual activity would preclude any danger as well as strengthen their existence and restore their youthfulness.

According to Rocha, Foucault’s understanding of sexuality in China comes from the works of a sinologist, van Gulik. Foucault mentions van Gulik and his work on the arts of conjugal pleasure in ancient China in Foucault’s *History of Sexuality Volume 2: The Use of Pleasure*. Rocha argues that Foucault uses Chinese *ars erotica* as ‘other’ to construct his concept of *scientia sexualis*. Foucault imagines the possibility of ‘living otherly’ without having to abide by the law of the permitted and the forbidden. Via van Gulik’s dreams of China, Foucault dreams of the East as ‘a less repressive, faraway land’ with regard to sexuality. Rocha points out that Foucault’s dreams are utopian dreams because the practice of sexuality in China is not as ‘ideal’ as Foucault dreams. For example, Van Gulik’s *Sexual Life in Ancient China* addresses the practice of a male having frequent sexual encounters with different women without emitting semen in the belief that those women provide him with vital essence to augment and strengthen his vital force.

From the discussion above, it can be concluded that as a concept, *ars erotica* could actually be found in both cultures, the East and the West, although it was practised differently for different purposes in different times and places. *Ars erotica* might exist in

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1990), 136–137.


278 Ibid., 338.

any culture and serve different purposes. Therefore, it is dangerous to put Foucault’s discussion on *ars erotica* in the dichotomy of the East/the Orient and the West/the Occident. The main reason is the hierarchy or asymmetry wherein the East/the Orient is positioned as inferior to the West/the Occident whereas in fact the concept of the Orient is a Western construction which neglects the real lives of the Orientals.\(^\text{280}\) In short, Foucault’s *ars erotica* is the imagined erotic art of the East.

The constructed belief that *ars erotica* belong to the East and that *scientia sexualis* represents the West is used by Evans to discuss Hugh Hefner’s *Playboy*.\(^\text{281}\) She uses Foucault’s dichotomy of *ars erotica* and *scientia sexualis* to explain the role of Hefner’s *Playboy* in providing the knowledge of *ars erotica* to the public. She says that the reason for the popularity of *ars erotica* in the magazines, in this case *Playboy*, is that it fills a gap: the lack of articulated erotics in Western society. It makes the articulation of the erotic which can commonly be found in academic discussion about sexuality, become visible. According to Evans, Hefner establishes a model of sexuality where male fantasy about women is made visible and touches upon the collective male sexual imagination of the West. So, basically Hefner’s *Playboy* works on sexual imagination which put women as sexual subjects and makes them available to men within a marketing package.\(^\text{282}\)

Tips on sexuality in the women’s magazines similarly represent articulated erotics. However, different from *Playboy*, which obviously makes women available as objects for the male gaze, the tips in women’s magazines deliver mixed messages to the readers. They offer women insight and knowledge about women’s sexual pleasure but they might also fall into the trap of objectifying women. This portrayal of open sexuality might be said to express female sexuality and women’s freedom from the

\(^{280}\) See Said, *Orientalism*.

\(^{281}\) Evans, *Love*, 64–68.

bonds of moral tradition, where women have to conceal their bodies, act passively, do domestic work and so on, which marginalises and subordinates women, but at the same time, as Leiliyanti claimed, it can also be seen as an attempt to make women into sex objects exploited in the interests of capitalism and the market. Moreover, although in some cases women are instructed to tell their partners about what they want their partner to do to make the women gain sexual pleasure, the inequality between women and men in society is still echoed by the magazines when the women are expected to master this art to give pleasure to their partners.

The general disappearance of taboo about the explicit portrayal of sexuality and the openness in discussion about sexuality in Western society as a result of sexual liberalisation has opened the way to the publication of materials related to sexuality in Western media. However, it is impossible to represent sexuality without considering the social and cultural background of the country where this sexuality is presented. In the case of Indonesia, it is clear that these internationally-licensed women’s magazines consider the topic of sexuality a selling point for the magazines, as shown by their positioning of titles related to sexuality on their covers. However, this apparent openness about sexuality is qualified. The magazines use White models in the illustrations in an attempt to negotiate the sensitivities of Indonesian local culture and regulations, wherein sexuality is restricted in public exposure. The White models are considered as ‘others’ by Indonesians. They are believed to have different values and norms with regard to sexuality. That is why the magazines’ openness on sexuality is acceptable. Using the White models, ars erotica, which is an ever-imagined Eastern practice, are sold back to Indonesian readers as Western practice. Below is an example of repackaging of ars erotica sold in Indonesian magazines:

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The article promotes the art of Tantric Sex, an art of erotics which originated in ancient India. The writer introduces the art by stating,

"The art of Tantra which has been established for thousands of years and which is now popular in the Western world, invites you to understand sex as a vital power of life which not only enables you to reach orgasm but also is a ritual which enables you to play and explore (sex) with your partner."  

The article clearly tells readers that Tantric sex is from India, which means that it is categorised as an Eastern practice. Historically Indonesia has a long-time attachment to Tantric Buddhism or Esoteric Buddhism. Woodward says that the precise time of when Tantric Buddhism came to Sumatra and Java is hard to say but there is proof of the existence of esoteric Buddhism in the early centuries AD. Woodward gives an example of the inscriptions of Talang Tuwo from the Palembang area of Sumatra, dating from 684 AD which have Sanskrit terms tied to the teaching of Perfection Path Buddhism in Tantric Buddhism. Other evidence, Woodward says, includes architectural remains, inscriptions and texts preserved in Java and Bali such as the eight chief

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Bodhisatvas in the exterior walls of Chandi Mendut and in the interior walls of Chandi Plaosan, inscriptions of Kelurak and Ratubaka, and Balinese Nāgabāyu Sūtra. However, what makes Tantric sex interesting in the article about Tantric sex above is not its historical link with Indonesian society but ‘its popularity in the Western world’. Apparently the popularity of this art of sex in the Western world is used as a guarantee of this art’s superiority. The use of White models emphasises the idea that this art or its modification is imported from the West.

The tips on sexuality in the magazines focus on how to gain sexual pleasure, with the magazines playing the role as ‘master’ by giving guidance to the readers about the art of erotics. The tips also teach the readers, especially women, to master their bodies to gain pleasure. The only thing missing is the element of secrecy, which in Benjamin’s opinion is expected and acceptable as a result of mass production. The discussion shows us further that ars erotica, as constructed by Foucault, was associated with the East/the Orient. In reality ars erotica were also practised by Western society. The interpretation of Foucault’s concept of ars erotica as the East versus scientia sexualis as the West should be carefully reconsidered. Interestingly, internationally-licensed magazines in Indonesia repackage the idea of ars erotica and sell it as Western sexuality in order to negotiate the sensitivities surrounding sex in public discourse in Indonesia.

Scientia sexualis in women’s magazines

Cosmopolitan, Cleo and Marie Claire offer tips on sexuality which give information on ways to seek sexual pleasure very openly accompanied by quite ‘vulgar’ illustrations. However, when the magazines discuss real women’s experiences on sexuality, the experiences are wrapped as scientia sexualis. Unlike ars erotica, which focuses on the

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286 The use of Foucault’s term ‘master’ is actually inappropriate to discuss about women learning to control their own bodies since the term is a masculine-gender word.
knowledge of sexual pleasure and the way to intensify individual’s experience of sexual
pleasure, *scientia sexualis* presents sexuality as scientific knowledge not as an art.
Foucault explains that in *scientia sexualis*, women’s experiences in sexuality are
presented in the form of medical, psychological or educational coding and interpretation
to avoid forbidden words and to maintain the decency of the experiences.

Examples of scientific coding and interpretation used to discuss women’s sexual
experiences can be found in the advice column about sex in women’s magazines. *Cleo
Indonesia* and *Cosmopolitan Indonesia* have a question and answer session about sex
where the readers ask questions through e-mail or mail and the experts answer the
questions in the advice column provided by the magazines. The questions about ‘Miss
Cheerful dan Mr Happy’ for *Cosmopolitan Indonesia* are addressed to
dr.sex@cosmopolitan.co.id whose real name is dr. Febriansyah Darus, SpOG. Below is
an example of a question and the answer given:

Q: *Dear Dr. Sex*, every time we make love, my partner only produces a few
sperm. Is it normal?

A: *Dear Glenda*, in general men will produce 2-6 cc of sperms (less than one
tablespoon) every time they ejaculate. To know whether it is normal or not, it
has to be examined in the laboratory. The number of sperm depends on
testicle productivity which functions as a factory to produce sperm. Well, you
have to know that the production of sperm will take 24 hours after your
partner ejaculates. If you are the type of person who often has sex with your
partner (with only a short period of rest), the quality of the sperm in round
two or three will definitely not be the same (as the first one). But of course
there is nothing wrong with visiting a specialist for a testicle examination.

*Good luck.*

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287 T: *Dear dr. Sex, setiap kali kami bercinta, pasangan hanya menghasilkan sperma dengan kadar yang
sedikit. Apakah ini normal?* -Glenda@email
J: *Dear Glenda, pada umumnya seorang pria akan mengeluarkan sperma sebanyak 2-6 cc (kurang
lebih satu sendok makan) setiap kali ia berejakulasi. Untuk mengetahui normal atau tidaknya, tentu
saja harus melalui proses pemeriksaan laboratorium. Sedikit banyaknya cairan sperma yang
dihasilkan ini sangat bergantung pada produktifitas testis yang berfungsi sebagai pabrik penghasil
ejakulat (air mani). Nah, Anda harus tahu kalau produksi sperma memakan waktu selama 24 jam
setelah pasangan Anda berejakulasi. Jika Anda tergolong sering melakukan hubungan seksual dengan
pasangan (dalam waktu yang berdekatan), tentunya kadar sperma tidak akan sama pada ronde kedua
dan ketiga, dear. Tapi, tak ada salahnya lho mengunjungi dokter spesialis untuk pemeriksaan testis.

*Good luck!*

In *Cleo Indonesia*, the questions are answered by Zoya Amirin, M.Psi a psychologist and a lecturer in Health Reproduction.

**Q:** My partner asked me a surprising question recently. He said that he did not find a problem with people videoing their own lovemaking (*sex tape*) to build a relationship. ‘Maybe we can do it once in a while,’ he added. Although he did not say it seriously, I am afraid that he is really serious in about this. Should I ask about how serious his statement is?

**A:** In sexual psychology, sex taping with the partner is aimed to give variation and to evaluate sexual style. It is healthier than adult movies and pornography because pornography will make you question whether you and your partner are normal or not. You should consider the public exposure of the sex tapes of famous Indonesian artists when it comes to saving your record. Or after you enjoy the tape or watch the tape together, you can erase it. Do whatever is safe for your privacy, now and in the future. If you do not feel comfortable, ask the question in a relaxed atmosphere, whether he is serious or not, so both of you do not act based on assumption. Talk to your partner about your expectations and listen to his sexual expectations. After that, decide what makes both of you comfortable and happy.²⁸⁸

The excerpts above show that the women’s questions are answered in medical and psychological coding and interpretation. Dr Sex answers Glenda’s questions by citing scientific terms specific for medical coding like ‘testicle productivity’, ‘production of sperm’, ‘the quality of the sperm’ and ‘testicle examination’ while Zoya Amirin answers the question in the frame of psychology by using words such as ‘in sexual psychology’, ‘to give variation and to evaluate’, ‘public exposure’ and ‘sexual expectation’. The use of those scientific terms is an attempt to maintain the decency of the confession and to avoid using inappropriate words to express the sexual experience.

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²⁸⁸ *Q:* Ada satu hal yang mengagetkan dari pertanyaan pasangan saya baru-baru ini. Ia mengatakan tak masalah kalau ada orang menggunakan sex tape untuk membangun hubungan. “Mungkin kita bisa mekakukannya sekali-sekali,” tambahnya. Meskipun itu disebutkannya sambil lalu, sya justru merasa khawatir kalau ia benar-benar serius dalam hal itu. Haruskah saya bertanya mengenai keseriusan pernyataanya tersebut?


Similarly, the Australian editions present questions and answers about sex although not in the form of an advice column like in Indonesian editions. In the Australian editions, the interaction between the reader and the expert is mediated by the magazine. The interaction is not reader-expert but reader-magazine-expert. This way, the questions and answers are less personal and more general. In the excerpt below, for example, the magazine lists a number of short, intimate questions and the answers to them:

Vagina FAQ
- What should my labia look like?
  Plump or thin, even or asymmetrical, if it doesn’t cause discomfort, it’s normal.
- Are condom allergies common?
  Very few people are allergic to condoms made of latex. They can use non-latex condoms.
- My vagina is really itchy, but I know it’s not a yeast infection. What could it be?
  Probably an allergic reaction to soap or body wash. If switching these doesn’t help, have your GP investigate. HPV infection can sometimes cause persistent itching.  

As a mediator, the magazines play the role as women’s representatives to describe their support for women like a personal friend.

Reading about someone’s sexual experiences in the magazines is like discovering the truth about people’s experiences. Finding the truth, according to Foucault, is the goal of scientia sexualis. One method to reveal the truth about one’s sexual experiences that was much discussed by Foucault is confession. As explained earlier in this chapter, Foucault argues that confession is used by Western people to tell everything related to their sexuality. Confession is also used by the women who tell about their sexual experiences in these women’s magazines. In their confessions, the

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women talk not only about their personal experience of sexual pleasure but also about their experience of sexual danger.

It is important to note that confessions in these women’s magazines are different from the confessions in Foucault’s concept. Confessions addressed by Foucault are the auricular ones where people see a confessor and tell their secret to the confessor such as a priest or a psychiatrist while confessions in the women’s magazines are written. Furthermore, people who do auricular confession do it in secrecy to a person in power whereas people who do the confessions in the magazines are exposed to the public. To explain about the written confession and its characteristics, I use Krondorfer’s discussion about male confession. I will follow the terms use by Krondorfer who addresses the person who does the confession as confessant and the person who listens/reads about the confession as confessor.

Krondorfer states that male confessants write confessions ‘because they have sinned, because they have experienced a transformative moment, because they want to be forgiven, or because they are self-absorbed and self-interested’. Confessions involve the revealing of personal memories and thoughts after people come to the realisation that they are disturbed by the way they arrange their lives. They usually include a personal transformation where a new order takes over the chaos. A confession is basically ‘an interpretation of the past, a re-envisioning of our lives, a reinvention of ourselves’. Krondorfer calls this written confession a confessiography, a neologism which according to him could describe texts in which men attempt to reveal themselves to others in a mode of self-examination. These texts are hybrid texts of autobiographies, memoirs, diaries, novels or poetry where men are trying to give a truthful account of themselves. In his study, he analyses St Augustine’s

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291 Krondorfer, Male Confessions, 2.
292 Ibid., 35.
293 Ibid., 8.
Confessions, a confession of faith; the confession of Calel Perechodhik, a Jewish ghetto policeman who perished during the Holocaust; the confession of Oswald Pohl, a high-ranking Nazi perpetrator who reconverted to Christianity while in Allied internment after the war; and the confession of contemporary American gay theologians who open themselves up to the eroticism of the spiritual male body. According to Krondorfer, in confessiography, the male confessant reveals his intimate and private life to the public through texts. This way, he will get an audience as well as become exposed to a potentially hostile and non-compassionate audience. However, written confessions do not make men vulnerable because they also reinforce and strengthen the writers’ identities. The writing helps men to articulate themselves and transform themselves to ‘new’ men. It also enables the public to witness their attachment to the new meaning. Krondorfer points out that the words used in confessiography are related to ecstatic fantasy, atonement, faith, sinfulness and guilty feelings, since confession is related to the discourse of religion. In this written text, the male writers express themselves by writing their own confession.

The role of the readers of the written confession is interesting. In auricular confession, the confessor must not reveal the secret shared by the confessant. They are obliged to the sigillum, the seal of secrecy. In auricular confession, the confessors represent a greater power, which in the religious imagination is God, or in the psychoanalytic situation, the Unconscious. The power possessed by the listener allows individuals to reveal, unravel and then reconstitute the self. In writing confessions, the writer reveals the secrets on paper and addresses the confession to the public. The confession itself is about oneself and between oneself and God but it is also a public declaration.294 In written confession, the impersonal listener is replaced by more than one reader so what used to be private intimacy is now consumed by the public.

294 Krondorfer, Male Confessions, 15.
Krondorfer explains the interesting interaction between the readers and the writers in a written confession: ‘As readers, our private reading experience draws us into bearing witness to a private confession, but the medium, through which it is communicated, is a public document’.295 One thing that should be noted is that written confession, as suggested by Krondorfer, is a carefully crafted confession. So the truthfulness and authenticity of the text is difficult to maintain. Total self-disclosure is difficult to do because the confessant must have also thought of protecting themselves from the possibility of readers’ hostile reactions. In Krondorfer’s words, ‘confessional texts can hide as much as they can reveal’.296

Comparing Krondorfer’s explanation about male written confession and Foucault’s explanation about auricular confession, I can draw some points. First, with regard to the confession itself, Krondorfer points out that confession includes the act of transformation from men’s old selves to ‘new’ ones as a result of this self-examination. The act of transformation is a point that is not addressed by Foucault who places more emphasis on the confession as an act of revealing the truth of someone’s secret. Second, as suggested by Krondorfer, the male confessants in the written confession have the power to reveal the truth in them by themselves since they wrote their own confession based on their own experiences. The ability to find the truth through self-examination differentiates the confessants in written confession from those in auricular confession who need the help of other people, the confessor, to help them find and interpret the truth. Third, as a consequence of the confessants’ ability to find the truth about themselves, written confessions give a lesser role to the readers to help the confessants to find and interpret the truth. The readers have less of a role because there is no direct contact between the confessant and the readers as with the confessor. In this case, the readers can only enjoy the pleasure and power of reading people’s truth as well as

295Krondorfer, Male Confessions, 137.
296Ibid., 15.
having the option to approve or condemn the confessant’s acts. Fourth, written confessions as texts might not contain total self-disclosure as writers might try to avoid readers’ strong disapproval. They do not possess the same degree of truthfulness and authenticity as the auricular confession.

I use Foucault’s concept of confession as the method of *scientia sexualis* of getting the truth and Krondorfer’s concept of the written confession, especially confession as a model of self-examination to transform oneself to a new self, to analyse women’s confessions about their experience of sexuality. I am aware that Krondorfer’s male written confessions might be different from these women’s confessions for two reasons. Krondorfer’s confessions are done by men and the magazines’ confessions are done by women. The second reason is that Krondorfer’s writers wrote their own confessions while these women’s confessions are mediated by the magazines’ writers. I will address these differences in the discussion about ‘Who is Speaking’.

For my analysis, I took examples from two articles in *Marie Claire: Marie Claire Indonesia* March 2011 and *Marie Claire Australia* March 2011. The article in *Marie Claire Indonesia* March 2011 is entitled ‘What’s your sexual score: who has the most partners?’ (‘What’s your sexual score: *Siapa yang terbanyak*?’). The article presents the confessions of six women about the number of partners they have had and their sexual experience with their partners. The heading of the section is ‘Psycho Sex’ which I think is the abbreviation for psychology and sex. At the end of the article, there is a small section with the title ‘Smart Tips’ which gives general advice on how Indonesian women should respond to matters related to sexuality. In the same month, *Marie Claire Australia* has an article entitled ‘Let’s Talk about Sex: 3 Generations, 1 Steamy Topic’. The article contains stories of women from three generations of three

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297I found this heading amusing because besides neutrally referring to psyche (mind or soul), “psycho” is slang for a person who is psychotic or psychopathic. I was not sure whether the editor deliberately chose this ambiguous word as the heading of the section to foreground these women’s courage in exposing their sexual lives and to emphasise the challenge to conventional Indonesian views on sexuality, or simply abbreviated “psychology” into “psycho” to combine it with “sex.”
families sharing their sexual experiences. The article is under a section called ‘confessions’. In the discussion, I focus on the sexual experiences revealed by women coming from different cultural settings to find how the women perceive their experiences. It is unfortunate that *Marie Claire Indonesia* only covers the stories of one generation but I consider their stories enough to give an insight into Indonesian women’s sexual experiences.

The public acceptance of the naming of the body and sexual acts in talking about love makes it possible for people to talk about sexuality outside the framework of science as can be seen in the openness and the disappearance of taboo in tips on sexuality presented by the women’s magazines. However, the magazines seem to treat information provided in tips on sexuality differently from the information in articles containing women’s confessions about their sexual experience. The articles which involve real women’s sexual experience are put under the common heading of ‘confession’ where secrecy is part of the element. The examples are from the opening paragraphs of the two articles.

The article in the Indonesian edition starts with this sentence: ‘Honest confessions of women who dare to reveal their sex stories’ (*Penuturan jujur para perempuan yang berani mengungkap kisah seks mereka*). The sentence creates an impression that what is shared by the women in the article is something secret, and that it takes courage to share them secret with the public. However, I was surprised to see that each narrative was accompanied by a photo of each confessant posing with her score. At first I thought the women were models employed to illustrate the article. Later, since I could not find the usual note explaining that the article was illustrated by models, I assumed that the women in the photos were the confessants themselves. While it is true that the women’s faces are concealed behind their score, their faces can still be

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seen. It is also interesting to note that this article publishes the name of the confessants. There is also no note explaining that the magazine uses pseudonym for these women. The photos and the names mentioned in the article seem to stress that the sexual stories presented in the magazines are true stories.

The first woman is Kirana, 28 years old. She is a secretary. She had sex for the first time with her boyfriend. She ‘confessed’ that she did not have any regrets about having sex with her boyfriend. She is now married to the boyfriend. The second woman is Fara, 28 years old. She is a copy writer in a well-known agency. She never had sex before she got married. She asked for a divorce because her husband had an affair with his secretary. She ‘confessed’ that she had sex with ten other men because of the divorce. It happened within one year. She did not need to be in a relationship to have sex with a
partner. She was involved in *pergaulan bebas* which can be loosely translated as ‘free sex’. She had done night stands as well as a threesome. She said that she stopped sleeping around and came to the realisation that what she did was wrong after she had many *cobaan berat* (misfortunes); like her mother became seriously ill and her father was bankrupt and had heavy debts. The third woman is Ekana, 30 years old. She is an artist manager. She had sex for the first time in early high school with her boyfriend. She ‘confessed’ that she has had sex with five men. She is now in a relationship. The fourth woman is Sasa, 27 years old. She is a private company worker. She had sex with her boyfriend for the first time after she finished high school. She broke up with this boyfriend because she said that her boyfriend had a tendency to be hyper-sexed. She confessed that she has had sex with four men. She is in a relationship now. The fifth woman is Gaia, 26 years old. She is a finance officer. Her first experience with sex was not enjoyable because she was forced by her boyfriend. She has had sex with six men. The sixth woman is Angie, 25 years old. She works in a private company. She had sex for the first time when she was in her first year of university with her boyfriend. She has had sex with two other men.

The article in *Marie Claire Australia* starts with ‘Many memories are passed down from mother to daughter, but sex is rarely the subject. We found three brave families prepared to open up about their bedroom histories’. Similar to the Indonesian edition, in the Australian edition the women’s confessions about their sexual experience are presented as the revelation of hidden truths, an act which needs courage. Different from the confessions in *Marie Claire Indonesia*, the women in this article are anonymous. In the first family, the grandmother, 72 years old, was brought up as a Catholic. She had sex for the first time at 21 years old in what would now be called date rape. She did not use contraception so she got pregnant. She has had two backyard abortions. She married the man she had the sex with but then she was divorced. The
mother, 46 years old, was told by her mother about anything she wanted to know about sex but her mother gave a sign that she should not do that. She lost her virginity at the age of 16. She never married but had a daughter when she was 17 with her second boyfriend. The daughter, 28 years old, knew about sex from her mother. She had sex at 16 with her boyfriend. She went on the pill. She said that she slept with her boyfriends but did not do a lot of sleeping around. She also slept with two girls. In the second family, the grandmother, 88 years old, was a virgin when she got married at 23. For her the relationship was more about romantic love and things they built together rather than sex. The mother, 49 years old, knew about sex from her brother. She was afraid of getting pregnant out of wedlock, though she was curious about sex. She got engaged at 16, moved in together at 18, got married at 24, and got divorced at 42. After the divorce, she had another relationship right away. She has only had sex with a person with whom she is in a relationship. The daughter, 21 years old, discussed sex with her friends. She had a serious relationship at the age of 17. She is on the pill. For her, sex is beautiful when she is in love.

In family three, the grandmother, 79 years old, knew about sex naturally because she lived on a farm. She lost her virginity in her early twenties. She got pregnant and gave up her baby for adoption. She used the rhythm method as her contraception but she was not very strict in doing that. She had seven children. She had a hysterectomy in her mid-40s so that she would not be afraid of falling pregnant any more. For her, sex is a sacred thing, healthy and natural. The mother, 51 years old, was sexually active at 16. For her, sex is a way to know a man. She had sex because she wanted to be loved. She got married at 21 then got divorced. She dated younger guys. For her, sex is everything. The daughter, 25 years old, was told by her mum about sex. For her, losing your virginity is a big deal. She said that she has never been in a situation where she felt pressure. She is married. She enjoys sex but could happily go without.
They are women from different cultural settings and different generations talking about sexuality. In this confession they tell stories about the complicated personal issues regarding sexuality. As confessants, they address many sides of sexuality. I will discuss the main issues that these women mention in their confessions.

**Women’s confessions: Sexuality, love and marriage**

As promised by the title, the women in the articles shared their sexual experiences. Most women in the articles had premarital sex except for two women. The first one is Fara, the divorcée in the Indonesian edition and the second is the grandmother in the second family in the Australian edition. The stories of women both in Indonesia and Australia show that they are active and pro-active in sex. Kirana said that, ‘as a wife, I never hesitate to ask for my “entitlement” to my husband’²⁹⁹ and the mother in the third family said, ‘I did some online dating. I was making the booty calls, not them!’³⁰⁰

The way the women in the articles talk about their sexual experiences shows that they do not relate sexuality to promiscuity any longer. They admit that they have sexual desire and they can even ask for advice publicly in mass media such as magazines when they have a problem in their sexual life. With regard to sexual pleasure, Gerhard states that in the period of the late 1960s and early 1970s, feminists saw sexual pleasure as empowering.³⁰¹ It was the symbol of liberation from patriarchal repression of the body. Sexual pleasure creates the idea of liberated versus oppressed and modern versus traditional. Sexual pleasure as well as sexual desire is channelled by the women in their confessions and it becomes the key to defining women’s empowerment.

From their confessions, I found, interestingly, that these women put ‘love’ as one

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²⁹⁹ _Sebagai istri saya juga tak malu menagih “jatah” ke suami._


main reason for their experience in sexuality. All women in the articles, regardless of culture and generation, generally believe that sex is more than just a biological need: it is also the representation of love. In the Indonesian edition’s article, although not all women explicitly state that they have sex outside of love, they had their first sex with people they were in a relationship with, boyfriends or husbands. The same stories are presented in the Australian edition where all women had their first sex with their boyfriend or husband. I found that ‘love’ as the reason to become sexually involved with their partner was pronounced more clearly by the women in the Australian edition. For example, the grandmother in the first family shares a story that although her first sex was what is now called date rape, she thought then that that was love.\textsuperscript{302} Similarly, the daughter in the second family says,

\begin{quote}
I was 17 when I lost my virginity. It was perfect for me, because we were in love. I was a little nervous, but I was in a safe environment with a person I trusted and was in love with. I believe sex is more beautiful when you’re in love.\textsuperscript{303}
\end{quote}

These two women show that ‘love’ is their reason to have early sexual involvement.

Love is a point that Giddens considers missing in Foucault’s discussion about sexuality.\textsuperscript{304} According to Giddens, the idea of romantic love appeared in the nineteenth century in relation to marriage. Love was considered as a factor that differentiated the marital bond from wider kinship ties. Romantic love has to be separated from the sexual/erotic compulsions of passionate love. It is more about sublime love than ardour love. Romantic love offers a durable bond. Giddens says that the ideal of romantic love as an aspiration affects women more than men. However, unhappy experiences in love prove that romance cannot guarantee foreverness. Therefore, Giddens comes up with the idea of confluent love, a love where ‘almost everyone has the chance to become

\textsuperscript{302}Murray, Let’s Talk About Sex, 79.
\textsuperscript{303}Ibid., 82.
\textsuperscript{304}Giddens, The Transformation of Intimacy.
sexually accomplished”. Confluent love is based on a pure relationship which will work when each partner accepts each other ‘until further notice’, in which the benefit received from the relationship is enough for each partner to continue the relationship. Unlike romantic love which excludes ars erotica, confluent love includes ars erotica and makes reciprocal sexual pleasure an important element in determining whether the relationship is sustained or dissolved.

Although Giddens’ concept of confluent love has weaknesses, such as it can only operate when man and woman are equal and it does not consider the presence of children, I found that Giddens’ concept of confluent love can be applied to the confessions of Australian women. Australian women use the word ‘love’ more explicitly than Indonesian women. Some women view their relationship as romantic where sex is not the most important element in their relationship, like the grandmother in family two who said that, ‘My husband and I had sex, but for me our relationship was always more about the romantic—our love, our family, the things we’d built together—than it was about physical stuff’. Other women view sex as an important element in their love and relationships; for example, the daughter in family one says, ‘I’ve never dated, then made a commitment, then had sex; sex comes into the picture pretty quickly. If there is no sexual chemistry, there’s no point’. In general, the women’s confessions relate sexuality to love whether they view it as either romantic or confluent.

Love, on the other hand, is not expressed clearly in the confessions of Indonesian women. They used expressions like ‘my love story’ (kisah cinta), ‘my sweetheart’ (kekasih) and ‘affection’ (kasih sayang) in their confessions to show that they relate their sexuality to love. But they do not elaborate on the relation between their love and their sexual experience. Marriage as the goal of a relationship is more

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305 Giddens, The Transformation of Intimacy, 63.
306 Grandmother in family two in Murray, Let’s Talk about Sex, 80.
307 Daughter, in family one, Ibid.
obvious in the stories of Indonesian women. For example, Sasa says that, ‘He is very mature and often talks seriously about the future plans for our relationship’ and Angie says that, ‘We reconciled and now we are engaged. Our relationship is more mature and we are thinking of a more serious goal’. Although Indonesian women mention marriage more often than the Australians, it does not mean that marriage is not important for the Australian confessants. Marriage is also chosen by the Australian women regardless of their generation, although some marriages ended in divorce. Marriage as the goal of a relationship is more important for Indonesian women than Australian women because unlike Australian women who can choose to cohabit instead of getting married, Indonesian women do not have that choice. Indonesians in general cannot accept the choice to live together for cultural and religious reasons. So for Indonesian women, ‘future plans’ or ‘serious commitment’ always mean marriage.

Evans says that in the West, the fusion of love, sexuality and marriage has disappeared. So love is separated from sexuality and the sexual relationship is separated from marriage. When the sexual relationship is separated from marriage then the morality which attaches to the marriage also disappears. It means that sexuality can be done without love and without getting married, without the risk of being accused of being immoral. However, Evans says that romance is often used to ‘civilise’ sexual desire. The profession of love is necessary in a sexual relationship in order to make it less ‘crude’ or ‘vulgar’. The disappearance of the ties of love, sexuality and marriage makes it more difficult for women to have stable relationships like that shared by the

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308 Dia sangat dewasa dan sering membicarakannya rencana serius untuk hubungan kami ke depannya.’ Sasa in Mulyani, What’s Your Sexual Score, 104.
310 I discuss women both in Australia and Indonesia and their options of relationships in my chapter on “Relationship.”
311 See Munti, Demokrasi Keintiman ; Parker, “Theorising Adolescent Sexualities in Indonesia” Utomo, “Reproductive Health Education in Indonesia”
312 Evans, Love , 55.
313 Ibid., 72–73.
mother in the third family who said, ‘I had six one-night stands. I wanted to be choosy about who I had sex with, but it came down to wanting to be loved and recognised’, and Angie who says that ‘Sometimes I feel too tired to start a relationship with a man if at the end he is not going to be serious and he only wants to have fun. I hope I will be able to find the right man soon’.

**Sexual dangers: Pregnancy, contraception and abortion**

One of the dangers of sex is unwanted pregnancy. This problem is addressed by the Australian women, especially the older generation. The grandmother in family one and the grandmother in family three confess that they had unwanted pregnancies. The first grandmother says, ‘I had four female flatmates. No-one used condoms and we all ended up pregnant. We never worried about diseases. I had two backyard abortions: I was devastated’. The grandmother in family three got pregnant and had her baby adopted.

Contraception is the safest way to prevent unwanted pregnancy. Oral contraception, the pill, was released for the first time in January 1961 in Australia and since then has become the most popular contraception in Australia. However, Bongiorno says that like other contraception methods before the pill such as condoms, diaphragms and spermicide, the pill was for married women and difficult to obtain by young single women. From the second half of the 1960s, access for unmarried women to the pill increased although it was still more difficult for single women to get the pill compared to married women. Bongiorno quotes an article in *Woman’s Day* from 1964 which includes a testimony of a doctor who refused to prescribe the pill to unmarried women because he considered not only the conventional morality but also ‘the sometimes

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314 Murray, *Let’s Talk about Sex*, 82.
disastrous psychological after effects of promiscuity in the emotionally immature. In the 1970s, access to the contraceptive pill for single women became easier.

The availability of the contraceptive pill which helps women to avoid unwanted pregnancy and allows women to have sex freely changed sexual relationships and the sexual morality of women and men. Evans writes:

Fifty years ago the ‘good’ woman did not have sexual relationship outside marriage. If she did, then it was assumed that she had been ‘persuaded’ into sexual intercourse by a male partner and any resulting pregnancy would be accepted and rapidly ‘organized’ by marriage. At the end of the twentieth century a ‘good’ woman is one who makes effective use of contraception and sexual relations between unmarried heterosexual partners are acceptable so long as both are ‘careful’. The technological control of nature (including the availability of legal abortion) has created a situation in which the morality of sexuality is about the use of technology and the establishment of a relationship with the body which it is organised by what is deemed ‘rational’ control. Consequently, girls who fail to maintain effective use of contraception and allow themselves to fall pregnant are considered ‘bad’ girls. With regard to the Australian women’s confessions, there is no mention of unwanted pregnancy in the second generation, i.e. the ‘mothers’, but they also do not mention whether they use contraception or not. The mother in family one had a daughter when she was 17 but she did not cite this as an unwanted pregnancy. The mother in family two says that she was afraid of the idea of being pregnant out of wedlock but she also does not mention anything about contraception. Only the mother in family three addresses contraception by stating that she felt silly for not using a condom when she had sex for the first time. On the other hand, the daughters seem to have more awareness about contraception and consider it part of their sexual experience. They mention the contraception they use in their confessions. Two of the ‘daughters’ mention that they are on the pill and one of them mentions that she uses condoms.

According to Evans, new contraceptive technology creates problems connected

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318 Evans, Love, 97.
to the birth of children.\textsuperscript{319} Before contraception was available for unmarried women, men were tied by a moral code to be responsible for the children who were born out of wedlock. The responsibility was based on the assumption that men were the ones who initiated the sexual relationship so it was natural for them to be responsible for the pregnancy and the children. After contraception became available for unmarried women, the moral responsibility of the pregnancy passed to women. The children are not protected from abandonment by their father any more, although society still expects men to support their children. To ensure men’s financial support of their children, many countries in the West establish laws to regulate this matter.

The discussion about contraception does not appear at all in the confessions of Indonesian women while the issue of unwanted pregnancy is only mentioned by Kirana. Even then she felt that she was not afraid of getting pregnant. She says that when she had sex for the first time, she was not afraid of losing her virginity or getting pregnant out of wedlock.\textsuperscript{320} The absence of contraception from the confessions of Indonesian women about their sexual experience is very interesting. Talking about contraception in Indonesia cannot be separated from the family planning program. Indonesian family planning is a state fertility control project. It promotes contraceptive use. Family planning in Indonesia is a state-orchestrated effort under the coordination of BKKBN (Badan Koordinasi Keluarga Berencana Nasional), the National Family Planning Coordinating Board.\textsuperscript{321} Fertility regulation was created and promoted widely during the New Order in Indonesia. The government promoted family planning in many ways. One of the methods was through clinic and family planning personnel (medical doctors and nurses) where clients were expected to come voluntarily to consult about their contraception use. The government sent fieldworkers to villages and remote areas to

\textsuperscript{319}Evans, Love, 96–97.
\textsuperscript{320}Kirana in Mulyani, What’s Your Sexual Score, 100
encourage contraceptive use. These fieldworkers promoted this program door-to-door. There were also family planning groups which consisted of female volunteers who made contraception available to women in even the most remote parts of the country, and acted as agents of family planning motivation. This group was part of PKK, a nationwide women’s organisation, established by the state. PKK exists in most villages and suburbs, and primarily consists of married women who are automatically interested in family planning; the organisation’s leaders at each level of government are typically political or government figures or their wives, with the capacity to mobilise their large networks. The methods mentioned above are continued by the current Indonesian government to promote family planning. However, the promotion of contraception mainly focuses on married couples, especially married women; it does not reach unmarried people, especially young people. With regard to the availability of contraception, The Population Development and Family Welfare Law (Undang-Undang Perkembangan Kependudukan dan Pembangunan Keluarga Sejahtera) No. 10/1992 states that family planning services are only for married couples.

The women in the confessions mostly had sex when they were in high school or in their early years at university, which means that they were in their late teens and early twenties. The absence of contraception in their confessions is not unusual in the Indonesian context. Although youth sexuality is a major concern in Indonesia, Harding says that the Indonesian government does not pay attention to their sexual and reproductive health (SRH). Up until now the national school curriculum still does not include SRH education. Harding says that Indonesian youth rely on informal sources to get their understanding about sex and sexuality. One of the informal sources is the

324 Harding, “The Influence of the ‘Decadent West’”
media. Islamic *buku panduan* (guidance books), teen magazines and tabloids can be found easily on the street, at university markets, regular workshops and in shopping malls, and there are books aimed at those who are married or preparing to marry, but the information about sex and sexuality in these media does not include information about contraception.

The lack of knowledge about contraception may result in unwanted pregnancy as addressed by the older generation in the Australian editions. In Indonesia, Utomo says, premarital pregnancy is considered ‘socially deviant’.\(^{325}\) In a society where people almost always have children within marriage, women who get pregnant out of wedlock often have a difficult time because they have to face condemnation from society. An article published in *Cleo Indonesia* especially discusses unwanted pregnancy. The title is ‘Help! I’m Pregnant’. I found this article interesting because it offers several options which can be taken by women who experience unwanted pregnancies with some local considerations. The consultant in the article, a psychologist, Dra Ieda Purnama Sidi, explains four options: adoption, abortion, marriage and becoming a single parent. Out of the four options, adoption is the only option which is explained by Sidi from a general point of view, without considering the Indonesian context. She says that, ‘Giving the child to other people might release you from the burden. But psychologically, the existence of the child will always haunt you’.\(^{326}\)

For the option of abortion, Sidi says that even though it is up to the woman to choose, there are other external considerations that she has to think about like religion, culture and state law:

\(^{325}\)Utomo, “Reproductive Health Education in Indonesia”, 113.

\(^{326}\)Menyerahkan anak kepada orang lain mungkin akan melepaskan beban. Tapi secara psikologis, keberadaan anak ini akan terus membayangi langkah anda.

One of the considerations to make a decision concerning this matter is religion, cultural norms, social norms, laws. Religion definitely forbids the act of abortion, cultural and social norms cannot accept it as well, and the law clearly states the penalty in the Penal Code and the Health Act.

Sidi’s explanation shows that, apart from health and safety, Indonesian women who are thinking of having an abortion, should also consider factors such as religion, cultural and social norms, and the law.

The next option is marriage. Sidi says that, ‘Usually, the couple who experience an “accident” will be directly forced to get married to save the “big family” from shame and humiliation. This way, the child will have a legal birth certificate’. However, Sidi says that in the present day the choice to jump into marriage is not wise because a couple who are not ready to get married will easily end up in divorce after the baby is born. Forced marriages or ‘shotgun’ marriages are also discussed by Evans when she talks about unwanted pregnancy in English society in the 1950s and 1960s, before the availability of mass contraception. She says that ‘if women agreed to premarital sexual intercourse and became pregnant, then “decent” men were expected to marry them’. It was considered a matter of honour for the men to be responsible for the child they fathered.

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327 The laws which regulate abortion can be found in the Penal Code (Kitab Undang-Undang Hukum Pidana (KUHP)) articles 299, 341, 342, 343, 346, 347, 348, and 349 which make abortion a crime and the Health Law 23/1992, article 75, states that abortion is forbidden by law.

328 Salah satu rumusan pengambilan keputusan tentang hal ini adalah agama, norma budaya, norma sosial, hukum. Agama jelas melarang untuk menggugurkan kandungan, norma budaya dan sosial juga tidak menerima, sementara secara hukum ancamannya tercantum jelas di KUHP dan UU Kesehatan.

329 ‘accident’ (kecelakaan) is a term commonly used in Indonesia to refer to unwanted pregnancy to make it less offensive.

330 Indonesians use the term big family (keluarga besar) to refer to the extended family which mainly consists of three generations from the same grandparents or more.

331 Biasanya, pasangan yang mengalami ‘kecelakaan’ langsung dinikahkan untuk menyelamatkan keluarga besar dari aib. Dengan cara ini, anak kelak juga akan memiliki akta kelahiran resmi.

332 Evans, Love, 87.
The other option is becoming a single parent. Sidi says that a woman might choose to be a single parent but the choice is not without risk:

How do you get a birth certificate (for the child)? (A birth certificate can only be issued when you have a marriage certificate and this certificate is needed when you apply to send your child to a school). How do you explain your status to your child later? … It also causes the child to be called ‘bastard child’.  

In Indonesia, the state tries to enforce paternal responsibility for children. So, as Sidi mentioned, children can only be registered with a legal birth certificate when they are born within a marriage. Children who are born outside marriage can be registered under their mother’s name to get a ‘mother certificate’ (akte ibu). In that certificate the children will be registered as ‘illegitimate child’ (anak luar nikah/kawin) which definitely would bring heavy consequences for the children in a society with traditional marriage values like Indonesia.

Unlike the confessants in the Australian edition, the confessants in the Indonesian magazines focus more on their experience of sexual pleasure. The absence of contraception and unwanted pregnancy in the discourse of Indonesian confessants in these magazines does not mean that contraception and unwanted pregnancy do not exist in Indonesia. It might only mean that as individuals the confessants do not find the issues important enough to talk about or they do not have any knowledge about contraception so they do not talk about it.

Women’s confessions: Virginity

The Australian confessants use the term ‘loss of virginity’ to describe their first sex while the Indonesian confessants seem to avoid this term, perhaps because it is more

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sensitive in Indonesia and to use the term would imply guilt. At present, when girls in the West have more sexual freedom, the question is not whether girls will do it or not but the right time and circumstances to do it. The case is different in Indonesia, where virginity is still a big matter. In their study on university students in Indonesia, Utomo and McDonald found that students still believe in conservative values where women should remain virgins until they are married but not the men.335

Bellows analyses Balinese young women’s questions on sexuality in Pangkahila’s advice column in the daily newspaper, the Bali Post.336 In this column, the girls sent letters asking advice on sexuality, especially virginity. Bellows notes that after the young women talked about their past sexual experience, they would follow it with the question of whether they are still a virgin or not. According to Bellows, the letters reflect the confusion faced by the young women about sex and their sexuality. On the one hand, they want to satisfy their sexual desires and those of their boyfriends. On the other hand, they want to make sure that their sexual experiences will not affect their virginity. At present, Bellows says that Balinese young women have to be responsible for themselves to preserve their virginity by controlling their sexual desire and their interest in sexual experiences since they are not sequestered and protected by their family anymore.337 They need to keep themselves virgins until marriage since, according to Bellows’ interview with Tari Adnyani, Director of the Center for Indonesian Family Planning (PKBI) in Bali, preserving virginity is a way of ‘preserving personal self respect, the honour of families, and Balinese moral order’.338 Bellows explains that having premarital or non-normative sex for Balinese women was regarded as ‘a personal moral failing, a sin, a physical pollution, and potentially physically

336Bellows, “Like the West”
337Bellows, “Like the West”-105.
338Ibid.,83.
dangerous’. Men are not expected to do the same. Instead, Balinese men are expected to be actively seeking sexual experiences.

Munti in her book recited a prolonged debate about virginity in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. It started with the publication of a study on sexuality among female university students in Indonesia by *Lembaga Studi Cinta dan Kemanusiaan serta Pusat Bisnis dan Humaniora* (LSCK PUSBIH) on July 2002. This study was considered controversial by many people because it claimed that 97 per cent of female students in Yogyakarta had lost their virginity. This study was considered a defamation against Yogyakarta which is famous as a City of Education (*Kota Pelajar*). GKR (*Gusti Kanjeng Ratu*) Hemas, the wife of the governor and ‘queen’ of Yogyakarta, said that she was often asked by parents who plan to send their children, especially girls, to study in Yogyakarta whether the city is ‘safe’ for their girls. Safe here means that the girls will not be involved in premarital sex. The study on virginity above could have had the effect of decreasing the number of students, female students particularly, coming to Yogyakarta to study, which would affect the regional income of Yogyakarta. The discussion above shows that the issue of virginity in Indonesia has political and economic implications.

**Sexuality and religion in the Indonesian context**

Foucault bases *scientia sexualis* on the Catholic Church tradition of confession. However, the religious element of confession disappears from the discussion on *scientia sexualis* since Foucault does not focus on confession as a religious practice, but rather on confession as a scientific procedure for revealing the truth. Evans says that as a result of the separation of marriage from sexuality, morality which was attached to marriage

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339Ibid., 87.
341Yogyakarta has been popular for a long time as a place to pursue higher education. The availability of higher education institutions and their facilities attracts people, women and men, from different places in Indonesia.
342Foucault, *The History of Sexuality Volume 1*.
disappeared. The disappearance of the tie between morality, marriage and sexuality can be seen in the confessions of women in the Australian edition. One of the older generation, the grandmother, still acknowledges the connection, ‘I was brought up a Catholic—sex before marriage was a mortal sin,’ although it did not stop her from having premarital sex. The later generations do not mention religion in their discussion of their sexual experience. Similarly, the Indonesian confessants do not address religion in their confessions.

The absence of religion from the confessions of the Indonesian women was a surprise for me. Religion and its traditions are important parts of Indonesian daily reality. Similarly, in Indonesia, religion is always a part of sexuality. In Indonesia sexuality is always connected to morality and to what is forbidden and what is permitted according to religious teaching. Munti mentions a discussion entitled ‘The Social Construction of Sex in Modern Society: a solution’ which concluded that the prevalence of premarital sex portrays the vulnerability of the younger generation, and their weak morality as a result of the weak religious foundation. The discussion concluded that young people should be continuously exposed to religious education.

Parker says that talking about sexuality in Indonesia should also include religion. In her study of Minangkabau adolescents in West Sumatra, Indonesia, Parker found that all young women and men considered premarital sex zina. Zina is fornication outside marriage and is a major sin. However, Parker found that these young women and men have different interpretations on what behaviour is considered zina. She gives an example that some young women interpret holding hands with a boyfriend as the same as ‘going all the way’.

343 Evans, Love.
344 Munti, Demokrasi Keintiman, 92.
345 Parker, “Theorising Adolescent Sexualities in Indonesia”.
346 Ibid.
Discussions about premarital sex in Indonesia always lead to the double standard applied to young women and young men, with the young women facing more risks than the young men: unwanted pregnancy, condemnation from society for being a ‘bad’ girl and, as Parker points out, the risk of committing a major sin. The inequality between men and women is the reason for this double standard. Munti states that the general concept about honour for Muslim men is the belief that women’s sexuality is men’s possession.347 Zina, according to Munti, is a crime because it is a betrayal of men’s authority over women’s bodies. Double standards also happen when men are allowed to have more than one wife while women are not permitted to have more than one husband, though it is important to understand the historical context in which polygyny was allowed by Muhammed.

Some Muslim countries exercise control over sexuality, especially women’s sexuality, by implementing zina laws which make some sexual acts a criminal action leading to punishment.348 These laws, according to Mir-Hosseini and Hamzić, are implemented for political and social ends in which men are assumed to have ‘the right’ to control and subjugate women. However, Mir-Hosseini and Hamzić point out that these kinds of laws are not only present in Muslim communities or maintained solely with reference to Muslim religious and cultural norms. In the case of the implementation of zina laws in Indonesia, these laws which are derived from the ‘revivalist’ visions of Islamic society are supported by Muslim right-wing political forces. They use the decentralised political arena of post-Suharto Indonesia to revive the patriarchy norms with reference to syariah where women are confined to the household and their husbands, and dress code and moral rules are strictly regulated. Mir-Hosseini and Hamzić say that syariah is used to appeal to religious sentiments in the general

347 Munti, Demokrasi Keintiman, 41.
348 Mir-Hosseini and Hamzić, Control and Sexuality, 7.
It is played on by the Muslim right-wing political groups to get greater access to state power or retain their position in local governments.

Although these political forces have not succeeded at the national level, in some regions they have been successful in pushing forward their agenda in enacting certain gender-discriminatory provincial regulations and by-laws such as dress codes and public morality regulations.\textsuperscript{350} The extent of the implementation of syariah laws with regard to zina in South Sulawesi can be seen in the quotation below:

A 13-year-old girl called Fatma was punished under the so-called ‘whipping law’ (\textit{hukum cambuk}) in the Muslim village of Padang in Bulukumba, North Sulawesi.\textsuperscript{351} Fatma frequently went to her neighbour’s house to watch television in the evenings.

One night, as usual, she visited her neighbour’s house. When she went to the toilet, which was outside the house, the neighbour’s nephew followed her and tried to hold her hand. She was so frightened that she ran away from the outhouse and the man ran after her. The chase disturbed some of the village officials.

Eventually, Fatma and her assailant were caught by the village officials and were brought to the village office for questioning. Without a formal trial, and even though she was a minor, Fatma was punished with a number of lashes, while the man was merely fined for the alleged \textit{zina}.

The psychological stress suffered by Fatma resulted in a prolonged trauma. Her family was excluded and isolated from the village and Fatma herself did not dare to join any public activity as she would always be bullied by her neighbours.\textsuperscript{352}

Although this was an exceptional case picked out by a women’s NGO for special attention, the real experience of the girl in the above quotation shows how strong a part religion can play in women’s sexuality in Indonesia. It is intriguing that this fact is not mentioned by Indonesian confessants in the magazine article above.

Parker addresses various attitudes and behaviours related to sexuality in Indonesia by using the plural form ‘sexualities’. She argues that there is a huge range of

\textsuperscript{349} Mir-Hosseini and Hamzić, \textit{Control and Sexuality}, 52–53.
\textsuperscript{350} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{351} Although Mir-Hosseini and Hamzić cite that this incident happened in ‘Bulukumba, North Sulawesi’, Bulukumba is actually in South Sulawesi.
understandings about sexuality among young people in Indonesia:

These range from fundamentalist condemnation of any behaviour or thinking that approaches zina, found commonly in pesantren but also among students in ‘secular’ schools; through a conservative ‘idealised Muslim morality’ that disapproves of premarital sex but may or may not be accompanied by behaviour that is in alignment with professed morality; then through a highly Westernised, wealthy, educated and urban youth who are more secular in their morality and liberal in their sexuality, but who would probably still express disapproval of premarital sex to authorities; to an underground, opportunistic, sometimes survival, sexuality, found mainly among subcultural city youth who live away from families and home and indeed sometimes are homeless.\(^{353}\)

The confessants in *Marie Claire Indonesia* are most likely from urban and upper-middle-class backgrounds and can be seen to be older versions of the ‘highly Westernised, wealthy, educated and urban youth who are more secular in their morality and liberal in their sexuality’ mentioned by Parker. Their backgrounds are implied in their mentioning of ‘personal swimming pool’, ‘living in an apartment’ and ‘having a villa’ which in the Indonesian context are properties only affordable by high-middle-class people. With this kind of background, these women might be more secular in their beliefs on morality and religion than women with a traditional and religious background.

Besides the reasons above, the absence of religion in Indonesian discourse is possibly based on the fact that these confessions are written confessions; so no matter how personal they are and how honest they are as self-examinations to find the truth, they are still crafted. By crafted, I mean that the confessions are presented in this article in a way that serves the magazine’s mission to promote a representation of liberated modern women as opposed to oppressed traditional women. Since in the Indonesian context, liberated modern women are associated with Western women,\(^{354}\) the magazine takes the position of Western people who separate sex from marriage to present

\(^{353}\)Parker, “Theorising Adolescent Sexualities in Indonesia”.

sexuality and does not touch on the issue of religion which is important for Indonesians. Apparently, the magazine is aware that the issue of religion in sexuality, especially woman’s sexuality, is very sensitive in Indonesia. Therefore, in order to sell the magazine and forward the idea of liberated modern women, it avoids the issue of religion. Instead, the sexuality in these women’s confessions is presented as *ars erotica* which only focuses on sexual pleasure and ignores the permitted and the forbidden in religion. By avoiding its association with religion, the sexuality represented in the magazine indeed can be read by Indonesian readers as the representation of ‘Western lifestyle’ and *pergaulan bebas* (free socialising). As I mentioned in my introductory chapter, *pergaulan bebas* (free socialising), especially in terms of sexuality, is regarded as the negative influence of ‘Western lifestyle’ which can erode the morality of Indonesian youth.

However, by using Foucault’s concept of *scientia sexualis*, the representation of sexuality in the magazines can be viewed from the position of sexuality as knowledge, thus avoiding taboos and maintaining the decency of the discussion. Foucault’s concept of confession as a procedure for revealing the truth helps in the analysis of women’s stories in these magazines. The women’s confessions in both Australian and Indonesian editions show that confessions can reveal more than just women’s fantasies and experiences related to sexual pleasure. They also offer women’s views and experiences on the ties of sexuality, marriage and love, and the effect of the separation of the three elements. The confessions cover not only sexual pleasure but also sexual danger, such as unwanted pregnancy, and external factors related to sexuality such as control over sexuality by religion and the state. Women’s confessions in the magazines are ‘knowledge’ about sexuality which touches many facets of women’s reality, such as psychology, education, culture and law. In women’s confessions, the body control suggested by Foucault is exercised by channelling it through discourse. The control is
expressed through what Krondorfer calls self-examination, where people revisit the past and use it to transform their old selves. Although the idea of transformation cannot always be clearly seen in the women’s confessions, the idea is there. For example, in her self-reflection, Fara, an Indonesian confessant, says that, ‘All those things happened over more than a year. Then I came to a realisation that I had many misfortunes. My mother was seriously ill and my father was in debt because his business went bankrupt. I have left my past behind. I want to rearrange my life’. It shows that the women in the confessions do revisit, reflect upon and re-evaluate their past. Other examples are from the Australian grandmother who concludes her life story with, ‘I think things are getting better for women. We need to talk about sex; we need to understand it’ and from another confessant who says, ‘I’m on the pill; it makes things easy. My dad brought it up in the car; it was one of those awkward conversations. He said, “You don’t want anything to happen”. But it was my decision to go on it’. In both excerpts, we can see that the women revisit their past and make a self-evaluation by comparing their present situation with their past.

For the women readers, understanding their own sexuality is important. They need to get information to empower themselves. The need is very obvious for Indonesian readers, because it is taboo to talk about sex in public. The magazines are seen by the readers as a source of information on sexuality. Below are letters from the readers of Marie Claire Indonesia and Cosmopolitan Indonesia to the editors:

355 Semua itu berlangsung selama lebih dari setahun. Sampai saya menemukan kesadaran saat cobaan berat datang bertubi-tubi. Ibu sakit keras dan ayah terlilit hutang karena bisnisnyabangkrut. Semua masa lalu sudah saya lupakan. Saya ingin menata hidup kembali.”
Fara in Mulyani, What’s Your Sexual Score, 107.

356 Grandmother in family one in Murray, Let’s Talk about Sex, 80.

357 Daughter in family two in Murray, Let’s Talk about Sex, 80.
I am a new reader of Marie Claire and all of a sudden I fell in love with its open discussion of lifestyle, while still being polite and classy. The rubric features are also very informative, like One Night Stand in last December’s edition. My suggestion is, to the reader whose letter was published, give a beautiful gift as a reward.
Thank you.
Dina Handriati, 32, Depok.358

Dear Cosmo, the June edition is really sexy, but it doesn’t look vulgar. In Indonesia, the word ‘Sex’ is a taboo and not a common topic for open discussion. The fact is, from the perspective of health and knowledge, sex education is very necessary. And Cosmo did it well! I do the right thing to wait every month, because Cosmopolitan is worth the wait. Thanks Cosmo!
Marsel@email.359

Both letters show that the writers find the discussions about sex in the magazines informative because they cover a topic which is commonly considered taboo. They both agree that the way the magazines talk about sexuality is decent because the presentation is polite, classy and not vulgar. The second letter writer even implies that the discussion about sex in the magazine is presented as knowledge. These letters show that Indonesian women indeed turn to magazines to get information about sexuality since they do not get that information from formal institutions.

Who is speaking?

Women’s confessions about their sexual experiences prove to be important as they show women’s opinions about their own sexuality. However, there are two questions that I would raise with regard to women’s confessions in the women’s magazines. The first

358 Saya adalah pembaca baru Marie Claire dan dalam sekejap langsung jatuh hati dengan pembahasannya yang terbuka seputar gaya hidup, namun tetap santun dan berkelas. Rubrik yang ditampilkan pun sangat informatif, seperti One Night Stand di edisi Desember lalu. Saran saya, kepada pembaca yang dimuat surainya berikanlah bingkisan cantik sebagai reward. Terima kasih.
Dina Handriati, 32, Depok.
“We’ve Got Mail.” Marie Claire Indonesia, Januari, 2011, 16.

359 Dear Cosmo, edisi Juni benar-benar sexy, namun tidak terlihat vulgar. Di Indonesia, kata “Sex” adalah hal yang tabu dan bukan topik yang umum dibicarakan blak-blakan. Padahal dilihat dari sisi kesehatan dan pengetahuan, sex education sangat dihutuhkan. And Cosmo did it well! Memang tidak salah menanti tiap bulan, karena Cosmopolitan pantas ditunggu. Thanks Cosmo!
Marsel@email
“You Tell Us.” Cosmopolitan Indonesia, Juli 2010.
question is whether writing confessions is a gendered activity where men have more privilege than women. The second question is who is actually speaking in the women’s confessions in this magazine.

To answer my first question, I will start with Krondorfer’s argument that confessional writing is a gendered activity360 and present my argument later. In his book, Krondorfer argues that for a long time, the ability to articulate oneself was only available to men. Access to the means of preserving the written word in the form of writing was only available to men because it was a privilege based on education, social status and felt entitlement to a public hearing. Krondorfer claims that the written form is attractive to men because the outcome is easier to shape and control, different from the face-to-face encounter where the outcome is less predictable and more difficult to shape and control. He says that writing appeals to men because it is pervaded by a tinge of adventure, when the writer is filled by the sense of being suspended between risk and control. It gives the sense of ‘control’ because the writer in and through the process of creating a text also creates a distancing from himself, others and events in the past. The writer is the one in command of the story about himself. And it gives the sense of ‘risk’ because the writer is exposed to public ridicule and censure. Krondorfer argues that the confessional act is men’s privilege because women are robbed of access to education, to a public voice and to subjectivity. As an object, women cannot present themselves in their own stories. They cannot confess.

In my opinion, women are as capable as men of making confessions. The long history of confession in the Catholic church shows that women are able to make confessions, including of their sexual desire and experiences as part of their religious obligation.361 Women had written confessional texts such as diaries and letters for an

360 Krondorfer, Male Confessions, 7.
audience in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, although they did not publish them commercially. Women share their personal problems including sexual experiences and sexual problems in the advice columns of women’s magazines. Women also make confessions about their sexual lives for magazines as can be seen in this chapter. Furthermore, the development of new media like blogs enables women to write their confessions and share their sexual experiences with the public. Scrimgeour in her article in *The Independent* lists blogs about women’s confessions including Confessions of a Wayward Wife (confessionsofawaywardwife.blogspot.com), Post Secret (postsecret.com), Secret Tweet (secrettweet.com), Second Chance (Secondchangeonline.blogspot.com) and True Wife Confessions (truewifeconfessions.blogspot.com). These blogs are where women can post real-life relationship confessions such as day-to-day experiences in a relationship, regret and infidelity. By sharing their sexual experiences through blogs, as well as facing what Krondorfer calls the risk of ridicule from readers, the women practise ‘control’ by taking on the role of authoring their own stories. Scrimgeour quotes Dawn Rouse, the founder of True Wife Confessions, who offers some insights into why women write their personal issues in a public space like the internet:

‘I feel there is a definite lack of space for women to say the unsayable; the things that we as humans need to say or lose our minds,’ she explains. ‘I may say these things in a therapist’s office. Others may only have access to a blog like this. You get it out. Then it dissipates, gives you the impetus to say it to your partner, or confirms that you have some different choices to make in life.’

From her opinion, I can infer that these blogs are places where women can find a way to say things they cannot say in a non-virtual situation. The popularity of these blogs as a

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365 Scrimgeour, *True Wife Confessions*.
space in which women can share their experiences shows that before the internet era, as Krondorfer suggested, women apparently did not have a way to share their experiences with the public. So, it is not the act of confession or the act of writing the confession which disables women from making their confessions public, but their access to the means to publish their confessions which is the problem. Additionally, similar to Foucault’s concept of confessions, Rouse considers a blog a substitute for a therapist. The difference between Krondorfer’s male confessions and these women’s blog confessions is the men in Krondorfer’s confessions are not anonymous while the women writers in these blogs are mostly anonymous. As a part of virtual media, a blog provides a space to confess in secrecy just like confession in church. Scrimgeour quotes Amy, one of the bloggers, who says that to remain anonymous she only blogs when she is alone and always deletes her browsing history after that. She also says that she is using a proxy server when she blogs. The reasons for staying anonymous are not explained by the bloggers in this article. However, the choice of these women bloggers to stay anonymous implies the possibility of cultural constraints, as suggested by ‘Betty Walker’: ‘Mums have it hard—society still expects us to be virtuous and homely, and we don’t have the equality in the home that we do in business’.

The discussion above shows that the written confession is not a gendered activity. Women can and do write their confessions just like men. Women’s problem is access to the means to write and share their opinions in public. With the development of the internet, women now have more access to write their confessions. However, most women are not as free as men to reveal their identities to the public as a result of cultural constraints.

With regard to the question about who is actually speaking in the women’s

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366 A proxy server is a system which becomes an intermediary for requests from users who try to find resources such as a file or a web page from other available servers. When it gets the information requested, it relays it back to the users. By using a proxy server, the identity of the user is hidden.

367 Scrimgeour, True Wife Confessions.
confessions in these magazines, all confessions in these two articles are shared by women and all stories are written using the first person point of view. But different from the male confession, where the writer/narrator is the one who does the action, has the experiences and writes, in the magazines the women’s confessions are retold by someone else, the writer of the articles. The confessions use a first person point of view to narrate the stories of the women. Using the first person point of view creates the effect of the narrator being a real person, ‘I’, and brings the readers into a situation where they are involved in the story. According to Simpson, in the context of narrative fiction, point of view means ‘the psychological perspective through which a story is told’; it is related to the basic viewing position which is adopted in a story.368 The written confessions on sexuality in these magazines are complicated in regard to point of view because they are supposed to be personal and a self-examination product to be able to present the truth. The writers in these confessions are like the confessor in auricular confession where they help the confessants to interpret experiences to find the truth. The need of other people to help women to voice or write their sexual experiences is addressed by Lawless’ discussion about women who experience violence.369 She says that that the girls actually have voices and tell their own stories in the first person, but nobody listens, nobody cares, nobody asks what they are feeling and thinking. They could speak but felt that few cared to listen to what they had to say. It seems like women, as suggested by Krondorfer, do not have an entitlement to public hearing the way men do. In the case of women’s confessions in the magazines, access to public hearing is mediated by the writer of the article. The consequence of mediated writing is that ‘control’ is possessed by the writer, not the story owner. The writer is the one who shapes the story. In these women’s confessions, the shared experiences of women’s

sexuality seem to be forwarded as ‘empowering’ situations. To serve the idea of women’s empowerment, the writer might avoid mentioning certain facts like the issue of religion in Indonesia. Therefore, these confessions should not be used to generalise women’s sexual experience, especially in the Indonesian context where issues like religion are avoided.

**Conclusion**

In general, Australian and Indonesian editions represent women’s sexuality similarly. Following Foucault’s concept of *ars erotica*, tips on sexuality in both Australian and Indonesian editions of *Cosmopolitan, Cleo* and *Marie Claire* can be classified as *ars erotica*. Further, as these tips on sexuality are published in the mass-produced women’s magazines, these tips on sexuality are regarded as *ars erotica* in their popular version. These tips focus on guiding women to gain sexual pleasure. Foucault’s positioning of *ars erotica* as the East and *scientia sexualis* as the West attaches the idea of the constructed East to *ars erotica*. In the Indonesian context, the idea of *ars erotica* as an Eastern practice is repackaged and sold as a Western practice to negotiate the restrictions of local cultural, religious, and state regulations.

Foucault’s *scientia sexualis* helps the magazines present women’s sexuality as knowledge. In the advice column or Question/Answer section, codification and interpretation in medical, psychological, educational or legal terms is used to avoid taboo and maintain the decency of the article. Furthermore, confession as a model of *scientia sexualis* to reveal the truth is used by the magazines to present the sexual experience of real women. Through the confessions, women’s sexual experiences are shared with the public. These confessions show that women’s sexual experiences are also related to other fields of knowledge such as psychology, medicine, education and law. The confessions reveal sexual pleasure and sexual danger faced by both Australian and Indonesian women.
Particularly in the Indonesian context, women’s confessions seem to promote the idea of liberated modern women, which is associated with the West’s idea of women. In Indonesian women’s confessions, we can see that sex is not regarded as a practice that can only happen within marriage. In talking about their sexual experiences, the women in the confessions do not address the issue of religion which is central to Indonesian society. As a result, the women in the confessions can be considered by Indonesian readers as involving in *pergaulan bebas* (free socialising), a negative lifestyle imported from the West. There is a possibility that these women’s idea of sexual practice may be influenced by their socio-economic background. It is implied in the confessions of these Indonesian women that they come from an urban middle-class background. This group, as suggested by Parker, are ‘more secular in their morality and liberal in their sexuality’.\(^{370}\) We can also see that contraception is absent in the confessions of Indonesian women as a result of the lack of formal sex education. As seen in the Letters to the editors, the magazines are regarded as a source of information about sex education. It makes the role of these women’s magazines unique in the Indonesian context.

Finally, the fact that the women’s confessions in the magazines are mediated by other people, the writers, does not mean that women are unable to write their own confessions. Instead, it is the result of limited access to the means of expressing their experience in public. Historically, women’s writings in the form of diaries or letters, although not commercially published, were proof that women could also write their confessions. In contemporary society, the popularity of women blogging their sexual experiences is also proof that women can write confessions.

\(^{370}\) Parker, “Theorising Adolescent Sexualities in Indonesia”. 
Chapter 4 Beauty and Body Image

All the magazines studied present advertising on recent trends in women’s beauty products as well as tips and articles on beauty on glossy pages. They emphasise women’s need to look beautiful on any occasion and to stay on guard all the time. They claim to provide products for women from different cultures, backgrounds and professions. They link beauty with the idea of freshness, health and youth. Thus, beauty and its various representations are central to all these magazines.

In the Indonesian context, the popularity of whitening products supports the idea that having fair skin is the mark of ideal beauty. Whiteness is seen as the representation of West modernity, superiority and privilege in Indonesia. On the other hand, in representing beauty in Australian editions, the women’s magazines emphasise the representation of women having tanned skin. Tanned skin is represented in association with health and wealth. With regard to body image, apparently body image is a major concern in Australian editions only. The Australian editions cover this issue a lot, mostly in articles which tell women to be happy with their natural body. The articles also present real women’s opinions about their bodies. However, these same magazines also discuss ways to have a better shape and how to manipulate the imperfection of women’s bodies using the right products. Except for tips about how to be healthy and toned, the Indonesian editions of these magazines barely touch these issues.

This chapter therefore examines the way beauty and body image are represented in the Australian and Indonesian editions. In the first section, I discuss that basically the beauty promoted in the women’s magazines is not natural but is created by the beauty industries. I intend to show how the beauty industries use the idea of diversity to

embrace a wider market and sell their products. I am using Jones’ and Tungate’s discussions about beauty and how beauty industries create the concept of beauty as a framework for my discussion about beauty, especially their discussion about whiteness. Skin colour, which easily marks ethnicity/race as well as class differences, is the most manipulated feature of beauty. The beauty industries create stories about beauty such as whiteness as the mark of modernity and class privilege or tanned skin as the mark of health and wealth to serve different markets. In the advertisements of beauty products, the stories are supported by the models employed. For example, in promoting whitening products in Indonesia, the advertisements feature Indonesian models who have fair skin. In this section on beauty, I explain that technology, especially image editing techniques, helps the beauty industries and the magazines to create beauty which is suited for a specific target market. Technology provides the techniques to manipulate the skin colour of the models to become lighter or darker. In general, the representation of beauty still positions whiteness as a privilege. In both editions, the models commonly used to illustrate the advertisements are White models. When local models are employed as in the case of whitening product advertisements, the models usually have fair skin.

In the second section, I discuss body image by using Blood’s discussion about ordinary women’s bodies as a framework for my discussion. In the women’s magazines, body dissatisfaction is no longer associated with women’s physical attempts to discipline their bodies but is associated with women’s psychological dissatisfaction in perceiving their bodies. Based on Blood’s discussion, I discuss how naked ordinary women’s bodies are presented in the women’s magazines and the effects of their representation for real women. I argue that the publication of ordinary women’s bodies may help women to construct a positive view about their own bodies but may also lead women to have a negative view about their bodies. Although it is true that the beauty
industries, including women’s magazines as their intermediaries, create beauty through images, existing concepts about beauty and body shape in a society will also determine the readers’ or markets’ acceptance of the image presented and the products sold. For example, the popularity of whitening products in the Asian market is supported by the existing view in Asian societies that fair skin is the preferred skin colour. In general, I argue that although there are some changes in the representations of beauty and body images, most of the images are still dominated by unrealistic beauty and body ideals.

**Ideal beauty and body image**

Standards of beauty are different from one place to another, depending on ethnicity and cultural background. Jones mentions that the variation of ideals of beauty as an effect of different diets, climates and availability of natural ingredients, which include differences in skin tone and hair textures, have existed for a long time. Tungate shows that the concept of beauty has changed from time to time. He started from Egypt, which in ancient times was the hub of a veritable beauty trade. He explains that in ancient Egypt women had an extensive beauty regime for every part of the body including skin treatments, hair treatments and face make-up.

Egyptian women dusted their skin with ochre to give it a lighter, golden hue. As well as lining their eyes with kohl, they painted their eyelids with malachite, turquoise, terra cotta or charcoal. Their eyebrows were plucked and elongated, their lashes darkened. Their lips were reddened with carmine.

On the other hand, Tungate says that the Greeks believed in natural beauty rather than beauty as a result of face paint. The application of make-up in Sparta was associated with courtesans. Tungate points out that Aphrodite, the goddess of love and beauty, is the representation of ideal woman. This goddess had an oval face, an aquiline nose, a

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rounded yet youthfully firm body, prominent breasts and pale skin. In the sixth century BC, make-up techniques from the Orient became known in Athens. Women started to whiten their skin with ceruse—white lead—or powdered chalk, added blusher made of crushed fig or mulberry, painted their eyelids with saffron, plucked their eyebrows and blackened them with kohl. According to Tungate, Roman women also underwent beauty rituals similar to the Greeks. Like the Greeks, they whitened their skin with ceruse which damaged the skin, blackened the teeth and damaged the nervous system in the long run. The practice of lightening women’s skins continued during the Dark Ages, despite the acknowledged damaging effects.

Tungate explains that in the eighteenth century, paleness as a trend was added to by the popularity of rouge. Rouge was applied lightly to white cheeks to create the effect of the angelic appearance of a cherub. Rouge was popular among the aristocracy of France and Regency England to cover the weariness of ‘endless balls and nights at the gaming tables’ and also to mimic a state of sexual excitement. Tungate says that this trend of beauty once again changed after the French Revolution with the return to ‘natural’ beauty which once again put forward the idea of paleness as ideal beauty. Paleness was such that it was ‘as if fashionable women had been struck simultaneously by a mysterious malady’.  

The above outline of the history of ideals of beauty shows that paleness has been a preferred feature of beauty since ancient times. Tungate offers an explanation about this preferred paleness. He says that skin paleness was associated with light and clarity, which were associated with the life-giving rays of the sun in ancient cultures and with the light of God in the cultures afterward. Light and clarity were also associated with youth and divinity. However, I agree more with his other explanation that paler skin implies that the woman who possessed it belonged to a social class which was different

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375 Tungate, Branded Beauty, chapter 1.
376 Ibid.
from that of the darker working-class women who had to do manual labour outside.

In Asian cultures, as well as in many other cultures, paleness is associated with wealth, privileged class and aristocracy\textsuperscript{377} while dark skin is associated with manual labour.\textsuperscript{378} Goon and Craven say that the whiteness or the paleness of women’s skin is a marker of refinement.\textsuperscript{379} There is a fantasy of superiority which can be obtained by possessing white skin. This prejudice was no doubt reinforced by the White rulers of the colonial era. In the Indonesian context, when a woman has white skin, she is different from those around her. She stands out from other women and has the quality of superiority possessed by the Westerner (coloniser). This idea is actually supported by the pre-existing concept that fairer skin is a privilege. In the ‘olden days’, women with privilege, such as those from the Javanese royal family, were often portrayed as having fairer skin than those from a common background.\textsuperscript{380} Fair and bright skin as the preferred skin colour and an attribute of Javanese woman’s beauty is also mentioned in *Serat Centini*, an ancient Javanese manuscript. Tilaar mention that *Kinanthi* Song 32 verse 12716 in *Serat Centini* describes the beauty of a woman named Wara Surendra.\textsuperscript{381} In the song, a woman is considered beautiful because she has an authoritative bearing and clear yellow skin. The text shows that the preferred skin is yellow (fair). In recent years, having white skin means being modern, as suggested by Handajani in her study of girls’ magazines. She says that in Indonesian girls’ magazines modernity is closely connected to Western society.\textsuperscript{382} Having white skin also means being civilised and being


\textsuperscript{379}Goon and Craven, *Whose Debt?*

\textsuperscript{380}Martha Tilaar, *Kecantikan Perempuan Timur*, Edited by Dorothea Rosa Herliany (Magelang: Indonesia Tera), 1999.

\textsuperscript{381}Tilaar, *Kecantikan Perempuan Timur*, 46.

\textsuperscript{382}See Handajani, “Globalizing Local Girls”; Handajani, “Western Inscriptions on Indonesian Bodies”
middle class as stated by Prabasmoro in her study of soap advertisements in Indonesia.\(^3\)

With regard to body shape and size, Brown and Konner explain that obesity was never regarded as a common health problem in most primitive societies as food shortage and food quality had always been a problem.\(^4\) It was thinness, not fatness, which would be considered a serious problem in these societies. Fatness, on the other hand, was viewed as a sign of health and prosperity. Especially for women, fatness was a symbol of maternity and nurturance. In modern times, Brown and Konner argue that the ideal body shape depends on the society’s economic condition. In a society where people easily become fat they prefer thinness. On the other hand, in a society where people easily remain lean they prefer plumpness. They say that

> In poor societies the rich impress the poor by becoming fat, which the poor cannot do. In rich societies even the poor can become fat, and avidly do; therefore, the rich must impress by staying thin, as if to say, ‘We have so little doubt about where our next meal is coming from, that we don’t need a single gram of fat store’.\(^5\)

However, Brown and Konner note that fatness here most probably means large body size because there is no society on record that idealises extreme obesity.

Brown and Konner explain that obesity started to occur when modernisation changed people’s diet. It was when traditional diets which were rich in fibre were replaced by Westernised diets which have high fats and sugar. Brown and Konner point out one important fact, which they call ‘a sad fact’, when traditional societies which originally have healthy diets readily switch to diets high in fats and sugar despite their lack of healthy nutrients. Another factor which makes obesity common is when a society reaches a certain level of prosperity where even poor people are able to consume enough food to become obese. Obesity, then, becomes a concern when it starts to pose a

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\(^3\) See Prabasmoro, *Representasi Ras, Kelas, Femininitas Dan Globalitas Dalam Iklan Sabun*.


threat to people’s health. Brown and Konner take US society as an example where obesity is regarded as a major health issue. The campaign against obesity in the US has reached the point where obesity is hated and socially stigmatised.

According to Wykes and Gunter, culturally the concept of an ideal woman’s body shape is not universal and not consistent but has been an ever-changing concept even amongst Western nations.386 They show the way the ideal of women’s body in Western societies changed over time in the era before mass media and mass consumer culture. Between 1400 and 1700, a plump, big-breasted and maternal woman was the portrayal of a sexually appealing and fashionable woman. This figure was associated with the socio-economic conditions in which a plump figure was a sign of wealth, health and youth. By the nineteenth century, a voluptuous hourglass shape with a generous bust and hips but a narrow waist replaced the plump figure. In the 1920s, the slender flapper replaced the voluptuous woman. The slender body as a new ideal body began to raise concerns about eating disorders amongst the medical profession in the twentieth century. In the 1930s, the ideal figure shifted to the fuller figure inspired by film icons Betty Grable and Mae West. That curvaceous shape which was shown by Marilyn Monroe, Jane Russell and the Playboy centrefold survived through the 1940s and 1950s. By the mid-1960s, slenderness returned as an ideal shape to replace curvaceousness. Wykes and Gunter note that the mid-1960s was also the period of significant change in gender roles, technological advances and the florescence of global capitalism. That era also marked the change of the dominant cultural icons from film stars to skinny fashion models like Twiggy. The slender body continued to be an ideal figure during the 1980s, with a slight change from extreme tenderness to the muscularisation of the still very slender body. Wykes’ and Gunter’s explanation shows that being slender is generally preferred by modern Western societies over a once ideal

plump body shape. They note that young women prefer to have a small and thin body size with a well-developed bust.

In the Indonesian context, in Kinanthi Song 32 verse 12716 in *Serat Centini*, a woman is deemed beautiful in traditional Indonesian society when she is:

…quiet, calm and gentle, smart, cautious, careful, polite and bright. Her thick forelock is loose, her hair is shiny black and greenish, her neck is long and slim and her chest is wide. She looks bright like a coconut flower. Her shoulders are perfect, her arms are like an ivory curve, and her behaviour is agreeable. She is sexually attractive. When she walks, she walks carefully, gently, slowly and lightly, supple like a lotus in the water blown by the wind. 387

The text does not clearly mention the ideal body shape for a woman but from the description of other features such as neck and arms as well as from the description of the way she walks, it can be inferred that the preferred body shape is slender.

**Crafting beauty**

Beauty industries create ‘stories’ about beauty to sell their products. ‘Youth’, ‘health’, ‘vitality’, ‘radiance’ and ‘luxurious’ are words used in advertising copy by beauty brands which also offer a promise of status. McClintock tells the story of soap during the Victorian era in Britain when it was promoted not only as real hygiene but also as imperial progress. 388 She mentions that soap was not commercially popular during the peak of British imperialism. Its popularity started when Britain faced potential crisis and social calamity as a result of the increase of slum areas, industrial pollution, social unrest, economic upheaval, imperial competition and anti-colonial resistance. The popularity of soap was supported by the ideas of salvation and regeneration found in soap as a product of hygiene that could restore the potency of the imperial power over other races. McClintock gives the example of Pears’ advertising, which showed an environment magically purified from industrial pollutants and a working-class people

387 Ibid.
magically purified from polluting labour. Another created story of beauty is the story behind the popularity of Helene Rubinstein’s crème valaze, the first global beauty brand, as told by Tungate. This cream was associated with luxury, sophistication and science. It was sold under the pretence that the cream was scientifically developed by Dr Jacob Lykusky of Krakow, a figure who could not be traced in real life. The cream that was basically a mix of lanolin, soft paraffin, distilled water and pine bark extract was advertised as ‘VALAZE BY DR LYKUSKY the most celebrated European Skin Specialist, is the best nourisher of the skin. Valaze will improve the worst of skin in one month...’ The storytelling does not stop with the products alone but also includes packaging as a vital part of the storytelling process. For example, Clarins, which sells the hygiene kind of cosmetics, have a package that looks like a pharmaceutical product: a green box with a simple package.

In the present time, beauty products still sell ‘stories’. Tungate cites his interview with a product manager at a major beauty company whom he named Caroline as she wants to stay anonymous:

You want to be sure you’re maintaining your fair share of the market, so you may find yourself launching a product to react to the competition or respond to a success story, but that’s by no means the only impetus. When you have a successful range of products there’s natural erosion. You can maintain interest by launching an extension to the range or you may have to repackage and relaunch the entire line, changing the marketing message entirely. That’s when you need to contact the laboratory and find out if there’s a new active ingredient—a new story to tell. Everything starts with a concept. You actually sit down and write this. And a lot of what you write typically ends up in the advertising copy at the end of the process. You take that concept to the laboratory and discuss it with them. They can tell you whether their research supports your concept. You go back and forth for a while adjusting your concept until it agrees with the research. And finally you’ve got a coherent story to tell the consumer.

From Caroline’s story, it can be inferred that it is not the product but the story behind the product that is more important in selling the product. And beauty as a competitive

389 Tungate, Branded Beauty, chapter 2.
industry needs convincing stories for consumers. The language of beauty marketing is full of what Tungate calls surreal poetry words such as ‘natural’, ‘radiance’, ‘flawless’, ‘visibly reduces’, ‘enhances’, ‘renews’, ‘boosts’, ‘rejuvenate’, ‘revitalizes’, ‘replenishes’, ‘exclusive’, ‘patented’, ‘tested’, ‘proven’ and ‘advanced’. Those words are easily found in the stories of beauty products. To associate science with beauty, Tungate says that the beauty industries translate science in the most attractive way into a scenario that sells. The industries dramatise science by employing some scientific language as in beauty advertising which contains words related to science such as ‘cells’ and ‘cellular’, and also by including statistics. With regard to the statistics, Tungate points out that to claim that 80 per cent of users are satisfied with a product, as few as 30 respondents in one sample group might be asked to use the product.391

According to Jones, the mass production of beauty offers ‘the democratisation of personal aesthetics’ as it provides an opportunity for people to make choices about how they look and smell.392 It helps people to define their personal taste, fashion and style. These mass-produced beauty products give ‘every man and woman new powers of self-reinvention: to change the colour of one’s hair, the redness of one’s lips, and the scent of one’s body’.393 The consumers, according to ‘Caroline’, are willing victims who are not duped by the glamorous beauty companies and representations of the products in the glossy magazines.394 The consumers realise that there is an element of fantasy in the products they buy, they are never 100 per cent convinced that the products will work. But, as ‘Caroline’ argues, the consumers not only enjoy the products but also the experience of talking to the ‘beauty consultant’ in the store, taking the object home, opening it up and applying it to their body.

White faces, pale skin and blonde hair have been the focus of beauty norms

391 Tungate, Branded Beauty, chapter 10.
392 Jones, Beauty Imagined, 275.
393 Ibid.
394 Tungate, Branded Beauty, chapter 10.
worldwide for decades and it was many years before beauty marketing broadened its message to include a wider range of skin types and ethnicity. By then the clichéd story of whiteness as a standard ideal of beauty had become the universal marker of beauty and superiority regardless of ethnicity. The concept of universal beauty above is changing as beauty companies go global and market their products to many different countries. Tungate says that in order to sell beauty products to people who have their own characteristics of skin and hair; the standard patterns are modified to take account of local circumstances. To address local markets, Jones says that beauty companies try to adapt to local consumers while maintaining the core formulas. They use various local models. For example, Maybelline New York employed a Bollywood actress in India and a Japanese actress in Japan; Unilever’s Lux Toilet Soap employed Chinese film stars in China; Avon used Brazilian models in Brazil; and Pond’s used a famous Indonesian singer in Indonesia. However, as whiteness is still assumed as the object of desire for the local market, advertisements feature the image of pale Asian women and pure-white packaging.

**Beauty creation in women’s magazines**

In the following discussion, we will see that women’s magazines have their share in the creation of beauty. According to Kitch, *Ladies’ Home Journal* in the late 1890s to early 1900s presented pen-and-ink sketches of the ideal woman on the cover of the magazine. The created ideal women were named Gibson girls after the illustrator, Gibson. The Gibson girl was represented as:

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395 Ibid., chapter 12.
396 Ibid., chapter 9.
398 Good and Craven, *Whose Debt?*
...a tall, radiant being, her gaze clear, fearless and direct, her nose slightly and piquantly uptilted. Her lips fine-modelled and alluring. Her soft hair crowning a serene brow and caught up into a dainty chignon. The graceful column of her neck rising from the décolletage that barely concealed her delicately-rounded bosom. Her slim waist emphasized by the bodice cut of her gowns, gowns still with the vestige of a bustle and with full, smoothly-fluent skirts. 399

Kitch says that the Gibson girl represented a single repeatable type which was consistent from one drawing to the other and became the first visual stereotype of women in American mass media.

Sutton says that women’s magazine copywriters create images that supported an ideal version of feminine beauty. The development of technology, such as airbrushing and computer generation, to modify images brings the creation of beauty to a new level that Sutton calls total creation. 400 Technology enables people to manipulate images to look perfect without blemishes, wrinkles, or any other faults to conform to the ideal of beauty. The result of image editing techniques like airbrushing or photoshop can be seen in the examples of an international brand advertisement below:

Figure 4.1 was found in Cosmopolitan Indonesia and figure 4.2 was in Marie Claire Australia. The most important feature to point out in these two advertisements is both are using one woman, Hilary Rhoda, as the model. The development of image

editing technology enables the manipulation of skin colour to the way the advertisers want it to be. In figure 4.1, the same model is fairer than her image in figure 4.2. Technology helps to create different representations based on the story attached to a product as it is easy now to change the tone of one’s skin, eye colour, hair colour and even face shape. The manipulation of images is addressed by Malkan, who tells the stories of ‘digital photo retouchers’, Ken Harris and Dominic Demasi. As a ‘digital photo retoucher’, Ken Harris edits fashion photos which promote ideal images of beauty around the world. He says,

   Every picture has been worked on some 20 or 30 rounds going back and forth between the retouchers and the client and the agency. They’re perfected to death …I don’t see these photographs as being authentic or real. I see them as being mechanical and inhuman.  

   Another digital retoucher, Dominic Demasi, says that ‘If it looks like it hasn’t been touched at all, I’ve been successful’. Malkan explains that Dominic Demasi shows the way he retouched a photo of actress Halle Berry by removing pockmarks, changing her skin tone to match her make-up and even shaving down her knuckles to make them less obtrusive. In some extreme cases, the image of a model is modified in such a way that the end product resembles a painting rather than a photograph of a real woman, as can be seen in figure 4.3:

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402 Ibid.
Sutton argues that mass media images of women created with the help of airbrushing and computer generation might have a negative impact on women and girls because the images are often unrealistic. The magazines, as the intermediaries between the beauty industries and their consumers, seem to endorse the creation of ideal beauty for women which tends to neglect many women who do not meet the standard. The photographic image of a real woman might mislead people to think that this unrealistic standard of ideal beauty is attainable. The representation of women with perfect bodies, perfect skin, without wrinkles and blemishes is not natural, but, as Demasi says, product manufacturers are not concerned with the natural, but rather with selling their product. Figure 4.1 and figure 4.2 prove that the beauty industry appropriates the skin colour of its model to suit the products advertised.

As mentioned above, companies develop stories about products to sell the products. The name of the product and the text accompanying the images in the first advertisement (Figure 4.1) indicate that the product advertised is a collection of whitening products named CyberWhite EX.

*Advanced technologies brighten every kind of dark spot.*
*Now, even the most persistent spot of all.*
*New. CyberWhite EX*
**Advanced Performance Brightening Essence**

Perfect. Estee Lauder Asia research has found the cause of dark spot and found the most effective essence to relieve it.

Result? A strong essence which works fast to help overcome the most persistent dark spot.

In only one week, every woman using this essence finds that she has fewer dark spots and her skin looks bright.*

Use CyberWhite EX collection for perfect bright skin.

*Tested on Asia consumers in Asia

esteelauder.com

This advertisement sells the story that ‘dark spot’ is a problem for women since they are expected to have perfect bright skin. So, the product is marketed with the promise of having perfect bright skin. To support the promise, the advertisement mentions the experience of other women who have successfully fought against dark spot to get a bright skin. The explanation at the end of the ads gives the idea that the product has

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403 Advanced technologies brighten every kind of dark spot. Now, even the most persistent spot of all.
New. CyberWhite EX
Advanced Performance Brightening Essence [originally in English]


Hanya dalam waktu satu minggu saja, setiap wanita yang menggunakan merasa bahwa noda gelap pada wajah berkurang dan kultinya terlihat lebih cerah bercahaya.*
Gunakan bersama-sama dalam satu rangkaian CyberWhite EX untuk kulit yang selalu terlihat cerah sempurna.

*Diuji pada konsumen Asia di Asia

esteelauder.com

been clinically tested on Asian consumers in Asia, to show its compatibility with a specific consumer, Asian, in a specific place, Asia. The experiences were the proof of a scientific test, not just random experiences of women. This advertisement follows the beauty industry’s standard story of beauty, as in Tungate’s explanation that I discussed earlier in this chapter, that beauty marketing contains surreal poetry words such as ‘perfect’, ‘bright’ and ‘essence’, and associates beauty with science by using the word ‘tested’ to convince the consumers.

The second advertisement (Figure 4.2) is promoting a collection of beauty products called original Long Wear Minerals, make-up applied to give colour to the skin in order to look healthy not pale.

**WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT**

**IS WHAT MAKES YOU BEAUTIFUL**

At Estee Lauder, find makeup as individual as you are. There’s a shade for every skintone, a formula for every skin need. And each foundation is created with our world-leading skincare expertise. Let our iMatch System help you find the foundation that’s definitely you.

[esteelauder.com](http://esteelauder.com)

The text in the advertisement tries to convince the readers that being different is good and desirable. At the same time it sends a message that the beauty industry is aware of the different needs of women and recognises women as independent individuals by producing make-up which suits each of them. In short, the underlying message is that make-up can support women to look different and independent. The message in this advertisement is stronger than the one in the Indonesian advertisement which is all about dark spot and brighter skin. The different stories offered by the advertisements show how the beauty company sees women in Asia and in Australia differently: women in Asia are still perceived as women whose concern is beauty, while the women in Australia are seen as more independent. To emphasise the seriousness, this

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*Estee Lauder, Marie Claire Australia, November, 2010, 2–3.*
advertisement also associates the product with science by using words such as ‘world-leading skincare expertise’ and ‘iMatch System’.

Additionally, the collection of products marketed in Indonesia has light colour packaging and is depicted with a light background which emphasises the idea of brightness and whiteness. On the other hand, the product for the Australian market is darker and advertised with a darker background. It gives the impression that the product will give colour to pale skin. The differences give the idea of different trends in Asia and Australia in which Asians are encouraged to be pale or white to look beautiful while Australians are to have more colour to look healthy.

**Skin colour and constructed ethnic/racial differences**

The increasing interest of beauty industries in embracing the global market is indicated by the way they address differences in beauty, including the diversity of skin colour. Skin colour becomes important because it is the most obvious marker with which to construct ethnic/racial differences. Images of models with different skin colours can be found in both Australian and Indonesian editions of *Cosmopolitan*, *Cleo* and *Marie Claire*. However, whiteness is still privileged, as can be seen in figures 4.1 and 4.2, where one White model is portrayed in different skin colours to advertise different collections of products. Ballaster et al. say that the women in the magazines are assumed to be White as opposed to Black women.\(^{405}\) Skin colour as a marker of difference becomes more important when it intersects with the issue of racial difference. As I discussed earlier in my introductory chapter, ‘whiteness’ as a socially constructed concept of race is generally perceived as a privilege over others in a racialised context, especially where there is ‘blackness’. The superior quality associated with whiteness and the privilege over whiteness is discussed below.

\(^{405}\) Ballaster et al., *Women’s Worlds*, 14.
Most models with darker skin colour found in both Australian and Indonesian editions are White women with tanned skin, as shown in figure 4.4. Ahmed addresses the issue of how skin colour can destabilise or secure racial identification by citing John Howard Griffin’s *Black Like Me*, which tells the story of a White man who had medical help to change his skin colour to black. The man in the story wanted to know whether he would be treated as a White man in dark skin or as a black man. He found out that once he changed his skin colour, he was seen as black. Ahmed writes:

> But as soon as one becomes Black one is Black. The white man who becomes Black takes on the fact of Blackness and loses his ‘white interiority’. The Black man’s fate is forever sealed in the fact of his Blackness.

The models changing skin colour from white to tanned do not have the same fate as the White man in the story because the models do not actually become black like the man in the story but tanned. Different from black colour which marks inferiority, tanned colour is suggested by Ahmed and also Williamson as a mark of status and health. It refers to healthiness acquired through leisure time during holiday. It implies wealth because, as

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Williamson says, sun tanned skin can only be possessed by a White Western man/woman who has the money to travel to tropical countries and enjoy the leisure of a far-from-ordinary way of life, a privilege of middle/upper class people.\footnote{Williamson, “Woman is an island”, 99–118.} Therefore White women having tanned skin are often seen as representing health, wealth and superior status. It is important to note that although there seems to be a shared meaning in the women’s magazines that tanned skin is associated with holidays in tropical countries thus becoming the mark of health and wealth, Small states that in the Australian context, tanned skin is not always associated with holidays.\footnote{Jennie Small, “The Emergence of the Body in the Holiday Accounts of Women and Girls,” in \textit{Tourism and Gender: Embodiment, Sensuality and Experience}, ed. Annette Pritchard, Nigel Morgan, Irena Ateljevic and Candice Harris (Oxfordshire and Cambridge: CABI, 2007), 86} She says that in a country with a high incidence of skin cancer like Australia, tanned skin is associated with skin cancer.\footnote{Small, “The Emergence of the Body in the Holiday Accounts of Women and Girls,” 86.} As a result of the educational programs about skin cancer, people’s awareness of the dangers of suntanning is increasing. However, Small also mentions that many twenty year olds in Australian tend to ignore the dangers of suntanning because they consider that having tanned skin is fashionable.

The question is, what will happen if it is a Black model or a dark skinned model portrayed with a lighter colour skin? Unlike the transformation of skin colour from white to tanned, which is not associated with the issue of ethnic/racial difference, the transformation from black/dark to lighter colour is associated with the desire to become white, of gaining a superior status. The notion that fair skin is desirable seems as ingrained in Asian societies as the general idea in the West that a suntan implies a life of leisure and good health. This desire is represented by the popularity of whitening products in Indonesia. Like many countries in Asia, Indonesia is a big market for skin-whitening products. The popularity of these products in Indonesia is fostered by the idea that having white skin implies being modern, civilised and of superior status.\footnote{See Handajani, “Globalizing Local Girls”; Handajani, “Western Inscriptions on Indonesian Bodies”;} But
most importantly, the popularity is based on the fact that attaining a lighter skin colour at least is possible for many Indonesian women who have a brown complexion rather than black. Whitening products will not be popular in a society where women have a black skin colour and a lighter skin colour is not attainable for many women.

Skin-whitening product advertisements can be found easily in Indonesian women’s magazines, although only a few advertisements clearly state that their products are skin whitening. To promote their products, the advertising wraps the representation of beauty in classic stories of being fresh, healthy and youthful shown by words such as ‘bright’ (terang), ‘radiant’ (bercahaya), ‘clear’ (bening) and ‘healthy’ (sehat). Figure 4.5 and figure 4.6 are classic examples of advertisements for whitening products. Both employ local models, who are depicted as having fair skins after consuming the products. The skin fairness ranges from fairly fair to unrealistically white like the model in figure 4.6. These advertisements promote the idea that Indonesian women could achieve the desirable skin colour simply by consuming the product advertised. Like the advertisements in figures 4.1 and 4.2, the text in whitening advertisements in figures

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4.5 and 4.6 employ words such as bright and brighter. Below are the texts in the advertisements in figures 4.5 and 4.6:

**Pond’s Flawless White**

Everybody says that my beauty is different.
The secret is not in a million rupiah cream

Many other women and I have proved that *Pond’s Flawless White* helps the skin to look brighter and conceal dark spot, equal to a million rupiah whitening cream!*  
Andien, Singer

*Pond’s Flawless White* is unbeatable by a million rupiah cream*

*Based on a clinical test on 50 Asian women for the attribute of making skin brighter and concealing dark spot*  

How detailed is your beauty?

Find the detail of your beauty in *Melanox® Premium* combining *Whitening* and *Anti-Ageing* to help to radiate the detail of your beauty through 3 processes at once:

- Fading dark spot
- Reducing wrinkles
- Brightening face skin for a whiter look

*In the morning and afternoon, after applying *Melanox® Premium*, add *Melanox® Face UV Protector* which contains antioxidant as sun screen.*

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413Pond’s Flawless White
Semua bilang cantikku beda.
Rahasianya bukan krim jutaan rupiah!

Aku dan banyak perempuan lainnya telah membuktikan bahwa Pond’s Flawless White membantu jadikan kulit tampak lebih cerah dan noda hitam pun disamarkan, nggak kalah dibanding krim pencerah seharga jutaan rupiah!*  
-Andien, Penyanyi-

Pond’s Flawless White tak terkalahkan oleh krim jutaan rupiah*

*Basedasarkan uji klinis yang dilakukan terhadap 50 wanita Asia untuk atribut membuat kulit tampak cerah dan menyamarkan noda hitam.*

-Cleo Indonesia, March 2011, 32–33

414Sudah Detailkah Cantikmu?
Temukan detail cantikmu di Melanox® Premium memadukan Whitening dan Anti-Ageing untuk
The message in these advertisements is the standard message of beauty product advertisements that beauty is attainable. The text in figure 4.5 is about using the product to fulfil the desire of ‘many other women and me’ to have brighter skins, while the text in figure 4.6, besides promising a brighter skin, also includes the promise of staying young. Both advertisements offer products to fight dark spots, to conceal them or to fade them. Opposing bright skin and dark spot is like opposing whiteness and blackness where blackness is seen as an abnormality that should be erased and whiteness is the standard to be reached. Here, we can see that whiteness is still privileged by the advertisement producers.

The advertisement in figure 4.5 is particularly interesting in the way it compares itself with more expensive whitening cream products. This company promises that using their cheaper product will produce the same effect as consuming expensive ones. It sends a message that brighter skin is the right of every woman, not only those who are rich but also those who are poor. It implies that everybody can easily change their social class just by consuming the product and having a brighter skin colour. It is important to note that this advertisement also carries the idea of difference, but the difference implied here is not the same as the idea of difference in figure 4.2. In this advertisement, the woman looks different not because she is recognised as an independent individual but because her skin gets brighter after she uses this particular product. While it is obvious that class status or ethnic/racial identities cannot be changed only by consuming a whitening product, Goon and Raven argue that the selling of skin-whitening products is

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membantu memancarkan detail cantikmu dengan 3 proses sekaligus:

- Memudahkan noda hitam
- Mengurangi kerutan
- Mencerahkan kulit wajah sehingga tampak lebih putih

*Di pagi dan siang hari, setelah menggunakan Melanox® Premium, tambahkan Melanox® Face UV Protector yang mengandung antioksidan sebagai tabir surya. Marie Claire Indonesia, Maret 2011, 69.*
a resistance toward the superiority of White (Western) people.\textsuperscript{415} It sells the possibility to be modern and superior in an instant and cheap way. It is when whiteness, not only the colour of the skin but also the (superior) quality belonging to White (Western) people, is assumed to be easily and cheaply owned in that women can ‘buy’ whiteness in bottles. In short, the advertisements put forward the idea that people can choose what they want to be and have personal freedom to create their desired beauty. They simplify the complexity of class and ethnic/racial issues into selling and buying a product.

These beauty companies also use the standard promotional formula, citing scientific references about the products to convince consumers that their products are of high quality and modern. The advertisement in figure 4.5 says that the product was tested clinically on 50 Asian women which of course cannot represent Asian women in general. The advertisement in figure 4.6 does not mention a clinical test but the words ‘Melanox\textregistered Premium’, ‘Melanox\textregistered Face UV Protector’ and ‘antioxidant’ imply its association with science. The association of a product with science is not new. As discussed previously, Helene Rubinstein also claimed that her crème was founded by a doctor, a skin specialist, whose origin cannot be traced. The attempt to associate the product with science is apparently done to convince the consumers that the product is a high quality product.

Although technology in image editing can transform the skin colour of a model either from fair to dark or from dark to fair, models born from interracial marriage between Europeans/Americans and Indonesians/locals are popular in Indonesia. They are called Indo. Originally, this term was used for people of mixed European and indigenous Indonesian descent from what was the Dutch East Indies. In contemporary Indonesia, the term Indo usually refer to ‘persons of mixed Indonesian-foreign (usually

\textsuperscript{415}Goon and Raven, \textit{Whose Debt?}
Apart from their long history in Indonesia, Indos now have a status of privilege. They are considered as the representation of Western White in Indonesia. Handajani, in her study of Indonesian female teen magazines, says that in order to conform to the Western standard promoted by the magazines, Indonesian teenagers need to change their physical appearance with whiter skin, taller height, and modified colours of eyes. With regard to Indos, Kebon says that Indonesians often assume that people who have Indo backgrounds come from affluent or regal families. Kebon argues that Indos become popular because the entertainment and advertisements sell their image of ‘honey-milk skinned, tall, slender and strikingly good-looking individuals' as desirable. With their Westernised features and their privileged status, Indos can be considered as the ‘Indonesian White.’ Their origin as half Indonesian creates closeness with an Indonesian audience and readers compared to White models. Especially in whitening products’ advertisements, this closeness emphasises the idea that having white skin is attainable for Indonesians. Another reason for employing Indos instead of White models or film stars is probably because of a more practical reason. Unlike White models or film stars who need a permit to work in Indonesia, as Indonesians the Indos do not need a permit. Therefore, it is easier to employ them than foreign models or film stars.

In the Australian context, Matthews argues that the presence of Asian and Eurasian images in fashion challenges the standard of beauty and reinforces the variation on the theme. She says that the bodies, especially female bodies, of Asian and Eurasians show the dichotomy of Asian otherness and Anglo-White Western

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417 Handajani, “Globalizing Local Girls”; See also Handajani, “Western Inscriptions on Indonesian Bodies”.
418 Kebon, “Stars and Stereotypes”.
419 Ibid.
421 Matthews, Deconstructing the Visual.
femininity since the standards of beauty are still measured from the point of view of the White Western standard, where Asian beauty is regarded as powerless, sexually exotic and erotic, while whiteness is considered powerful and superior. We can see here that the Asian models, including Indonesians and Eurasians, are positioned differently in the Indonesian and Australian contexts. Indonesian and Eurasian models are represented as people who conform to whiteness in the Indonesian context. On the other hand, the representation of Asian and Eurasian models in the Australian context is challenging the ideal of whiteness. The positions show how the same subjects might be represented and perceived differently in different contexts.

Employing models born from interracial marriages is done by international brands to represent their awareness of different ethnic/race groups and embrace a wider market. It is especially important when they represent Black people. When brands want to use Black models, they will use models like Halle Berry in figure 4.7 whose mother is American and father is African American. This kind of model provides an intermediate representation between White and Black. She represents diversity and at the same time she is still conforming to whiteness.

![Image](image.png)

Figure 4.7
Halle Berry
Cosmopolitan Australia, May 2010, 6–7

Beauty has always been a desirable attribute for women, but, as this chapter has
shown, now it is not about natural beauty but rather about unnatural or crafted beauty. The discussion about beauty shows that the beauty industries set the standard of beauty by creating stories with which to wrap their products. These stories are often more important than the product itself. The stories of beauty basically hold on to the classic stories of freshness, healthiness and youth. These concepts are used worldwide to promote international brands, although in order to address local needs the beauty industries adapt local perceptions of beauty and even use local models to broadcast their idea of ideal beauty. Amongst many features of beauty, skin colour is important because it is the most obvious marker of class and/or ethnic/racial difference. At the present time, the beauty industries try to embrace the diversity of skin colour by presenting models with different skin tones. However it can be inferred from the products advertised and the models employed that whiteness is still privileged. Therefore, the diversity is actually used by beauty industries as a way to expand their market for profit. The technology to modify images helps beauty industries create stories about their beauty products since advertisers are able to play with and manipulate skin colour as well as other beauty features of the models to suit the stories created. The stories created will be successful if they suit the society’s existing concept of beauty. In the Indonesian context, having fair skin is traditionally preferred and is linked to several other social markers such as White superiority, class privilege and modernity, which is why whitening products are very popular in Indonesia. In the Australian context, the representation of women is still dominated by White women. The presence of Asian and Eurasian models has given more variation to the representation, however Aboriginal people are still absent in the representation of beauty. The popularity of whitening products in Indonesia and the dominance of white models in Australian editions confirm that whiteness is privileged in both the Indonesian and Australian settings. Discussing the advertisements for skin-whitening products in Indonesian editions and for skin-
tanning products in American editions of *Cosmopolitan* magazine, Saraswati argues that both skin-whitening and skin-tanning advertisements put white-skinned women in a favourable position. 422 Thus, whiteness is cosmopolitan and transnational; it is beyond ethnic/racial categories.

**Body image in women’s magazines**

Blood points out that women in popular women’s magazines are almost entirely White, Western women who are flawless, thin and toned.423 She says that, combined, these characteristics comprise woman’s desirable future self. This often unrealistic image is presented as normal by the magazines: ‘normal’ women’s bodies should be slender and hairless. These ‘normal’ images are used by advertisers and publishers to show the discrepancy between two images: who someone is now and who someone can be in the future. From this point on, women’s magazines guide women to fight deficiencies found in women’s actual bodies and acquire the desired ideal image. As magazines promote the idea that ideal beauty and body shape are attainable by buying the right products, women who are attracted to possess ideal beauty and body image will be guided to buy the products advertised. Blood writes that the relation between women’s magazines and advertisers is so close that advertising often influences editorial content.424 However, Wykes and Gunter note that the marketing of ideal beauty and body image could not work successfully unless it were supported by culture and an acceptable model of femininity in society.425 They argue that popular women’s magazines represent dominant meanings available in the current socio-historical moment.

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The mass media help to popularise the notion of slenderness as an ideal shape which influences how viewers perceive their own bodies. This influence, according to Wykes and Gunter, is often regarded as a distinctly Western phenomenon.\textsuperscript{426} Although the media effects on body self-perception can cross culture, regardless of ethnicity, Wykes and Gunter mention that observations of African American women who experienced body dissatisfaction reveal that those affected the most by the media tended to be the women who identified most strongly with White culture, which is concerned about body shape. Accordingly, body image is apparently a major concern for Australian women. Australian editions of Cosmopolitan, Cleo and Marie Claire cover this issue a lot. Most articles about body image tell women to be happy with their body. They present real women’s opinions about their bodies and are supportive of ordinary women’s bodies. The same magazines also present ordinary women’s bodies in glossy and colourful photos. Both the texts and the pictures accompanying the discussion about ordinary women’s bodies encourage women to think positively about their bodies. However, these same magazines also tell women that their bodies need improvement and provide information on how to have better shapes.

Bordo claims that the development of mass media like movies, television and magazines makes women able to learn about femininity through images that tell us what clothes, body shape, facial expression, movements and behaviour are required to conform to the contemporary ideal of a woman.\textsuperscript{427} As part of the desire to attain the ideal beauty and body image, women are supported by the media to reconstruct themselves. Women’s bodies become the site of reconstruction, which aims at the kind of femininity dictated by the beauty and fashion industries, and is based on women’s own willingness to discipline themselves. Bordo says that to gain the ideal of

\textsuperscript{426}Wykes and Gunter, The Media and Body Image, 168.
femininity, women focus on their self-reconstruction through disciplines of diet, make-up, and dress.\footnote{Bordo, “The Body and the Reproduction of Femininity,” 91.} She uses Foucault’s framework\footnote{See Michel Foucault, Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison (New York: Pantheon Books, 1977).} to explain how women train, shape culture and impress their bodies by organising and regulating the time, space and movement of their daily lives. She states that disciplining the bodies is followed willingly by women although these disciplines make women suffer. The representations of ideal beauty and body in the media are blamed as a cause of disordered eating habits—habits developed by women in their attempt to attain often unrealistic body images. Bordo gives the example of disorders related to the construction of femininity in the nineteenth century like hysteria, agoraphobia and anorexia nervosa. Eating disorders in the present are recognised as a major health problem, although Bordo says that women who suffer the disorders as they try to have the ideal image are considered as the ‘masters’ (sic) of their lives. Additionally Wykes and Gunter explain that anorexia and bulimia, two of the most common eating disorders, are the result of the discrepancy between the perceived self and the ideal self.\footnote{Wykes and Gunter, The Media and Body Image, 4.} They are not clinical problems but behavioural syndromes caused by psychological constructs of body image.

In this part I focus on the representation of ordinary women’s bodies in Australian editions of the magazines. I compare the representation of naked ordinary women in the magazines I am discussing with the representation of naked ordinary women discussed by Blood in chapter 4 of her book Body Work: The social construction of women’s body image. She discusses a ‘body image’ article in More magazine, which she regarded as an anomaly as it represented naked ordinary women, an unusual women’s representation in popular women’s health and beauty magazines in 1992.\footnote{Blood, Body Work, 66–69.} She explains that this article showed black and white photos of naked ordinary women in contrast to glossy colourful photos of models. The photos are accompanied by the
women’s comments on what they liked and disliked about their bodies. Blood’s reaction
upon seeing the photos of naked ordinary women in More magazine is worth noting:

I got a real shock when I saw those pictures, particularly because they are such a
sharp contrast to the coloured glossy pictures in the rest of the magazine. They
looked really grim in comparison.
I’m just not used to seeing pictures of women who are really overweight with
lots of cellulite standing there naked. The women look as if they’re in an identity
parade for ‘suspects’; their faces are blanked out and they are all standing in the
same position—sort of frozen and lifeless…When I look at the images of the
real women in black and white I don’t see that they have a life.

... When I looked at the colour pictures on the other pages, I felt a sense of relief.
Although I know they’re models and they use air-brushing, etc. to make them
look really good, they looked much more real to me. Of course, they’re
photographed in exotic locations and all that but it’s the women’s facial
expressions that draw me in, that seem to tell me about her…her pose, her smile,
her enigmatic expression. It’s as if she is there for me, looking at me, telling me
something—seducing me? Yes…many of the expressions on these women’s
faces are those you’d expect to be reserved for a lover. In these photos the
woman is always doing something—in the process of being—I can tell she has a
life, a deep inner life, an emotional life.432

Her shock upon looking at the real women’s bodies portrayed in the women’s
magazines shows how uncommon it was for the magazines at that time to publish
photos of naked ordinary women. The representation of not-so-perfect bodies in the
magazines was shocking because, as Blood says, the magazine usually imposes upon
readers the message that women’s perfect physical appearance is important in achieving
happiness and contentment. Blood expressed her negative perception about those photos
by saying that the women in the photos looked grim, that they were like suspects lining
up to be identified, and that they looked blank, frozen and lifeless. She compared the
photos with the usual representation of women, the models who looked happy and
active. Blood’s expectation—that she would see refreshing representations of women
instead of ‘grim’ representations—is probably the same as that of magazine readers,
who consider women’s magazines an escape from daily activities. In Blood’s
exceptional experience, the imperfect ordinary woman’s body is the harsh reality which

readers would not expect in a magazine—rather, they expect to be comforted by the perfect body of a model.

Apart from her negative reaction to the photos of naked ordinary women, Blood argues that this kind of publication might be regarded as positive, as these ordinary women challenge the usual standard of physical appearance presented by the women’s magazines. She says that the bodies of ordinary women displayed in More magazine would be considered overweight or out of proportion compared to model bodies, but these images will encourage ordinary women to accept and value themselves as they are. At this point, Blood raises a question of the intention behind the publication of the images because when the women accept their bodies as they are, it will pose a threat to the commercial goals of the magazines. Women will stop correcting and improving themselves using the products advertised in the magazines. Blood says that basically the magazine divides women into two types based on how the magazines value women’s bodies. The first type, the most valuable commodity, is the models’ bodies, and the second one, the most flawed, is the ordinary women’s bodies. By comparing their bodies with the ‘ideal’ bodies of the models, ordinary women will feel discouraged and then try to improve their bodies.

Once again, the beauty industry brings out the idea that beauty, in this case body shape, is attainable. This time, as Blood says, the industry works by manipulating the free choice that women have. By doing the comparison, women struggle between self-improvement, which requires that women spend time, energy and money in disciplining their bodies, and self-acceptance. This struggle puts pressure on women alone, as individuals, to find out whether they will try to attain the ideal or are happy to accept themselves as they are. Furthermore, Blood argues that the assumption about women’s capability to see the image analytically is wrong. She says that most women cannot resist the influence of the dominant image of the slender model that has become the
normalising imagery. Another thing that Blood points out is that the discussions about body image in the magazines hardly address the issue of eating disorders, anorexia and bulimia as an effect of disciplining the body. She says that eating disorders are not considered important issues to discuss in women’s magazines, as also are other issues such as the use of very young models, the use of drugs for weight loss, the use of face and body make-up to create perfectness and the use of photographic manipulation.

**The representation of ordinary women’s bodies: Now and then**

Blood’s shock at seeing the black and white photographs of naked ordinary women who are really overweight, with lots of cellulite, will not be experienced by present-day readers. Figure 4.8 is an example of articles about ordinary women’s bodies in *Cosmopolitan Australia*. In this article ordinary women’s bodies are represented in glossy colour pages in the same way as models’ body images are usually represented. Similar representations can be seen in other articles featuring ordinary women’s bodies. These ordinary women are supposed to represent natural bodies, but when the readers look at the photos closely, they will see bodies that are perfect, hairless and with no cellulite. It is also important to note that although some are a bit overweight (the largest is size 14, and Raelene has a tummy roll) none of these ordinary women has excessive weight. These representations seem to have an underlying message that women who are not models have a chance to display their bodies in magazines as long as their bodies are presentable or made presentable by the magazines. The way ordinary women’s bodies are represented in recent editions of women’s magazines closes the gap between the representation of imperfect ‘real’ women’s bodies and that of perfect models’ bodies.
Nonetheless, Blood’s idea that ordinary women's bodies is the ‘before make-up’ and that models’ bodies is the ‘after make-up’ is still there to be seen from the women’s opinions about their own bodies. Below is an excerpt from an article that depicts naked ordinary women’s bodies which includes comments from the women and their partners about the women’s bodies.

**Boobs**
He says: ‘I’m a “boobs man”, and I think Raelene has great boobs. It’s the whole area, though—her decolletage is very sexy.’
She says: ‘I didn’t really appreciate them until I met Ross. I am a C to D cup, and it’s more about finding the right things to wear so they don’t look inappropriate.’

**Butt**
He says: ‘I like Raelene’s butt. It’s funny, I’d probably never tell her that, but I do.’
She says: ‘I don’t think there’s much there! It’s not something I show off just because I don’t think there’s anything to show off.’

**Thighs**
He says: ‘She has beautiful legs.’
She says: ‘When I wear jeans they fill out, so they benefit me.’
Arms
He says: ‘I like everything about Raelene’s body...but I’ve never paid much attention to her arms.’
She says: ‘As a kid I had eczema and I still do get breakouts, depending on the weather. The one place it shows up the most is on my arms, but I’ve learnt over time not let it bother me too much.’

Tummy
He says: ‘I know Raelene thinks her tummy needs a bit of work, but I disagree. I really like it the way it is.’
She says: ‘I know that it’s bigger than I would expect it to be sometimes, but it doesn’t really bother me at all.’

This excerpt is about Raelene’s opinions about her own body which contains the typical ‘what she likes’ and ‘what she does not like’ about her own body. Reading Raelene’s opinion about her own body, it is particularly interesting to see that Raelene’s dissatisfaction about her body is sometimes expressed with mixed feelings. It seems that she knows that she is expected to accept her body although she is dissatisfied with some parts of her body. When she expressed that she didn’t like her arms because of the eczema or when she said that she didn’t like her tummy, she concluded by saying that she managed not to be bothered by her flaws (‘I’ve learnt over time’—as though she has trained herself not to mind).

The title ‘Your naked body: What you see, what he sees’ clearly tells the readers that they will find not only women’s opinions about their bodies but also men’s. The man’s opinion is put before the woman’s opinions. That way, the woman can only be seen to agree with or negate the man’s opinions. Thus, just like the ordinary women’s bodies in Blood’s discussion, ordinary women’s bodies in this article are the objects of the male gaze. Mulvey explains the male gaze in cinema:

In a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female. The determining male gaze projects its phantasy onto the female form which is styled accordingly. In their traditional exhibitionist role women are simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so that they can be said to connote-to-be-looked-at-ness.\(^{434}\)

The opinions represented by Raelene and Ross show women’s bodies as the object of the male gaze. Although both Raelene and Ross voice their opinions, Raelene represents passivity as the body scrutinised is her woman’s body. Following Mulvey’s concept, Raelene is styled or styles herself in order to be presentable to be looked at and displayed for Ross’ satisfaction. On the other hand, Ross is represented as active because he is the one who gives his opinion about the woman’s body without having to be gazed at as an object. The article goes further by implying that women are not capable of judging their own bodies—they depend on what men think to appreciate their own bodies. For instance, Raelene said that she didn’t really appreciate her boobs until she met Ross, who happened to like her breast size. It seems as though to see themselves women have to look through men’s eyes. Employing the male gaze to look at a woman’s own body has the effect of putting women and the beauty issue in the framework of the heterosexual relationship, where the woman in women’s magazines is presented as someone who is looking for a partner. The possibility that a single woman is happy to be single and not looking for a man or a partner is thereby ignored.

The fact that women’s magazines treat women’s bodies as an object of the male gaze can be seen strongly in the next excerpt. Smiedt writes about women’s and men’s different perceptions of women’s bodies in ‘What He Thinks About Your Body Issues’ in *Cleo Australia*:

> Guys are pretty much over the whining; we’re fed up with you not ordering dessert and then eating half of ours on the basis of some ludicrous rationale that it’s therefore ‘not as fattening’; we’re over ‘does this X make my Y look Z’; and we’ve had it with the all-I-had-today-was-salad-and-an-apple brag.

Here’s why: The fluctuations in weight that can elate or depress women are neither here nor there in the eyes of most men. Naturally, there will always be that small percentage of pec-tastic poser who view cellulite as a character flaw and act accordingly. But, for most, weight gain just doesn’t register on the male radar. Unless, of course, it’s so drastic that your health is threatened.\footnote{David Smiedt, “What He Thinks About Your Body Issues,” Cleo Australia, September, 2010, 150–51.}

This man’s opinion puts women and men in different positions. Women are set as the irrational ones who are obsessed with unnecessary worries about their bodies while men are the rational ones who try to convince women that they should not be worried about their bodies. In those positions, what men think is more important than what women think. It means that if women want to be accepted by men or want to have partners they should consider the men’s point of view rather than their own.

The two excerpts about body image imply that women are actually the ones who are always dissatisfied with their bodies. From the way women talk about their body dissatisfactions, and also from the men’s opinions, women’s dissatisfaction with their bodies is not based on their physical flaws because nothing is physically wrong with their bodies: the dissatisfaction is psychological. The articles want to convince women that naturally ordinary women’s bodies are not as perfect as models’. So women have to change their way of thinking, from feeling dissatisfied they have to shift to a positive acceptance of their bodies. This way, Blood says, the magazines are sending two different messages. The first message is that women’s ordinary bodies are not perfect and the second one is that women are expected to be positive about their imperfect bodies. Women then have a choice whether to accept their bodies the way they are or to shape their body imitating the ideal bodies presented by the models.

Blood shows that posing models as a standard of ideal body as a comparison to ordinary women is a common practice in women’s magazines. In its article, ‘Recognise These Famous Figures? They could change the way to see your own’, Marie Claire Australia brought this activity to a different level when it presented the cut-outs of
celebrities to real women.436 Marie Claire took four ‘anonymous’ cut-outs with very different body shapes. It asked ‘real’ women to give their opinion on which shapes appealed, which didn’t, and which the women resembled or wished they did. Later, it disclosed who the figures were and the women were asked to give their opinion. The four cut-outs are the figures of Kyle Minogue (singer), Gisele Bundchen (model), Marilyn Monroe (actress) and Beyonce Knowles (singer).

The article claims that it aims to find out whether the stars are distant from ‘real’ women or not and to give space for ‘real’ women to criticise the stars to make these women feel better about themselves. Below are some examples of women’s opinions about the celebrities’ bodies.

Figure 4.9
Recognise these famous figures?
*Marie Claire Australia* March 2011, 45–48

‘I’m surprised this is Beyoncé—I thought she’d be bigger in real life! It just goes to show how skinny celebrities are, which is a bit scary. It was her confident stance, not her curves, that I loved.’
Sangeeta, 28, marketing executive

‘I can connect with tall girls, although I’m not as skinny as this. I’m not surprised Gisele’s a supermodel, but she’s so thin for her height, it seems unrealistic. Not all of us want to be this skinny. I’m fine with my body the way it is.’
Katja 20, student

‘I had no idea Kylie was that short! I’d never have guessed I was taller than her—and I like being petite. I’m surprised how much smaller these celebrities are in real life. I think it makes them seem more like normal human beings.’
Elizabeth, 26, solicitor

‘Marylin looks womanly without being too ‘hippy’, like Beyonce. I wish I had curves like Marilyn, but I’m too skinny. Women with curves should embrace them.’
Laura, 33, teacher

‘I love this shape, plus she’s a similar height to me. The fact it’s Kylie reminds me that petite can be beautiful.’
Jackie, 28, exhibition coordinator

The article contains various opinions, both positive and negative, about women’s own bodies and the celebrities’ bodies. Although this activity intends to enable women to criticise the stars and feel better about themselves, in practice the women also scrutinise their own bodies. The process of scrutinising their own body is done via what Doane calls the female gaze. This concept of female gaze is drawn from Mulvey’s theory on the male gaze in which a woman is the object of desire. By scrutinising her body, a woman is looking at her own image and becoming the object of her own desire.437 However, according to Ann Doane, there is a problem in exercising the female gaze. The closeness with her own body makes a woman unable to see the body itself, so she needs to distance herself from her own body. In order to be able to distance herself from her body, Doane argues that women have to adapt the ‘male gaze’ which means that a woman has to become a man or a transvestite to maintain the necessary distance.

from the image.\textsuperscript{438} Here, women spectators alternate between a feminine position and a masculine position.

These women’s opinions in the excerpt above show that some women are affected by the body shape possessed by the celebrities and some women are not affected. Comments like Laura’s ‘I thought she’d be bigger in real life!’ or Katja’s ‘I had no idea Kylie was that short!’ show that these women had different ideas about what the celebrities were like before they saw the cut-outs. Comparing themselves with the celebrities sometimes made the women feel better about themselves, but the act of comparing also made the women see the flaws in themselves.

The above article shows that comparing oneself with others may lead to a dissatisfied feeling about oneself. Regarding this act of comparing, women’s magazines stand in two different positions: they provide the means for women to compare themselves to other women while at the same time they tell women not to do the comparison. Below is a text and a photograph taken from one article in \textit{Cosmopolitan Australia}, ‘Your Body Rocks: Trust us!’

To those of you hiding under a kaftan all summer, Dr Papadopolous adds, ‘If you’re worrying about your bum, someone else is worrying about their legs and someone else about their bingo wings. There’s not one person on that beach who isn’t body conscious. Is a beach really a fashion show, or is it more about feeling the sand between your toes, the sun on your skin or chasing your man into the sea? Don’t let the bully on your shoulder stop you from enjoying a beautiful day. When that negative voice comes into your head, challenge it. Your body is not an object for people to look at and judge’.\textsuperscript{439}

... Cosmo has said it before and will say it again: learn to feel confident and you will be the sexiest, sassiest goddess in the room—or on the beach. And when those doubts creep in, remember all those other women on that beach, or in that club, are worrying about the way they look just as much as you are—or more.\textsuperscript{440}

The message in this article is really clear, that women should not compare their bodies with others’. The article quotes Dr Papadopolous who said that ‘There’s not one

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{438}Doane, “Film and the Masquerade,” 185.
\item \textsuperscript{439} ‘Your Body Rocks: Trust Us!’ \textit{Cosmopolitan Australia}, March, 2011, 210–211.
\item \textsuperscript{440} Ibid., 212.
\end{itemize}
person…who is not body conscious’. S/he said that all women think that they have a problem with their bodies and they worry about their bodies. Since feeling worried is psychologically unhealthy, women should learn to love their bodies and ignore their dissatisfaction about their own bodies as well as ignore what other people might think about their bodies. However, the photo that accompanied the article is a photo of a model who conforms to the ideal of standard beauty in women’s magazines: young, White and thin.

The article shows the challenge faced by women’s magazines: to suit the interest of the beauty and fashion industries and to appear progressive and supportive for real women. The mixed roles of women’s magazines—as a means to gain profits by promoting ideal femininity, which is often unrealistic, and as a means to support real women—is not uncommon. Le Masurier, in her study on Cleo magazine and feminism in 1970s’ Australia, argues that women’s magazines in the 1970s not only emphasised ideal femininity as women’s main goal but also voiced feminist ideas in their own way.\footnote{Megan Le Masurier, “My Other, My Self-Cleo: Magazine and Feminism in 1970s Australia,” \textit{Australian Feminist Studies} 22, no. 53 (2007): 191–211.} She says the range of coverage shows us that women’s magazines are a site of struggle.
There are several points that can be drawn from the discussion about body image. The first is that a ‘woman’s body sells’, no matter whether it is a model’s body or an ordinary woman’s body. The bodies are used to attract the readers to buy the magazines. The second point is that the publication of ordinary women’s bodies could be regarded as supportive for women since the magazines embrace the diversity of women’s bodies. However, it could also be seen as another misleading representation of women’s bodies, as the ‘ordinary’ women’s bodies in present-day magazines are similar to those of slender models. The third point is that by asking men to give opinions about women’s bodies, ordinary women’s bodies are clearly regarded as objects of the male gaze. This also shows that women’s magazines position women within heterosexual relationships. The fourth point is the act of comparing one’s body to others’ is considered by the magazines as a common practice of women. It has the potential to enable women to feel better about their own bodies, but it could also make women see their own flaws. This encouragement to compare could also be taken as encouragement to compete. The magazines say that the act of comparing is psychologically unhealthy and they encourage women to accept their bodies the way they are. On the other hand, the magazines put forward slenderness as a universal image of a woman’s ideal body shape. Here, the magazines are caught up in two different and contradictory functions, to gain profits and to be supporters of women.

Besides those points, I want to argue that society’s existing view on ideal body image and ideal beauty determines society’s acceptance of the ideals represented by the beauty industries and the magazines. The preference for a certain ideal beauty and body image is used by beauty industries and the magazines to market their products. The example quoted by Brown and Kroner shows the importance of the existing concept in a society in determining society’s acceptance of ideal body image:

In an obesity-prevention campaign in a Zulu community outside of Durban, one of the health education posters depicted an obese woman and an overloaded
truck with a flat tire, with a caption ‘Both carry too much weight’. Another poster showed a slender woman easily sweeping under a table next to an obese woman who is using the table for support; it has the caption ‘Who do you prefer to look like?’ The intended message of these posters was misinterpreted by the community because of a cultural connection between obesity and social status. The woman in the first poster was perceived to be rich and happy, since she was not only fat, but had a truck overflowing with her possessions. The second poster was perceived as a scene of an affluent mistress directing her underfed servant.442

The example might help to explain why Indonesian editions rarely discuss body image issues. One of the explanations is that in Indonesia being fat is a mark of wealth and associated with better socio-economic status. With a gross national per capita income of $2850 per annum,443 and more than 30 million people living under the poverty line,444 even when there is no food shortage many Indonesians struggle with food quality. Following Brown and Konner, in societies where food shortage and food quality has always been a problem, fatness will not be considered a serious problem but rather is viewed as a sign of health and prosperity. In my personal experience, when Javanese people address someone they have not seen for a long time as ‘fat’, they will follow it by saying, ‘You must be very prosperous now’. It means that although slender was considered ideal in Indonesian ancient texts, fatness is perceived positively by contemporary Indonesian society. In general, Indonesian society does not put much pressure on women to look slim. That Indonesian society has a positive perception of fatness is supported by the survey done by Swami et al., which found that participants in Oceania, South and West Asia, and Southeast Asia preferred heavier women compared to participants in North America and East Asia.445 They also found that men across all world regions except East Asia selected a significantly heavier figure as the most

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442 Brown and Konner, An Anthropological Perspective on Obesity, 40.
physically attractive compared to what women believed was most attractive. However, the representation of women with a slender body shape as ‘ideal’ is beginning to affect middle and upper-class Indonesian women who are exposed to the Western ideal.

**Conclusion**

Beauty industries use women’s magazines as their intermediaries to promote the idea that women’s beauty and women’s body shapes can be shaped to meet the ideal. Beauty industries and the magazines sell the stories of youthfulness, agelessness, whiteness or stories about slenderness to promote their products. Most of the time, the stories become more central than the products themselves. In their attempt to embrace a bigger market, increasingly the beauty industries, through the magazines, claim to address the needs of the local market by marketing products which reflect diversity. The industries make use of technology in image editing to create the representation of ideal beauty customised for different cultural settings. Skin colour is the feature of beauty which is manipulated the most to serve the market because it is believed to be the basic marker of ethnic/race superiority and class privilege. For example, a model is represented as having a pale white skin colour to promote whitening products for the Asian market but the same model is represented as having a darker tone of skin, which implies healthiness, for the Australian market. In short, ideal beauty in the magazines, especially in the advertisements, is mostly represented by White models and local models with fair skin. Thus, whiteness is still privileged and considered superior. It contrasts with the claim from the magazines and the beauty industries that they have embraced the diversity of women coming from different backgrounds.

With regard to body image, concern about body image is mostly found in Australian editions. These women’s magazines present ordinary women’s bodies in addition to the models’ bodies to attract readers. However, the representation of near-perfect ordinary women’s bodies in the present magazines might lead women to
scrutinise and construct a negative view about their bodies. The same effects occur when women compare their bodies to models’ bodies. Furthermore, by asking for men’s comments about these women’s bodies, the magazines position women as objects of the male gaze. The contrasting and contradictory functions of the magazines, as a commercial product to gain profits and as a supporter of women, might be the reasons behind the mixed messages.

The acceptance of ideal beauty and ideal body image created by the beauty industries and the magazines is influenced by society’s existing view of ideal beauty and ideal body image. For example, the belief that having white skin is superior and privileged in the Indonesian context supports the marketing of whitening products which sell the ideal of white skin colour. In the Australian context, the idea of having a healthy tanned skin replaces the idea of whiteness, as tanned skin is the mark of health and wealth for Western women. That is also why the concept of slenderness as an ideal body image is more popular in Australian editions than in Indonesian ones: Indonesians have a more positive view of fatness, believing it is a sign of prosperity.
Chapter 5 Work and Home

There are many articles and tips about women and work in both Australian and Indonesian editions of *Cosmopolitan*, *Cleo* and *Marie Claire*. They are about how to find the right jobs, how to work well, how to get promoted, how to survive the work environment, how to deal with problems at work and when to change jobs. The articles and tips give the impression that the world of today’s women is the world of work. For both single and married women, work is a domain that cannot be separated from them. Most of the women who become the sources in the magazine have a career, not simply work to do. They work at least at middle management level. The representation of women in workplaces seems to challenge the traditional virtues of femininity promoted by women’s magazines where women are part of the domestic world.

This chapter deals with the representation of women’s work and home in Australia and Indonesia. At present, more Australian women including mothers participate in public work at present compared to they did in the past. Unfortunately, the participation of women in the work place has not been followed by the participation of men in unpaid housework. The issue of balancing work and home responsibilities then, becomes the issue of gender inequality between paid and unpaid work. Campo says that even when women work in paid labour, the responsibility for housework and childrearing is still mainly the women’s responsibility. On the care of children, Probert mentions that working mothers have to rely on child care services offered by the market, their parents, parents-in-law, nannies, or a combination of those options. On formal child care, Probert says that not every woman can use the services of formal

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447 Campo, “‘Having It All’ Or ‘Had Enough’?”, 65.

child care because it is too expensive. Working-class women, for example, will not have the advantage of formal child care. In the Indonesian context, the labour division between man and woman is shown in Marriage Law No. 1/1974 which mentions that man is the breadwinner and the woman is responsible for household work and child care. Nilan and Utari say that in Indonesia there is a concern that women’s responsibility for the home will be neglected when women participate in public work. This implies that, similar to the conditions in Australia, domestic work is still mainly women’s responsibility although they also work outside the home. The difference between Indonesia and Australia is in the presence of domestic workers, who do the housework and take care of the children. Mainly employed in Javanese upper and middle-class households, these domestic workers support working women in pursuing their careers.

This chapter discusses the way women’s magazines in Australia and Indonesia represent women’s work and home. I show that, basically, women and work are represented similarly in Australian and Indonesian editions of these women’s magazines. I argue that women in these women’s magazines are represented as those who are bonded to public work, not domestic work any more, implying the understanding that the agenda fought for by feminism to give women the opportunity to work in public has been fulfilled. The representation of women’s work in the women’s magazines is the representation of middle-class working women who work at managerial level and work to pursue their career. The magazines do not address any culture-specific problems faced by these women. Particularly in the representation of women’s work in Indonesian editions, I discuss the self-help discourse which often occurs in the articles talking about what women should do when they have problems in

the workplace. I argue that the self-help discourse, which emphasises women’s individuality by telling them that they can solve the problems they face in the workplace by themselves, creates a fantasy of ideal working conditions. I also show that although the self-help discourse can also be found in Australian editions, Australian articles give more attention to the general structure of work. In this chapter, I also examine women’s work and its association with travel and mobility. Using Kaplan’s and Krolid’s theories on voluntary travel and mobility, I intend to show that the ability to be mobile is represented as a mark of women’s empowerment. Women who voluntarily travel to other cities or countries to work are represented as free and independent individuals who travel to get personal satisfaction, not financial gain. On women’s home, I focus on the problem faced by women in balancing work and home responsibilities. I explore the way women have to deal with the problem of balancing the responsibilities represented by the magazines. The representation of celebrities as superhuman and independent individuals who have the potential to do whatever they want is used by the magazines to represent celebrities as supermoms. Using Rojek’s and Marshal’s concept of celebrities as role models, I argue that the magazines offer the fantasy of balancing work and home responsibilities.

**Women and work in Australia and Indonesia**

According to Probert in her article “‘Grateful Slaves” or “Self-made Women”: a Matter of Choice or Policy?’, women in Australia expect and are expected to work in some form or another.\(^{451}\) Women nowadays are increasingly holding positions in managerial, professional and technical jobs as many of them are undertaking tertiary education. As a result of women’s well-paid jobs, households commonly have two incomes. In the workplace, Probert says that the participation of married women, especially women with young children, is now rapidly increasing. Wives now see themselves as individual

claimants or job-seekers or workers, they do not consider themselves as primarily dependent on a wage earner or unemployed man. As married women participate more in the workplace, the problem that is faced most by women and men is to combine work and family responsibilities. Probert mentions that longer working hours, increased child care costs, loss of award protection, the failure of enterprise bargaining, and the implementation of individual contracts are aspects of work which undermine women’s needs and interests. The system which regulated how households organised themselves and how children could be taken care of, had probably already resulted in declining fertility in Australia before 2001. In the years between 2001 and 2008, Australia’s total fertility rate increase coincided with changes to government policies such as the Baby Bonus and the Child Care Rebate. Although Parr and Guest argue that there is no direct relation between those policies and the increased fertility rate, Heard says that those initiatives might have reduced the economic barriers to childbearing. Probert also notes that full-time employment is now decreasing and being substituted with casual, part-time, and contract employment, which disadvantage women.

Probert compares Australian women’s roles in the 1990s to those in the 1950s. She explains that in the 1990s women were economically productive citizens as mothers were expected to head back into the workforce. It was the time when women wanted to return to the workforce and the time when society would even criticise women for choosing to stay at home. Most mothers head back to work as a result of families’ and households’ needs; the need to have two incomes to maintain living standards. Some women regarded work as self-actualisation which became central to their identity. Although these women said that they worked for themselves, mostly they did not earn enough to be independent. Women in the 1990s were uncertain about making their work

and career take second place after their family responsibilities and they had to juggle work and caring responsibilities at home.

Probert states that the condition in the 1990s was much more complicated than that in the 1950s, when conceptions of men and women’s roles clearly assigned men to be the breadwinners and women to be mothers and homemakers. Women in the 1950s accepted without question the notion of fathers earning and mothers caring. Probert explains that the gendered division of roles was based on the overwhelming acceptance that women were financially dependent on individual men. She says that Australian-born women with children were hard to find in the labour force in the 1950s compared to those who had migrated from Yugoslavia or Italy. In the 1950s, Australian-born women were expected to give up work when the first baby arrived as there was a view that children needed their mothers and women were primarily good at bringing up children. As caregivers, women had very little personal autonomy except that given by individual husbands. Those differences resulted in men being more powerful than women.

With regard to career women in Indonesia, Nilan and Utari in their study on female media and communication workers reveal two main problems faced by women workers in Indonesia.\textsuperscript{454} The first is that the tension around the discourse of *wanita karier* (career women) is not only concerned with working conditions but also with the idea that paid work takes priority over women’s domestic responsibilities. In middle-class conservative Indonesia, the discourse about women and work still reflects many elements of New Order ideology where women should ideally be ‘in the home’. Suryakusuma called the gender order in New Order Indonesia ‘State Ibuism’, based on the regime’s efforts to control society by making women appendages of their husbands and casting female dependency as ideal. She considered that *Dharma Wanita* (Women’s

\textsuperscript{454} Nilan and Utari, “Meanings of Work for Female Media and Communication Workers,” 136–54.
Duty, a large organisation for the wives of civil servants) and PKK (*Pembinaan Kesejahteraan Keluarga* or Family Welfare Guidance, an organisation for women with a village-neighbourhood basis) played a key role in the promulgation of Sate Ibuism’s ideology. The Indonesian Marriage Law No. 1/1974, as well as a whole range of regulated and unregulated employment practices, enshrine the discourse of *kodrat wanita* (divinely assigned female gender role) which encodes both the ideal of *ibu* (symbolic or actual mother) and *peran ganda wanita* (the dual role of women). That positioning of *ibu* makes it seems ‘natural’ that women should place their responsibilities as wives and mothers above everything else in their lives.

However, it is important to note here that the idealisation of woman as a housewife was not only imposed by the State as suggested by Suryakusuma. Hull in her study in the early 1970s found that rural middle-class women in Maguwoharjo, Yogyakarta considered being a housewife a privileged position. Hull explains that for rural middle-class women in Maguwoharjo, being a housewife showed that their husbands had a good position in their jobs so that the husbands alone could support the family. It meant that the women were financially secure and not obliged to work outside the house and were free to stay at home. They also believed that the jobs in the village, such as farming, labouring and the trading world, were not appropriate for them because the jobs did not represent their social status. As I discussed earlier in chapter 2, women’s social status in Indonesia is often determined by their husbands’ jobs. In doing their housework, some of these women were helped by servants, mimicking the lives of daughters and wives in Javanese noble families in the past where housework was done by their many servants. According to Hull, these women spent their time mainly taking care of the children and educating them to become the successors who ‘determine

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Indonesia’s future. Hull explains further that the women who worked outside the house were lower class women. These poor uneducated women worked because of economic necessity and were considered as having low social status.

In the present time, Nilan and Utari found that the workers in their study actively supported the discourse of *kodrat wanita* in the private domain since they felt that it defined them as Indonesian women. Many of the female media workers in their study were keen to balance their lives so that they fulfilled obligations in both directions. Working outside the home is actually common for Indonesian women. Brenner explains that traditionally women worked in farming, craft production and trading in the marketplace. However, women who work in those areas are not considered ‘career woman’ although they also earn money. Brenner says that ‘career woman’ in Indonesia has special connotations: she is the one who works as a white-collar worker in modern sectors of the economy such as by being a business executive, a secretary, a lawyer or a civil servant, among other professions. The work the woman does is usually identified as modern, professional, urban and, in some cases, typically masculine. A career woman is seen as having some power that is independent of her status as wife or mother and that removes her from the constraints of ‘tradition’. Additionally, Brenner says that the term ‘career woman’ carries with it the positive and negative associations of Westernisation. As a career woman, she is admired for her successful entry into the modern world while at the same time she is seen as a potential problem for her family and for society. Her role as career woman may conflict with her duties as wife and mother as she may become too absorbed in her work and neglect her family. Her independence may also lead her into extramarital liaisons that could result in the breakup of her marriage and family. People are afraid that ‘she will become too much like the stereotyped Western woman—self-absorbed, overly obsessed with her career.

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457 Hull, “Women in Java’s Rural Middle Class,” 106.
458 Brenner, “On the Public Intimacy of the New Order”
(and thus too much like a man), and, most threatening of all, rampantly sexual outside the bonds of matrimony’. That is why a lot of Indonesian women try to balance their work life and their family’s lives.

The second problem according to Nilan and Utari is that Indonesian women, especially middle-class and well-educated women, often choose to work in female-dominated workplaces for the reason of moral safety. Working in female-dominated workplaces will save women from moral danger such as arises from working in teams with men, working at night, or doing unfeminine acts like looking tough, assertive and competitive. The preference for female-dominated sectors is also based on a general assumption that married women are expected to work in a less demanding workplace so they can balance their public and domestic responsibilities. Nilan and Utari use the case of female communication and media workers to give an example of difficulties faced by women who work in an ‘unnatural’ work environment. Working as media workers is considered to be masculine in nature and it is not for women, as it includes working irregular hours and often staying out all night in a largely male group of journalists to collect news. The media workers could be subjected to sexual harassment. In Nilan’s and Utari’s study, although the women agreed that most male colleagues were respectful, helpful and showed good manners, they also mentioned harassment by their male colleagues, such as whistling at the women entering the office, coming up behind and embracing the women, and squeezing the women’s waist or buttock. Some young female media workers did not consider these behaviours worthy of attention as they were *keisengan* (just for fun), but some others considered these behaviours as harassment and had developed ways of stopping them. To survive the ‘masculine’ working environment, Nilan and Utari say that female media workers learn to deal with workplace situations rationally rather than emotionally, to take the noise and pressure,

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460 Ibid., 149.
especially rough language in the meeting room, without showing disapproval or breaking into tears, and to take responsibility for their own work, asking for no help and making no excuses. These women considered themselves as women doing a man’s job; so in order to successfully do the job, they have to become more like men.\(^{461}\)

On the representation of women and work in Indonesian media and official texts, Sen says that mainly the texts represent professional working women in metropolitan Jakarta, not proletarian women, because the texts target an urban middle-class audience in Indonesia and the outside world.\(^{462}\) She claims that the working woman in Indonesia has become an ‘iconic figure’ to legitimise Indonesia as a modern nation. In commercial texts, Sen says, professional working women are defined by objects like the diary, the laptop computer and the tall office blocks around them.\(^{463}\) In government policy, Sen mentions that gender equality is addressed in The Broad Outlines of State Policy(\textit{Garis-garis Besar Haluan Negara}/GBHN) which contains policy on women’s access to jobs and the shared responsibility between women and men in the domestic sphere.\(^{464}\)

Particularly on the domestic responsibility that should be shared by women and men, Sen notes that the focus of shared responsibility is the education of the children. She says that the children’s education becomes the emphasis because in the domestic arrangement of the Indonesian professional working women’s households, which are commonly middle and upper-class, the housework is done by domestic servants coming from rural poor and urban working-class backgrounds. She argues that the success of professional working women depends on the exploitation of proletarian women since the work of domestic servants is in one of ‘the least regulated and lowest-paid sectors’.\(^{465}\) Sen suggests that the representation of professional working women who do not do housework cannot be found in Western society.

\(^{461}\) Nilan and Utari, “Meanings of Work for Female Media and Communication Workers,” 153.
\(^{463}\) Ibid., 47.
\(^{464}\) Ibid., 45.
Although the domestic servants do most of the physical labour in middle-class homes, it does not mean that the middle-class wives have lives of leisure. Jones states that middle-class women’s activities at home are mostly emotional labour.\(^{466}\) Jones says that a middle-class wife’s role is to manage the household and balance ‘her husband’s affective needs and maid’s moods’ to ensure the smooth running of the household.\(^{467}\) With regard to the children, Jones mentions that middle-class women bear the moral responsibility for raising the children. The emotional labour which includes scheduling and juggling responsibilities, according to Jones, often makes the middle-class women experience *stres*.\(^{468}\) Jones argues that the difference between the maids’ physical labour and the middle class women’s emotional labour is a mark of class difference in the home as it shows that the middle class women are more capable of maintaining ‘the moral order of the home’ compared to the domestic servants who can only keep the physical order.\(^{469}\)

The professional working woman as the ‘icon’ of Indonesian modern women as suggested by Sen was challenged by Ford.\(^{470}\) Ford says that middle-class career women are not the only representation of women’s work. She states that the image of working-class women can be found in popular culture and the press too. She mentions two kinds of images which commonly represent working-class women: the image of factory workers and that of overseas migrant workers.\(^{471}\) Ford states that the female factory worker is usually presented as a proletarian who becomes both a victim of gender inequality in the workplace through a low salary and poor working conditions, and an


\(^{468}\) Carla Jones defines *stres* as ‘the mild form of a feeling of anxiety about hectic scheduling and juggling all one’s responsibilities, or could be so severe that it required professional attention or medication’. See Jones, “Whose stress?” 516.

\(^{469}\) Jones, “Whose Stress?,” 515-516.


\(^{471}\) Ford, “Beyond the Femina Fantasy,” 107–08.
activist who fights against gender inequality through strikes and protest. These kinds of representations are in line with the working-class women discussed in academic and NGO discourses. On female overseas migrant workers, Ford says that, like in academic and activist discourse, the press represents these overseas migrant workers as domestic workers who are the passive victims of their circumstances. Ford says that this representation of working-class women is only one of diverse representations of working woman in Indonesia but their representations are important.

The representation of women’s work in the women’s magazines

Traditionally, as Ballaster et al. mentioned, throughout the history of women’s magazines the texts in the magazines were structured with divisions between masculine and feminine, public and private, and production and consumption.\footnote{Ballaster et al., Women’s Worlds, 6–7.} Generally, the main focus of most women’s magazines has been home and femininity, with the emphasis on women’s roles as wife and mother and on ideal beauty. Femininity was emphasised as the long-term career for women. That women’s magazines were about women’s domestic work was stated by Ferguson who said that women’s magazines were the femininity itself as they provide women with instructions and directions to acquire a female attitude and behaviour as well as to obtain a certain kind of femininity and female world view.\footnote{Ferguson, Forever Feminine, 185.} Similarly, Winship stated that magazines were about women’s culture and femininity such as motherhood and family life, beauty and fashion, love and romance, and cooking and knitting.\footnote{Winship, Inside Women’s Magazines, 6.} In Indonesian women’s magazines, Azehrie’s study of Femina\footnote{Femina is an Indonesian local women’s magazine with the largest circulation in Indonesia.} from the 1970s until the 1990s found that the magazine represented a ‘good’ Indonesian woman as a household manager, a wife and a mother.\footnote{Azeharie, “Representation of Women in Femina”.} Women’s magazines as part of the mass media practised the ‘symbolic annihilation of women’, a
term used by Tuchman to show how women and their interests are marginalised and trivialised by their stereotyped domestic work and sexual attractiveness.477

As a result of the social revolution in the 1960s and 1970s, many women enjoy the results of the struggle by feminists on issues such as equality in education, the workplace, law and politics. Although the representation of women in women’s magazines is mostly still traditional, the changes in society also affect the representations of women. What was once a mother responsible for their children and a wife obedient to their husband is now added to by the idea of new women who are depicted as strong, inspiring and beautiful; the images grabbed by the marketing of a consumer product from feminism.478 The changing representations of women in the women’s magazines might simply be a result of what Braithwaite called the ‘varied tastes of current fashion and trends’479 or, following Ferguson’s argument, the changing representations might be caused by changing views in society in the perception of men and women. The magazines still portray traditional roles such as women as caregivers, but they also present more modern roles such as women as breadwinners or single mothers. However, joining in public work is sometimes portrayed by the media as a reason for dissatisfaction faced by present-day women. Faludi addresses a problem she calls backlash by the media. It is when the equality fought for by women, in order to secure their place in the public sphere, is accused of resulting in the misery and loneliness experienced by women who fight to be independent or those who try to juggle both household responsibilities and career. Faludi says that the media describe these women as having to face the fact that they do not have a partner, are too old to have children, or have failed as a mother despite their success in the workplace.

On Indonesian women’s representation, Azeharie, based on her study on

477 Tuchman, “Introduction: The Symbolic Annihilation of Women by the Mass Media”
478 Andi Zeisler, Feminism and Pop Culture (Berkeley & California: Seal Press, 2008), 16.
479 Brian Braithwaite, Women’s Magazines: The First 300 Years (London: Peter Own, 1995), 7.
women’s representation in *Femina* magazine, notes that there have been changes in the representations of women and gender relationships, as women are not only portrayed as domestic persons but are also portrayed as women with high educational backgrounds who work outside their home. However, the changing representation is not left without challenge. Ford’s criticism of Sen’s claim that upper middle-class professional working women are the icon of Indonesian working women which I mentioned earlier in this chapter shows us that Indonesian women cannot be represented by a single group only. The representation of middle-class women with high educational backgrounds and working outside their home, as found by Azeharie, is only a partial representation of Indonesian women in public discourse. There are other representations of women in the media like the representation of working-class women discussed by Ford and the representation of the happy consumer-housewife and devoted follower of Islam discussed by Brenner.

The changing representation of women and work can be seen in *Cosmopolitan*, *Cleo* and *Marie Claire*. The women’s world in these women’s magazines is not the domestic world any more. As shown in both Australian and Indonesian editions, women are associated with work in the public sphere. The magazines cover women and work in tips and articles such as ‘My No. 1 Career Tip. How do you become a success?’, ‘Young, Ambitious & In Charge: How To Be A Good Boss’, ‘When Did The Workplace Become A War Zone?’ If you want to cry, this is not the place’ (*Kalau mau nangis, bukan di sini tempatnya*), Help! I’m afraid of free time and

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480See Ford, “Beyond the *Femina* Fantasy”; Sen, “Indonesian Women at Work”.
481See Ford, “Beyond the *Femina* Fantasy”.
‘Let’s Go To Work Overseas’ (Kerja di Luar Negeri, Yuk!).488 The tips and articles about women and work put work as a priority in women’s lives and success in the workplace as the goal of every woman. The excerpt from Cleo Australia below shows how women perceive work and what women are expected to do to be successful:

Laura Vozzo, head of talent, MTV
To be a candidate for a job, you need 100 per cent dedication, passion and pride. There’s a lot of hard work and long hours that go with what we do. I love people who believe no task is impossible. These kinds of candidates are great because, even if they achieve half of what they set out to do, they’ll always exceed your expectations.489

As suggested by Vozzo, work should be put as the top priority in women’s lives by giving ‘100 per cent dedication, passion and pride’. Work is also expected to take priority over other parts of women’s lives because women should do ‘a lot of hard work’ and ‘long hours’. Finally women need to become superwomen in the workplace as they should believe that no task is impossible.

Similarly, an article in Cleo Indonesia presents work as the top priority in women’s lives and success is the goal. In this article, a woman regards her work as so preeminent a priority that she does not enjoy anything during her weekends because she is afraid that she will be too relaxed. The article shows that she is more comfortable in her work than in her free time. This is possibly because free time brings more challenges over self-control compared to the workplace, which is more regulated and controlled. It is important to note the way the woman represented here is in accordance with Faludi’s discussion on ‘backlash’, when work is considered a cause of women’s misery and loneliness. Pita’s loneliness, without friends and a family, is not a typical characteristic of a single woman. The discussion about the representation of single women in chapter 2 shows that being single does not always mean being lonely, because they have friends and families. Another interesting point to make about this article is the

way she considers domestic chores as spare time activities and even as activities to release her anger. Here, domestic work is not presented as a problem for this woman because it is not an imposed obligation but her free choice:

For me, time is precious although it is not wrong to spend it being relaxed. I am afraid that if I am too relaxed, I’ll be far too relaxed. So on the weekends I do not enjoy anything. On Saturday (when the office is closed) I plan my own activities. When I do not go home to my parents—I stay in my boarding room all day—I like to clean and rearrange my wardrobe, arrange my CD collection, or only read and reply to e-mails. I enjoy sweeping and mopping my boarding room. Even when I am angry I like to clean my room, oddly the room is neater! Hahaha

Wangi, 30 years old, website and online promotion

The negative opinion about women who work does not exist any more in these women’s magazines. Most working women covered by the women’s magazines do not fall under the debate between good or bad women any more with regard to work.

Women, work and the self-help discourse

As work in the public sphere becomes part of women’s lives, it poses problems for women who are traditionally expected to be responsible for domestic work. The biggest problem, especially for married women who work, is balancing the responsibilities of work and home. This problem is discussed in a separate discussion about women and home in this chapter. Other problems are related to work routines, such as how to deal with the boss, how to get along with colleagues and so on. In dealing with problems in work, self-help solutions are often offered by the magazines. Traditionally, women’s magazines tell women to use ‘self-help’ in facing their domestic problems at home or in


Pitta Sekar Wangi, 30 tahun, website and online promotion

their relationships, but in these magazines the discourse of self-help is about women and their working problems.

The self-help discourse offered in women’s magazines might be the result of what McRobbie calls female individualisation, which is drawn from Beck’s and Beck-Gernsheim’s discussion on individualisation and women.\textsuperscript{491} In general, Beck’s and Beck-Gernsheim’s individualisation refers to the opportunities offered to individuals to plan their own lives free from the traditional social patterns which tend to control and limit individuals’ choices.\textsuperscript{492} Beck’s and Beck-Gernsheim’s concept is a focus on individual freedom to improve the quality of life. With regard to women and individualisation, as I mentioned in my Introduction, Beck and Beck-Gernsheim argue that education and work are the main facilitators of women’s individualisation. Education teaches women to know their capacities and restrictions in order to be able to make their own choices and decisions, and to help themselves. In her discussion about female individualisation, McRobbie particularly addresses the individualisation of young women who must practise self-monitoring and self-planning in communities where gender roles are not fixed. No longer bound to the old structure, these individuals must choose their own path to reach the life they want as they are believed to be able to make the right choices. McRobbie mentions the diary, the life-plan, and the career pathway as examples of self-monitoring practices and as examples of the cultural means to the process of individualisation.\textsuperscript{493}

The self-help discourse in the women’s magazines is actually part of a huge florescence in the field of personal development or personal improvement. According to McGee, the popularity of the self-help discourse in the US creates what he calls a ‘self-improvement industry’ which includes books, seminars, audio and video products, and

\textsuperscript{491}McRobbie, \textit{The Aftermath of Feminism}. See Chapter One of this thesis.

\textsuperscript{492}Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, \textit{Individualization}.

\textsuperscript{493}McRobbie, \textit{The Aftermath of Feminism}, 19.
personal coaching"). McGee explains that the flourishing of this industry in the 1990s coincided with the stagnant wages and uncertain employment faced by American workers. Americans, as suggested by McGee, turned to self-help literature for inspiration and to help them overcome their insecurity. This self-help literature usually gives advice about the way to improve oneself with a better management of personal life. McGee gives the example of Stephen Covey’s well-known self-help book, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, which teaches people to manage time effectively. Interestingly, in his discussion about Covey’s *First Thing First*, McGee shows that Covey’s idea about time planning cannot be applied to women’s role as a mother. McGee quotes Covey who advised her daughter to relax and enjoy her time as a mother when she was frustrated by her failure to manage her time because of her responsibility as a mother. McGee argues that self-improvement can only be effective for men because men can rely on the labour of women and other people to support their work. The lack of academic study about the self-help discourse and Indonesian readers makes it hard to find out whether Indonesian women, especially middle-class working women who have the help of domestic servants, can be successful in applying self-improvement. These women can rely on domestic workers to do the housework and help to take care of the children while they pursue their careers.

Despite the lack of academic studies, it is possible to observe that self-improvement is quite popular in Indonesia. One of the studies that gives evidence about the popularity of the self-improvement discourse is Jones’ study on private personal-development courses which taught a modern feminine lifestyle to middle class women in Yogyakarta in the late 1990s. According to Jones, the courses teach women to be

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self-confident primarily by learning the global style of personal appearance and presentation. Jones says that the women who joined the courses believed that changes in their style of dress and appearance reflects changes in their mode of thinking which can lead to professional success.\textsuperscript{497} Jones mentions that in these courses, women learned to improve themselves using expert sources like local and foreign magazines, television, and motivational philosophies such as that of Stephen Covey to learn how to be modern.\textsuperscript{498} The role of the personal development courses Jones studied was to provide students with the way to adjust foreign styles to the Indonesian context. For example, Muslim women were encouraged to adapt Western women’s power suit but they had to modify the suit to longer skirts or higher necklines. Similar to Gerke in her discussion of the Indonesian middle-class and their consumption, Jones points out that to perform well as modern women is sometimes above these women’s financial ability. In this case, the instructors and managers of the local personal development courses helped the women to negotiate the gap between the desire to look modern and these young middle-class women’s limitations to realise their desires.\textsuperscript{499}

The discourse of self-help in the articles about women and work is found more frequently in Indonesian editions than in Australian editions. Below is an excerpt from Cleo Indonesia which contains the discourse of self-help. This article is about how to be happy during the working day in order to improve work performance to reach success. The readers are convinced by the magazine that they basically posses an attitude to overcome difficulties in the workplace as long as they learn to love their jobs even if the job is not enjoyable.

\textsuperscript{497} Jones, “Dress for Sukses”, 200.
\textsuperscript{498} Ibid., 195.
\textsuperscript{499} Ibid., 193.
Some matters in life are indeed unfair, like the cost of a pair of Manolo Blahnik shoes, unobtainable men like Zac Efron, and the fact that there are five work days and only two holidays every week. Although not much can be done about Manolo and Zac, you can still manage this situation of ‘post-weekend blues’—what you have to do is to find a Positive Work Attitude (PWA) in your head. And, yes, you actually have it!

Your personality influences your way of thinking. Your way of thinking influences your attitude, and your attitude influences your performance. And it is your performance which influences your success. And when success means keep the ‘Friday night feeling’ for a week, you should develop a bit of positive thinking. According to Sieger, 80% of the skills necessary for success come from your attitude. And because attitude is a choice you make, it will be easy to control it.500

In giving the tips, the magazines clearly promote the discourse of self-help for their readers. They lead women to think that they can do all things by themselves and that they can help themselves to overcome difficulties to reach success. It is important to note here that most self-help is aimed at making women successful in their work.

Another article in Cosmopolitan Indonesia gives advice to women to avoid crying in the workplace. The article tells women to hide any traits associated with femininity in order to look professional. This article represents the need to learn masculine language and values in the workplace just as Nilan and Utari found in their study about female media and communication workers in Indonesia.

You must have been in a situation when your emotions were challenged. Like when your project was cancelled after months of hard work; or when your customer/client rebuked you sharply; or when your best friend at the office was fired or when the boss gave you more work to do when your work was already piled high.

500Beberapa hal dalam hidup memang tidak adil, seperti harga sepasang sepatu Manolo Blahnik, pria seperti Zac Efron yang sulit dijangkau, serta fakta bahwa ada lima hari kerja dan hanya dua hari libur setiap minggunya. Meskipun tidak banyak yang bisa dilakukan mengenai Manolo dan Zac, Anda masih bisa menyesatkan situasi ‘post-weekend blues’ ini—yang perlu Anda lakukan hanyaalah menemukan Positive Work Attitude (PWA) [originally in English] di kepala Anda. Dan, ya, sebenarnya Anda memilikinya!


In your private life, you usually face these stressful situations by crying, screaming, or feeling sorry for yourself. But at work, such acts could put you in trouble. Why? Because your reputation and productivity are at stake.

Tips to become a tough woman at work
- focus on work
- be oriented towards your goal by being responsible and professional
- react appropriately according to the context, like being able to control yourself under pressure, being able to respond humorously in a ‘heated’ situation and not being easily provoked emotionally.501

The article draws a clear line between women’s private lives and work lives by stating that in their private lives women can cry, scream or feel sorry for themselves but in the workplace women should be tough, oriented towards goals, professional, able to control themselves under pressure, humorous in a ‘heated’ situation and not easily provoked emotionally. The article assumes that women lack the appropriate qualities for public work – therefore they need to act differently in the workplace in order to succeed. It is just like putting women’s characteristics in a column with the word ‘bad’ as a heading and other characteristics, presumably men’s, in a column with ‘good’ as heading. There is no suggestion that the workplace culture should change to become more accommodating to women.

An article in Cosmo Indonesia which discusses bullying at work also applies the self-help approach, regardless of the fact that bullying in the workplace is a serious offence.

501 Anda pasti pernah berada dalam situasi dimana emosi Anda ditantang. Sebut saja, ketika proyek Anda dibatalkan setelah berbulan-bulan bersusah payah mengerjakannya; atau saat pelanggan/klien menghardik dengan ketus; atau ketika sahabat Anda di kantor dipecat atau saat si bos memberi pekerjaan lain di saat pekerjaan Anda sudah menumpuk.

Tip menjadi wanita tangguh di kantor
- fokus pada pekerjaan
- Orientasi pada pencapaian hasil dengan proses yang dapat dipertanggungjawabkan secara profesional.
- variasi dari konteks yang terjadi, seperti kemampuan mengendalikan diri bila berada dalam kondisi penuh tekanan, dapat bersikap humoris saat suasana sedang “panas” dan tidak mudah terpancing emosi.
Sometimes there is a colleague at work who makes life harder. They might bully or they are back-stabbers. Whatever they are, no one is supposed to make you uncomfortable to work. Is this the time to ‘take revenge’ at work?

Co-workers from hell can come in many forms. But the effect is the same: feeling annoyed, and stressed, which can spoil work performance and career achievement. When you are annoyed, what can you do? Of course you need to stand up for yourself, darling. Cosmo will help you with these guidelines to take a (smart) ‘revenge’.  

The ‘revenges’ proposed are mixing the drink of the ‘enemy’ with laxative medicine or substituting low-calory sweetener with sugar, hiding or destroying their documents, and hiding their stationery. This article creates a comic fantasy, a fictitious atmosphere that everything can be done personally without serious consequences. It neglects the fact that those proposed revenges might be considered crimes and could be brought to court. The practical and personal solutions underplay the real problem of bullying, letting the perpetrator off the public hook, and potentially causing the ‘victim’ more trouble.

Australian editions also present the self-help discourse in discussing women and their problems at work. However more serious discussions are found more in Australian editions compared to Indonesian editions. I found an article which also discusses bullying in the workplace in Marie Claire Australia, but in this magazine the issue is in the form of reportage and is discussed more seriously. Below is an excerpt from the article:

The tragic death of a young waitress has put workplace bullying in the spotlight and raised serious questions about how we deal with a culture of intimidation. Lollie Barr investigates.

...
September 20, 2006, Brodies Panlock jumped from a multistorey car park near her flat. She died in the hospital three days later. An investigation would later reveal the once chirpy teenager’s mental torment was fuelled by the campaign of vicious bullying certain members of the Cafe Vamp staff had waged against her.

... These deaths represent the tip of an iceberg that lurks beneath the surface of the ‘happy’ Australian workplace, and costs the economy an estimated $13 billion a year due to decreased productivity, increased absenteeism and staff turnover.503

This article presents stories from the victims of bullying and facts about bullying in Australia. At the end of the article, the magazine asks the readers to sign a petition to the government asking them to do more to solve workplace bullying. Comparing Australian stories with the Indonesian stories, we can see that the Australian stories are more concerned with the structure of work and the legislation that has been put in place to prevent abuses of power, whereas the Indonesian stories do not have that structural critique or support.

Another article found in Marie Claire Australia is about the inequality between men’s and women’s wages. This article was originally published in 2004 and reprinted in 2010 with an introduction which basically states that ‘with regard to disparity in payment between men and women, nothing has changed’. Below are some personal stories not only about unequal payment but also about less than ideal working conditions that result in the disparity of payment in Australia:

The story you see here was published by Marie Claire in 2004. Nothing has changed since then. Here we are, six years later, and we’re shocked to find ourselves in the same unbelievable position and asking the same question—why are we still fighting for equal pay?

... In 2004—35 years after the ‘equal pay for equal work’ ruling by the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission assured salary parity for both sexes doing the same job—a Marie Claire report on the gender pay gap found the full-time earnings of the average woman were 84 per cent of a man’s. Today, they are 82 per cent. Over 40 years in the workforce, this amounts to more than $1 million in lost income for an Australian woman.

503.“When Did the Workplace Become a War Zone?” Marie Claire Australia, May 2010, 42–48.
‘Young people...think this (inequity) has been sorted out, that it’s a thing of the past,’ remarks Mairi Steele, acting director of Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency (EOWA). ‘To them it seems stupid—why would men and women be paid differently?’ It’s not until they’ve been in the labour market for a few years,’ she adds, ‘that many women realise they’re getting a raw deal. Even then, the corporate “don’t ask don’t tell” attitude about pay cheques makes inequity hard to detect.’

Hannah Beling, 19, University student
Growing up, I was always taught that as a woman I could do and be anything I wanted. So it was a huge shock to arrive at university and discover that from the moment veterinarian students graduate, men earn $3000 more than women.

I was already worried about how I would balance my career and children, and now I feel even more frustrated. I don’t know why more people aren’t outraged by this, and I think it’s time for women to stand up for themselves.

Rachel Hart, 37, Sexual assault counsellor
As a counsellor, I work with men and women at their lowest ebb...For all this, I get paid around $38 000 a year, which is less than a rubbish collector. I believe, along with the Australian Services Union (ASU), that this is because counselling is a female-dominated industry.

The work we do is vital, and yet society undervalues it because caring and nurturing work has traditionally been seen as women’s work that’s provided for free. The ASU is currently campaigning to ensure female-dominated sectors are not discriminated against in this way and having joined their case, I’m right behind them.

Sarah*, 504, 26, chemical engineer
Engineering is very male-dominated. There’s a boys’ club at my office; all the guys, from junior engineers to senior managers, go to the pub or play golf together. Even work functions are geared towards the men; clients are sometimes taken to the racetrack or to play golf. As a result all the men share a much better rapport and, as all the senior staff are male, too, I can see how men end up getting promoted faster.

But I know that if I ever raised it as an issue—or argued I wasn’t getting paid fairly, I’d been seen as a ‘femo’, and it’s crucial to my career progression that I don’t rock the boat...

Since then, I’ve joined Women in Mining, as I believe women need to work together to reduce the pay gap. I have no idea whether I make less than my male colleagues now, but I get furious when I consider how much I’ll lose in savings and super over the years.

As a student, I’d heard stories about pay inequities, and the fact that senior female engineers earn 30 per cent less than men, but I’d always brushed them off. You just assume things will be fair. But after just three years in the workforce I’m beginning to realise they’re not.

504 Not her real name.
Rebecca Badenoch, 41, lawyer
It was while I was a junior partner that I experienced the pay gap first hand. I was chatting to a male colleague and he happened to mention his salary, which I instantly realised was about $10000–$20000 more than mine.

Today, I’m a partner in a law firm, which is still relatively uncommon. Just 18 per cent of partners in Australian law firms are women. Although the legal fraternity has become better at supporting women, a masculine culture still exists; in many firms there’s still a notion lawyers must put in long hours at the office, and this penalises women with families. I worked extremely hard to become a partner, but I also don’t have children.

My experiences have made me very conscious of supporting younger, female lawyers and I belong to Victorian Women Lawyers. I also lead by example; ultimately it’s up to women to empower ourselves. 505

From the stories of the women above, we can see that unequal payment exists in different circumstances. In a female-dominated sector like counselling, the workers received lower payment because the work was associated with nurturing and caring, which is traditionally done by women for free. On the other hand, in the male-dominated sector women were disadvantaged by male-centred work functions which gave men the chance to be promoted faster than women. Another problem is the long hours at the office which poses problems for women with families. The discourse of self-help can be seen in Hannah Beling’s sharing about the belief she had about being a woman, ‘Growing up, I was always taught that as a woman I could do and be anything I wanted’ and Rebecca Badenoch who says, ‘it’s up to women to empower ourselves’ when she talks about supporting younger female lawyers in fighting gender discrimination. Beling shows how she was raised to believe that as an individual, a young woman in this case, she could make her own choice about which path to take to obtain her goals in life while Badenoch believes that women can and should help themselves to fight structured gender discrimination without involving men in the negotiation. However, besides those self-help beliefs, most women in the excerpt above also join an association to try to tackle the problems together with other people/women:

Rachel Hart is a member of Australian Services Union (ASU); Sarah is in Women in Mining; and Rebecca Badenoch joins in Victorian Women Lawyers. However, the result of this female collaboration is still far from successful.

The lack of articles addressing inequality and violence in the workplace in Indonesian editions does not mean that Indonesian women do not experience similar problems. Based on data from the Ministry of Women’s Empowerment, on average women workers in Indonesia are paid only 78 per cent of men’s wages. More than 30 per cent of women workers are not paid because they work to help the family business and 70 per cent of paid women workers work in the informal sector which does not provide a fixed salary and job security. According to data from the ILO office in Indonesia, there are an estimated 2.6 million Indonesians working as domestic workers within Indonesia (pekerja rumah tangga/PRT). The role of domestic workers in Indonesia is very important because in most upper and middle-class households, these women are the ones who do the housework and help take care of the children. As suggested by Sen, domestic workers can be considered the main support behind the success of professional working women in Indonesia. Although domestic workers are much needed by Indonesians, their position is very vulnerable. Most workers work without a written contract but on trust alone; therefore there is no formal protection and regulation which can protect them against physical, mental, emotional or sexual abuse and exploitation. There is no official data on violence in the workplace, domestic situation or other, but the mass media reports on violence which has happened to, for

510 International Labour Organization, The Regulation of Domestic Workers in Indonesia.
example, domestic workers, show that violence indeed occurs in the workplace. The difficulties ingesting actual numbers of incidents of violence in the workplace are the result of difficulties in finding proof about the violence unless it is physical violence. The acceptance and passivity of Nilan’s and Utari’s respondents toward sexual harassment they experienced in the workplace are examples of the difficulty in finding proof of violence in workplace.511

Despite the grim reality of women workers in Indonesia, the Indonesian editions of the magazines present mostly about managerial-level women workers who are the target readers of the magazines and who mostly come from a middle-class background. The self-help discourse presented by the articles in dealing with problems in the workplace offers the fantasy of ideal working conditions and hides the reality of women and work in Indonesia. Different from personal development courses studied by Jones, the magazines do not provide instructors and experts to assist the readers to contextualise the personal skills taught by the magazines to local context. Hermes claims that the self-help articles create a temporary fantasy of an ideal self where readers who read the practical knowledge in the magazines fantasise themselves to be the ones who can take decisions and who are in control.512 She argues that the pragmatic and solution-oriented articles in the magazines are used by women to train themselves to come up with solutions for virtually anything.513

Women, work and mobility

Articles about women travelling to other cities and other countries to work are found more in Australian women’s magazines than in Indonesian magazines. Moving from smaller cities to bigger cities is seen in Australian magazines as a move forward for a better life. In Indonesian editions, similar stories can be found. According to Kaplan,

511 Nilan and Utari, “Meanings of Work for Female Media and Communication Workers,” 149.
513 Hermes, Reading Women’s Magazines, 39.
travel can be voluntary or involuntary. These two types of travel are interesting. The type of travel covered by these women’s magazines is mostly voluntary. There are only a few stories covering involuntary travel which is done as the result of economic necessity, like the travel done by migrant labourers, or as the result of political pressures like the travel of asylum seekers. The stories of involuntary travel are invisible compared to features related to voluntary travel. It seems that stories about involuntary travel are not considered interesting enough for these women’s magazines which offer mostly images of independent, successful and glamorous women.

With regard to voluntary travel, I am going to discuss how the women’s magazines focus on the reasons why women travel to move to other cities or countries for work. An article in Cleo Australia quotes a demographer on the reasons Australian women move from the country to the city.

More Australian women than ever are moving from the country to the city. In fact, around 70 per cent of girls aged 25 to 29 are migrating towards the skyscrapers for jobs, education and the lifestyle, according to social demographer Dr Sue Bandaranaike from James Cook University in Townsville, Qld. She calls it the ‘Sex and the City Effect’. ‘Women are more outgoing, more educated, more independent and more cashed-up now, ‘she says, ‘They want great jobs and lifestyles, and they’re moving to the city to get them.’

The article mentions that although one of the women’s motives to move is economic reasons, i.e. to get jobs with good salaries, women are also attracted to the city lifestyle which is considered different. The women are shown as looking for ‘great jobs’ – not just good jobs. This implies that the women are not under the pressure of economic necessity. Instead they are searching for more than simply a job, they are pursuing their career. Having city lifestyles and great jobs are so desirable that the source names the phenomenon the ‘Sex and the City Effect’ after the famous American television series. The series features four female characters who live in Manhattan and it explores their

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lives, especially their romance, sex and shopping. The female characters in the series are independent, have good careers, and wear designer products. Apparently the women who travel to move to the city are seen by the source of this article as the ones who are seeking independence and success. They are voluntary travellers. Some of them have already moved to cities or even other countries when they went to university, and then they work in that country. The women who move are described as being more outgoing, more educated, more independent and more cashed-up than other ordinary women. Those characteristics strengthen the image that the women discussed here are voluntary travellers. Their ability to move about and travel freely brings them to more advantageous positions. This ability puts women as part of modern society because modern society is a society on the move.516

Apart from the obvious reason of getting a better job, women travelling or moving to other cities or other countries have other reasons. The following excerpts show that, just like tourists, these women see moving to other cities or countries to work as a way to explore new experiences.

Hayley, 25, moved to Sydney from Perth in 2008 to experience living in a bigger city.517

Kimberley, 26, moved from Sydney to Melbourne last year to broaden her horizons.518

Nicole Madison, 23
Since moving, I’ve made most of my friends from the incredible expat community. Many Australians and Kiwis have moved to Singapore and are regulars on the local bar scene. I’ve also learnt to appreciate the Eastern way of life. For example, locals place a greater emphasis on religion, customs and family values. Singaporeans are also very polite—swearing is minimal and advertisements everywhere remind locals to ‘act kindly to others’.519

From the excerpts we can see that these women move to another city or country because

518 Ibid.
519 Ibid., 96.
they want to explore and learn something new. These women’s capacity to be mobile makes them able to have new experiences both during their travel for leisure and travel for better jobs or for higher education. (And again, the magazines tend to ignore the way children, or uncooperative partners, can anchor a woman and prevent this much-vaunted mobility.) The women also get a better understanding of other people, like the experience of Madison, above, an Australian working in Singapore.

To be successful is another reason for moving to the city or another country. According to Kronlid, spatial mobility is connected to social mobility; having the ability to move spatially also means having the ability to move socially.\textsuperscript{520} Women who travel to find jobs not only move from one city or one country to another but they might also move to a higher social class. The cities or countries to which the women (Nicole and Alice, below) move are represented as places which give opportunities to women to be successful in terms of career. When they are successful they will automatically have the ability to move to higher social circles.

The two excerpts about Alice and Nicole show that both of them moved to another state because they wanted to be successful in their careers. That the move is voluntary travel can be clearly seen in Nicole’s statement that she ‘decided to move’. Moreover, the excerpt about Alice, who moved from Sydney to Melbourne, contains a statement that she ‘made sure’ she focused on how the move would ‘pay off’ in terms of career and personal growth. Alice is ready to fight to get what she dreamed of and she will make sure that she will be successful.

Nicole, 24, marketing coordinator at onetest hr. moved from Taroom, Qld, to Brisbane.
Taroom [Population 600] is a very small town in Queensland, about six hours north of Brisbane. I grew up on my parents’ property where we farmed cattle. I decided to move to the city because I wanted to pursue a career in marketing.\textsuperscript{521}

\textsuperscript{520}David Kronlid, “Mobility as Capability,” in \textit{Gendered Mobilities}, ed. Tanu Priya Uteng and Tim Creswell (Hampshire and Burlington: Ashgate, 2008), 15.
\textsuperscript{521}“Small-Town Girls under Big-City Lights.” \textit{Cleo Australia}, September, 2010, 100.
Alice 23 is a PR consultant who moved from Sydney to Melbourne in April. A work opportunity came up in Melbourne that was too good to turn down, so I moved. I’d been to Melbourne only once before when I was a teenager. So I made sure I focused on how the move would pay off in terms of career and personal growth.522

The desire for a change is another reason for women to travel to another city or country. Sally Jasper, below, sees travel as a way to free herself from past routines. The move is regarded as an escape from routine. The notion of escape is strengthened by the fact that these women seem to easily enjoy their new lives and adapt to their new places. They voluntary decided to move and they think that they made the right decision. Here, in the excerpt, Jasper says that she needed ‘the perfect chance to take a fresh look at my life’.

Sally Jasper, 30
I moved to London, three years ago. Although I’d lived in France for 12 months when I was 19, I had always wanted to reside in the UK. When my then-boyfriend and I decided to take a break, I thought it’d be the perfect chance to take a fresh look at my life. 523

Women move mainly because they need higher education and/or to get better jobs. Those two things enable them to improve their personal life and sometimes to change their personality. Madison, who is quoted in Cleo Australia, feels that her personal life improved as a result of the experience of working abroad. Once again, independence is the factor which marks the improvement toward a better life.

Nicole Madison, 23
Working and living overseas is an incredibly worthwhile experience. As hard as it is to leave your loved ones, taking a plunge like this will inevitably change you for the better. Since I’ve arrived, I’ve become much more independent. I’ve had to navigate around the country by myself and am relying on my Lonely Planet books less and less. It’s also made me a more open person.524

In addition, these women are represented as having the ability to adapt to a new culture and engage in a new environment. From the articles about women moving abroad, the most important thing for them in their new environment is to make friends. They

usually establish networks to start their lives in the new place.

I knew just two people in Melbourne and making friends has been the hardest part.\textsuperscript{525}

Nicole Madison, 23
Since moving, I’ve made most of my friends from the incredible expat community. Many Australians and Kiwis have moved to Singapore and are regulars on the local bar scene.\textsuperscript{526}

In the magazines, these young women are not afraid to leave their old lives and take up the challenges to get new jobs and to be in a new environment. Taking responsibility for their own working lives and not being dependent on one stable and reliable job for life are also the result of female individualisation, as suggested by McRobbie.\textsuperscript{527} These young women’s decisions to voluntarily move to bigger cities or to other countries are for self-satisfaction. It is their choice. Even when there is an economic consideration such as a bigger salary, financial gain is not the goal of these young women. They are not financially desperate to have money and consider their moving for work just like travelling for leisure. These women value the ability to move to other countries, to meet other people, to see new places and to learn about other cultures more highly than financial gain.

In the Indonesian context, moving to bigger cities to work is the major component of urbanisation, a major demographic shift in Indonesia. Like many other cities in Asia, urbanisation is associated with the problems of:

…rural-urban migration, overcrowding, proliferation of slums, housing shortage, growing unemployment and underemployment and choice between capital intensive productivity vs. labor intensive employment generation, suffocating pollution caused by both industries and motor vehicle fumes, crumbling urban facilities and education/health care systems and above all mind-boggling poverty.\textsuperscript{528}

The Indonesian magazines largely neglect serious issues surrounding urbanisation, and

\textsuperscript{526}“The Expat Diaries.” \textit{Cleo Australia}, May, 2010, 96.
\textsuperscript{527}McRobbie, \textit{The Aftermath of Feminism}, 19
there are not many articles that discuss women who move to other places to work. Generally, Indonesian women who move for work are portrayed similarly to Australian women in the women’s magazines. The women’s moving to another city or country to work is also represented by the magazines as a way to improve life and to develop their personality. It is an empowerment for them.

Irvine Prisilia, 28. Regional Copywriter. Hakuhoda Asia Pacific, Thailand
Bangkok is my first working place outside Indonesia. And according to me, this work in the end enhances my value in the workplace. By working abroad, we prove to ourselves that we are able to live independently and make our own decisions. It also shows that we are able to adapt to cultures that are different to our original culture.

... Secondly, determination. Working abroad is like throwing yourself into the sea. You never know what will happen there, and you will be forced to go out of your comfort zone.⁵²⁹

Working in another country improves Irvine’s Prisilia’s personal value. In this excerpt, Irvine proves to herself that she is able to live independently and make her own decisions. To be able to live independently and make one’s own decisions are qualities that are rarely possessed by Indonesian women. So proving that she can be independent is very important for Irvine.

For Indonesians, overseas education is an important steppingstone for an international career. Therefore, women who travel for education are actually travelling to a better job opportunity.

⁵²⁹Irvine Prisilia, 28. Regional Copywriter. Hakuhoda Asia Pacific, Thailand


“Working Abroad (Local Babes Go Global: 3 Cerita Sukses Di 3 Benua),” Cleo Indonesia, Desember, 2010, 71.
Ira Mariana Kesuma, 28. Consultant, SAP Germany

For me, in Germany, there are many things that I can learn apart from the theory I got at university. One of them is work ethos. One aspect of the culture of German people I admire is their professionalism. In every aspect they always try to be professional. They are also very disciplined and on time for their appointments. When they are late, they have a solid reason, not simply saying that there was a ‘traffic jam’ like in Indonesia.

Ira Mariana Kesuma was a graduate of Business Information System (Wirtschaftsinformatik) from Luneburg University, Germany (the name was changed to Leuphana University). The women mostly work at the management level and in their travel and work are like men who are represented as free and not bound to family matters or domestic chores. Travel to work in these women’s magazines is truly represented as a means of empowerment.

Discussion of travel as the representation of empowerment for women, particularly Indonesian women, can also be found in chapter 6, which is about travel for leisure. In travel for leisure, the women’s magazines represent women as tourists who free themselves from their daily routines and practise their freedom of choice and independence in their holiday activities. Apparently, the capability of being mobile in both travel to work and travel for leisure is considered a quality which can empower women.

In general, the women represented by the magazines are independent, free and brave. They are single women who travel alone or move to other countries. They are responsible for themselves. As mentioned before, travel to work is related to social mobility as well. I found no story about families’ concerns or restraints about women moving to other cities or going abroad, even though responsibility for their family is in

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530 Ira Mariana Kesuma, 28. Konsultan, SAP Jerman

Ira Mariana Kesuma ini lulusan Business Information System (Wirtschaftsinformatik) di Luneburg University, Jerman (sekarang berubah nama menjadi Leuphana University).
“Working Abroad (Local Babes Go Global: 3 Cerita Sukses Di 3 Benua),” Cleo Indonesia, Desember, 2010, 72.
fact a major factor which is still attached to women. Scheibelhofer found in her study on skilled migrant workers that women’s responsibility toward their family is the most pressing motivation for women to travel to and fro from their original countries to the countries where they live. Women usually have to consider both productive and reproductive responsibilities when they work in other places. The women represented in the women’s magazines are different from the women found in Scheibelhofer’s study. However, the women represented in the magazines are mostly young single women who have no obligation to look after their family.

In Indonesian editions, the women’s magazines represent Indonesian women who have higher education as the ones who can freely choose to travel to other countries to have prestigious work out of economic necessity. These women are represented as being able to exercise their freedom and individualisation. However, as concluded by Kim in her study of Chinese, Korean and Japanese women, the women’s magazines’ representation of women’s individualisation is a fantasy for most Indonesian women who still experience gender-based inequality at work.

**Balancing work and home**

Probert uses the term ‘Ideology of Domesticity’ to talk about a culture that requires women to become mothers and requires mothers to be selfless. According to Probert, this ideology gives the idea that women who act for themselves rather than for others are selfish. Thus being a career woman who neglects to think about family and children is being selfish. This ideology or culture of domesticity is found easily in popular culture. In general, this ideology puts women into an understanding that women naturally belong in the private sphere where child caring and caregiving are women’s responsibilities.

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tasks. The ideology is changing and, in my analysis, I found that the domestic sphere is not the focus of Australian and Indonesian editions of *Cosmopolitan, Cleo* and *Marie Claire* and has been replaced by the public sphere. Interestingly, women’s magazines often represent work done in the domestic and public spheres as opposed. The excerpt below from *Cleo Australia* shows how domestic affairs are regarded as constraints to career and personal life:

Coming from a tight-knit family, there’s an unspoken expectation on Erin to become a mother one day. ‘It was a bit of a shock to them that I didn’t want my own [family] as yet…Mum still thinks I’ll have children when I meet the ‘right man’—but the last guy I was with, we both decided we didn’t want to have kids. It didn’t mean we loved each other any less, it just meant we had different values.’

Currently focused on travelling and her career, Erin is happy to be child-free. ‘I always get asked why I don’t like children, but the ironic thing is, I’m a primary school teacher and I love the kids at school—I just don’t want my own yet.’

The reason Erin does not want to have a child is that she wants to focus on travelling and her career. She also points out that she and her partner have ‘different values’ in answer to her family’s pressure to have children. In Probert’s point of view, this kind of article gives an impression that staying at home for the sake of the children cannot coexist with self-actualisation. As it is difficult to share responsibilities at work with domestic responsibilities, women have to give up their jobs temporarily or permanently when they decide to have children. The excerpt below shows that women have to give up their work to be full-time mothers:

Two years ago, I was a full-time TV journalist. My days were spent on the road filming interviews or in the office writing a story for the night’s show. Hair, make-up and choosing an outfit were key aspects to my morning routine. And sharing stories with interesting people was simply part of the job. Media shindigs were commonplace where free champagne flowed and what to wear was my biggest dilemma.

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Fast-forward 18 months and that life seemed a distant memory. I’d been pregnant, given birth and was now a member of the Mummy Club. Mornings had become a blur of feeds, burps and dirty nappies. Lullabies replaced Beyonce, baby talk replaced intellectual discussion, and I had a regular lunch date with Dr Phil.

But while the joy of motherhood was overwhelming, I soon realised I had to bring myself back into the picture. And this is where many women come unstuck. According to LifeCare counsellor Susan De Campo, most new mums put their own needs second to bub’s.

‘We stay home, do the housework and care for the baby,’ says De Campo. Meaning spontaneity is a thing of the past—a reality that hit author Jodie Hedley-Ward unexpectedly. Despite a masters degree and a dream job at an Italian fashion house, Jodie happily gave it all away to pursue a life of motherly bliss. ‘I underestimated how much I’d miss my freedom. All of a sudden you’re struggling to get into the shower by noon and you can’t remember the last time you had a coffee with your girlfriends.’

The article talks about how difficult it is for women to choose between work and family and it offers an alternative to replace the jobs they miss by working from home. According to Probert, the Australian model for a family is a dual-breadwinner/dual-carer model, in which childrearing is seen as the responsibility of the family, and in which the labour market has to allow not only women but also men to assume this responsibility. In Probert’s opinion, a coherent family policy which supports women with family should be provided by industry as well as by government. This kind of social contract requires measures to protect parents from enormously long working hours, to give rights to the very large and growing sector of casual labour, and to give some measure of security and provisions such as maternity leave.

Balancing work and domestic responsibility is not easy for Indonesian women either. An illustration is provided by Brenner from Femina, a local woman’s magazine in Indonesia, which covers a story about Debby. Debby was described as selfishly having taken her career too far and sacrificing her family’s happiness even though it was for the economic well-being of her family. In the end, Debby had to give up her career.

536 Ibid.
and adjust herself to her husband’s needs and the needs of the whole family. The story puts Debby’s choice to pursue her career as selfish and her decision to return to the family as ideal.

Different from Debby’s story above, in Indonesian editions of *Cosmopolitan*, *Cleo* and *Marie Claire*, women are no longer judged as selfish when they choose to have a career and are not tugged to return home and leave their career. Instead they have to make their own choices about whether to leave their career to be a full-time mother or to keep on working and be child-free, or to juggle both domestic and career responsibilities. The excerpt below shows a woman who decides to pursue her dream work because she does not want to get trapped in what she calls the ‘usual life cycle’:

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I am tired of the usual life cycle. Watching my parents, older sibling, and all people around me going through the same cycle—graduate from university, work, find Mr Right, get married, have children, and then have grandchildren. ‘I want something different!’ said Shirley, Accounts Manager in a well-known PR consultancy in Jakarta. ‘Treading through my 25 years of age I started to think, what happiness have I realised for myself? I like travelling, I like living in the open air, not in a packed office. And that’s it, I do what I want.’ Although her parents had protested (her decision) when she left a job with quite a big salary, Shirley finally moved to Bali and enjoys life the way she wants it. She opened a small travel agency and lives from a meagre income. No more party, no more glamour life, no more full-list resolution which haunts every woman in their 20s. *But she enjoys it every second of her life.*

Another woman chose to give up her job and to work from home as a full-time blogger and entrepreneur – a choice enabled by the development of internet technology:

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I never imagined myself working in an office all my life. After more or less 10 years being employed, I felt that I had enough experience to start my own...
business, with Hani. The real reason was my son, Ligia Aluf. I was having difficulties balancing taking care of the baby, breastfeeding, and doing my very demanding office work. I often felt frustrated because I didn’t have enough time to be with my son. Apart from quite long working hours, time was short for me because of Jakarta’s traffic jams which happened every day.538

Another article shows the difficulty of juggling work and maternal responsibility. This excerpt shows career women’s difficulty in breastfeeding their babies. They feel stressed but they put it as a personal responsibility.

It was hard to make the expressing (breastmilk) schedule fit the meetings, sometimes it made Lira feel stressed. But she also liked to motivate female staff who have babies to do the same thing. Her staff also often ask Lira about breastfeeding.

Meanwhile, Danie Sulistio, Marketing and Public Relation The Apartment, a restaurant, admitted that because of the irregular working hours, she had to express breastmilk at any available time. Including in the backseat of her car, on her way to work or in her office toilet: ‘Maybe because I was stressed and tired, I could not produce enough milk, so I often asked my friends who were also breastfeeding for some of their breastmilk,’ explained Danie.539

These women acknowledge the difficulties in balancing their responsibilities but they are compelled to do both. It is important to note that men’s opposition to women’s careers is barely seen in any women’s stories, which gives the impression that men do not have problems with women having careers. Women are portrayed as the ones having

538 Saya tidak pernah membayangkan akan jadi orang kantoran seumur hidup. Setelah kurang lebih 10 tahun bekerja sebagai karyawan, saya sudah merasa cukup modal pengalaman untuk akhirnya memulai bisnis sendiri, yaitu bersama dengan Hani. Pemicu sebenarnya adalah anak saya, Ligia Aluf. Waktu itu saya kesulitan membagi antara mengurus bayi, memberikan ASI eksklusif, dan menjalankan tugas-tugas kantor yang sangat demanding. Saya sering merasa frustasi karena tidak bisa mendapatkan waktu yang cukup untuk bersama anak saya, karena selain jam kerja yang cukup panjang, waktu tersebut semakin pendek karena saya juga harus menghadapi kemacetan kota Jakarta setiap hari.


539 Repotnya menyesuaikan jadwal pumping dengan pertemuan-pertemuan, terkadang membuat Lira stres. Tapi, ia juga sering dapat memotivasi karyawan-karyawan perempuan yang memiliki bayi untuk melakukan hal sama. Karyawannya pun sering berkonsultasi pada Lira mengenai ASI.

... Sementara itu, Danie Sulistio, Marketing dan Public Relation The Apartment, sebuah restoran, mengaku karena jam kerja yang tidak pasti, ia harus memompa susu kapan pun. Termasuk di bangku belakang mobil di sela-sela perjalanan kerja atau di toilet kantor: ‘Mungkin, karena saya stres dan lelah, produksi ASI saya sering kali tidak cukup, jadi saya sering meminta tambahan dari teman-teman yang juga sedang menyusui,’ jelas Danie.

the self-awareness to balance those two responsibilities, especially for the sake of their children, not their husband.

When Danie Sulistio asks her friends to share their breastmilk because her breastmilk production is not enough, she brings out the issue of breastmilk sharing as maternal responsibility. According to Shaw, historically the exchange of breastmilk was not uncommon: it was usually done through wet nursing, when a woman breastfed another woman’s child, cross-nursing, when women shared their breastmilk for each other’s babies, and breastmilk donation, when women donate their breastmilk, usually to human milk banking.\(^{540}\) As breastmilk was seen as a ‘precious gift’, therefore there was no question about payment in the sharing of breastmilk.\(^{541}\) However, Shaw says that in contemporary society, where the relationship between a mother and her baby is conceptualised as private and intensive, practices such as wet nursing and cross-nursing are considered to threaten the privacy and exclusiveness of the mother-child bond.\(^{542}\) Shaw also argues that breastfeeding another woman’s baby could result in psycho-social anxiety because breastmilk is given directly from women’s body parts, which are considered sexual, through intimate bodily contact.\(^{543}\) As breastmilk is highly valued for its benefit for infants’ health and also the mothers’, breastmilk donation becomes the preferred option to supply breastmilk to babies who need it. Breastmilk donation is preferable because the woman does not come into bodily contact when she gives the breastmilk to other women’s babies. However, the practice of breastmilk donation done by Danie Sulistio in the excerpt above leaves a question about the safety of this donated breastmilk. In countries such as North America, Europe, Australia and South Africa,\(^{544}\)

\(^{541}\)Ibid.
\(^{542}\)Ibid., 84.
\(^{543}\)Ibid., 84.
the breastmilk donation is managed by Human Milk Banking to guarantee donor milk screening and processing. In Indonesia, the safety of breastmilk donation is still the responsibility of the individuals involved in the breastmilk sharing, i.e. the mothers.

In general, the representations of women balancing their work and home responsibilities are similar in Australian and Indonesian editions. From the excerpts, we can see that women have to leave their public work and stay at home when they have children. Although they can work from home, they are still primarily responsible for the care of their children. The Australian women’s stories do not mention child care services offered by the market; similarly the Indonesian women’s stories do not address the presence of domestic workers who are commonly found in middle-class families.

The excerpts also show that balancing work and home is difficult, so if women do not want to juggle the responsibilities of work and home, they have to stay single and childless. Either as mothers or single women, the magazines represent women as individuals who make their own choices in taking different paths of life. Using McRobbie’s idea, these women’s choices are the result of female individualisation. As I mentioned in the introductory chapter, McRobbie draws the idea of female individualisation from Beck’s and Beck-Gernsheim’s discussion about women and individualisation. As a result of education and financial independence, these women exercise agency by setting their own life and career plans. They are independent and capable of making their own living. However, unlike McRobbie’s claim that female individualisation frees women from gender-fixed roles, the women in these excerpts are still bound to the demands and pressures of prior traditions of gendered work in separate spheres for the middle class. Their attachment to gendered work limits these women’s choices since they take domestic responsibilities into consideration when they make

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545 See McRobbie, The Aftermath of Feminism, 18–19.
choices. The women’s magazines’ emphasis on the idea of women as individuals who choose their own lives and face the consequences of their own choices seems to overlook the obligation of industry and government to provide support for women with families, at least in the form of working policy, as discussed by Probert.  

**Celebrity as supermom: ‘Having it all’**

With regard to women and work, it is interesting to discuss how celebrities are portrayed as ideal women who can balance domestic and work responsibilities. Celebrity as supermom is seen as women’s personal success both in Australian and Indonesian editions of *Cosmopolitan, Cleo* and *Marie Claire*. Celebrity has long been known in the media as having the power to disseminate visibility and publicity. According to Berlanstein, the representation of women celebrities evolved from *femme fatales* to proper women whose achievements outside the home were accepted as legitimate. The changes are the result of changes within culture as well as an attempt to attract different groups of readers. With regard to celebrities’ role as a model for the fans, Berlanstein says that celebrities’ success, fame and glamour attract the public to seek personal knowledge about them. Then the celebrities become ‘intimate strangers’ to fans. They come to embody fans’ dreams for distinction and glamour in a success-oriented culture, especially for people with little status but hopes for more.

Celebrities can indeed change things and fill us with powerful inclinations and cravings. In his discussion of celebrity, Rojek mentions mass media as a key principle in the creation of celebrity culture. He says that celebrity is often represented as magical or superhuman, a representation which is comprehensively staged for the public eye. Celebrity provides monumental images of elevation and magic. In this staged activity

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548 Berlanstein, “Historicizing and Gendering Celebrity Culture”, 66.
the celebrity puts on a ‘front’ or ‘face’ as the public presentation of self and keeps a significant portion of the self in reserve. The celebrity’s ‘front’ or ‘face’ is constructed and presented to an imaginary public face. As a cultural fabrication, celebrity often involves a split between a private self and public self because wearing a ‘front’ is the inescapable condition of celebrity. They are constructed by ‘cultural intermediaries’ such as agents, publicists, marketing personnel, promoters, photographers, fitness trainers, wardrobe staff, cosmetics experts and personal assistants who concoct the public presentation of celebrity personalities that will result in an enduring appeal for the audience of fans.⁵⁵⁰

Rojek says that as media play an important role in everyday personal interaction, media can make celebrities become role models.⁵⁵¹ He states that celebrities are symbols of material success that attract fans through the fantasy and desire they offer like wealth and luxury. Rojek says that celebrities are often perceived to live in a different world, so they can do things common people can only dream about. He regards celebrity culture as a culture of faux ecstasy because it is based on staged authenticity. According to Marshall, celebrity as role model is influenced by the concept of individualisation, by offering the idea that individuals can achieve whatever they want.⁵⁵² Marshall considers celebrities as a representation of excellent independent individuals because they represent the possibility and potential to make a change and transformation only by having a ‘will’ to do that.⁵⁵³ However, Rojek argues that today celebrity also often involves the transgression of ordinary moral rules such as excessive conspicuous consumption, drug abuse, alcohol addiction, and violence. The act of transgressing moral values may degrade the idealised image of the celebrity in the eyes of the public, but as celebrities they can do whatever they like and then go through what

⁵⁵⁰Rojek, Celebrity, 11.
⁵⁵¹Ibid., 93.
⁵⁵³Marshall, Celebrity and Power, 246.
Rojek calls a ‘redemption processes’. In this process the celebrities ask for forgiveness from the audience for their negative behaviour or ask the audience to understand their weaknesses.

In the Indonesian context, celebrities and their roles in the audience’s/readers’ lives has been paid little scholarly attention, even though the celebrities and their stories are a very significant part of contemporary popular culture in Indonesia. Yulianto studied popular television programs called ‘infotainment’ which contains celebrity gossip.\textsuperscript{554} Yulianto found that female viewers in Jakarta and Yogyakarta considered celebrity gossip, which became a daily subject of conversation, a source of information.\textsuperscript{555} Yulianto argues that the celebrity programs offer the instant pleasure of escapism and fill an emotional gap for Indonesians who are under social and economic pressure.\textsuperscript{556} While celebrity gossip is escapism, there is no information about the influence of the representation of the celebrities on the viewers.

One important representation of celebrities in these women’s magazines is as a supermom: a mother who can balance her public and domestic lives. The excerpt below shows an Indonesian female celebrity who combines her work and child care by taking her children to work and educating them by having them watch her work.

Whatever she does: from working on a documentary about marginal people, a film about a \textit{trans-gender superhero}, or simply taking her child to the filming location, she has her own mission. As a person, Nia is concerned about the issue of women and marginal groups. As a film-worker, she raises those issues to the wide screen to open people’s eyes. As a mother, she wants to show this reality to her two children so they do not lose their empathy.\textsuperscript{557}


\textsuperscript{555} Yulianto, “Consuming Gossip”, 135.

\textsuperscript{556} Ibid., 139.

\textsuperscript{557} \textit{Apa pun yang dilakukannya: dari menggarap dokumenter soal kaum marjinal, film cerita tentang superhero yang transgender, atau sekadar mengajak anak ke lokasi syuting, ia punya misi tersendiri. Sebagai pribadi, Nia concern pada masalah perempuan dan kaum marjinal. Sebagai pekerja film, ia mengangkatkedua isu itu ke layar lebar untuk membuka mata banyak orang. Sebagai ibu, ia ingin memperlihatkan realita itu pada kedua anaknya agar mereka tidak kehilangan empati. Sherly Puspita, “Nia Dinata: Woman on a Mission” \textit{Marie Claire Indonesia}, July 2010, 70.}
The more common coverage is the use of international celebrities as models, as can be seen in the excerpt about how Elle Macpherson arranges her very busy work schedule in order to be able to take care of her children, and how she performs her responsibility as a mother:

A few months later, the glamour of the catwalk has been swapped for the reality of the school run and a load of work commitments that include lingerie venture Elle Macpherson Intimates and her skin care range, The Body; spokesmodel roles with Invisible Zinc sunscreen and Revlon and her role as executive producer/host of Britain’s Next Top Model (BNTM)

As she weaves her car through busy London streets with sons Flynn, 12, and Cy, 7, in tow, Mcpherson describes a schedule that would spin the head of a military tactician. ‘The schedule for the boys’ parenting time is set for the year so we know exactly who has the boys when,’ she says of her ex-partner, French Financier Arpad ‘Arki’ Busson. ‘I then make my business and travel arrangements around the schedule. When the boys are with their dad, I can travel, work in the studio and have appointments. When I have the boys—which is the majority of the time—I just do everything like a normal working mother.’

Of all the adjectives appended to Macpherson over the years, ‘normal’ does not rank highly. Take a typical day on Planet Elle: ‘[I am] up at 5.30am. I get the boys up by 6. We leave the house for school by 7.30 and I am back home by 9. Then I go to the gym if I can or go for a run, and then I start taking appointments in my office or go to work in the studio. I am back by 4pm from the school run and then the boys have homework and evening activities. They go to bed at nine and at around 9.30 I start doing office work before I go to bed. You can see now why I look forward to the weekend.’

But it doesn’t explain her professional juggling act. ‘The thing is, all of my business concerns demand that I work in different capacities at different times. For example, when I am in front of the camera shooting Britain’s Next Top Model, it’s full-on. Then there are periods when I have to concentrate on Elle Macpherson Intimates: designing the collection, presenting to the buyers, coming up with the concepts for advertising campaigns.’

In the excerpt we can see that Elle Macpherson has more than one profession. She is a model, an executive producer, a host of a program, a designer and a marketer. She is also a mother of two children. Despite all the work, she claims that she just does ‘everything like a normal working mother’. With so much work to do, including taking care of her children, scheduling Macpherson’s activities could really ‘spin the head of a military tactician’. The most important message sent by the magazine is that despite her

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very busy schedule, Elle Macpherson manages to do everything without experiencing emotional turmoil or having a nervous breakdown or becoming a ‘super-mess’, as expressed by Butler: ‘At the end of almost every day, I fall into bed feeling more like a super-mess than a Supermom, having neglected my work for pressing child-care concerns or my kids for a looming deadline or, without fail, my house’. As Rojek noted, celebrity is often represented as superhuman; in Macpherson’s story, it is the magazine which points out that she does not live a normal life. The magazine presents Macpherson as a perfect model of an individual. In Marshal’s words, she is an excellent independent individual who can do anything and everything. In Macpherson’s story, she does not mention child care, a nanny or any other people who help her to take care of the children. She also does not mention the presence of domestic workers who do the housework for her although she also does not say anything about doing the domestic work herself. In the article, Macpherson is represented as a woman who takes all the responsibility by herself. She offers a dream of luxury, wealth and success and at the same time she offers a dream of the possibility to balance the work and home.

Celebrities represented in women’s magazines include successful women in any sector such as business, sport, education—they are not just film stars, performers or models. Similar to movie stars or models, they are represented as successful women who can manage to balance their work and home responsibilities. The excerpt below is taken from an article about a successful Indonesian woman. She works for an international company and is one of the most highly paid professionals in Indonesia. The excerpt shows that no matter how busy she is, she still manages to drive her children to school and read them bedtime stories. Her closeness with her children is shown in the excerpt when her sons freely came to her and kiss her when they come back from going out. The excerpt also mentions that Ira usually dedicates her Sunday

fully to her family. Therefore, she seems to have sacrificed her time with her family when she agreed to be interviewed on Sunday.

She is Ira Noviarti, Marketing manager Skin Care Unilever Indonesia Co. Ltd., the woman behind the fast development of skin care products which have become the ‘friends’ of many Indonesian women, to enable them to look impressively beautiful and to be concerned about progress in thinking about women. Her success has enabled her to become a member of the ‘expensive professional’ group, of which only a few members are women. And starting effectively from 1 November 2010, she has been preparing herself to enjoy the invitation and new experience as the Ice Cream Director of Unilever Indonesia Co. Ltd.

... The meeting with Marie Claire Indonesia happened at the end of September 2010 on a Sunday. The time she usually dedicates fully to her family. The photo session was done in her most private room, in the house which she interior-decorated herself. When the photo session began, her husband, and children Aghy Arya Papilaya, 10 years old, and Naraya Maheswara Putra Papilaya, 5 years old, were in a mall in South Jakarta. At the beginning of the photo session, the woman who was born on 28 November 1972, looked nervous and less than relaxed. ‘I often feel nervous when my picture is taken,’ she said. But when she was asked to talk about her work, her expression immediately relaxed, she looked happier and her laugh was freer. One could definitely feel that she loved her job very much.

... When the photo session was almost ended, her husband and children came home. Both of her sons freely came to their mother and kissed her cheek. Despite her busy work, Ira always takes the time to drive her sons to school. At night, her sons willingly wait for their mother to read them bedtime stories. One could definitely feel that she really loved her sons.

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Ia adalah Ira Noviarti, Marketing manager Skin Care PT. Unilever Indonesia Tbk., perempuan yang berada di balik pesatnya perkembangan produk-produk kecantikan kulit yang menjadi ‘sahabat’ banyak perempuan Indonesia untuk tampil cantik mengesankan, tetapi juga memiliki kepedulian khusus terhadap kemajuan berpikir perempuan. Kesusksesan pencapaiannya mengantarkan ia ke dalam kelompok ‘profesional mahal’ yang jumlah perempuan dalam kelompok tersebut masih sedikit. Dan efektif mulai 1 November 2010 ini, dirinya sedang bersiap menikmati undangan dan pengalaman baru sebagai Ice Cream Director PT. Unilever Indonesia Tbk. ...


Boedi Basuki, “Ira Noviarti: Seri Mengabaikan Kelelahan,” Marie Claire Indonesia, November,
Interestingly, Ira’s success is measured not only by her success in balancing career and family but also from the consumption of consumer goods. This is not mentioned in the text but is shown through the pictures that accompany the article. We can see from the picture in figure 5.1 the books she likes to read, the bag she has, the shoes she wears, the places she has travelled to, the gadgets she uses and the food she consumes. This is reminiscent of the gadgets and symbols of modernity mentioned by Sen as accoutrements of the iconomic modern Indonesian woman. The glamour of Ira Noviarti’s life is not explicitly mentioned in the article but is shown by the pictures. These consumer goods are the symbols of her success, since the products she has are international brand products, the food she consumes is international cuisine and the travel she does is overseas travel. By showing consumer goods to mark her success, she indirectly endorses the products by creating the image of how a successful woman looks and what goods she should possess.

In general, the excerpt shows that Ira Noviarti can successfully balance her work and home responsibilities. She can effectively manage her time at work and her time at home. Unlike the middle-class women in Carla Jones’ study, Noviarti does not seem to experience stress in serving her husband and children. Her story does not mention the presence of domestic servants who are typically present in upper and middle-class households in Java. At the same time, as in the article about Elle Macpherson, Noviarti does not mention doing the housework herself. As suggested by Sen, the presence of domestic workers in Indonesia who do the housework is the factor that enables Indonesian professional working women to have a career.⁵⁶¹ Here, as a celebrity, Noviarti can individually do things that other people can only dream of. She is the symbol of material success and an ideal mother who is suitable as a role model.

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⁵⁶¹See Sen, “Indonesian Women at Work” 45.
Similar to the Indonesian editions, Australian editions also portray female public celebrities as figures who do their jobs successfully and love their families. The excerpt from an article about Anna Bligh, then Premier of Queensland, and her work during the Queensland floods in 2011 shows a similar representation. Bligh is represented as giving high priority to seeing her son by ‘diverting her car after receiving a message from him’ despite her hectic schedule. The magazine shows that she managed not to neglect her family responsibilities while doing her work:

2.44 pm Back in the car, Bligh checks her Blackberry. There’s a message from her 17-year-old son, Oliver. He’s checking out floodwaters just a few streets away. She diverts the car and pulls up as Oliver wanders along the footpath with a mate. She hops out and hugs him. They chat for a moment, and then she’s back in the car. ‘That was an unscheduled stop,’ says Bligh. ‘I didn’t want to miss the opportunity to see him—I haven’t seen him for three days’. The thin sliver of family life dissolves on the drive back to EMQ, as Bligh is briefed about the worsening situation in Goondiwindi, and informed that reservoirs in the Lockyer Valley are running low on water.\textsuperscript{562}

The excerpts show that children are more important than husbands in the discourse of women’s work and home in women’s magazines. Husbands are not named, and women are shown as going out of their way to attend to their children but not their husbands. In

\textsuperscript{562}Craig Henderson, “Queensland Flood Exclusive: 24 Hours on the Frontline with Anna Bligh,” \textit{Marie Claire Australia}, March, 2011, 36–42.
this discourse, women are the focus and they are assumed to have the full support of their husbands or ex-husbands to balance their lives.

According to Campo, the celebrities in the excerpts conform to the discourse of ‘having it all’.\(^{563}\) She explains that the promise of ‘having it all’ is:

...the promise that women could take on the role of ‘career woman’ (never just ‘worker’) without having to sacrifice either their femininity (they could still wear a skirt to the office and still be taken seriously) or their desire to have children (who could be fitted in between promotions and cared for by other ‘child carers’—never by their father). The idea was that women, no longer confined to domesticity, could simply take on the new roles opened up to them by feminism without relinquishing their old ones, and by working hard and organising well, women could have the ultimate trifecta of career, children and marriage, and retain their femininity, their primary role as mothers, their feminist belief in the equality of women, and their right to economic and social independence.\(^{564}\)

Campo argues that the idea of ‘having it all’ was more ‘at home’ in women’s magazines than in feminist discourse and it created more problems than solutions. She claims that instead of ‘having it all’, feminists believed that women could not ‘have it all’ because to ‘have it all’, women would have to overwork, which is one of the causes of women’s oppression. She also points out that the discourse of ‘having it all’ excludes the experience of working-class women who rarely have a choice about ‘doing it all’ because they just have to combine their paid and domestic work.\(^{565}\) She then explains that the actual demand of second-wave feminism in Australia was to give women more access to the traditional male workplace. Without men’s integration into the domestic domain, by sharing the responsibility for childrearing and housework, women’s integration into the sphere of paid work would not improve women’s lot. What happens now is that the public sphere is open for women but the responsibility of the private sphere is also put on women’s shoulders.

\(^{563}\) Campo, “‘Having It All’ Or ‘Had Enough’?”

\(^{564}\) Ibid., 64.

\(^{565}\) Ibid., 65.
The idea of ‘having it all’ is a distorted idea of the ideal condition of women’s lives yet, as suggested by Campo, this idea is easily found in the magazines. The magazines provide the readers with the idea of an ‘ideal’ mother represented by celebrities. The magazine’s discourse of self-help gives a way to the readers to model the successful women in arranging their domestic and work responsibilities. As role models, the celebrities are desired by the readers since they symbolise material success as well as a heroic model of ‘ideal’ mother. The life of the celebrity represented in the magazines is actually a staged life—that is, the celebrity’s public face—the authenticity of which can be doubted. For example, the excerpts about Nia Dinata and Ira Noviarti do not mention the presence of domestic servants in their household though typical middle-class families in Java usually have one or more servants. Dinata’s and Noviarti’s stories show that in order to represent celebrities as role models who can balance their work and home responsibilities, the magazines ignore the presence of their domestic servants. To convince the readers of the authenticity of the celebrities’ stories, the story about their family is often included in the narrative. In the excerpt about Ira Noviarti, we can see that she usually dedicates her Sundays to her family. The mention of the family brings the fantasy closer to reality, since ‘family’ for the celebrity usually represents the reserved self, which is away from public consumption. Additionally, as someone who the readers know, like and have confidence in, the celebrity offers assurance like an intimate friend does. In this case the assurance is about the possibility of balancing work and domestic responsibility so that women can ‘have it all’.

Conclusion

Despite the usual focus of women’s magazines on women in the domestic sphere, *Cosmopolitan, Cleo* and *Marie Claire* published in Australia and Indonesia pay more attention to women in the public workplace. In Australian and Indonesian editions, women are similarly associated more with the workplace than with the domestic sphere.
Female individualisation results in the occurrence of self-help discourse in the articles about women and the workplace, particularly in the Indonesian editions. This discourse creates a fantasy that women can do all things by themselves and can help themselves to be successful in their work. A slight difference can be seen in the way the magazines represent the problems and solutions for women who experience unequal payment, discrimination, and violence at work. While Indonesian editions excessively employ the discourse of self-help, the Australian editions also relate the problems to the structure of work and legislation. By applying the self-help discourse as a way to tackle working problems, Indonesian editions offer more fantasy than reality.

In these magazines, women are not only associated with the workplace but they are also portrayed as mobile. Women represented as workers in these magazines are voluntary travellers who move freely and independently from smaller cities to big cities or from one country to another. They belong to the urban middle-class group who travel for reasons of pursuing their career and experiencing different lifestyles, not for economic reasons. They search for new experiences, new environments, new people, new cultures and a brighter future. In both Indonesian and Australian editions, these women are represented as independent, capable of taking care of themselves and not being bound to their families. With regard to women and home, the magazines present balancing work and domestic responsibilities as the main problem faced by women in Indonesia and Australia. These responsibilities are seen as constraints to career and freedom. Therefore, women are left with choices: get married but have no child, give up work and stay home as a full-time mother, or keep both the career and family regardless of the consequences. In representing women and their responsibilities, the magazines do not address culturally-specific contexts. The magazines do not talk about formal childcare services in Australia or domestic workers in Indonesia. Instead, these magazines promote the idea of ‘having it all’, where women as individuals can easily
balance work and domestic responsibilities. The idea of ‘having it all’ can be seen very clearly in the articles about celebrities with families. These celebrities are represented as supermoms who can smoothly balance both responsibilities. These celebrities supply a fantasy to the readers by providing a false assurance that balancing work and domestic responsibilities is definitely possible.
Chapter 6  Travel for Leisure

Travel sections appear regularly in Indonesian editions of *Cosmopolitan, Marie Claire* and *Cleo*. *Cosmopolitan* Indonesia has ‘Cosmo Travel’, *Marie Claire* Indonesia has ‘Destination’ and ‘On Location’ and *Cleo* Indonesia has ‘Getaway’. Similar sections are also covered by Australian editions but they do not appear as regularly as those in Indonesian editions. *Australian Cosmopolitan* has ‘Cosmo Travel’ and *Marie Claire* has ‘City Guide’ or ‘Travel’. In general, Indonesian and Australian editions of these magazines present travel stories similarly. They use personal narratives to describe holiday destinations and the activities people do during a holiday. The destinations are mostly overseas but even when the destination is a local tourist sight, the activities are relatively the same. The travellers do sightseeing, shopping, consume local beverages and food, go to the destination’s favourite places, or do the activity specific to the destination such as sunbathing on the beach or trekking in mountainous areas.

At first I thought there was nothing significant that I could use to discuss cultural differences in travel stories. It was after I read Jordan’s article about the beach body that I realised that as an Indonesian I did not associate the beach body with the idea of travel. My idea of travel, and I believe many Indonesians’ idea of travel, does not include the displaying of our bodies. Later, reading Rojek’s concept of indexing and dragging made me understand that people’s understanding about the holiday depends on their personal and cultural backgrounds including the representations people learn from the media. Rojek’s concept of indexing includes the process of people storing the representations they see about tourist sights or holiday activities from sources like mass media into an index. These representations help people to familiarise themselves with the tourist sights they have not seen and the holiday activities they have not done. Later, when these people go for a holiday, they will drag the representations into real life by
using them as models for their holiday activities. In the case of the beach body, I found that the beach body represents the idea of travel for Australians. As a beach body is a body ready to display in public, it is also attached to the idea of disciplining bodies. So, the beach body in the Australian context has a complex meaning.

The concept of beach body is also found in Indonesian editions, but I did not use its representation to discuss women and travel in Indonesia since Indonesians do not associate the beach body with the idea of travel. Instead, I analyse the travel stories of Indonesian women. Sommer’s concept of four dimensions of narrativity, particularly in public narrative, helps me discuss the travel stories. Public narrative is comprised of the existing stories in a wider community which are shared amongst people living in the same place. I compare Indonesian women’s travel stories with public narratives about the holiday in Indonesia.

My chapter, then, aims to explore the way the magazines represent Australian and Indonesian women in association with travel for leisure. In Australian magazines, I focus my discussion on the image of the beach body. I explore the way women’s magazines use the beach body to promote an idea about the holiday and its activities. I argue that the beach body represents the holiday, wealth, healthiness, the act of body display and the act of disciplining the body. Since beach body has a complex meaning, the beach, which serves as the background, also has multiple meanings. On this point, I argue that as the background of the beach body, the beach’s original value as a tourist sight which offers different holiday activities is reduced to a place to display the body and a place to have sexual encounters. In their relation to commercial products, I look at the representation of the beach body and the beach in the advertisements. I try to show that the complex meanings of the beach body and the beach are simplified by the advertisements to sell commercial products.

In the second part I explore travel stories found in the travel section in
Indonesian editions of *Cosmopolitan, Cleo* and *Marie Claire*. I focus my discussion on travel articles written in the form of personal narrative including the advertorial, a personal narrative which has promotional content. I choose to concentrate on personal narrative because it is self-constructed based on one’s experience. It shows how the narrators, the women narrators, represent themselves and the holiday from their point of view. I will discuss the way women represent themselves as tourists by taking different positions in their personal narratives and link the narrators’ personal narratives with public narratives. It is possible that an analysis of the travel stories published in Australian editions of the same magazines would produce the same result; however, a difference could be seen when the personal narratives in Indonesian editions are compared to the public narratives about the holiday and travel. Limited capital and opportunities for Indonesians to enjoy holidays, especially overseas holidays, and the restrictions for women to travel in some regions affect the public narratives of the holiday. I argue that while the holiday is seen as a moment of empowerment by the narrators of the travel stories, the travel stories themselves are fantasy and dreams for most Indonesians. However, travel stories shared by women writers may also inspire the readers to travel, so they can also be considered as empowerment for the readers.

**Representations of the holiday, and indexing and dragging**

The holiday in tourism imagery is represented as ‘a site of freedom and fantasy where ‘norms’ are suspended’.\(^{566}\) It is a time when people escape from their ordinary lives and do things they do not usually do at home. As tourists, people travel to visit and see tourist sights. They stay there and enjoy activities different from those of home. Tourist sights are under the social category of ‘extraordinary place’ as opposed to

'ordinary/everyday place’. Tourist sights are important elements in tourism industries.

According to Rojek, tourist sights are socially constructed. He argues that ‘myth and fantasy play an unusually large role in the social construction of all travel and tourist sights’. Tourist sights are usually physically distant from one’s ordinary place of living. In Urry’s opinion, travel to physically distant places involves the notion of ‘departure’ where one is disengaged from the established routines and practices of everyday life. The distance between tourist sights and one’s local place creates unfamiliarity with the new places which in turn produces speculations and fantasy. These speculations and fantasy are based on personal understanding and experience about travel as an activity which sometimes is also influenced by one’s cultural background. Every speculation and fantasy of each person creates a certain representation about what a tourist sight should be and what a tourist should do in that particular place. Urry says that people produce this understanding through the tourist gaze. He points out that the places gazed upon are usually not connected with work, offering anticipated daydreams and the fantasy of intense pleasure, and are separated from everyday experience. He says that the tourist gaze varies by society, by social group and by historical period.

Rojek makes an interesting analogy about the representation produced by the tourist gaze. He says that each representation is like a file. When people go to a tourist sight, they place their gaze upon that sight. People have their own understanding and interpretation about tourist sights depending on their personal and cultural backgrounds. When people represent their personal understandings and experiences about the tourist sights in the form of signs, symbols and images, they create a file. The files created are

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570 Urry, The Tourist Gaze,2–3.
shared with other people through personal stories, magazines, television, the internet and any other media. When the audience sees or hears those representations, they actually start to arrange the files into an index. The act of indexing the representations of a tourist sight produces a collection of files on that particular tourist sight. The index of representations helps the audience to feel familiar with the tourist sight. So, the tourist gaze produces signs, symbols and images which make up an index of representations that familiarises audiences with distant tourist sights.

After the indexing of representations, Rojek introduces the process of dragging. Dragging refers to the combination of elements from separate files of representation to create a new value. The new values are promoted through tourist marketing, advertising, cinema and travellers’ tales. According to Rojek, dragging operates at both conscious and unconscious levels. He gives the example of the Schindler’s List tour, a tour to the setting of Spielberg’s film Schindler’s List in Kazimierz. The tourist marketing consciously dragged the cinematic event in the film into a real landscape to attract tourists. By watching the film, people were able to see Kazimierz before they actually visited it.

Rojek argues that the process of indexing and dragging will make people have expectations about what they are going to see as tourists and what they might experience as tourists. Those expectations are not always satisfactorily fulfilled as there are often anti-climatic experiences termed ‘tourist denial’ which make people feel disappointed when they see the sight for themselves. This unsatisfied and disappointed feeling will not be experienced by people who only consume the tourist sights in the media because the media wrap tourist sights/holidays glamorously and all glamorous representations are forever satisfying. Rojek also makes a point here that in doing the

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573 Ibid., 54.
indexing and dragging process, an individual is actually participating actively in the process, they are not passive dupes and not victims.

The process of indexing and dragging shows how subjective people’s understanding about tourist sights is and that the representation of tourist sights consists of factual and fictional elements. So, tourist sights are actually social constructions produced by conscious and unconscious processes of indexing and dragging. Rojek says that the distorted and fabricated representation of tourist sights is very common now in the media where fiction elements and the reality are very difficult to separate. This artificial representation of tourist sights in the media challenges the main assumptions in the literature on tourism that travel is primarily motivated by a quest for authenticity. According to Rojek, authenticity cannot be found because what we search for when we become tourists is just the representations of that culture which are the mix between reality and fantasy. The most important reason for travelling is not to search for authenticity but to distract oneself from one’s daily routines.

**Benjamin’s phantasmagoria**

In this section, I will look into Rojek’s interpretation of Benjamin’s phantasmagoria to explain tourism as a capitalist commodity. This discussion helps to explain the representations of travel/holidays in women’s magazine advertisements. Benjamin characterises the culture of capitalism as a ‘phantasmagoria’. Rojek defines this term loosely as ‘the dreamworld of commodity capitalism’. He explains that Benjamin’s concept of phantasmagoria consists of two elements. The first element is ‘the Surrealist reading of the fantasy content of everyday life’. Benjamin says that ‘The market is not only the show place for commodities, it is also the material register of our inner

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575 Ibid.
fantasies and dreams’. Using this definition, Rojek argues that tourism is an example of the phantasmagoria of capitalism. Escape experiences as commodities are sold as a package in tourism. This package is presented by advertisements as a product that can be bought easily whenever people want to escape from their daily routines.

The second element is related to Benjamin’s concept of aura. In relation to tourism, Rojek argues that an object has an aura which has a magnetic power to attract people to see the object by themselves. Rojek says that tourists do not necessarily have to lay hands on an object in a tourist sight to verify its reality, they can ‘touch’ the auratic object by standing beside it, seeing it and taking a photograph of the object. According to Rojek, Benjamin argues that the power and the meaning of auratic objects weaken as a result of the density and velocity of their representations. The accessibility of the object as the result of mass production is the first factor which weakens the auratic object. Technology enables things that are physically distant to become near. People can watch a tourist sight anytime through media such as the internet. Once an object becomes readily and effortlessly accessible, it loses its authority as auratic object. The second factor is duplication. Rojek says that the processes of indexing and dragging substitute the original objects with secondary images, values and associations thus making the original object lose its original meaning. The duplication lessens the unique manifestation of an auratic object. The third one is that the technology of mass production makes the representation closer to everyday life. Representations of the object are easier to access than the reality. In this position, the traditional quest for authenticity when someone visits a tourist sight is substituted with the reproduced objects, packaged events and other manipulated stimulants.

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576 Ibid., 58.
577 I also use Walter Benjamin’s concept of aura in my discussion about tips on sexuality as popular ars erotica in chapter 3.
578 Ibid.
With respect to tourism, Rojek argues that Benjamin’s work implies that an actual visit is no longer necessary to experience tourist sights. Rojek says that people do not have to actually travel to experience travel, as physical travelling to the sights is substituted by representational travelling. He also points out that technology, particularly computer technology, even provides the viewer with more extraordinariness of tourist sights as it may magnify features of the sight, penetrate the surface and examine the sight from all angles.\(^ {579}\) However, artificial visits of tourist sights offered by representational travelling actually cannot replace real travelling. Although the artificial visit may offer more features and angles of a tourist sight to see, it strips the sights of the distraction of physical experiences such as unwanted crowds, of having to stick to timetables, hustlers and hawkers.

**The beach body**

The representation of women as ‘beach bodies’ is mostly found in Australian editions of *Cosmopolitan, Marie Claire* and *Cleo*. They represent the idea of travel and holiday where travel is addressed through images. In Australian magazines, beach bodies usually come in combination with beaches or exotic places as a backdrop in cosmetic or fashion advertisements and as illustrations in the health and holiday sections. Particularly in advertisements, there are three main elements that can be found: they are the beach body, the beach/exotic places and the product. Before discussing the beach body in the magazines, I will discuss women as consumers of the holiday, particularly women’s bodies represented by beach bodies which often occur in women’s magazines. I will discuss Jordan’s work on the beach body.

The beach is one of four standard attractions in tourist industries along with the hotel, monuments and wilderness.\(^ {580}\) According to Fiske, the beach is a place between

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land and sea which is ‘neither one nor the other but has characteristics of both’. The mixed characteristics, Fiske argues, make the beach have many potential meanings. Put between the opposition of the land as culture, the civilised, and the sea as nature, the uncivilised, the beach mediates these two by presenting itself as nature but with cultural restrictions. The examples of cultural restrictions can be seen in the signs found on the beach such as ‘no dogs’, ‘no nude bathing’ and ‘no vehicles’. As a tourist sight, the beach is an extraordinary space where one is cut off from daily routines. Rojek says that the beach is associated with relaxation and rest, with sunbathing as the main activity. Its popularity is shown through postcards, advertisements, television programs and brochures on holidays which capture people doing leisure things like sunbathing, surfing and swimming. The beach is also a part of the imaginary Australia where it is portrayed as the sight of freedom and pleasure signifying the best about the Australian way of life. However, the beach is also represented as a place where semi-nudity is accepted by presenting it as a place of displaying women’s bodies as objects of social surveillance and as a place of sexual encounter. The beach as a place for displaying the body and sexual possibility is represented in mass media with photographs and images of the beach body.

Sun, sand and sea are the formula of favourite tourist destinations. Daye states that the coastal landscape is so predominant in descriptions about holidays in the Caribbean that even the non-coastal landscape is described as a recreational place using beach imagery of sun, sand and sea. She gives an example where a travel writer

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(University of Glasgow, 1991), vii.
582 Fiske, *Reading the Popular*, 45.
585 Rojek and Urry, *Transformations of Travel and Theory*, 18; Fiske, *Reading the Popular*, 52.
587 Marcella Daye, “Mediating Tourism: An Analysis of the Caribbean Holiday Experience in the UK
describes the sugar cane ripples as a green tide. The beach as well as places like the Caribbean, the islands, are represented as exotic places. Williamson relates the backdrop of these exotic places with the representation of the colony, the Orient.\textsuperscript{588} The Orient has been represented as ‘a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences’.\textsuperscript{589} According to Williamson, as a representation, the Orient will be represented differently by countries which have less attachment to colonisation such as America and those which closely encountered the experience such as European countries. However, media such as magazines make the idea of the Orient as ‘the other’ accessible to almost everybody in a uniform image of an exotic place. In holiday discourse, the exotic place is the representation of ‘the other’; exotic places of extraordinary experiences which cut people from their ordinariness; a place like a beach where people, especially women, display their bodies in a free and relaxing atmosphere.

Holidays put women into a public space which is different from other public spaces entered by women because holiday destinations are a space which put women under other people’s gazes. Jordan talks about the representation of women’s bodies in the holiday in her discussion of the ‘beach body’ or ‘bikini body’.\textsuperscript{590} She relates it to the concept of body image where the beach body becomes the standard image of what women will look like in the holiday destination. Jordan starts with the understanding that tourism providers use beach bodies as objects of the sexualised gaze. She says that there are three ways women’s bodies are portrayed in the context of the holiday.

The first portrayal is the homogenised ‘beach body’. Here Jordan argues that the ‘beach body’ is culturally constructed to invent and promote idealised femininity. In her study she found that the majority of beach body images found in the lifestyle magazines were ‘female, almost exclusively white, UK clothing size 8–10, slim or thin, toned and

\textsuperscript{588}Williamson, “Women Is an Island,” 99–118.
\textsuperscript{589}Said, Orientalism, 1.
\textsuperscript{590}Jordan, “Life’s a Beach and then We Diet”, 92–108.
sometimes muscular, often tanned’. They are usually in poses of the alluring: passive, sexualised and wearing a swimsuit. The second portrayal is the sexualised beach body. As holidays sometimes also offer the possibility of sexual encounter, the images of the female body are promoted by the magazines as the way to get a successful sexual relationship. The images in the magazines clearly show that a woman with the ideal beach body is a sexually desirable one. The beach becomes the space which offers an opportunity for sexual adventures in some images. The third is the disciplined (bikini boot camp) body. This portrayal gives a message to women that they should do hard work and control themselves to have their body displayed for the tourist gaze on holiday.

In attaining the ideal beach body, women take an active role by engaging in the process of self-surveillance and discipline. Jordan uses Foucault’s conceptualisations of power-knowledge-sexuality to explain the recreation and reinforcement of bodily ideals through self-surveillance. According to Foucault, discourses about the body are articulated through images, text and language. These discourses have the power to create and promote certain sexualities. The idea of the ideal body is coerced by the surveillance gaze of one’s peers. The result is the production of ‘docile’ bodies. One’s body becomes a project of self-surveillance to strive for a certain body image which conforms to established social norms. One then is involved in practices such as diet and exercise. So disciplining the body becomes the objective. With regard to the beach body, Jordan argues that women are led to think that they have to prepare their bodies for public display during the holiday. They have to engage in bodily practices such as waxing, plucking, smoothing, dieting, exercising, conditioning, exfoliating, oiling and fake tanning to conform to the established norms of physical beauty. Women have to discipline their bodies and endure these holiday preparations. She argues that the

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591 Jordan, “Life’s a Beach and then We Diet”, 98.
592 Ibid, 99.
representation of the beach body is very important to shape their understanding about what tourists are and what they are expected to look like and do. The representations are produced as a benchmark, as a guide for the consumers of the magazines. Nonetheless, Jordan says that this kind of representation excludes women who do not have the ‘ideal’ body standard. In this case, Wolf argues that there is pressure for women in modern society to conform to some standard of ideal beauty which is actually a beauty myth because it is so rare: women cannot reach this ideal appearance. Women as ‘beach bodies’ are basically placed outdoor in public spaces with beach and blue sky as background. We learn from the magazines that the woman’s body plays an important role in the representation of beach body for public display in the holiday. Women’s magazines set the standard of the ideal body as well as construct women as the objects of the sexualised gaze of men. Moreover, the celebration of ‘beach body’ by women’s magazines suggests women go through the regime of disciplining their bodies to attain the ideal body to display during the holiday.

The idea about the ideal body to display during the holiday which is implied by the representations of women in the media is not always the actual experience of women. Small works on the experience of Australian women and girls about holidays at different stages of life. The research participants were White, Anglo-Australian, middle-class, heterosexual and able-bodied. She found that a holiday was remembered by her participants as bodily movement, a sensual experience, an emotional experience and bodily appearance. Holidays, according to the participants, gave opportunities for girls and women of all ages to liberate their bodies by doing physical activities that they can never do at home. Based on her findings, Small found that women who saw themselves as the object of others’ gaze were women at the age of 20. That is why at

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594 Small, “The Emergence of the Body in the Holiday Accounts of Women and Girls.”
this age, women consider clothes such as bikinis as a body project. However, Small argues that while it is true that the standard set of beach body may haunt and prevent these women from displaying their bodies in public, the urge to display their bodies is not as important as the activities that they want to do with their body. Women do not care about the gaze, they want body experiences as shown by 40-year-old women who identified holidays as a way to escape exhausted bodies to obtain relaxed ones. It is interesting to note that the women and girls in Small’s study revealed that during the holiday they indulged themselves with food and beverages from different cultures when they had the opportunity to taste them. During the study, there was never a conversation about body health nor was there a conversation about resisting the dominant images of the body. In short, Small’s work proves Jordan’s opinion that the images of beach body exposed by the magazines exclude many women who do not meet the standard of the ideal body as well as exclude the expectations and experiences of women on the holiday.

The beach body and the beach

In the Australian edition of the magazines, the image of beach body can be easily found in combination with the image of beach as the background. As suggested by Jordan, most beach bodies in the magazines are typically represented as White, slim or thin, toned and tanned. I have already discussed in my chapter on beauty that women’s magazines share a general understanding that tanned skin is the representation of wealth and health.

The representation of the beach body as a mark of healthiness can be seen in figure 6.2 where the image of a beach body is used to illustrate an article about health. The title ‘Healthy Sexy Strong’ along with the image gives the idea that the sign of healthiness is looking sexy like the beach body. So, when a woman has a body like a beach body, including the tanned skin, it means that she is healthy. Brabazon in her
discussion about women and fitness says that nowadays good health and an ideal body are counted as a lifestyle. Brabazon notes that magazine industries and fashion industries value fitness highly. However, Brabazon argues that being fit and healthy requires time and money which are only affordable by advantaged women, not working-class women. Brabazon gives the example of women who go to fitness centres. Apart from the cost of joining the fitness centre, most of the women have to juggle their family responsibilities. The limited access of working-class women to money and time limits the opportunity for these women to stay healthy and fit. It can be inferred from Brabazon’s discussion that health is related to the issue of class.

Besides having tanned skin, beach bodies are typically represented in swimsuits, and in alluring and passive positions with the beach as a background as in figure 6.1 and figure 6.3. Similar representations can be found in many advertisements and illustrations found in Australian editions of the women’s magazines. In Rojek’s concept of indexing, the homogenous representation of beach body will create an index of files.

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in the mind of the readers about the beach body, in this case, the image of beach body is stored in the readers’ mind in association with body display during the holiday.

The association of display of the body with the holiday may send wrong messages to the readers. It may create the fantasy about what a tourist should do during the holiday as suggested by Rojek. Displaying the body, then, becomes the fantasised holiday activity. Based on Small’s study of Australian women and their activities during holidays, a holiday is not only about display of the body. Small says that holidays for Australian women are actually about bodily movement like swimming, walking around or climbing. Even when they do activities at the beach, they consider bodily movement such as swimming more important than displaying the body. Other activities these women usually do during the holiday are enjoying food and drinks. However, Small notes that women in their twenties tend to associate holidays with body display and care more about their appearance. The second is to be able to enjoy the holiday; women should have an ideal body like the body in the advertisement. The emphasis of the representation of the beach body on a woman’s body can be seen in figure 6.1 where the

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596 Small, “The Emergence of the Body in the Holiday Accounts of Women and Girls.”
597 Ibid., 83–86.
advertisement only focuses on the body of a woman such that even her head is cut off. As suggested by Jordan, an ideal body for a holiday is a disciplined body which should be worked upon and controlled through diet and exercise. In the discussion about body image in my chapter on beauty, I cite Bordo’s discussion about the female body. 598 Bordo argues that the practice of disciplining the body is actually a kind of gender oppression because many women who discipline their bodies suffer from the idea that their body is not good enough. However, Bordo points out that the disciplining of the body makes these women feel like they are the ‘masters’ of their lives.599

As an ideal body, beach body is also represented as a sexually desirable body. Jordan says that holidays are often represented as providing the possibility for sexual encounters; therefore a woman should prepare her body to be desirable in order to get a successful sexual relationship.600 In figure 6.3, we can see that the beach body is represented in an alluring and sexualised pose to be gazed at by other people, most likely men. In figure 6.4, the presence of a man behind the woman clearly shows that the beach body is represented as an object of male gaze. Similar to my discussion about body image in chapter 4 on beauty, the woman in figure 6.4 seems to prepare her body to be displayed and to be gazed at by men during the holiday.

598 See Bordo, “The Body and the Reproduction of Femininity”.
600 See Jordan, ‘Life’s a Beach and then We Diet”.

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While figure 6.4 only implies that the beach as a holiday sight opens the probability of sexual adventures, figure 6.5 obviously represents the beach as a place of sexual encounter. Using Rojek’s application of Benjamin’s concept of auratic object on tourist sights, we can say that the representation of the beach as a place to display the body and get sexual experiences in the women’s magazines makes the beach lose its aura as a tourist sight. The original value of the beach as a place of holiday which offers many activities such as swimming, surfing and sunbathing is reduced to a place of body display and sexual adventures. When potential tourists who are exposed to those representations visit a beach, they may drag the representations to their real experience as tourists. By regarding the beach as a place to display the body and to have sexual experiences, the real function of a beach as a tourist sight is corrupted.

Interestingly, the representation of beach body as holiday goes further, to the extent that the beach body is also used to represent holidays in tourist sights other than

the beach. Figures 6.6 and 6.7 show that ‘beach’ bodies are portrayed with ‘exotic’ places (and, in the case of figure 6.7, inappropriate places) as backgrounds.

As noted by Williamson, exotic places are associated with the colony, the Orient.⁶⁰² Like a beach, in the holiday discourse, the Orient is represented as an exotic place which offers extraordinary experiences. The combination of the beach body and exotic places once again creates a fantasy of a holiday and reduces holiday experiences and the tourist sight to body display.

**The beach body, the beach and the commercial product**

In the advertisements, the images of beach bodies are used to illustrate the products advertised. When the magazines use images to deliver their messages, the visual becomes the main point in shaping and giving meaning to the images. To explain the way visual images shape and give meaning to advertisements, I will use Crawshaw’s and Urry’s discussion of photography in tourism.⁶⁰³ Their discussion is interesting

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⁶⁰³Carol Crawshaw and John Urry, “Tourism and the Photographic Eye,” in Touring Cultures: Transformations of Travel and Theory, ed. Chris Rojek and John Urry (London and New York:
because it talks about the way images are created in the photographs of tourist sights. They explain that photography reproduces and enhances preferred images to present representations which look entirely accurate. Photographs include selecting, shaping and structuring elements found in the tourist sights to represent a mental dream. The photos sell the combination of the photographer’s dream and what they think as the tourist’s dream. So, tourism photographs are actually culturally constructed. When people see the photographs in travel brochures, postcards and photographs, what they see is actually the collection of sight representations. As a result, Crawshaw and Urry argue, tourists may have superficial experiences when they spend their holiday modelling what they see in the brochure.

In my opinion, advertisements in the magazines are like photographs for tourism. Both are still-images in print and both are works of art which have commercial purposes. While advertisements promote commercial products, tourism photographs offer tourism itself including tourist sights, tourist attractions or activities. Both advertisements and tourism photographs deliberately select, shape and structure images to successfully sell the products. The chosen images should be beautiful and easily recognisable. Although not as much as the images in advertisements, those appearing in tourism photographs are picked up and fabricated to some extent. Crawshaw and Urry give an example of how photographers in the Lake District, Britain, manipulated nature by using certain objects like a fake lawn plastered with flowers or moving twigs that might be obtrusive in the foreground to get better photographs. The photographers also deliberately excluded ‘vehicles, cars or anything that would date a picture’ to create a timeless effect. The photographers hoped that they could get photographs which suited people’s expectations.


604 The Lake District, Britain, is one of the most popular tourist sights in Britain. This place inspired William Wordsworth to write his poem ‘The Daffodills’.

605 Crawshaw and Urry, Tourism and the Photographic Eye, 187.
In the production of advertisements and tourism photographs, the producers choose from the best visual projections of the object. In Rojek’s concept of indexing and dragging, the producers pick up the images from their file of representations, the index, then they drag the representations and put them in the canvas of advertisements or photos. In the case of advertisements, the process of dragging certain files from the index to create new values is supposedly a conscious process as the producer will drag elements which will serve best to advertise the products. In doing so, they will consider the consumers’ expectations and dreams about the product. However, it is possible that the producers drag certain representations unconsciously based on their personal understanding of what they think as the best representation. The conscious and unconscious processes of dragging certain elements is so mixed up that they are difficult to separate. In this way, even when the producers think that they make conscious choices of representation their chosen representations might be based on speculations and fantasy. The chosen representations are reproduced and enhanced to create an end product.

Ballaster et al. state that like other popular culture products, women’s magazines are the commodity to sell to the market as well as the medium for marketing commodities to women, the target readers.606 Women’s magazines use advertisements to market the commodities to their target readers. It is expected that they will market products needed or desired by their target readers such as cosmetics and fashions. The core target readers of Cosmopolitan, Marie Claire and Cleo are between 18 and 35 years old, which means that they are young women. As Small suggested, these women are in the age when they care about others’ gaze,607 therefore they might try to conform to the ideal beauty and body image presented by the magazines such as the beach body.

606Ballaster et al., Women’s Worlds, 2.
607See Small, The Emergence of the Body in the Holiday Accounts of Women and Girls, 84.
Below are two examples of advertisements representing the beach body in *Cleo Australia*:

![Figure 6.8](image1.png)  
**Figure 6.8**  
The beach body and beauty product  
*Cleo Australia*, May 2010, 23

![Figure 6.9](image2.png)  
**Figure 6.9**  
The beach body and fashion product  
*Cleo Australia*, November 2010, 9

Using Rojek’s term, the advertisements which put the beach body, the beach and a product is a file of presentations produced by the creator by combining the elements they intend to show to a canvas. In the making of the advertisements, the producers consider their potential viewers’ expectations of the representations as well as put their own fantasy. The advertisements in figures 6.8 and 6.9 promote commercial products. The first one is an advertisement for perfume and the latter is for fashion. The main elements of these advertisements are the dream and fantasy related to the beach body. The beach body represents the ideal body and the way women are supposed to enjoy their holiday as objects of gaze. Both advertisements are dreamy. They are offering the experience of the holiday by presenting a beach as the landscape. The empty beach in the backdrop emphasises the idea of travel for leisure as a way to escape busy daily routines and ordinariness, to experience the extraordinariness. The beach also represents
a place far from home which can only be visited by wealthy people who can buy long leisure time far from day-to-day lives. The absence of any marker which can point out the exact location of the beach implies that it is an imaginary place. Additionally, there is no marker of time in the advertisements, which creates the effect of timelessness. As images, the advertisements represent Benjamin’s phantasmagoria where the elements of fantasy and dreams of a faraway and timeless beach as well as of escaping from daily routines are presented. The sensual pose of the models presented in figures 6.8 and 6.9 also promises sex as part of the phantasmagoria.

Looking closely at the images of the ‘beach body’ in the advertisements, the models pose alone. They are not under the scrutiny of others’ gaze. They are the objects of the magazine readers’ gaze. When the readers see a photograph, they are going to make an index of the representations they see. The same process happens when people see the image in an advertisement. In his discussion on the way people view images, Burnett argues that an image cannot be separated from media or social contexts. He uses the term vantage point, a concept related to perspective, to explain how people view things differently. He says that there is no single interpretation of the image by the viewer because the viewer has his/her own vantage point from which to understand images found in ordinary life. He says that ‘seeing is an activity of creative engagement with processes of thinking and feeling’ which means the relation between the image and the viewer is not simple. Creativity, viewing, and critical reflection are intersected in the act of seeing the images to create meaning. Burnett gives the example of the images in the photography which are used to construct and maintain the legitimacy of the sight where the photos capture an event but cannot catch the real experience of the event. Therefore, the imagination of the individual viewer is needed to read the events

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608 See Williamson, “Women is an Island”, 99–118.
610 Burnett, How Images Think, 13.
captured in the images. Because the viewers do not have physical contact with the real event, the viewer’s imagination becomes a bridge between the event and the depiction. Burnett calls the process a ‘dynamic daydream’ where the viewers undertake a creative process to read images. This process has the potential of connections and disconnections when the viewers reinvent, visualise, imagine and retell the images.

The viewers’ creative process in reading the advertisements involves indexing and dragging from different resources. Using their imagination, they actively participate in the process of choosing representations that fit their personal view and experiences about holidays. The readers’ understanding of the representations will be dragged later into the real experience. Just like the tourists who have a superficial experience by modelling the type of activities shown in tourism photographs, the viewers of an advertisement could have superficial experiences too. In the case of these advertisements, the viewers may associate holidays with the public display of the ideal body which naturally excludes the experience of many holiday consumers. The viewers’ creative process, as suggested by Burnett, may take further reading of the representations of the beach body by associating the beach body with the act of self-surveillance and disciplining the body, as found in Jordan’s work. The beach body as the icon of travelling is reproduced and duplicated over and over again to represent the ideal body for the holiday. Finally, the represented beach body becomes the ‘reality’ of a woman’s body that every woman should possess. The effect of this ‘reality’ could be harmful since women might dread going for a holiday when they do not possess the ideal body or they may put their bodies under such disciplines which torture them. However, considering that the readers are active participants in reading the advertisements and that they also consciously and unconsciously put their own expectations on indexing the representations and dragging them into their real life, it is

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611 Burnett, How Images Think, 24.
obvious that the readers often take only what they want from the media representations. So, although some readers consider the beach body as their dream body, there are also some readers who will not be affected by the representation of the beach body. Jordan shows that among her research participants, those who will be influenced the most are those who feel insecure with their bodies.\textsuperscript{612}

Through the readers’ imagination, the beach body and the beach create ‘stories’ in the background of the product advertised. The meanings created by the readers based on the images may corrupt the original meaning of the objects. For example, the idea that the beach body is a reference to the holiday experience is very strong, so that even when the beach body is detached from its backdrop, such as a beach or exotic place, the idea of a body under the sun, suntanned and well-toned, slim, perfect, well-groomed, healthy and ready for public display still remains. In Benjamin’s concept of the auratic object, the representation of the beach body makes the tourist sight, in this case the beach, lose its authority as a place of holiday. People do not have to visit the tourist sight physically; they do not even need a tourist sight to experience the idea of holiday. The beach as a marker of a holiday destination and experience is replaced by the beach body alone. Furthermore, with the ‘stories’ about holiday in the background, the product advertised is also attached to the idea of holiday. When the advertisement of a certain product is reproduced and consumed many times by the viewers, the product may become the representation of the holiday too. It brings the idea to the viewers that consuming the product is experiencing the holiday.

This discussion of advertisements which include images of the beach body, the beach and the product reveals that the production and the consumption of all elements in the advertisements are not simple. To produce the advertisements, people transfer their understanding about the beach body and the beach to create images related to the

\textsuperscript{612}Jordan, ‘Life's a Beach and then We Diet’, 103.
beach body and the beach using the process of indexing and dragging. People’s understandings regarding the beach body and the beach themselves are not authentic because they are understood from a certain point of view of an individual based on his/her experiences and they are also added to by this individual’s dream and fantasy. Then, to translate the images into a real experience in the process of consumption, the viewers once again undertake the process of indexing and dragging. In the process, the viewer’s vantage point and imagination are important to the creative process. The process of reconstructing, retelling and reinventing the experiences captured in the image may lead to the creation of different values from the original.

In the advertisements, the beach body is the representation of the ideal body ready to display during the holiday, and the disciplining of a woman’s body to attain the ideal body. Similarly, the beach is not simply represented as a tourist site which offers escape from daily routines but also as a place to put women under the sexualised gaze of other people. It can also be a place where sexual encounters are possible. As discussed previously, the advertisements are phantasmagoria for the viewers as they offer fantasy and dreams of everyday life. Thus, the meanings related to the beach body and the beach are the ‘stories’ which wrap the product advertised. These ‘stories’ are spread widely by the help of the technology used by the media. The technology which enables the mass reproduction of the images makes the images become readily and easily accessible by the viewers. When viewers are exposed so many times to the images, the representations become more important than the original objects. In the above advertisements, the ‘stories’ behind the product enable the product to replace the holiday experience. In short, the discussion shows that the images representing holiday have multiple meanings and give way to multiple interpretations. It also shows how the complex ideas of women and travel for holidays are simplified and packaged to sell a product.
The discussion about the beach body shows us that the beach body represents complex meanings of travelling for holidays, disciplining the body, and the body as an object to sell a product. However, the meanings can only be understood by people who share the same personal and cultural understandings about the beach body. People coming from different cultural settings will fail to understand the message behind the representation of the beach body. For example, Indonesian people who do not associate holidays with bodily display will not interpret the beach body as the body which needs to be disciplined to look perfect for a holiday. In other words, Indonesians might not see the beach body as the representation of the ideal body.

**Personal narrative in travel stories**

The idea of holiday is not only represented by pictures but also by stories describing activities and experiences of the people who are travelling. The magazines cover stories about travel as a leisure activity. I found that travel stories in both Indonesian and Australian editions of *Cosmopolitan, Cleo* and *Marie Claire* are mostly written as personal narratives. According to Shuman, personal narratives are self-constructed narratives, stories based on personal experiences. The narratives, then, are very important in daily life as a medium through which to share social information. She says that personal stories or personal narratives which are based on local experience attract greater interest especially when the storytellers are travelling out of their own locales. The stories about people’s experiences while they are travelling are interesting because they disrupt ordinary lives and place extraordinariness in the centre.

Imagination plays an important role in creating an understanding about the idea of holiday told through narratives as in the way people create meanings of pictures or

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photos of tourism objects. The process of imagining is indeed the bridge between the narrator’s experience and the reader. Adaval and Wyer, like Burnett, argue that the process of imagining in making meaning of a narrative will produce ‘stories’. They based their explanation of the creation of stories on the story model developed by Pennington and Haste (1988) in reference to the juridical decision in a court case. Different from the ‘stories’ created by images in which the sequence cannot be seen clearly, the stories in personal narratives are usually presented by the narrators in a sequence of events. The temporal sequence of events where the events are put in the order of time makes the readers understand the information provided easily because people are familiar with that kind of sequence in their life experience. Adaval and Wyer also say that people’s prior understanding of what is going on is also important in understanding the narrative they read. If the new information matches people’s prior understanding about certain matters, people will have a thorough understanding about the narrative. But if the new information does not match, people are going to use the information separately and integrate it later. In the case of travel stories, the readers will have a thorough understanding about the stories if they find that the stories are similar to their prior idea or experience about travel or holiday because the readers can relate to the stories with their own views and experiences. Adaval’s and Wyer’s concept of the personal narrative is similar to Rojek’s concept of the way people understand and create representations of tourist sights using indexing and dragging where the interpretations of both images rely on people’s prior understanding about certain images.

However, Shuman says that personal experience is larger than personal. Personal stories are not just ‘personal stories’ because they include other people’s stories as well. Adaval and Wyer explain that people acquire and retain important knowledge in

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614 See Burnett, How Images Think.
616 Shuman, Entitlement and Empathy in Personal Narrative, 149.
their memory in the form of stories that they construct based on their personal and social experience. They say that the stories are the basis on which to understand new experiences and make judgements and decisions about persons, objects and events. Later, the stories will help to develop general attitudes and beliefs concerning the referents.

Personal narratives are more than just stories about personal experiences as a result of the intersection between personal narrative and other narratives. This intersection is addressed by Somers in her explanation about the four dimensions of narrativity. The four different dimensions of narrative are ontological, public, conceptual and metanarrative. These four dimensions intersect with each other. The first dimension is ontological. Somers says that ontological narratives are the stories that people use to make sense of their lives. The narratives help us to define who we are and, later, to guide us to what to do. The narratives affect activities, consciousness and beliefs and are affected by them. Ontological narratives are personal narratives which are closely linked with the second dimension, public narrativity. According to Somers, ontological narratives are social and interpersonal so when people tell ‘personal’ stories about their own experience they actually connect and relate their stories to the stories based on other people’s experiences or the existing stories in a wider community, the public narratives. Public narratives are attached to cultural and institutional formations. They range from the narratives of one’s family to those of the nation. These narratives have drama, plot, explanation and selective criteria. Somers’ examples of public narrative are the narrative told when government agencies tell us ‘expert’ stories about unemployment or when the mainstream media arrange and connect events to create a ‘mainstream plot’ about the origin of social disorders. To connect and relate themselves

to the wider community people appropriate the existing stories to fit their own identities. Somers’ concept of public narratives is similar to Rojek’s explanation about the files which people create during the indexing process and which people will drag later to make new meaning in their lives. Although these files are based on people’s personal views and experiences, they are not exclusively personal because of other people’s views and experiences which influence personal views and experiences.

The third dimension of narrativity is metanarrativity. Somers says that metanarrativity refers to the ‘master-narratives’ where we become contemporary actors in history, and social scientists. The story of the growth of Industrialisation/Modernisation out of Feudalism/Traditional Society is Sommer’s example of metanarrative. The fourth dimension is conceptual narrativity, the concept constructed by social researchers. Conceptual narrativity, according to Somers, is the theories and analytic categories that are specific to a discipline or profession. The conceptual narrativity is constructed by ontological and public narratives.

Phibbs adds ‘positioning’ to Somer’s four dimensions of narrativity to discuss the gender identity of the transsexual. She explains that in order to explain their identity and their place in the world, transgenders position themselves between male and female in their narratives. Phibbs says that people position themselves when they have a social encounter. She uses Davies’ and Harré’s theory to explain the way people do positioning when they do social encounter. Davies’ and Harré’s discussion is about interaction in a conversation among the speakers where positioning is ‘the discursive process whereby selves are located in conversations as observably and subjectively coherent participants in jointly produced story lines’. Davies and Harré argue that the contexts are more important than the stories themselves. For example when we want to

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say that A is powerful, we have to provide the position taken up by A in a discourse. That particular position will enable people to ‘see the world’ and make sense of the images, metaphors, storylines and concepts from the vantage point of that position. Using this concept, different positions of an individual could emerge through the process of social interaction depending on how they position themselves based on their personal and cultural background. The participants in the conversational speech construct their present moment using personal and cultural resources. Examples of resources for this positioning are the nurse-patient relation or mother-child relation. Furthermore, Davies and Harré say that in a contradictory discursive practice, the participants have to choose one of the positions they want to conform to. They cannot be in two positions when they try to make meaning of a storyline in a certain time, although they can take a contradictory position in another time later. Whether they like it or not, people live with contradictory views about themselves and their environment. People struggle when they have to produce a unitary and consistent story about themselves because people may function differently depending on how they position themselves in the stories.

**Advertorial**

Tourist sights are promoted to consumers through formal media such as advertisements, brochures and flyers or through a personal approach such as word of mouth with other people. Loda et al. argue that among those media, personal information is the most effective medium to persuade the consumers.\(^{621}\) However, unlike advertisements which are paid and non-personal, personal information is a source that is difficult to be influenced by marketers. Marketers usually have to rely more on mediated communications such as advertisements and brochures to promote holiday destinations.

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However, there is a way to include personal information to promote tourism. According to Rozier-Rich and Santos, the popular form of promoting tourism is travel articles. They define travel articles as:

narratives primarily concerned with providing instruction and interpretation of recent travel experiences written in a non-fictional narrative story format, from a first person account, and published in regional and national newspapers and magazines.

The blossoming of travel narratives can be seen in the printed media, radio, TV, magazines and websites. Unlike advertisements where the sponsor can be spotted easily, in the form of personal travel narratives the sponsor cannot be easily identified.

Adaval and Wyer state that when consumers want to buy a product, they will be interested in the product promotion which includes the sequence of events that they can relate to their daily experience rather than a list of features that is more rigid. In the case of a holiday, the potential consumers can imagine the events that they are going to experience during the holiday better when it is told in the form of narrative rather than when it is presented as a list of facilities and activities in the holiday. The narrative helps people to see the holiday experience as more ‘real’. The narrative is usually accompanied by images. According to Adaval and Wyer, the mental images presented by the pictures accompanying a text should help the people to understand the verbal description of the narrative. They say that pictures are important as eye catchers when the consumers have little personal interest in the information presented, but when people really want to know the information provided, the narrative is more important than pictures.

Some writers travel as part of their work as reporters. Their travels are sponsored by the tourism boards of the destination’s country or by companies promoting their new

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625Ibid., 208.
product. They are invited as guests in the launching of the products and basically they are pampered by free facilities and write their experience as reportage. In writing the reportage, the reporters represent more than one interested party: herself, the magazine, and the company which invites them. They also put the products of the company which sponsored them in their reportage. Gough Yates calls it advertorial.\textsuperscript{627} She defines advertorial as a kind of reportage which combines advertisement and editorial. She says that advertorial is one of the most successful techniques for attracting advertisers to women’s magazines because by blending the advertised products into the magazines’ editorial, the advertisements will be read as the objective comment of a ‘trusted friend’.\textsuperscript{628}

In their Indonesian editions, Cleo’s advertorial about travel is in ‘Getaway’, Cosmopolitan’s advertorial is in ‘Cosmo Travel’ and Marie Claire’s advertorial is in ‘On Location’. In the excerpt of an advertorial below, we can see that the writer presents the promoted place through her own experience. The promotional goals to sell the tourist object are wrapped in a personal narration. Unlike in the advertisements, the sponsor or the product cannot be seen clearly.

Finally...that’s what I said when I got an invitation from Martha Tilaar to the opening of Martha Tilaar Shop & Spa in the ‘Island of the Gods’. For three days last January, I was ‘kidnapped’ from hectic Jakarta to meet natural beauty and Bali culture from a different angle. An exquisite way to spend the weekend.\textsuperscript{629}

This excerpt clearly promotes Martha Tilaar Shop and Spa in ‘Island of the Gods’, Bali. Bali as the ‘Island of the Gods’ is famous as a tourist destination with beautiful nature and a unique culture both for domestic (Indonesian) and foreign tourists. The close link between Bali and tourism is not only understood by outsiders, but also by the natives. In

\textsuperscript{628}Ibid.
a study of students in Bali, Parker asked the students to write an essay on ‘Bali’.\footnote{Lyn Parker, \textit{From Subjects to Citizens: Balinese Villagers in the Indonesian Nation-State} (London: Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, 2003), 229–245.} Parker found that the students were aware that the tourist industry was important in Bali, and they all mentioned this phrase, ‘Bali, Island of the Gods’. However, they did not associate the idea of Bali as ‘the Island of Gods’ with the fact that religion exists in all aspects of life in Bali; the students also did not know much about the formal history of Bali, its geography, and its economy.\footnote{Parker, \textit{From Subjects to Citizens}, 230–231.} Like the meaning of the beach discussed earlier in the section on beach body, in Benjamin’s concept of aura, Bali as a complex entity with its unique culture has lost its original value by merely being regarded as a tourist object. The understanding that Bali is only a tourist destination can be seen in the way the narrator of the excerpt above writes about Bali. Bali, in the narrator’s perspective is promoted as an Island of the Gods because it has natural beauty and Balinese culture. The narrator does not explain further what she learns about ‘Bali culture from different angles’ in her only three days’ visit. Instead, she focuses more on how she feels about the weekend. It is not important what she learns about Bali because she is a mere tourist who wants to enjoy her break and Bali is only a tourist destination to enjoy.

**Personal narrative in travel stories in women’s magazines**

Using Davies’ and Harré’s theory about positioning, I put the narrators of travel stories into two positions. The first one and the most interesting for me is the position of the narrator as a flaneur and the second one is as an escapist. The narrators in the travel stories that I analysed are women. It is also important to note that I will not separate the discussion about travel stories from advertorials or publicities which have promotional content because both forms are written as personal narratives where the sponsors are not
clearly foregrounded. However, the second position, the narrator as an escapist, is the position taken by most narrators in publicity/advertorial.

**Women as flaneurs**

As tourists, women are expected to encounter extraordinary experiences which are different from their ordinary routines. Personal travel narratives in *Cosmopolitan, Cleo* and *Marie Claire* are mostly about overseas travel. Most writers are women who travel alone or who travel in a group with other women. Women travellers in these women’s magazines look for new places to have experiences and to develop a deeper understanding of other cultures. Their activities mostly consist of gazing at the tourist sights and the people they meet. Women’s writing about the holiday is translating the tourist gaze into a narrative, a story. The excerpt below is an example of the personal narratives in an Indonesian edition of *Cleo*.

The following day in the cold and foggy morning, we walked to the Red Fort. This is a 17th century fort built by emperor Shah Jahan. Along the street I saw that many people had started their activities wrapped in a very thick blanket. Unfortunately, the visibility was only 3 metres due to very dense fog. Consequently, the glorious and mighty fort could not be seen from a distance and I could not take a clear picture. *Red Fort* was built in Delhi after the capital was moved from Agra (there was a similar fort in Agra). There were some buildings inside this fort, including the soldier’s barracks, a weapons and armoury museum, and the theatre. The buildings were built from various materials, there were some in marble, some in red brick, typical buildings of India. After the walk, we went in a hurry to the biggest mosque in Delhi, Jama Masjid. Upon entering the mosque area, the visitors should take off their shoes and women should wear a kind of robe. We were lucky because we arrived in this place at the time of dzuhur prayer so we could see people preparing to pray. The next destination was India Gate, a big monument which is the gate to this country like the *Champs-Élysées* in Paris. Unfortunately, the fog still lingered in the city. We continued our journey to Humayun’s Tomb, a great tomb built during the Mughal era. After taking pictures in this place, both of us went to Nizamudin train station to go to the next city, Udaipur. We traveled in a 1st class train which had several compartments. Each compartment was provided with two or four bunk beds, towels, bed linen, blankets and pillows which were quite comfortable for the night journey as well as a central heater which was very useful given the cold temperatures in India then.

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632 *Keesokan harinya di pagi yang dingin dan berkabut tebal, kami pergi berjalan kaki ke Red Fort. Ini adalah sebuah benteng pertahanan pada abad ke-17 yang dibangun oleh kaisar Shah Jahan. Sepanjang perjalanan saya melihat banyak orang sudah memulai aktivitasnya sambil membawa...*
In this excerpt, the writer tells the story in a temporal sequence of events, starting from
the first event on her first day, and continues to the next events during her holiday. The
sequence enables the readers to follow and to imagine the narrator’s experience easily.
As a personal narrative, this article shows how the narrator makes sense of herself using
the experiences in her holiday. In this case the narrator puts herself in the position of a
flaneur. Urry defines a flaneur as a stroller, the modern hero who is able to travel, to
arrive, to gaze, to move on, to be anonymous, to be in a liminal zone. The definition
sees flaneurs as people who are distanced from the objects of their gaze and able to
create stories about those objects. According to Urry, flaneurs need to stand out from the
crowd, they can move about unnoticed, observing and being observed, but they do not
really interact with those encountered. In Benjamin’s concept, a flaneur is calm,
slower, more observing and idler. As flaneurs, tourists are out of place, they are not
part of the crowd so they can see things calmly. The distant position taken by flaneurs
enables them to see things and to produce stories by imagining one’s lives based on
their personal views and experiences. They are different from people in the crowd who

633 Urry, The Tourist Gaze, 126.
634 Ibid., 126.
have no privacy but are part of it. This opposition indicates tourists’ unique aura compared to people in the crowd.

In the excerpt from Indonesian Cleo, the narrator as a tourist travels physically to a distant place. She disengages herself from her daily routine and engages with the extraordinariness of the tourist destination. However, when she walks around, meets new people, and becomes involved in some activities as a tourist, she distances herself from the people and the daily activities that she observes. She is different from the people in the crowd who will be oblivious to the extraordinariness of their daily routines. By taking the position as a stranger she makes the daily routines such as people starting their daily activity in the morning and people preparing for their noon prayers seem extraordinary. She gives the ordinary things an aura of uniqueness which make the objects/tourist sights extraordinary.

Jokinen and Veijola state that traditionally a flaneur was a man or a woman dressed as a man because the activity of flaneuring includes controlling, distancing and using women as the material of imagination. This was when women were more restricted to the private sphere. However, the emerging participation of women in public space invalidates the claim that a flaneur has to be a man or a woman dressed as a man. The personal narratives written by women about their travel show women’s way of perceiving and understanding things they find during their travel. The narrators decide what is important and not important to see and tell to the readers from their point of view. In the excerpt, the narrator is interested in the daily activities of the people she sees as well as the tourist sights which are the typical attractions for tourists. She also puts an emphasis on the weather, which is different from the weather she has in her

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636 As an Indonesian, a citizen of the nation with the largest Muslim population, the writer is supposed to be familiar with the everyday activities of Muslims who pray five times a day, including the preparations for the prayers.

country. It is interesting that an unfavourable feature, such as dense fog, which actually disturbs the enjoyment of the holiday, becomes obscure when she puts it in her narrative as her extraordinary experience, but it adds authenticity. Here, we can see that as a flaneur, the narrator invents and creates stories by imagining the lives of other people. The magazine, in turn, gives her a place to voice her story to the public.

Amongst the love, beauty, fashion and other typical issues covered by women’s magazines, travel stories which position women as flaneurs represent women’s empowerment. Travel stories give women the independence and autonomy to tell their travel experiences in their own voices and words. Travel stories in the women’s magazines show that women’s magazines are also a site of struggle. It is where the acts of travelling and flaneuring which were traditionally attached to men or women dressed as men are contested. The fact that these travel stories are written by Indonesian women who are more restricted and controlled in their travel than Australian women, emphasises the act of producing travel stories as the moment of empowerment for the narrators. However, it is important to note that the position of a flaneur is not always an empowering position. In the study on young people and the shopping mall in the East Midlands of the UK, Matthews et al. found that young people who hang out in the mall like flaneurs make the adults uncomfortable and are perceived as inappropriate. The adults consider that places like school and home are appropriate for young people while the young people consider the shopping mall as a meeting place to assert their group membership.

**Women as escapers**

In these women’s magazines, travel is a way to liberation for women. It is represented as an escape from daily routines. It is important to note that in *Cosmopolitan, Cleo* and

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Marie Claire, the daily routines which the women in the travel stories want to escape from are not related to domestic chores, the stereotypical women’s work, but the daily routine of their public work. These travel stories put women in the work/leisure instead of the public/private dichotomy. Under capitalism, work is seen as the first priority whereas leisure is something subordinate as it is not related to production. The holiday as leisure is often seen as the reward for work. For these women who are in paid work, the holiday liberates them from working pressure.

These are some excerpts from Indonesian editions of Cleo which show that the holiday is the representation of an escape from work.

Stressed because of a deadline, ‘got a headache’ from fulfilling clients’ demands, working overtime until late at night—you feel like you want to ‘runaway’ from those routines and go on holiday with your friends like you planned months ago.

The pressure of the deadline is relentless. But I, representing Cleo Indonesia, had an opportunity to ‘runaway’ from the deadline. The fun is, this opportunity is really tempting and cannot be avoided. The invitation for Nature’s Rose Experience Journey with The Body Shop, promised to fly me somewhere to have fun. At the beginning, the destination was kept a secret. Wow, where are they going to take Cleo this time? Buckle up and take off to Hong Kong.

The narrators in both excerpts put work and leisure at two different poles. Work is represented as a distressing world full of pressures while the holiday is represented as a fun world. However, the excerpts also show that for the women, work and holiday are closely tied to each other, they complete each other. The work is the hard labour and the holiday is the way to escape, to runaway. The holiday offers novelty for people from...
their hectic work even when they travel to do work like the narrator in the second excerpt.

As a way of escaping daily routine, the holiday is the time to do activities which people do not do in their day-to-day lives. The activities shared by the narrators in their travel stories are tourists’ typical activities such as enjoying the scenery and the people, enjoying local food and beverages, having adventures and shopping. The next part of my discussion will be about the main activities as told by the narrators during their holiday. I will not discuss the activities of enjoying tourist sights and the people the narrators meet in their holiday because I have discussed it in the previous section. I realise that not all activities of enjoying scenery and the people are the act of flaneuring but basically the narrators as tourists practise the act of gazing.

Tasting and enjoying food

Food in tourism is a component of travel that cannot be neglected. It even becomes the main attraction for people to visit certain places and do what is called ‘Food Tourism’, which, according to Hall and Sharples, is motivated by the tourists’ desire to experience a particular type of food or food that belongs to a specific region or to taste the food cooked by a particular chef. They describe the relation between tourists and food as ‘the consumption of experiences and the experience of consumption’. As tourists, people consume experiences related to tourism while at the same time they experience the food provided in the tourist destinations. Hall and Sharples say that food is one of the largest items of expenditure for tourists in their travel.

Tasting and enjoying food and beverages are the activities that are put in the personal narratives of these women out of many activities they do during their holiday.

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642 See Jennie Small’s discussion on how women and girls in Australia experience holiday during different stages of their lives.
It seems that tasting food and beverages is part of the narrators’ memory about holidays. According to Small, a holiday is the time when people have experiences related to sense, and one of the senses is taste. People taste the local food and beverages they never tasted before, or food they will not find in their home, during the holiday. Below is an excerpt from a travel narrative:

‘The Pearl of Orient’ is the nickname of this island. But for me, the phrase that is the most suitable to describe Penang is: super delicious food! Yes, culinary tourism is always my main agenda when I visit this place. Why not? You can find many kinds of food here. In every corner of Georgetown, you can find coffee houses, restaurants, and hawkers which sell the traditional food of Penang such as Assam Laksa (it is different from the Laksa I usually have, Assam Laksa there is not cooked in coconut milk, it tastes more like mixed spicy food!), and Char Kway Teow (kway teow with prawns). Hmm... Yummy! Walking around the city makes me always hungry!

It is necessary to point out that not all acts of tasting and enjoying food are food tourism. It is possible for tourists to taste and enjoy their food just as part of their travel. In this excerpt, it is clear that the narrator is involved in food tourism because she travelled to Penang with the purpose of enjoying the food. The excerpt above shows how the narrator views the tourist destination as a place to pamper her taste. She even has her own nickname for the place, ‘super delicious food’. For her, the main attraction of this city is the food, which she says that she can never get enough of, and she always feels hungry when she walks around the city. Tasting and enjoying food is an act of indulgence for women, especially those who usually are concerned about their body image and health. It represents the freedom to indulge and to release oneself from body control and discipline.

644 Small, The Emergence of the Body in the Holiday Accounts of Women and Girls, 78.
645 “The Pearl of Orient,” begitulah julukan pulau ini. Tapi bagi saya, kata yang paling tepat untuk menggambarkan Penang adalah: makanan superlezat!
Ya, wisata kulinernya selalu menjadi agenda utama saya saat berkunjung ke pulau ini. Betapa tidak? Beragam jenis makanan dapat Anda jumpai di sini. Di setiap penjuru kota Georgetown, Anda bisa menemukan kedai kopi, restoran, dan hawkers yang menjual makanan khas Penang, seperti Asam Laksa (berbeda dengan yang biasa saya makan, Asam Laksa di sana bukan hanya bersantun, namun justru terasa seperti bumbu rujak!), dan Char Kway Teow (kwetiau yang disajikan dengan udang). Hmm... Yummy! Berkeliing kota ini membuat saya seakan tak pernah kenyang!
Doing adventure

The next activity that the narrators point out as their interest is adventure. Adventure, according to Little, is ‘a specific form of leisure that tends to be physically and intellectually challenging and predominantly accessed in natural environments’. She found in her study on women doing adventure pursuits that there were some factors that constrained women from doing adventures. The first factor was sociocultural. This factor constrained women from doing adventures because of the gendered role expectation where women were expected to be caregivers and dependants. In patriarchal and imperialist discourses, adventure was framed as a masculine concept because it was considered a male activity. Adventure was an activity which was restricted for women as women were believed to be unable to cope with the activity. The second factor was the family and other commitments. This factor is related to the sociocultural factor. Women’s responsibilities to home, their partner, children, friends, work, parents or study, restricted women from doing outdoor activities which take their time and energy. The third factor was self where women were limited by self-doubt, fear, guilt and their perception of adventure. Their lack of or too much experience as well as their personal perception about what and who were supposed to participate in adventure constrained them from participation. The fourth factor was the technical factor such as the high cost of the activity, the lack of skills, or the lack of time.

Travel stories in these women’s magazines cover adventures done by women. There is one travel story about a woman having an adventure by driving a car around Bali.

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647 Little, Women and Adventure Recreation, 163–166.

Want to have a fun holiday in Bali? Drive a car around Bali, go camping and have adventures with water sports. Be fun fearless! Cosmo tried this one.

... 

Enjoying the beach does not always mean sunbathing, wearing sunglasses, lying on your back and waiting for the sunset. Wear your bikini and move! Cosmo tried many kinds of water adventures. Starting with the floating and rotating ‘jubing’, a bit of acrobatic action with a buoy in a river near Kintamani. Or adventures at the beach like jet ski, banana boat and flying fish in Tanjung Benoa.649

The excerpt which shows that the narrator participates actively in the adventure represents the fact that women have the ability to join in adventure. Although there are many women who still have constraints in doing adventure tourism, some women are able to break the claim that adventure is a male domain. Like the women in Little’s study who found ways to negotiate with the constraints they faced by, for example, reconstructing the adventure to fit their physical ability, the narrators find a way to fight the constraints by using the holiday to do adventure. As an escape from daily activity, the holiday opens an opportunity for women as well as men to enjoy things they do not usually enjoy. By doing adventure in their holiday, the narrators show that they have freedom and power to do activities that are usually restricted to them in their day-to-day experiences. In the excerpt above, the narrator also mentions wearing a bikini in her holiday. An Indonesian wearing a bikini during a holiday is unacceptable for the Indonesian public. I will discuss this matter later in my section about public narratives and the readers.
Shopping

In the magazines’ travel stories, one of the main tourist activities is shopping. Shopping is defined by Shields as the process of looking and browsing with purchase as the end goal of the process.\(^{650}\) He says that the browsing itself can be done over a long period of time and might result in purchasing insignificant items or feeling frustrated. At the end of the process, the real purchase might or might not be done. It means that a shopper can actually do shopping without having to purchase. In the Indonesian context, the practice of shopping without actually doing the purchase is common in large shopping centres. The shopping centres in Jakarta, Wall et al. say, are the only places for middle-class people for social meeting, ‘out of-home leisure’.\(^{651}\) So, the shopping centres in Jakarta serve the function of a meeting place rather than a place for shopping.

Shields argues that the act of looking and browsing while shopping is like the act of exploring and sightseeing in tourism.\(^{652}\) It makes shopping a leisure activity. The establishment of many shopping centres or malls in tourist destinations shows that shopping cannot be separated from the holiday. The activities of shopping actually have started even before the holiday itself when people shop to prepare themselves for the holiday. In the excerpt below we can see that the magazine provides a guide for its readers to prepare suitable clothes for different destinations which will lead to the act of shopping if the potential tourists do not own these particular clothes.

Is it better for you to start planning your travel (around the world) from now? As a guide, just take a look at the travel book of these two Fun Fearless Females. From travel destinations to what to wear during the travel.\(^{653}\)

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\(^{652}\) Shields, “The Individual, Consumption Cultures and the Fate of Community,” 102.

\(^{653}\) Tak ada salahnya kan bila Anda mulai menyusun persiapan traveling (keliling dunia) dari sekarang? Sebagai panduan, intip saja travel book dua Fun Fearless Females ini. Mulai dari tujuan wisata hingga tampil gaya selama bepergian.

“You, Vacation, and Style.” Cosmopolitan Indonesia, Mei 2010, 199–221.
Paquet mentions two types of shoppers during a holiday. The first type is the tourists who put shopping as a side activity of the holiday while the second type is the tourists who travel for the sole purpose of shopping. For the second type of shoppers, shopping is the main attraction. They do not even care about the cost of the travel itself. Paquet told a story about a passenger she met on a cruise ship who travelled all the way from Canada to Saint Thomas, in the Caribbean, with the main purpose to buy a Tanzanite ring. She commented, ‘It seemed to me that the price of the cruise was a hefty surcharge on the jewelry, negating any savings he might have made, but I politely kept my mouth shut’. These two types of shoppers can be found in the magazines’ travel stories.

Most people think that it is impossible to shop in Tokyo. But the reality proved different. I could bring home goods for myself and souvenirs.

Bangkok is identical with cheap goods. No wonder there are many Indonesians who travel to Bangkok just to shop. Ok, the products are cheap but are they good quality?

My visit to Bangkok this time was not to go down Chak Tu Chak to find cheap goods, but to fulfil the invitation of the Central Retail Corporation Ltd., to visit two malls they own which have just been renovated. The fun was, this invitation really fulfilled my hobby of browsing interesting but quality goods. The fact was I got more than I hoped for, because in these two malls owned by Central Retail Corporation Ltd. in Bangkok, I could see many cool products, high quality, and of course affordable.

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655 A Tanzanite ring is a ring with bluish-purple stone named after Tanzania, a country in East Africa. Tanzanites are unique and visually interesting because there may be many shades of blue within the same stone—http://popular.ebay.com/jewelry-watches/tanzanite-ring.htm accessed on 26 April 2012.
656 Paquet, The Urge to Splurge, 216.
Just like consuming food and beverages, shopping during the holiday is a time of indulgence. According to Paquet, shoppers like to visit shops they will not find at home and purchase items that represent the place they are visiting.\(^{659}\) However, Paquet argues that finding items which cannot be found at the tourists’ home is becoming more difficult because chain stores like malls in the tourists’ country of origin might sell the same products. The chain stores make supposedly unique items become ordinary and easily accessible. In Benjamin’s concept of phantasmagoria, the items are losing their power and meaning, their auras, as a result of mass production and reproduction.

Shopping is often associated with women and it builds an identity for women as different from men. It is not only a public activity to buy goods for domestic needs as suggested by Lury,\(^ {660}\) but it is also an activity which enables women to meet other people and to practice flaneur-like activity by doing window shopping.\(^ {661}\) For the women narrators in the travel stories, shopping and travel are represented as activities which are liberating. Being able to travel and shop for their individual needs proves women’s independence. The growing participation of women in paid work gives women the opportunity to be economically independent, thus they can have time and money to travel for leisure. In short, shopping during travelling, particularly, is the time for these women to practise their freedom in leisure time as consumers.

**Public narratives, the narrators and the readers in travel stories**

Personal narrative intersects with public narrative because people cannot isolate themselves from the views held by the community. In Rojek’s concept, public narratives are the files of representations of the holiday owned by the public. These files provide

\(^{659}\)Paquet, *The Urge to Splurge*, 204.


representations that can be dragged into the real experience which might contain what
people should see, what people should do, or how people should behave during the
holiday. Applied by different people and added to with their own personal as well as
public views and expectations, the understanding about the holiday may be different
from one person to another.

I will discuss public narratives in travel stories from two different points of view,
from the perspective of the narrators and from the perspective of the readers. Reading
the images in the advertisements does not clearly give information about the producers’
understanding of a holiday so the readers play a greater role in interpreting the meaning
of the images based on their own imagining. On the other hand, reading a narrative
gives clearer information about the narrator’s understanding of a holiday because the
narrators state their views and opinions in their stories.

Public narratives and the narrators
Since personal is not ‘personal’, the narrators will refer to what they learn from the
public in writing personal narrative about travel. They will relate their personal
narrative with the general understanding about the holiday in the community. In this
case the narrators will relate their narratives with the idea of holiday as understood by
Indonesians in general. The increasing popularity of travelling for holidays in Indonesia
can be seen from the publication of many popular books about travel which are
available in the market. The best-seller book on travel, Around Europe for 6 Months For
Only $1000 (Keliling Eropa 6 bulan hanya dengan $1000 dolar) by Marina Silvia K
which was published in 2008 was claimed to have inspired many young people to travel
overseas. The book shows the readers that travelling overseas is not expensive and
exclusive. There are also specific magazines about travel in both printed and online

magazines such as ‘Traveling Magazines’ (*Jalan-Jalan Magazines*) and *The Travelist*. Although it does not appear regularly, local women’s magazines also cover travel in their coverage; for instance *Femina* magazine has the ‘*Oleh-Oleh*’ (souvenir) segment. Other media such as television also cover this topic such as *Wara Wiri* (Walking Around) and *Jejak Petualang* (The Footprint of an Adventurer) on Trans7. However, I had difficulties in finding studies about what Indonesians do during their holidays and how they think about travel for leisure in general. Most literature is about tourism from the point of view of the producers, not the consumers. It is about tourism promotion, tourism development, or the impact of tourism on the community. Using Heryanto's argument to explain why the study of popular culture is not popular in Indonesia, the same thing can probably be said about the study of Indonesian holiday consumers. Heryanto argues that the study of popular culture is not considered important enough compared to other issues related to nation-state building and modernisation or other pressing issues in Indonesia like ethno-religious conflicts, human rights and corruption. Similarly, study about travel for holidays from the consumers’ point of view is not as urgent as other pressing issues.

While it is true that there is an increasing interest in travel for holidays, especially with the emergence of low-cost carriers, the statistics show that travel for leisure is not a priority for Indonesians. Below are the statistics of Indonesians who travel as tourists:

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Table 6.1
Indonesians Travelling to Local Tourist Destinations and Overseas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Indonesians travelling to local tourist destinations</th>
<th>Indonesians travelling overseas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>114 270 000</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>115 335 000</td>
<td>5 158 441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>117 213 000</td>
<td>4 996 594</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>119 944 000</td>
<td>5 053 269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>122 312 000</td>
<td>6 235 606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>89 112 000*</td>
<td>6 594 231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>517 608**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy Republic of Indonesia

*Data taken from 1st–3rd quarter of the year

**Temporary number taken from 19 gates of departure

Each year in the period 2006–2011 about 50 per cent of Indonesians travelled to local tourist destinations (the total population is about 237 million)\(^{664}\) while Indonesians travelling overseas constitute less than 3 per cent of the total population. How many of them are women cannot be seen but even if women are half the number of the total travellers, they are very small in number. The statistics also do not show the exact number of people travelling because the same person travelling twice or more will be counted as two or more different persons, so the actual people who go travelling may be less than the numbers presented. Although the statistics only give rough numbers of people travelling to local and overseas destinations, the statistics show that for most people in Indonesia, travel for leisure, especially to other countries, is a dream and fantasy. Only some people can actually experience the overseas travel that the narrators of travel stories in *Cosmopolitan, Cleo* and *Marie Claire* do. So the women who travel, particularly overseas, can be seen as different, and even exceptional. It also means that


\(^{665}\)The latest data on the total population of Indonesia provided by National Bureau of Statistics (Badan Statistik Nasional) is 237 641 326 in 2010, http://www.bps.go.id accessed on 27 April 2012.
The lack of repertoire of representations and stories available about what
Indonesians do and their opinions on public narratives about the idea of holiday in
Indonesia may disrupt the narrators’ attempt to relate them to their personal narratives. 
It raises the question, whose public narratives do the narrators of personal narratives 
reference? In my opinion, the narrators adapt general public narratives about holiday 
that they learn from the available sources which mostly are written by the West. While 
adapting the West’s vantage point about the holiday is not wrong, it may miss some 
local issues related to the holiday. In the Indonesian context, the issue of control and 
restriction is potentially relevant to women travellers. Most women in Indonesia cannot 
travel in the same way as the narrators of the travel stories so most women’s experiences related to the holiday are different from the narrators’ experiences. 

According to White, in general, Muslim women in Southeast Asia are highly 
visible in public places such as the workplace, fields and schools.\(^6\) Muslim women are also able to travel overseas to work, despite the common idea in Muslim society that women should stay at home and not venture into the public sphere, or if they have to travel, they should be accompanied by their muhrim (father, brother, uncle or other male relatives).\(^7\) However, not every woman enjoys the freedom to travel. Bennett in her study about women in Lombok, an island in Indonesia, found that women, in this case single women in Lombok, have limited social autonomy and restricted mobility to protect them from expressing sexual desire.\(^8\) Even when mature professional single women travel, they should have regular contact through telephone calls with their natal

family. Additionally, since 2001 some districts have passed regulations (called *perda*) based on *syariah* that restrict women from being out at night:

The National Commission on Violence against Women (*Komnas Perempuan*) reported: since 2001, 254 local by-laws have been passed; 154 of these laws are based on such interpretations and 63 discriminate against women explicitly. For example, a number of regencies (*kabupaten*) and municipalities, including Tasikmalaya, Tangerang and Bekasi in West Java, have outlawed prostitution on the grounds that it is a form of *zina*. This has allowed the police in these districts to arrest any woman on the streets on suspicion of prostitution, especially if she is out at night. Such cases have already occurred. Most recently, the Pamekasan regency administration is planning to propose a by-law that would impose a curfew on all women after 11pm (The Jakarta Post: 2010).

Taking the fact that some Indonesian women are limited to travel as a result of control both by culture and state, it can be expected that women often go for a holiday with their family. There is one travel story which describes that the narrator is on holiday with her family but she presents her travel story as an independent traveller in a group. She does not address any family activities:

Last September, for the first time I had an opportunity to visit my ancestor’s land with my family. This travel was actually to visit World Expo 2010 in Shanghai, but our tour organised a short visit to Hangzhou and Wuxi which are located near Shanghai.

Although some regions in Indonesia impose the obligation to travel accompanied by *muhrim*, in some cases it can be negotiated. Idrus in her study about women migrant workers in Bugis found that women were allowed to travel to Malaysia as long as they were accompanied by one of their family members or those regarded as family members including female relatives (female cousin, mother, aunt or other distant female relative). So *muhrim* is replaced by female relatives. Travel writers often negotiate this obligation by travelling in groups with other women or in a packaged holiday.

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669 Sexual intercourse between parties not married to one another.
670 Mir-Hosseini and Hamzić, *Control and Sexuality* 57.
672 Idrus, “Makkunrai Passimokolo’ Bugis Migrant Women Workers in Malaysia”, 158.
Another example of the adoption of the West’s vantage point is when the narrator describes countries or people from a similar region. Positioning themselves as observers employing the Western vantage point, the narrators use words commonly used by the West to describe the Orient. This excerpt shows the narrator describing Bangkok as ‘exotic’:

Possessing exoticism and cultural richness, in many respects modernisation has not made this city, which has become Thailand’s centre of economic activity, lose its identity. This fact has made Bangkok the ‘target’ of tourists from different parts of the world. With increasing tourism, there is no doubt that Bangkok is one of the 50 richest large cities in the world.

Going on holiday to other countries gives an opportunity for travellers from third world countries like Indonesia to experience ‘otherness’. The excerpt shows that the narrator estranges herself from the Thais’ culture which actually has similarities to Indonesian culture. This positioning might be a result of what Heryanto calls the influence of the experience of the West’s othering of Asians. The narrator chooses to conform to the vantage point of Western narrators which relates the Orient to exoticism as a result of the unavailability of a public narrative about seeing ‘others’ in the Indonesian context.

Public narratives and the readers
As there are only few Indonesians who actually travel overseas, stories about overseas travel is a dream and fantasy for most Indonesians. The lack of similar experiences makes the act of imagining travel more complicated for Indonesian readers; therefore there is a big chance that the readers cannot relate to the story. This is not an unusual

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673 See Said, *Orientalism*.
674 Memiliki eksotisme dan kekayaan budaya yang berbaur dengan modernisasi di berbagai aspek tak membuat kota yang menjadi pusat kegiatan ekonomi Thailand ini kehilangan ciri khasnya. Hal inilah yang membuat bangkok menjadi ‘incaran’ wisatawan dari berbagai penjuru dunia. Dengan turisme yang begitu menggeliat, tak heran jika Bangkok termasuk 50 besar kota terkaya di dunia.
situation. Using Davies’ and Harré’s theory on positioning, I found three possibilities of positioning that can be conformed to by Indonesian readers when they read travel stories. Davies and Harré say that any reader may be put or put themselves in a position outside the story for some reason where they can only look in. In the case of people making conversation, Davies and Harré explain that when people are invited to conform to a storyline which they do not understand, they may take several options if they still want to be in the conversation:

Sometimes they may not contribute because they do not understand what the story line is meant to be, or they may pursue their own story line, quite blind to the story line implicit in the first speaker’s utterance, or as an attempt to resist. Or they may conform because they do not define themselves as having choice, but feel angry or oppressed or affronted or some combination of these.

The first positioning is when the readers cannot relate to the travel story they just read the story as it is and avoid relating themselves to the story as a way of not contributing to the story. For example, the association between the holiday and the beach body might be overlooked by Indonesian readers and regarded as the experience of ‘others’. The possibility of avoiding the association is supported by the fact that women portrayed as wearing bikinis in the magazines are usually non-native women, particularly White models.

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676 Davies and Harré, *Positioning*, 50.
677 Ibid.
The appearance of White models displaying their bodies in sexy dress is common in internationally-licensed magazines. Western models portrayed ‘sexually’ are more acceptable than local models by Indonesians because they believe that those women have different values and norms from Indonesians.

In the second positioning, the readers as outsiders are able to pursue their own story. In the case of travel stories, Indonesian readers negotiate with what they read and find ways to understand it in their own way. The readers have the choice to pick up the things that suit them the best. With the seemingly unlimited sources on the representations of the holiday in the media, Rojek says that the individual may combine elements from fictional and factual representational files. He calls this practice collage tourism where the readers use ‘the fragments of cultural information to construct a distinctive orientation to foreign sight’. Indonesian readers, especially those who are not lucky enough to have money to travel, could do this collage tourism as well by

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reading and consuming the images in the women’s magazines to construct their own understanding about foreign places. The fabrication they make might be incorrect and fake but it is all they have to create their understanding of other places and people. It is the creation of superficial experience which may become a source of disappointment when they visit the places for real. The same creation of superficial experience can be done by the readers about women shopping as their leisure activity during a holiday. Brenner says that reading women’s magazines published in Indonesia can make people forget that there is a lower class or rural population in Indonesia. The magazines represent urban, upper middle-class lifestyles. However, not all women are able to take part in the freedom associated with consumption. The women who look at the images of the products offered in the magazines may never be able to consume the products, they can only consume the images. Evans and Thornton suggest that looking at the images of products is the act of consumption in itself. Therefore, the same act may also be applied to travel in which the readers who are not able to travel will consume the images of other women travelling.

The third position is to conform but feel angry or affronted. This position is usually taken when it touches certain cultural stereotypes. The representations of ‘others’ encountered during travel might pose some challenging problems for the readers of the women’s magazines. When people read about what others view about them, they might disagree. In her article ‘Oppositional Gaze: Black Female Spectators’, hooks claims that the gaze is always political. She addresses the idea that mass media reproduce and maintain White supremacy so that the representations of Black people in television or in other mainstream media are actually created by the Whites from their point of view. White supremacy is possible because, as hooks says, the ones who have

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more power and authority shape the way we look. hooks uses the term ‘oppositional gaze’ to refer to the time when Black people have the desire to rebel against the dominant way of seeing things. It is the way to resist the power that dominates and the repression of Black people’s right to gaze. In the case of travel stories, an oppositional gaze or an affronted feeling might have been experienced by Indonesian readers when they read the article about an Indonesian woman wearing a bikini in her travels:

Enjoying the beach does not always mean sunbathing, wearing sunglasses, lying on your back and waiting for the sunset. Wear your bikini and move!683

While Indonesian readers can accept White models wearing bikinis in the magazines, they may not do the same thing to Indonesians wearing bikinis. Cultural appropriateness and laws regulating how women should dress in some parts of Indonesia will influence the readers’ judgement upon women wearing bikinis in their holidays. It may inflict the readers’ anger or affronted feelings. Apparently, the magazines are aware of this issue because although the narrator suggests that she is wearing a bikini there is no picture of the narrator wearing a bikini.

Below is an excerpt which shows how a reader can resist the things she reads. The excerpt is from the Letters to editor in Marie Claire Australia and it is not about travel. I include this letter as an example because this letter well represents the resistance of the reader towards an article about the typical consumption of women from different countries.

Hard to Swallow

I’ve been such a big fan of your magazine that my husband gifted me a year-long subscription as a special treat. So it was pretty sad (not to mention humiliating) to read in Come Dine With Me [November] your portrayal of the standard Indian women’s diet, which starts with a big glass of urine. Really, what are the stats on that? I literally don’t know anyone in my community that has that taste, hence I can only guess at your reasons: an underlying dismissal of women on the subcontinent? Racism?

683Menikmati pantai tidak melulu berjemur dengan kaca mata hitam, telentang dan menunggu matahari tenggelam. Kenakan bikini anda dan bergerak!

You’ve definitely lost me as a fan, and although there’s no way you’ll publish this kind of feedback, you have a responsibility to make sure you publish unbiased, unprejudiced articles.

Sheeba Singh
Lynbrook, Vic

Editor’s note: the women featured were not chosen to represent an entire culture, but to highlight differences in personal diets around the world. The pages of this magazine over the past 15 years are proof positive we celebrate and support the women of every culture.684

The writer of this letter feels angry with the way Indian women are portrayed. She argues that the portrayal is not valid and states that she disrespects the decision to publish that article. This woman is definitely an example of a critical viewer/reader as posited by hooks. However, not everybody cares or has the ability to be so critical in the way they ‘gaze’ that they will be able to produce an oppositional gaze. hooks explains that the Black people choose to stop being critical about the way they are represented in the movie to be able to enjoy the ‘magic’ of the film. Similarly the readers of the travel stories in the magazines might avoid being critical of the stories they read to enjoy the text.

In the discussion about personal narrative in travel stories, we can see that there are two positions taken by the narrators: as flaneur and as escapist. While the flaneurs are more observant, the escapists have more fun. The narrators’ position as flaneurs gives them empowerment to write about the places they visited and the people they encountered during their travel from their own perspectives and words. According to Pickford, writing experiences about travel was considered as a private activity for women in the past.685 Women had no authoritative voice in public, in literary and political activity. Women could only write and publish letters which contained their

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experiences and opinions about their travel. So the letter format was a common form of women’s travel writing. With that restriction, early women’s travel writing was private and supposedly not authoritative. The narrators of travel stories in these magazines do not face any restrictions like women travel writers in the past. In the travel stories, the narrators are the travellers, the observers and the narrators. As narrators, they have the authority to narrate and form their opinions on certain places and people. Meanwhile, the position of the narrators as escapists is also empowering although it is less serious than the flaneurs. As tourists who indulge themselves in the act of enjoying food, undertaking adventures and shopping, the narrators practise their freedom of choice and independence. They free themselves from the bonds of their daily lives which in the narrators' case are their public work not domestic work. The narrators’ participation in the adventure also invalidates the traditional claim that adventure is the male domain. In general, the holiday represents the moment of empowerment for the narrators.

Understanding the narratives requires an imagining process by the readers. The readers see the tourist sights through the eyes of the narrators. What differentiates narrative from images is the way that the narratives can be written in a sequence of events which makes the information easy to understand and easy to imagine. Considering that travel stories are able to empower the narrators they might become aspirations for the readers too. However, similar to the reading of the images in advertisements, the narratives may result in the readers modelling the narrators in enjoying their holiday down to the details. As a result, once the readers drag their imaginations to the real experience, they actually have what Crawshaw and Urry call superficial experience.686

Travel stories, both in the form of personal narrative and advertorial, are the best way to promote the holiday because the narrators take the position of trusted friends in

686Crawshaw and Urry, Tourism and the Photographic Eye, 178.
giving the information. The narrators provide information about where the readers have to visit and what they have to do there. The narrative forms obscure the promotional content in advertorials. Although I cannot find a clear distinction between personal narrative and advertorial in the travel stories, I found in the travel stories I analysed that advertorials tend to focus on showing escape activities while the personal narratives are more about translating into the narrators’ views and experiences the sights they see and people they meet. In advertorials we can actually see the commercialisation of escape experiences in a packaged holiday, the phantasmagoria of capitalism.

With regard to public narratives, the increasing popularity of travelling for holiday can be seen in the mass media. However, holiday travel, especially overseas holidays, represented by the narrators in these magazines is a fantasy and dream for most Indonesians. These female narrators are the exceptional ones. To be able to understand the public narrative about the holiday, studies about Indonesian experiences on holiday are needed as there are factors like control and restriction exercised by the community as well as the state with regard to women’s travelling. It will be very interesting to know how Indonesians, especially women, enjoy their holiday and negotiate with the control and restrictions to do the travel. The lack of references about the public holiday in Indonesia makes the narrators adapt the West’s vantage point about the way to see and understand places and people that they visit and encounter during the holiday. Regarding the readers, there is a possibility that the readers cannot relate to the travel stories because travelling overseas for holiday is not an activity that they can actually do in their real lives. In this case, the readers have three possibilities: to get involved in the travel stories by considering them as the stories of ‘others’; to develop their own understanding about the travel stories; or to resist the travel stories by disagreeing with them.
Although the public narratives of Indonesians going on holiday are problematic, the personal narratives are very positive. The positioning of the female narrators either as flaneurs or as escapists is empowering. Both positions enable the narrators to exercise their own power, freedom, independence and autonomy. While it is true that only a few Indonesians have the opportunity to do real travel, the representation of the holiday as an empowering moment may be used to inspire others to find a way to negotiate with the controls and restrictions and to travel for holiday. Even only as a reader, they can take the representations of the holiday by the narrators to exercise their analytical thinking by agreeing or disagreeing or negotiating with the travel stories. It is empowering for the readers too. In the end, the narrators and the readers of travel stories in the women’s magazines are the representation of the free, independent, autonomous and powerful ones.

**Conclusion**

The Australian editions present the idea of travel for leisure through images of the beach body and the beach. However, the image of the beach body, most often with the beach as the background, represents more than the idea of holiday, as the beach body is also associated with health, wealth, the act of disciplining the body and body display. In advertising, the beach body, with its complex meanings, is used to sell a product. The use of images to represent the holiday relies heavily on people’s understanding and imagination about the idea of holiday to create meaning of the images. Similar representations might not be understood by Indonesian readers due to cultural differences. Indonesians do not relate the idea of holiday with the beach body, they do not have a personal view and personal experience to relate the idea of holiday with the beach body.

In Indonesian editions, the holiday is narrated in the travel stories as personal narratives. Written by women, these personal narratives cover stories about holiday
destinations and activities done during the holiday. The personal narratives show that travel is seen as an escape from daily activities, which in the case of these women’s narrators are to do with public work. As flaneurs who observe the people and the place they visit, and as escapists who enjoy all activities in the holiday such as eating new food, adventures, and going shopping, the women’s narrators see the holiday as the moment of empowerment. The narrators’ moment of empowerment also happens when they can write of their experience as travellers from their own point of view and in their own expressions. It is important to point out again that in Indonesian editions, travel stories are often advertorials, a combination of reportage and promotion. The women reporters were invited by a company to visit the company’s site or to join in a launch of a new product, or invited by the board of tourism to visit a certain country. In return the reporters wrote about the company, the products or tourist destination they visited in the form of travel stories.

The holiday as a moment of empowerment for the narrators may inspire Indonesian women readers to travel. Limited access to holiday travel due to financial reasons and the constraints on women to travel by culture, religion and state regulations in some regions in Indonesia, mean that many Indonesians do not have the opportunity to travel for leisure, especially women. Therefore, travelling and enjoying holidays, particularly overseas, are fantasy and dreams for ordinary Indonesian readers. The holiday as narrated by the Indonesian women in their travel stories is the holiday of a few women who belong to a privileged group, the upper and middle-class group. Most magazine readers do not directly experience the holiday, but they consume the holiday by reading other people’s travel stories. While reading, the readers can give meaning to travel stories by agreeing, disagreeing or negotiating with them.
Chapter 7 Conclusion

My research has tried to answer the question about differences in the representation of women in women’s magazines in two different cultural settings, Australia and Indonesia. In Indonesia, the deregulation of the media and the dismantling of the Ministry of Information, that had formerly controlled the media in Indonesia, enabled the publication of internationally-licensed women’s magazines. As global magazines, these internationally-licensed women’s magazines in Indonesia indeed partake in global cultural flows. The adaptation and translation of the original content of the magazines in the publication of local editions construct the ‘imagined worlds’ of women in Indonesia. However, my main finding is that the large differences between Australian and Indonesian cultures do not contribute much to distinguish the content of Australian and Indonesian editions.

The freedom enjoyed by media publishers in the post-Soeharto era has opened opportunities for various kinds of media in Indonesia, including women’s magazines. Internationally-licensed women’s magazines like Cosmopolitan, Cleo, and Maria Claire exist side by side with the existing local women’s magazines as well as Islamic women’s magazines. These different women’s magazines, which have different target markets, complement each other. Through the images and the narratives, these women’s magazines try to represent the structured reality of the social condition of women including the representation of gender, class and ethnic /”race” differences at the time of the publication, in this case in the post-New Order era. My discussions on the issues of, for example, women’s individuation, sexuality and travel in the Indonesian editions show that a Western lifestyle has been chosen to be sold to Indonesian readers by the internationally-licensed women’s magazines. While these magazines provide interesting materials for research, women’s magazines are not considered as important as issues
such as poverty, education, finance or politics. In spite of the increasing number of publications, only a few scholars study these media. By the time I started my study, Indonesian scholars like Azeharie\textsuperscript{687} and Wiratmo & Gifari\textsuperscript{688} had studied the representation of women in Indonesian women’s magazines, Handajani had studied the representation of adolescent in female teen magazine\textsuperscript{689}, and Saraswati had studied whiteness in a transnational women’s magazine published in Indonesia and America\textsuperscript{690}. Additionally, international scholar like Brenner had studied the images of women in popular media including women’s magazines, during the New Order era.\textsuperscript{691} My study, therefore, is important in helping to fill a significant gap in the study of media in Indonesia as it presents the comparison between the transnational women’s magazines published in Indonesia and those published in Australia.

In my research, I use some Western theories to help me analyse the magazines. I use, for example, McRobbie’s theory on female individuation to explain how the magazines represent female individuation, independence, and sexual freedom; Gidden’s and Evan’s theories on romantic love to analyse women’s relationship; Benjamin’s phantasmagoria to discuss women and travel; Foucault’s history of sexuality to talk about sexuality represented in the magazines. I use Western theories as I have not found useful theories written by Indonesian scholars to explain the content of the magazines, particularly the content of the Indonesian editions. Lack of sources from Indonesian scholars in media research, especially on women’s magazines, is probably the result of opinions that women’s magazines are not considered important enough to study compared to other issues in Indonesia mentioned earlier such as politics, finance, or

\textsuperscript{687} Suzy Azeharie, Representations of Women in Femina: An Indonesian Women’s Magazine.
\textsuperscript{689} Suzie Handajani, Globalizing Local Girls: The Representation of Adolescents in Indonesian Female Teen Magazines.
\textsuperscript{691} Suzanne Brenner, “On the Public Intimacy of the New Order.”
poverty. Even when there are scholars who analyse media in Indonesia, it is not easy to get access to their works as the library resources in Indonesia are not integrated or online. Thus, my thesis is valuable because it contributes to media research in Indonesia as a source for further studies on Indonesian media in general, and on women’s magazines in particular. The use of Western theories also makes my thesis interesting because it demonstrates the postcolonial paradox wherein the content of the Indonesian editions can be well understood when analysed using Western theories.

The study shows that in both Australian and Indonesian editions, women are represented as free, independent, self-sufficient and empowered individuals who are bound to their workplaces more than to the domestic sphere. The focus on women as individuals seems to detach women from their cultural environment. As a product of culture, women’s magazines are expected to carry the ideology of the society associated with women. For example, the ideology related to femininity can be seen in my discussion about beauty and body image in chapter 4. However, the women in these internationally-licensed women’s magazines, in both the Australian and the Indonesian editions, are mainly represented in what appears to be a homogeneous situation, a Western setting. For instance, my discussion about women and sexuality in chapter 3 shows that Australian and Indonesian editions represent women’s sexuality in a similar way, thus neglecting religion as an important issue associated with sexuality in the local Indonesian context. Other examples can be seen in my discussion of ‘tips’ about relationships, where women are represented as embarking alternately on a quest for romantic love and the pursuit of personal happiness, and in my discussion of women’s work and home, where women celebrities are represented as individuals who can balance work and home responsibilities.

The homogeneity in the representation of women in the internationally-licensed women’s magazines seems to be the result of the magazines’ common identification of
their target readers. Women’s magazines, in general, target women from a specific group in society: urban, middle-class women. The Australian editions are targeted to more specific readers: White, middle-class women. To embrace a wider market, women’s magazines also target other women who aspire to the lifestyle of urban middle-class women. Urban middle-class women are targeted by the magazines because these women are considered financially independent, socially mobile and affluent, and able to ‘exercise their empowerment through consumption’. The right target market is necessary for women’s magazines because, as economic phenomena, the magazines have to produce profit and sell the products promoted in their magazines.

To decide the right target readers and to understand the needs of the target readers, women’s magazines research the market using ‘lifestyle segmentation’, which focuses on understanding the lifestyle of the readers, such as where they live, what their occupations are, how they travel to work, what sections of the magazines they read, and how they spend their leisure time. The representation of urban middle-class women can be found in the discussion of every theme. Especially in Indonesian editions, the representation of women as members of the urban middle-class group is obvious because in a country where the GDP per capita is low, this group is a minority. Middle-class members in Indonesia are characterised by high education, a consumption-oriented lifestyle, and a Western-oriented lifestyle. Women who belong to this group are portrayed as ideal and desirable. In the discussion about relationships, for example, the single women represented by the magazines are definitely urban, middle-class women whose managerial-level jobs provide them with financial independence. They feel less pressure to get married compared to women who are not financially independent, and

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do not mind postponing marriage because they perceive that they can enjoy their life and freedom. Similarly, in the discussion about Indonesian women narrators who tell stories about their travel for leisure, the women narrators are different and exceptional because they are among the minority who have the financial capital to travel overseas. By focusing on women from an urban, middle-class background, the magazines exclude women from rural, working and lower class backgrounds.

In the women’s magazines, the representation of diversity of ‘race’/ethnicity is not clear, even though Australia is a multicultural society and Indonesia is multi-ethnic. As can be seen in chapter 4, although these internationally-licensed women’s magazines claim to fit themselves to local needs, the evidence suggests that the magazines, especially in the advertisements and illustrations, primarily feature White, female models or local models with fair skin. It is obvious that the magazines still set whiteness as a privileged standard of ideal beauty.

A homogeneous ‘Western’ setting and Western-oriented lifestyle dominate the representation of women in both the Australian and Indonesian editions of these women’s magazines. By comparing internationally-licensed magazines published in Australia and Indonesia, I initially intended to find localized content in Indonesian editions of these women’s magazines. Thussu argues that the twenty first century media enable multidirectional cultural flows, from dominant culture to subaltern and vice versa, which help to create localized content which is appropriated to the value and taste of local readers.695

Thussu challenges Schiller,696 who stated that in media industries, there is mainly one flow, from the dominant culture, in this case Western culture, to that of developing countries. The flow is so powerful that it creates cultural imperialism, that

has the potential to disrupt local values. In this cultural flow, the intention of the sender and the effect on the receiver become central. On the side of the sender, the establishment of Western culture as the standard, according to Cowen, may be assumed as an intentional attempt to transfer and change the subaltern’s culture, or as an economic response to a particular niche in the market.\textsuperscript{697} On the side of the receiver, Salwen and Gables mention two contexts of cultural imperialism.\textsuperscript{698} The first one is where the subaltern is socio-politically disrupted by the dominant culture, while the second is where the subaltern resists the influence of the dominant culture and maintains their local values and behaviour.

In my study, I found that the orientation towards Western culture in the images and narratives of the magazines gives the impression that the global cultural flow carried by internationally-licensed women’s magazines is a one-way flow of culture from the West to Indonesia. The Western culture was very dominant in the Indonesian edition, such that the few items of localized content were insignificant. The emphasis on, for example, women’s individualisation in the workplace and women at home, as discussed in chapter 5, and on women’s sexual freedom, discussed in chapter 3, shows Western-oriented representations of women. The magazine editors and advertisers seem to translate an ‘international’ and ‘global’ identity as a Western orientation and to present the Western style as highly desirable. The intense promotion of Western lifestyles and their concomitant undermining of local values support Schiller’s idea of cultural imperialism, where local cultures may be disrupted as a result of the cultural flows from the dominant culture to the subaltern. However, I tend to agree with Cowen who argues that this dominant culture flow is more a response to the market.\textsuperscript{699} Thus,


\textsuperscript{699} Cowen, “Why Hollywood Rules the World, and Whether We Should Care.”
the dominance of the Western lifestyle for women in the magazines published in Indonesia is a way to attract the market: readers who are interested in a Western lifestyle. These readers are attracted by the fantasies of being a modern, progressive, and independent Westernized woman sold by the magazines.

Unfortunately, the Western formula in representing women tends to discount the social and cultural environment of Indonesia and the importance of religion in Indonesia. For most Indonesian readers, the representations offer more fantasy than reality, and can even be said to present an escape from reality. An example of fantasy offered in the magazines is the representation of women’s sexuality. It is true that not all Indonesians are sexually conservative. The traditional religious manuals on sexuality like the *Serat Centhini* in Java\(^{700}\) and epic *kakawin* poetry and *tutur* in Bali\(^{701}\) are proof that sexuality and sexual pleasure are recognised by Indonesians. Moreover, contemporary Indonesian adolescents are sexually more open, more active and more experimenting than earlier generations.\(^{702}\) These young people often turn to media, including magazines, as sources of information on sex and sexuality. Nevertheless, the idea of sexual freedom outside marriage is far from the reality of Indonesian women. Parker’s study on Minangkabau adolescents in West Sumatra presented a finding that premarital sex was regarded as immoral by Minangkabau youth.\(^{703}\) These young people

\(^{700}\) *Serat Centhini* is a Javanese manuscript written in Yogyakarta in the 1930s. This book is basically an instruction manual for would-be husbands to inform the readers about how to choose a good wife/sexual partner (based on physiognomy) and how sex works (based on ‘the etiquette of sexual intercourse’). See Edwin P. Wieringa, “A Javanese Handbook for Would-Be Husbands: The Sorat Candraning Wanita,” *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 33, no. 3 (2002): 431–49.


\(^{703}\) Lyn Parker, “Theorising Adolescent Sexualities in Indonesia — Where ‘Something Different Happens’,” *Intersections: Gender and Sexuality in Asia and the Pacific*, no. 18 (2008),
took seriously the risk of religious sanction if they had premarital sex. Parker argues that instead of only targeting middle-class youth or the products of popular culture like most studies on Indonesian adolescents and sexuality, researchers must take into consideration the different background of Indonesian youth in terms of ethnicity, religiosity, language, history and socio-economic classes. There are many girls and women in Indonesia who are still subject to strong social, cultural and religious controls. The adolescents who use the magazines as references for sex and sexuality and those who resist the idea of premarital sex prove Salwen and Gables’ argument that in cultural imperialism, Western culture may change local cultures, or may be resisted by the locals. In short, readers of internationally-licensed women’s magazines in Indonesian may adopt the Western culture, or resist it.

Given that the most dominant representations are Western representations, a question should be raised about the adaptation of the content to fit the local Indonesian context. The idea of having local editions of magazines is to have some local content or to have the original content adapted to or even transformed into local content. However, looking at the domination of Western content in the Indonesian magazines, I can say that the Indonesian editions do not succeed in contextualising the content for Indonesian readers. The large difference between the two cultural settings, Australia and Indonesia, seems to have become an obstruction in the attempt to adapt the original content of the publication to the Indonesian context. The homogeneous target audience of both editions, the urban middle-class woman, adds to the complexities of appropriating and contextualising the content. The Western lifestyle, as I discussed earlier, does not always have a positive meaning for Indonesians. The magazines’ emphasis on individualisation and sexual freedom may be seen by Indonesian readers as having a negative influence on Indonesians and upsetting the traditional norms and values of Indonesians. In

particular, the promotion of free sexuality in a very open way can be read by the Indonesian readers as promoting *pergaulan bebas* (free socialising), which is a major concern in Indonesia.

Although the way women are represented by the magazines is dominated by a Western orientation, this does not mean that the magazines, in particular Indonesian editions, do not have any local content. A few locally-sensitive examples can be found in the Indonesian magazines; for example, the issue of inter-religious marriage in Indonesia or the pressure to get married. The articles on local celebrities can also be considered an attempt to adapt content, despite the fact that the local celebrities are presented similarly to the Western celebrities in terms of material success and lifestyle. In the same way, the use of local models can be regarded as including local content despite the fact that most of the local models have ‘Caucasian ‘features and fair skin. The absence of and silence about some issues can also be seen as presenting local content. For instance, silence about contraception in Indonesian women’s sexual confessions shows the lack of formal sex education in Indonesia; similarly, the absence of discussion about de facto relationships as the end goal of a relationship shows the fact that Indonesian people cannot just live together without getting married, because cohabitation is unacceptable. Also, Indonesians’ positive view of fatness, as a sign of prosperity, results in the lack of tips and articles on body image in Indonesian editions. Although there are only a few examples, the attempt to include local content in the internationally-licensed magazines makes the magazines feel ‘glocal’—a combination of global and local considerations.

My thesis has shown that women are represented similarly by the internationally-licensed women’s magazines in two different settings, Australia and Indonesia. The similarity is basically Western culture. The thesis has described how ‘race’/ethnicity and class are represented by the images and narratives employed in the
magazines. It has also illustrated the difficulties in adapting the original Western content
to local Indonesian conditions, as a result of the large cultural differences between the
two cultures and the assumption by the magazine editors of a homogeneous target
readership.

The publication of internationally-licensed women’s magazines in Indonesia has
the potential to open access to global cultural flows. The women’s magazines represent
trends in popular culture and globalisation. Unfortunately, the global cultural flow tends
to be a one-way cultural flow from the West to Indonesia. The representation of women
in internationally-licensed women’s magazines is a fantasy, or even an escape, for most
Indonesian women, though it is true for some women. However, the illusory
representation may inspire some readers.

Apparently, women’s magazines consider that the issue of reality is not
important. As Marie O’Riordan, the editor of Elle, in her interview with Gaudoin, said,
‘A women’s magazine is all about fantasy and escapism. They don’t buy magazines for
a reality check. Their thinking is, “This is for me”’. The impact of the representation
of women in internationally-licensed women’s magazines on their readers, especially
their Indonesian readers, remains contentious. Therefore, further study on the impact of
the Western lifestyle on Indonesian women readers is needed in order to get a better
understanding of the functioning of women’s magazines in society.

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