REPRESENTATIONS OF WOMEN IN *femina*:

AN INDONESIAN WOMEN’S MAGAZINE

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This thesis is presented in fulfilment of the Degree of Master of Philosophy at Murdoch University, Western Australia, 1997.
I declare that this thesis, for the degree of Master of Philosophy, is my own account of my own research and contains, as its main content, work which has not previously been submitted for a degree at any other tertiary institution.

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Suzy Azeharie
17 August, 1997
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Abstract

Since the advent of the women’s movement, the mass media and literary classics have become targets for intensive scrutiny by some feminists who are concerned with the role and influence the media and literature play in promoting a gendered society. This thesis, focuses mainly on representations of Indonesian women as presented by the Jakarta-based women’s magazine, femina. By analysing six articles that appeared in the magazine from the 1970s to the 1990s, representations of gender relationships have been highlighted.

Shaped dominantly by Islamic beliefs, and the Javanese values, which consist of a syncretic blend of Animist, Hindu, Buddhist and Islamic beliefs, contemporary Indonesian society is dominated by a strong political state and patriarchal value system which downgrades women. Resulting from the political changes introduced by the New Order, there has been a pivotal transformation of Indonesian women’s organisations. The regime strongly encourages wives’ organisations, despite the full equality guaranteed to men and women by the 1945 Constitution. It is demanded of Indonesian women that their foremost duties are their motherly and wisely roles. The influence of the priyayi, the Javanese elite, who believe that woman’s destiny is primarily centred on her role as wife and mother, is partially responsible for the continuing influence of this ideal and the way it subordinates women to men. The religious traditions are also not without considerable influence in this area. These values can be found in the articles examined. Further, the thesis investigates attitudes to women who work outside the home, the double burden that they carry, and any changes in the representations of women and gender relations over the twenty years as revealed in femina.
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I thank my son, Hanindya, for being so understanding throughout the writing process, and also for MP.
Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my mother, Nurwilis bint Noor, the most important Minangkabau woman in my life - who I miss so much. I only wish she could have been here among her family.
Introduction

This thesis, in general, focuses on representations of women as presented by the Jakarta-based women’s magazine *femina*. By analysing some articles that appear in the magazine from the 1970s-90s, representations of female-male relationships will also be highlighted.

With the advent of the women’s movement, the mass media and literary classics have become targets for intensive scrutiny by some feminists who are concerned with the role and influence the media and literature play in promoting a gendered society. Feminists note that the media is capable of reaching millions of individuals simultaneously and these women are aware that ideas, language and image are essential in forming women’s and men’s lives.

Scott defines gender as ‘a social category (masculine or feminine) imposed on a sexed body’. As a category of analysis she suggests that gender ‘refers only to those areas - both structural and ideological - involving relations between the sexes’ (Scott, 1986:1056-7). Greene and Kahn suggest that a male perspective has dominated and monopolised fields of knowledge in a context where the ‘inequality of the sexes is neither a biological given nor a divine mandate, but a cultural construct’. As a result, one can postulate that the media and literature are, ‘a proper subject of study for any humanistic discipline’ (Greene and Kahn, 1985:1-2). They further contend that by challenging the dominant male patterns of thought within media and literature, women’s perspectives and experiences will be reconstructed (Ibid, 6). Within the field of communication studies, Lana F. Rakow suggests that
gender research involves ‘being engaged in questions about the role of communication in the construction and accomplishment of a gender system’ (1990:146). Liberal feminists, such as Kathryn Cirksena and Lisa Cuklanz, argue for three lines of inquiry; rhetorical studies, gender difference research and content analysis (1992:23-4), while radical feminists insist on criticising the ways in which language is controlled and formed to perpetuate patriarchal ideology (Ibid, 30).

According to Annette Kuhn, feminist media scrutiny began in USA in 1968, during a Miss America contest (1987:2). From that moment of critical challenge, intensive analysis of stereotypical representations of women by the mass media, and of the way in which language determines and constrains women has been conducted. Indeed, the politics of the women’s movement, as Kuhn argues further, has always been committed to challenging negative images, meanings and stereotypical representations of women (1987:3). In general, feminist theories offer an understanding of the root cause of women’s general devaluation in society (Steeves, 1987:96). According to Steeves, the term ‘feminist’ implies ‘a theoretical acknowledgment of woman’s traditional devaluation in relation to men with the assumption that the relationship needs to change’ (Ibid). In this way, patriarchy, as a male-dominated society, has been blamed as being at the core of women’s devaluation.

The concept of patriarchy, as developed within feminist discourse, refers widely to men’s power and dominance over women. The term itself, which literally
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means ‘the rule of the father’, was first introduced in 1970 by Kate Millet in her analysis of gender relations (Zeenatunnisa, 1988:14). However, patriarchy has been defined differently by some contemporary feminists. According to Susan Alice Watkins, et al, radical feminists emphasise power relations, a relationship of domination and subordination between men and women, and they tend to analyse institutions, like the family, through which patriarchy is sustained (1992:120). Issues which were formerly considered private, such as sexual violence, wife battering and pornography were first exposed by radical feminists (Van Zoonen, 1991:36). Socialist feminists argue that a combination of male domination and class exploitation is the causative factor of women’s oppression (Watkins, 1992:120). Liberal feminists, on the other hand, challenge the unequal position of women in society. They demand that equality and liberty, as general principles, should apply to women as well as men (Van Zoonen, 1991:35). To sum up, I, tend to agree with Drude Dahlerup’s opinion that the system of capitalist power associated with patriarchy ‘leaves women at the bottom, in term of power, status and income’ (1987:97). I hold this position, because, in spite of the various manifestations of patriarchy in each culture and class context, I believe that there are also common aspects which cross cultural and class barriers to affect women. As Juliet Mitchell argues, basically women’s subordination is situated in four dominant areas: production, namely women’s role in economic production; reproduction of children; sexuality, including its regulation and control and socialisation of children (1971:101). All these factors impact on the derogatory status of women in society.
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However, as an ideology, patriarchy is formed and maintained through a complex set of institutions, like the family, religion, indigenous custom and the media as I shall discuss in the following thesis.

Reports on representations of women in the media, undertaken by UNESCO confirm that the media ‘contribute to systems of representation that make up ideological processes in society’ (Steeves, 1989:89). Concomitant with the degrading treatment of women handed out by the media, and the limited representations of women offered, there is constraint put on the audience’s image of women that reinforces traditional gender relations (Pingree et al., 1976). In addition, the situation of women and their representation in the media very much depends on the type of society, culture and political situation of a particular country. In Indonesia, this situation appears, at least at first sight in the New Order period, very unfavourable to women, despite the frequently voiced idea that Javanese women have a higher status than other women in the Asian region (Errington, 1990:1). However, as Leacock and Nash argue, there is a link between the derogation of woman and state control of the population at large (1981:246). They explain, that the depreciation of women and nature ‘is not a characteristic of egalitarian society’, but appears with the formation of centralised states, political hierarchies, and social inequalities. By using the example of peasant societies in South East Asia, Mick Moore, as early as 1973, demonstrated that sexual equality is related, among other criteria, to the level of state control (1973:913).
Shaped predominantly by Islamic beliefs, and by what Geertz calls the religion of Java, which consists of a syncretic blend of Animist, Hindu, Buddhist and Islamic beliefs (1960:5-6), contemporary Indonesian society is dominated by a strong political state and a patriarchal value system which downgrades women. Therefore, in the following part, because of its influence on women and the representation of women in the media, I offer a description of the Indonesian political context.

**General Political Context: the prevalent situation regarding Indonesian women**

Indonesia proclaimed its independence on August 17, 1945, after having been colonised by various nations since the early 15th century. During this time the Dutch were the predominant colonisers. Indonesia consists of 13,667 islands and is inhabited by more than 300 ethnic groups of which the Javanese, who number more than 90 million, are the most dominant (Cooley, 1992:230). Because of the influence of the political and cultural hegemony of Java, both past and present, many argue that Javanese culture influences the entire modern Indonesian society (Geertz, 1960:6; Anderson, 1972; Djajadiningrat-Nieuwenhuis, 1987:47; Raharjo and Hull, 1984:115; Ricklefs, 1988:272).

Following the failed bloody coup d'état in Jakarta on 1 October, 1965, in which six senior army generals were abducted and killed, General Suharto, who was not on the coup’s target list, took command of the army. The Indonesian Communist
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Party, the PKI, and its affiliated organisations were eventually blamed for the uprising. Nonetheless, it remains an unanswered question as to how many people were brutally killed following that abortive attempt. Wieringa calculates that more than half a million people were killed and three-quarters of a million were arrested, many of whom were detained without trial (1988:84). The question as to who masterminded that ill-planned coup, or to what extent the PKI and President Sukarno were engaged in the attempt, are still unclear. Wolf argues that recently discovered evidence suggests the involvement of the Central Intelligence Agency, the CIA (1992:34).

In a document issued in 1966, which has become known as the ‘Eleventh of March Order’, Suharto was given authority by President Sukarno to take whatever security steps he thought necessary to save the situation (Latif, 1985). Only two years after the failed attempt, Suharto and his allies successfully managed to establish military control over the country and this period was claimed as the ‘New Order’, to differentiate and characterise it from the Sukarno ‘Old order’ (Ricklefs, 1988:272). However, as Krishna Sen states, it is ‘new only in the history of the New Order, not the history of Indonesia’ (1993:116).

In addition, the New Order reintroduced the Javanese notion of Pancasila as the ideological base of the State, and presented itself as the guardian and protector of both Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution, from those ‘dissidents’ they defined as enemies of the state. The five principles of Pancasila – belief in God, humanity,
unity, democracy and universal prosperity - were originally introduced by Sukarno during his period, but it was only under Suharto’s control, that *Pancasila* and the 1945 Constitution were successfully reinforced as the basis of the Republic (Hooker and Dick, 1993:2-3). Along with *Pancasila*, the New Order also promoted the national motto of ethnic and cultural diversity, Bhinneka Tunggal Ika [Unity in Diversity] (Cooley, 1992:230).

According to O’Neill, Suharto’s government created a link between religion, the cultural tradition of Java and the State (1993:151-9). In this case, the State is connected with both *Pancasila* and Islam. This relationship is promoted throughout Indonesia, where at the apex of the roof of all government-sponsored mosques there is an inscription of ‘Allah’. While, this in itself is not unusual, what does make it significant is that the ‘Allah’ lettering is surrounded by the five-sided symbol that has become associated with *Pancasila* ideology (160). In addition, the architecture of these state mosques, incorporates the clearly identifiable Javanese *joglo* roof shape, making the link between the Javanese notion of *Pancasila* and Islam even more pronounced. To build these mosques a ‘voluntary’ levy of Rp. 500 per month is deducted from the salary of every Indonesian civil employee, whether or not they are Muslim. This money goes to the Foundation of *Amal Bakti Muslim Pancasila* dedicated to promoting and legitimating the bond between Islam and *Pancasila*. In the office compound where I work in Bengkulu, Sumatra, the Foundation of *Amal Bakti Muslim Pancasila* has provided a mosque with the roof line and syncretised Allah/*Pancasila* symbol that has become readily identifiable with the Foundation and hence the State.
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*Repelita*, the Five Year Development Plan launched by the government, has somehow brought an improving economic growth and political stability. In order to achieve its far-reaching development projects outlined in the Five Year Development Plan, the importance of 'stability and centrally directed government’ are being stressed by the New Order (Hooker and Dick, 1993:2-3). The expansion of industrialisation and increased investment from foreign capital, has partly contributed to the emergence of the Indonesian urban middle class family which is both ‘urbanised’ and ‘westernised’ (3). There are about 2.5 million middle class family households in Indonesia involving 14 million people, with each household spending in average of from $135 - $350 every month (Sudarsono, in *Kompas*, 1996:4).

Now, more than thirty years after the coup, Suharto successfully remains in power, despite intense criticism of his government which is known as corrupt and miss-managed. There is a rumour that prevalent within the military are those who are discontented and who express the opinion that the regime is unsatisfactory (Ricklefs, 1988:66). In rationalising how Suharto can continue to remain in power, Ricklefs explains that Suharto’s presidency is deeply rooted in ‘the quasi-Islamic mysticism of rural Java, which gave him invaluable inner strengths’ (272). This Javanese influence is evident in Suharto’s speeches to lower official staff in which he uses a particular Javanese intonation which he carried into Indonesian and used during his presidential speeches.
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Resulting from the political changes brought by the New Order, there has been a pivotal transformation of Indonesian women’s organisations (Sunindyo, 1993:135). In Indonesia women number 89,873,406, about half the total population (National Census, 1990). Since the 1945 Constitution, Indonesian women have been granted full equal rights with men, but in spite of their heterogeneity as a group, their common role as mothers and housewives is highly glorified in the male dominated Indonesia context. In 1973, the Ministry of Internal Affairs officially implemented the PKK Pembinaan Kesejahteraan Keluarga [Family Welfare Programme] (Sullivan, 1983:148). Before it became a central government project, PKK was a local initiative introduced into Central Javanese province in the late 1960s by Mrs. Muladi, wife of the then governor. The PKK promotes five major roles for women, which are:

1. woman as loyal backstop and supporter of her husband
2. woman as caretaker of the household
3. woman as producer of future generations
4. woman as the family’s prime socialiser
5. woman as Indonesian citizen (148)

The PKK, presented as a non-political women’s organisation, has become the primary channel of communication between the State and village women (Sullivan, 1983:148). The programme has been highly criticised for its undue emphasis on woman’s role as wife and mother (Wieringa, 1988). In addition, its organisational structure is strictly a top-down model, adopted from the bureaucratic and military hierarchy. The head of the PKK is always the wife of the bureaucratic leader. For example, in any province, the governor’s wife will automatically be the leader of the
PKK, regardless of her capabilities. The PKK has provided the impetus for the growing number of wives’ organisations. However, Cooley contends that these wives’ associations differ markedly from the autonomous and semi-autonomous women’s political organisations that were affiliated with major political parties during the Sukarno era (1992:226). One of these organisations, GERWANI, was the most influential women’s organisation during Sukarno’s days. This powerful socialist women’s organisation was dismissed by the New Order after a failed coup attempt in 1965. From its start, GERWANI was heavily involved in helping peasant women (Wieringa, 1988:79). They combat illiteracy in women, demanded heavy penalties in cases of rape and abduction, held rallies to procure a democratic marriage law and formed childcare centres to free mothers to earn income (69-79).

After the establishment of the PKK, numerous other wives’ associations were formed (Papanek, 1983:73). These included Jalasenastri [the Navy Wives’ Association], IIDI [the Doctors Wives’ Association], IISEI [the Economists Wives’ Association], Dharma Wanita [the Civil Servants Wives’ Association]. At present, forty-six associations are joined together under KOWANI, the national women’s umbrella organisation (Cooley, 1992:226). Unlike GERWANI, the membership of these wives’ associations is mainly based on a woman’s marital status and her husband’s work position, and the organisational hierarchy parallels the work hierarchy of their bureaucrat husbands. Cooley suggests that these wives’ associations cater to women’s interests and provide women with regular meetings
that give them the chance to hold office. In this sense, Cooley suggests, they learn to be responsible and develop a feeling of importance (242). Unfortunately, Cooley neglects to mention that it is always the wives of high ranking officials who hold leading positions, and therefore lower ranking wives have no opportunity to take part in decision making within the organisational structure.

Furthermore, these government controlled women’s organisations claim to be entirely social with no political goal (Cooley, 1992:237). However, as Sunindyo argues, a strong motherhood ideology - how to be a good and subservient wife, a dedicated mother for the children, and the nation - is the dominant focus of these associations - (1993:136). Sunindyo uses Dharma Wanita as her example. The Dharma Wanita, the Civil Servants’ Association, was established on August 5th, 1974, and became the umbrella organisation for wives’ associations in all State departments. Dharma Wanita has about 2.8 million members throughout Indonesia, since the wives of civil servants automatically become members (Sunindyo, 1993:135). Many have criticised this, the largest association of women, for failing to advocate women’s rights and issues. The mysterious death, in 1993, of Marsinah, a female activist worker, has never been tackled by Dharma Wanita and neither has the issue of the jugun ianfu, those women who were brutally forced to satisfy the sexual needs of Japanese soldiers during their period of colonisation in Indonesia. Cooley is critical of the Dharma Wanita for not attempting to change the position of Indonesian women in society. Instead she suggests that its members’ primary concern is to maintain woman’s traditional societal roles in relation to her husband.
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and family, and to support her husband in the work place environment (1992:238). Similar to the PKK, the Dharma Wanita’s structure remains dominated by high ranking male civil servants, who act as ‘supervisors’. By forming the Dharma Wanita, the New Order, can ensure the political loyalty of the wives of civil servants, while at the same time controlling them in order to secure political stability (Sunindyo, 1993:135).

Women and The Law

In 1978, the Junior Minister for Women’s Affairs was appointed in the New Order cabinet. This position was elevated to that of State Minister in 1983. While it sounds grand and influential, the function of this position is limited to that of ‘coordinator ministry’ - in other words the female minister coordinates women’s activities and programmes throughout all State Departments. In spite of her far reaching portfolio as far as women are concerned, this minister, unlike other State Department heads, has no offices in other provinces. Along with the appointment of a State Minister for Women’s Affairs, the regime also approved the inclusion of women in its five year Principal Outlines of State Policy [GBHN]. Thus, women are officially acknowledged as a focus of government development.

In addition, after intensive and long debate between Muslim leaders and several women’s organisations, on January 2, 1974, the Indonesian Marriage Law,
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known as UU I/74, was enacted (Soewondo, 1977:283-5). Among other issues it deals with polygamy, minimum marrying age, rights and responsibilities of husband and wife, divorce procedures and marital property (Suryakusuma, 1996:102). It should be noted that polygamous marriage, permissible under UU I/74, is restricted to male Muslim believers, since polyandry is not considered an option for Muslim women and Christianity does not acknowledge multiple marriage.

Nevertheless, the New Order felt the need to introduce additional laws to control the marriage and divorce of civil servants, since they are expected to be models for society. Suryakusuma argues that the move was triggered by several cases in which high ranking officials were engaged in adulterous liaisons, which incensed Indonesian’s First Lady, Tien Suharto, and encouraged her to pursue the enactment of an additional law (1996:101-4). This law, PP 10/1983, applies to all civil servants. Among other things it covers marriage, repudiation and polygamy. In contrast to Islamic laws and to UU I/74 which allows Muslim males to indulge in polygamous marriage, PP 10/1983 actively discourages male civil servants from taking an additional wife (105-6). However, this restriction is not adhered to, and, as Suryakusuma argues, many high ranking staff hypocritically bend the rules and have concubines instead.
Introduction

Representation of Indonesian Women in literature and the media

There have been quite a few studies done on representations of Indonesian women in the mass media which explore literature, pop novels, text books, television, films, printed media and women's magazines. Dutch scholars, Peter Carey and Vincent Houben, discuss the image of Javanese women in Dutch colonial literature, because they are concerned with the lack of attention given to women in the vast bureaucratic records accumulated throughout the period of Dutch colonialism. According to these scholars, the surviving manuscripts deal primarily with court women, and are focused mainly on family history. In those documents, the priyayi [bourgeoisie] Javanese woman is depicted as a, ‘simpering and self effacing doll, exquisite but empty-headed’ (Louis Couperus and J. B. Ruzius in Carey and Houben, 1987:13). She is also portrayed as having potential sexual promise and untiring sexual needs (13). Carey and Houben believe that ‘the social history of Java will always remain incomplete’ (12) until the whole picture of Javanese women during the period of colonisation is fully understood. From their own research, they resolved that Javanese noble women played a crucial role in the military, religious and economic affairs of the community, and were agents of continuity at the Javanese courts. Furthermore, they concluded that women, like the Javanese heroine, Sumbadra, wife of Arjuna; Ken Dhedhes, a powerful Javanese woman, wife of the King of Singasari around the fourteenth century; and Ratu Kidul, the Goddess of Java sea, were represented as having great spiritual power (15-17).
Dutch scholar, Els Postel-Coster, on the other hand, explored the extent to which novels written during Dutch colonisation can be read to give a picture of gender relations within Minangkabau society. Postel-Coster researched ten Indonesian novels written in the Malay language by seven indigenous authors, during the period of Dutch occupation. According to Postel-Coster, the main theme emerging from each of the novels was the struggle to break down rigid norms and traditional rules established by society. Postel-Coster assumes that this repetitive theme is representative of the actual life of the people, because, like Tinneke Helwig, she theorised that fiction, poems and other forms of cultural expression are reflections of the culture in which the writer lives. The novels are therefore representative of family life in Minangkabau (1987:225-36).

Minangkabau is a matrilineal society in which adat, the indigenous custom, and Islam both play substantial roles. In this society, males customarily move to another region in the pursuit of financial gain, a practice called merantau, while women take care of the matrilineal corporate property which they own. Postel-Coster concluded that these sharply contrasting roles between female and male are represented in the novels and can be summarised in the following way:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>rantau</td>
<td>darat, home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mobility</td>
<td>stability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>market economy</td>
<td>subsistence activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>individual performance</td>
<td>collective responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>free sexual life</td>
<td>chastity and conjugal fidelity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>adat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1987:236)
Introduction

Tinneke Helwig approaches the topic from a different angle providing an account of Indonesian female rape victims in two Indonesian pop novels, *Karmila* and *Cintaku di Kampus Biru*. She discerned that not one of the vast number of reviews of these two novels paid attention to the way in which the women characters were constructed. Helwig attempts to fill this gap by elaborating a female orientated approach to the novels and her starting point is her belief that there is a relationship between what is written in literature and reality, in this case the novels reflect Indonesian society. Her study identifies certain stereotypical representations of woman as rape victim. What she finds striking in the novels is that no blame is placed on the rapist and the act of rape is perceived as momentary sexual violence that has no impact on the future life of the woman. As Nawal El Saadawi’s findings demonstrate, this is not a phenomenon limited to Indonesia. In Arab society the loss of virginity, even in the case of rape, will impact negatively on a whole family’s reputation. Consequently, incidents of rape are usually kept quiet, enabling the rapist to remain safe and free to repeat the behaviour (1980:18). In the Indonesia novels, Helwig describes how the blame for rape is placed squarely on the behaviour of the woman victim/survivor. A ‘good’ woman is one who protects her chastity and does not seductively tempt a rapist! Furthermore, if a child is born as the result of the rape, the woman is expected to sacrifice everything to fulfil her motherhood duties, which are highly valued in society (1987:240-51).

In the context of elementary school text books in Indonesia, Martha Logsdon
made an assessment of gender roles as they were presented. Her curiosity in this topic emerged when the New Order government proposed a new curriculum and contributed textbooks at government expense. The series of textbooks that Logsdon examined was *Pancasila Moral Education* which provides, ‘political socialization in ways supportive of the current regime’ (1985:244). Her study investigated books printed before 1981 and reflect the government decision about what should be taught to children. Logsdon found that in usage questions, *ibu*, the word for mother is never capitalised, while the opposite is the case for *bapak*, the word for father. Gender role content is also sharply divided. Mothers do household chores, shopping, and pray. Fathers, as family heads, have occupations, lead children, support and protect the family. An unbalanced portrayal of other adult roles is also evident from the texts. Women are seen as teachers, sellers in the market, and dancers - which, incidentally, is not considered an occupation. On the other hand, men are seen as teachers, farmers, road repairers, civil employees, doctors, school principals, policemen etc. Regarding the activities and characteristic of boys and girls in the texts, Logsdon discovered that boys appear more frequently than girls and that leadership positions were always represented as being in the hands of males. She argued that the unequal gender division represented in text books impacted on the students in the classrooms where boys spoke up in the class and girls did not (1985:243-57).

The social discourse on gender, represented in Indonesia’s state-owned television film production, was examined by Saraswati Sunindyo. She focused her study on the state-owned television, TVRI, because TVRI as a state apparatus
accommodates the ruling class’s views and interests. In researching three Indonesian cinetrons [cinema electronic], or television dramas, broadcast in 1989, she concluded that the New Order government promoted the motherhood ideology. A woman lawyer from the middle-upper classes, in one of the cinetrons examined, is presented as making the decision not to continue pursuing her legal career. Instead she gave it up to fulfil her domestic responsibilities. On the other hand, a woman market-coolie was portrayed as a hard worker struggling for her family. According to Sunindyo, working as a coolie, does not seem to threaten male hegemony, while working as a lawyer could be considered to challenge the status quo. Indeed, as priyayi, it is demanded that she be a ‘lady’ and perform her motherly and wifely duties foremost. In her final notes, Sunindyo concludes that the cinetrons are used as a hegemonic medium in relation to representations of gender domination (1993:134-45).

Krishna Sen discusses several Indonesian films in order to unravel the increasingly complex range of representations of women’s bodies and voices in the 1980s. There are four sensitive issues in Indonesian political discourse about which film makers are not permitted to deal. These include ethnicity, religion, race and group (class). Sen concludes from her research that among other things, the lack of interest from the State in censoring gender allows film makers to provide contradictory messages to women. On one hand, they take the opportunity to use female characters to articulate critical, political opinions, while, on the other hand, there is a proliferation of semi-pornographic movies which stereotype women as
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sexual objects. Sen argues that the new representations of Indonesian women in cinema indicate 'new ways of colonizing women’s voices and women’s bodies' (1993:116-30).

In a one day seminar held in Jakarta, Debra Yatim explained that the representation of Indonesian women in the printed media is solely restricted to the domestic area. She suggests that this is because of the lack of women journalists compared to men. According to Yatim less than 9 per cent of all journalists are women. Her figures show that, of the total 5,148 journalists, only 461 are women (1992:1-7).

Another scholar, Tamrin Amal Tomagola, investigated both the ideological and the structural underpinnings of the discourse in advertisements and rubrics in four Indonesian women’s magazines, Kartini, femina, Sarinah, and Pertiwi, during the period 1986-89. His project was to explore the ways Indonesian women’s magazines are ‘intensifying, decomposing and recomposing the existing gender notions among urban middle and upper class educated women’ (1990:8). From his analysis of 150 editions, Tomagola revealed that Indonesian women are, in general, represented by five images: the pigura [the frame], the pilar [the pillar], the peraduan [the bed], the pinggan [the dish], and the pergaulan [the social life]. From 111 advertisements that he studied, Tomagola concludes that the diversity of Indonesian women is homogenised and they are represented as confined to their motherly and wifely duties and subordinate to their husband (1990).
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As far as women's magazines are concerned Ashadi Siregar uses content analysis, to assess the content Kartini and Sarinah magazines. He provides empirical evidence for fifteen categories of analysis. For example he counts the proportion of male to female authors or, for rubric analysis, he assesses whether it was a reporting or a feature article (1992). Siregar concludes that female authors write 45 percent of the articles in Kartini, and male authors 30 percent. However, in 25 percent of the articles, he discovered that it was impossible to discern whether the author was a man or a woman. More journalistic reportage was carried in Kartini than Sarinah, with more women than men journalists writing articles. In addition, there were more stories about big urban cities than rural areas (Ibid, 65). Although Siregar produces interesting statistics, his study remains quite superficial and does not provide any contribution towards the study of representation of women in the media.

Situated within the context of this body of research of the media and gender in Indonesia, my research concentrates on the representation of women in femina through the study of the way gender relations is presented in the magazine's articles, but with a different focus. I also analyse changes in the representations of women between the 1970s and 1990s.

Moreover, this study was written from my point of view as an Indonesian woman from the Minangkabau region. Having been raised and educated mainly in Jakarta I chose to marry an aristocratic Javanese. My mother worked in Bengkulu as
Suzy Azeharie

a lawyer specialising in domestic violence and rape. So that I became aware of the problem faced by many women, she took me to the courts as an observer. She also discussed particularly difficult cases with my sister and me explaining the problems and the way the justice system mitigated against women. She encouraged us, as women, to be financially independent in a way that safeguarded our investments.

In early 1991, together with other friends, I started the Foundation of Legal and Consultation Aid for Women and Family in Bengkulu. I acted as a coordinator until leaving for Australia, when my mother replaced me. When she died in 1995, my sister become coordinator. In the early days, with the help of the wife of the Governor of Bengkulu, Mrs. Razie Yahya, the Foundation was provided with a room, rent free, in the mosque compound, from which the activities were coordinated. Since the death of my father late last year, however, the Foundation is situated in my parents unoccupied house.

In the Foundation, my friends and I work entirely as volunteers. Even though the Ford Foundation funds us every six months with Rp.750,000, this only covers administration. As far as further funding is concerned, we rely on donation although we gained capital from a one day seminar we organised in 1993. The volunteers comprise lawyers (one of them is a male), medical doctors, and lecturers. Basically, the Foundation helps women, regardless of their ethnicity and beliefs and charges only a very minimal charge. However, in some cases, the women who come to us are so poor, and desperately needing help, that we bear the expenses. In the past we have held a sensitising programme for women and organised free consultation days.

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Cases that we deal with concern deception, domestic violence, rape, and marriage disputes. As far as marriage dispute is concerned, we try not to bring the case to the court in order to avoid divorce, but if divorce is unavoidable, we work to force the man to meet his responsibilities in paying financial support for his children. Many times we have found that men abandoned this obligation once they are divorced.

In addition, I was also an early reader of women’s magazines including *femina* and *Kartini*. Because of my work with the Foundation, I began to become disenchanted with the content of these magazines. My growing sensitivity to the problems of women lead me to the realisation that there was a discrepancy between my experiences of the women who came to the foundation, and the Javanese centred images represented in *femina* and *Kartini*. I also came to realise that these magazines, aimed specifically at a female readership, were part of the problem rather than part of the solution for women.

I chose to focus the study on *femina* because it is the oldest magazine for women to exist in the New Order period. It was published for the first time in September 1972 and publication continues up to the present time. *femina* is designed to target middle upper-class women in big Indonesian cities. Accordingly, *femina*, represent the views of the Indonesian Javanese middle class. As I shall argue in the following chapters, almost 60 per cent of Indonesian society is made up of Javanese, and consequently Javanese culture has a great deal of influence on society. As a result, Javanese values have become the model as well as standard reference for various values in society (Raharjo and Hull, 1984:115).
I started this research by the end of July 1994. To begin, I took the advice of one of the senior editor staff of *femina* and wrote a formal letter to the chief editor of the magazine, in which I asked permission to do research in *femina*. I described that for the research I would need to study the magazine’s archives, to conduct interviews with staff members as well as distributing questionnaires. At first, it seemed that the chief editor was rather hesitant about the project and reluctant to allow me to undertake the research, but I explained that I had met her husband at a conference in Perth and he had encouraged me with the project. She eventually approved my research proposal. As far as the questionnaire was concerned, she demanded that it be handed to the secretary and she refused to have an interview.

Early in August, 1994, I began my study at the *femina* office. I was not provided with a table or a chair, and was forced to use a sort of wooden bench designed for the magazine’s guests while they waited to be seen. It was situated right by the stairs, so that everybody who left or entered the room, could see me. I did not have direct access to the archives. Instead, one staff member, who later became a good friend, was instructed to bring one piece of archive at a time. Since there was no a proper table, and I felt hesitant about asking the staff member to fetch another archive when I had finished with the last, the study proceeded very slowly and I felt very uncomfortable.

On Thursday, September 8, 1994, Sofjan Alisjahbana, the General Manager of *femina* was passing by, and asked me what I was doing. I told him about the research and also gave him my father’s regards since they both were classmate at
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high school. A few minutes later, a secretary came and provided me with a table and chair next to the Chief Editor's room. This gave me legitimacy to be allowed access to the 'archives room' which was situated inside of the pantry on the same floor. In addition, I could take the archive to the photocopy machine on the first floor, and request the man who operated the machine to copy the pages that I wanted. I rewarded him with some money each day. I used to come to the office early in the morning 6.30 am which allowed me to select the archives in the pantry before many people turned up, and would finish my work around 3-4 pm. The staff became more friendly. During lunch time, some of them, would join me to have lunch outside the building or I accompanied them to photograph food prepared by the kitchen division staff for inclusion in the next edition of the magazine. Sometimes we would watch the fashion models in the magazine's studio on the fourth floor as they modelled the clothes for the next issue. When they began to trust me, they started to share their feelings and views about the magazine. These conversations often turned into useful unstructured interviews. Despite an offer from some staff to have lunch in femina's dining hall, I never felt brave enough to eat there. Almost all of the senior editors were obviously unfriendly. During the three months I spent there, until the end of November 1994, they never talked to me. And this situation eventually made me feel uneasy.

When I circulated more than two dozen questionnaire forms (Appendix 1) to the senior editors, I received a very hostile response. Indeed, one woman in
particular was openly abusive and informed other staff members not to fill out the form. Nevertheless, one person was brave enough to disobey and returned the completed questionnaire form via an intermediary. As a result of the hostility of the editors I was forced to abandon this avenue.

Consequently, the sources for this study are two fold. Primary sources comprise *femina* articles, advertisements and photos, and informal conversations and unstructured interviews with staff. And secondly, my analysis is grounded on texts, stemming from the fields of gender studies and Asian studies, most particularly from the disciplines of cultural and anthropological studies.

**Outline**

This study, which examines the representation of women in gender relations articles published in *femina*, is divided into four chapters. The introduction provides the background to the study. It describes appropriate feminists concepts for the thesis and explores feminist critiques of the media. Further, it provides the general political context of Indonesia, and the extent to which the policies and laws impact on Indonesian women. The representation of Indonesian women is also presented. This is followed by a literature research of papers exploring the representation of Indonesian women in the media. Finally, I introduce my subject position and the sources and methodology used in the study.
Introduction

Chapter One describes the *femina* magazine. It explores the legacy of the magazine, and its founding persons. From there, the study investigates the development of the magazine rubrics over the last two decades, as a means of exploring the ways in which *femina* presents the women in its contents. I then examine the various activities conducted by *femina* and deal briefly with Indonesian press law and the censorship of Indonesian press. This is followed by my perceptions of working conditions at the magazine gained from informal conversations with staff members.

Chapter Two analyses the representation of women in marriage from the articles examined. This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section presents three articles, one each from the 1970s, 80s, and 90s. The second section is devoted to comparison and analysis of the three articles. I explore the representation of the married woman. I further analyse what constitutes a ‘good’ woman, why a woman is seen as ‘bad’ by nature, what behaviour constitutes a ‘bad’ woman, and finally what behaviour is expected from women and men. I also discuss the impact of polygamy. In addition, Islamic perspectives, government policies towards Indonesian women, Javanese views and philosophy are all used to explicate the root of the representation of Indonesian women.

Chapter Three discusses the working wife as she is represented by *femina*. As for chapter two, this chapter is divided into two sections. This time I present three different articles, again published in the 1970s, 80s, and 90s in order to see
whether there is any change in the representations of women over time. In the second part, I offer analysis and comparisons of the three articles. I examine what is considered to be a woman’s destiny in the Indonesian cultural context. I describe the discrimination faced by Indonesian working women. This is followed by a discussion of why Indonesian middle class women work in the paid work force, the benefits gained by these ‘working’ women, and conditions acceptable for them to ‘work’. Islamic and Javanese points of view are used to further analyse the impact of government policies on the ‘working’ wife.

The last part of this study concludes the overall discussion and analysis.
Chapter 1

The History and Development of *femina* Magazine

This chapter discusses the history and development of *femina*. Basically, it is divided into two sections. The first section briefly explains the present condition of Indonesian press life, in which journalists work under considerable pressures which are created by the New Order regime. In the second section, the history of Indonesian women’s magazines will be briefly introduced, followed by the development of *femina*. The chapter also describes the founding persons of this magazine, the changing of the magazine’s contents over two decades, and the prevalent working conditions, details of which are based principally on unstructured interviews with the magazine’s staff.

1. Press Life in the New Order

As already mentioned, the military influenced regime under General Suharto is very strong and in a well-constructed position, which, in turn, impacts on the present condition of the Indonesian press. In addition, in regard to Indonesian press life, Article 28 of the Indonesian Constitution 1945 stipulates that, ‘The freedom to associate and to assemble, to express thoughts orally, in writing, and so forth shall be determined by law’. This Article, remains as the basic operating principle of the National Press. According to David Hill, to ensure the full observance of this Article, the New Order subsequently enacted the Basic Principles of the Press,
known as the 1966 Act (1991b: 4). Although, Article 3 states that, ‘The Press has the right of control, criticism and correction of a corrective and constructive nature’, and Article 4 cites, ‘No censorship or bridling shall be applied to the National Press’, unfortunately, it does not always apply in practice. In fact, bridling and many various kinds of censorship still remain in Indonesia. The Permit To Publish (SIT) from the Department of Information, and the Permit To Print (SIC) from the Military Security Authority, which were required by any newspaper publishers as stipulated by Article 20 of the 1966 Act, have, in the 1982 Act, been replaced by a Press Publication Enterprise Permit (SIUPP). This has become one of the powerful weapons in banning particular newspapers (Hill, 1991b: 4-7). The Minister of Information has full authority to withdraw the SIUPP without giving the publisher the opportunity to defend its actions in trial. Hill notes that since the New Order took power, many Indonesian printed media have been banned. The latest, in 1994, were Tempo, the most prestigious Indonesian weekly magazine, and two other magazines; DeTIK and Editor for publishing material with a tone ‘critical’ of the government (Hill, 1994a: 41).

Another strategy to prevent journalists from writing on issues which are considered sensitive by the government is, what is widely known, as a ‘telephone culture’ [budaya tilpon]. To prevent the populace from reading ‘sensitive’ material a government or security official simply phones the publisher asking that the particular issue be not published. The publisher, does not have much choice but to abide by the request. In the mid 1970s, when information technology was not highly developed, the government practiced applying black sticky ink to some magazines, mainly foreign issues, so that the reader was not able to read the content. However, besides
the four sensitive issues which it is widely recognised are not allowed to published in sensational and seditious ways, - that is issues dealing with ethnic, religious, racial, and cross-class (SARA), there are, according to Hill, other topics which are considered equally taboo. These are the business dealings of the President’s family and of senior government and military officers (1994b: 46).

2. A Brief History of Indonesian Women’s Magazines

Relatively little is known of the history of Indonesian women’s magazines and there is certainly no comprehensive and complete documentation. However, according to Myra Sidharta, in 1906, a Chinese woman, Liem Titie Nio, was first to publish a women’s section in a newspaper targeted at educated Chinese. The section was written in Malay (1982: 71). Within the colonial socio structure, after the Dutch and other Europeans who were in the top layer, the Chinese, were directly below them in the second place. Accordingly, the Chinese, along with the third layer, the priyayi, were the groups that benefited most from the education system provided by the colonial system. A particular magazine, De Echo was published for Dutch women (Ibid).

Four years later, according to Sidharta, Poetri Hindia was published as a part of a newspaper called Medan Prijaji, which belonged to three priyayi and educated males. Poetri Hindia was led by a Dutch woman, Laura Staal, but she was replaced in 1911 by a high-born Indonesian woman, Raden Ayu Hendraningrat. Poetri Hindia [The East-Indies Lady] was written in Malay because, unlike the Javanese language, the Malay language is not sharply stratified according to social status.
Malay is, more egalitarian and, consequently, has been widely used among the majority.

The third women’s publication appeared in 1914. *Poetri Mardika* [The Independent Lady], was circulated by the Association of Poetri Mardika. According to Vreede de Stuers, some of the titles that appeared in this publication were: ‘Dealing with Child Marriages’ (1915); ‘Polygamy’ (1915); ‘Forced Marriage Must be Brought to an End’ (1918); and ‘The Feminist Congress in Paris’ (1919) (Tomagola, 1990: 48). This has been followed by seven other women’s publications which were circulated in local dialects. Two of these were published in West Sumatra; one in North Sumatra; four in Java; and one in North Celebes. The first two publications in West Sumatra were named *Soeara Perempoean* [The Voice of Woman], and *Soenting Melayoe* [The Malay Ornament], the publication in North Sumatra was *Perempoean Bergerak* [Woman in Action], and the one published in North Celebes *PIKAT* [The Mother’s Love for her Offspring].

The other three publications which were circulated locally in Java were *Wanito Sworo* [The Voice of Woman] in Javanese language; *Sekar Setaman* [The Blooming Garden] in Malay, and *Panoentoen Isteri* [The Wife’s Guide] in Sundanese. These were published respectively in 1913, 1914 and 1918. Nonetheless, as Vreede de Stuers argues, all of these publications were purely social, aimed at improving women’s position in society, in regard to education (Tomagola, 1990: 52).

The new publications which appeared in the 1920s and 30s, were mainly published by social and political organisations. Tomagola identified three main classifications - Islamic groups, *priyayi* and Christian groups (1990: 56). The
Islamic groups had successfully published *Soeara Aisyiyah* [The Voice of Aisyiyah - a women’s organisation affiliated to Muhammadyah, Islamic Organisation]. The *priyayi* women published *Isteri Indonesia*, [Indonesian Wife] headed by Maria Ulfa Santoso, the first Indonesian female Minister for Social Affairs, and *Sedar* [Alert], in 1930 (Jayawarden, 1986: 150-3). It should be noted that following the publication of *Isteri Indonesia*, it appears that the word *isteri* [wife], was introduced to replace the word *perempuan* or *wanita* [woman]. Proof for this claim can be made with reference to the circulation of *Soeara Isteri Kristen* [The Voice of Christian Wives] by the Javanese Christian Women’s Associations which was followed by other publications, such as *Maanblad Isteri* [The Wives’ Monthly], and *Doenia Isteri* [The Wife’s World].

According to Sidharta, *Doenia Kita* [Our World], which was published by Mrs. A. Latief, was considered a ‘new’ venture in publishing Indonesia women’s magazine’s, since it endeavoured to cater to both traditional domestic life as well as the ‘modern’ life (1982: 74). In one of its editions this tension was evident with women photographed in traditional sarongs and *kebaya* dress, as well as an article about law and an Indonesian woman student’s experience in America (Ibid: 74). After Independence, in 1945, the Indonesian Female Workers Organization, headed by Artati Soedirdjo, the future Indonesian first female Minister for Education, published *Karya* [The Achievement]. There were also several other publications such as the *Soeara Perwari* [The Perwari’s Voice], and *Wanita Sedar* [The Conscious Woman], published by the Indonesian Women’s Consciousness Movement. Other publications were circulated by various organisations such as
Wanita Indonesia [The Indonesian Woman], GERWANI, the leftist women’s organisation, and Saraswati, of the University Indonesia’s Women’s Association

However, when the New Order came to power, only one magazine remained, Keluarga [Family] published by Mrs. A. Latief. Following complicated political intrigues in which Sukarno had withdrawn Indonesia from contact with the western world, the New Order began to restore those contacts and improve economic conditions within the country (Ricklefs, 1981: 268). This, along with the dearth of women’s magazines, partly accounts for the achievements of femina which published for the first time in September 1972.

3. femina’s Early Story

From a very simple offset printer named Pustaka Rakyat in Ketapang Street Jakarta, femina was started. This offset belonged to Sutan Takdir Alisjahbana, one of Indonesia’s authors, who is very prominent in literature and culture (Ami Wahyu: 1992a: 2). For years, this business, which later changed its name to PT Dian Rakyat, had been printing and distributing books for school.

As Irda Triany explains, Sofjan Alisjahbana, a son of Sutan Takdir Alisjahbana, had a new idea which included expanding the business by printing magazines as well as the school text books. He sought printing orders (1989), and Selecta, another magazine, was the first to be printed at Sofjan’s family offset (Wahyu, 1992a: 2). Together with his sister, Mirtati, Sofjan Alisjahbana attempted to produce their own woman’s magazine. Belinda Gunawan explains that Mirtati, who worked as a book editor for Dian Rakyat, believed there was a market for the
publication of a woman’s magazine which differed from other women’s magazines (1988: 2). At that time, there were two other women’s magazines: Keluarga [The Family], published by Mrs. A. Latief in 1957, and Mutiara [The Pearl], owned by Sinar Kasih Publishing Company, a private enterprise, closely associated with the Protestant group in Indonesia (Sidharta: 1982: 75). Nevertheless, it should be noted that since these two magazines are meant for the consumption of the whole family, they could hardly be considered specifically women’s magazines. Johnny Ganda published the western-style Model, but this magazine was not accepted by Indonesian readers because it was too much glamorous, and it closed down not long after it began (Sidharta, 1982: 75). It was this dearth of woman’s magazines, along with having read international magazines, which she borrowed from Sofjan Alisjahbana’s mother in law, Mrs. Soerjomihardjo, eventually inspired Mirtati and Sofjan to publish their own (Wahyu, 1992a: 2).

Irdi Triany recounts that Mirtati, together with her college friend from the Faculty of English Literature, University of Indonesia, Widarti, a mother of two and a lecturer at the University of Indonesia, and Atika Makarim, met regularly three times a week in the house of Sofjan Alisjahbana (1989). Wahyu further tells how they read Burda and Contanze, magazines, printed in German, and Margriet and Libelle, in Dutch to get ideas (1992a: 2). They even sought old magazines from the tukang loak, the itinerant peddler who sells and buys used objects.

After they consolidated their ideas of their dream magazine they occupied a very small garage at Sofjan’s house, which they designed as an office room. They borrowed typewriters from some friends (Wahyu, 1992a: 2). In September 1972, the month of Mirtati’s birthday, the first issue of femina eventually appeared. Despite
the fact that none of them were said to be journalists, they managed to get the requisite print permit from the Minister for Information No. 01322/SK/Dirjen PG/SIT/1972 and the publish permit No.Kep.070-PC/VI/1972 (Pengantar Redaksi, *femina*, 13, 1983). It is unknown how *femina* was funded, although it could be assumed that the money came from Sutan Takdir Alisjahbana’s family.

Mirtati acted as chief editor, assisted by Widarti. Atika Makarim, Pia Alisjahbana (Sofjan’s wife), and Imam Waloejo were responsible for the distribution of the magazine as well as procuring advertisements. Noesreini (Widarti’s sister), was a secretary, financial clerk and reporter. Artwork and layout were handled by Tony Sarojo and Herry Bowo. In addition, there were three assistants, Irma Hardisurja, Miranti Purba and Martha Tilaar who respectively managed the fashion, beauty and housing rubrics.

According to Enny Kusmartiny, the first edition of *femina* was published in forty-two pages, sixteen of which were colour printed. Its cover girl was Tuti Indra Malaon, an actress of the *Populer Theatre*. She was portrayed as a professional woman who did not ‘forget’ [melupakan] her duty to manage the domestic chores (1992: 8). This dual role was represented by her having several hands holding kitchen and office equipment, while a little girl was sitting in front of her. Explicitly, it suggest that a woman’s role is to handle all domestic matters in spite of her professional career (Ibid: 11). From its beginning, *femina*, as Rita N. Pramulyani adds, targeted middle class female readers who had graduated from University (1994: 27-28).
A week after \textit{femina} published its first issue, the staff were worried about the reaction and the response of the readers. Widarti frankly admitted to Rita N.Pramulyani, that she was not brave enough to go to public places for the first week of \textit{femina}'s first publication. Surprisingly, this first edition of 15,000 copies, printed on poor quality paper, and selling for Rp.125 sold out. Criticisms and suggestions came from some people, and this encouraged the staff to the extent that they promised they would continue to publish \textit{femina} (\textit{femina}, 1982: 9).

The second issue of \textit{femina} was eagerly awaited by many of its readers. As a result, the number of issues had to be increased to 25,000, then to 40,000 and to 100,000 (Wahyu, 1992a: 3). In 1976, \textit{femina} reached its highest selling point with 130,000 copies (Ibid). For the first three months, \textit{femina} was published monthly, but in the fourth month it became a fortnightly, in May 1981, it was published weekly (Pramulyani, 1994: 27).

Along with the growth of this magazine and the ‘birth’ of \textit{femina}'s sister teenage magazine, \textit{Gadis} [Teenage Girl], in November 1973, the enterprise outgrew the garage, was which used as the office. Consequently, according to Wahyu, the enterprise was moved to a flat in Kebon Kacang Jakarta (1992a: 4), where the kitchen was being used to test new recipes for the forthcoming edition. Hiang Marahimin, one of the magazine’s senior editors, explained that the need to form this food department was inspired by criticism from \textit{femina}'s reader’s when an incorrect traditional recipe was printed (1992: 47). In fact, the formation of this department turned out to be a brilliant idea, because, based on a research done by the magazine in 1982, the cooking recipe section proved to be is one of \textit{femina} reader’s favourite rubrics (1982: 13).
Beginning in *femina* 6, *Bimba*, a supplement for children, headed by Yus Kayam, wife of Umar Kayam, one of Indonesia's prominent scholars, was included. In addition, in an effort to diversify its company, a humour magazine *Senyum* [Smile] was published, which unfortunately, only lasted for four issues due to continuous warnings from the Minister for Information (Wahyu, 1992a: 4). In 1977, when Mirta gave birth to her third child, she published a magazine, named *Ayahbunda* [The Parent], which became the first magazine targeted at helping young couples to nurse and educate their babies and children in simple ways. *Ayahbunda* is still published today (Wahyu, 1987c: 8).

In 1982, with the increase in activities of *femina*, *Gadis* and *Ayahbunda*, the business was forced to shift again, this time to a site which they themselves owned. Located in Kuningan, the 'golden triangle', the enterprise is now situated in one of the most expensive and prestigious areas in Jakarta. Meanwhile, in 1981, Mirtati who had held the position as chief editor from the beginning, had relinquished her job to Widarti due to health problems (Wahyu, 1987c: 8).

**4. *femina'*s Founders**

**4.1. Mirtati Kartohadiprodjo**

Mirtati, or, as people called her, Mirta, was the first chief editor of *femina* from 1972 to 1981 (Wahyu, 1987c: 7-8). Toeti Adhitama explains that Mirta graduated in
English Literature from the University of Indonesia (1977). Her mother was the second wife of Sutan Takdir Alisjahbana, because his first wife passed away. With his first wife, Sutan Takdir Alisjahbana had three children: Samiati, Iskandar and Sofjan Alisjahbana. When they were still children the mother of Mirta and her sister, Ria, died, after which their father married a German woman, a medical doctor, Dr. Margaret. Together Dr Margaret and Sutan Takdir Alisjahbana had four children: namely Tamalia, twins Marga and Marita, and Mario who presently works as a vice president for *femina*.

Since the death of her mother, as Mirta admitted to Ami Wahyu, she had to mature fast. She wanted to follow in her mother’s footsteps and be active in woman’s organisations and business such as founding the offset of *Dian Rakyat* (1987c: 9). Mirta married a business man, Haryono Kartohadiprodjo in 1968, and due to health problems had to wait for seven years for their first child. She, used to spend her spare time working as an editor at the offset belonged by her own father (Ibid). Working there, she realised that there was no particular magazine for women and it was this fact that had been partly instrumental in inspiring her and Sofjan to publish *femina* in 1972.

Because colour printing was not available in Jakarta during *femina*’s earliest years, Mirta had to go to Singapore and Hong Kong to have coloured pages and the cover printed. This was a luxury at the time and it is obvious that the magazine was funded by and targeted at the elite.

Fifteen months after the birth of Yudha, her first son, Mirta had her second child, a daughter, Kasha (Wahyu, 1987c: 7-8). By this time, her health was worsening and after giving birth to her third child, Rubin, she handed her position in
femina to Widarti in 1981. Nonetheless, Mirta successfully managed to retain her interest as a chief editor with the Ayahbunda magazine, which she had begun in 1977. Unlike femina, which is a weekly magazine, Ayahbunda is published monthly so that Mirta had time to manage her family (Ibid: 7-8). This indicates, that unlike other senior editors, Mirta decided to spend more time with her family and be an active caregiver to her children.

4.2. Widarti Gunawan

Widarti was a graduate of the Faculty of Letters, from the University of Indonesia. As the eldest of a family of eight, her desire to be a teacher was nurtured as educated her younger sisters and brothers (Pramulyani, 1994: 30). She was born in Sukabumi, West Java, on February 29, 1944. Her father was a government official.

At the University, during discussions and seminars, she met Gunawan Mohamad. They married in 1970 and had two children, Hidayat Jati (27), a journalist of Jakarta Post newspaper and Paramita (25), a psychology student at the time of writing. After completing her degree in 1969, Widarti started to teach at her faculty twice a week until 1975 (Ibid: 26). According to Toeti Adhitama, among her students, Widarti was known as a tough lecturer (1977).

When Gunawan and his friends founded the magazine Tempo, which, in 1994, was banned by the New Order regime, Widarti became interested in the printed media. She met Mirtati and they agreed to publish their own woman’s magazine. During an interview with Jakarta Jakatra, in 1994, Widarti acknowledged that in its first years most of femina was imitated from the Dutch
magazines, *Libelle* and *Margriet* (Ibid: 27). The reason for her confession was that, at the time, many middle and upper class Indonesian women read those magazines. She also pointed out that at first the contents of *femina* were of a domestic nature (Ibid: 28). However, it became obvious that although quite a lot of *femina*’s readers had graduated from University, they did not know how to enter the paid work force. Because most of the young and educated women’s mothers were full-time housewives, they could not provide guidance and examples for their daughters outside the home. Widarti explained that *femina* stepped in to fill this gap by writing articles, for example, on how to write application letters in order to get a job (Ibid: 28). Widarti explained that the magazine was aimed at middle and upper class women, not, initially anyway, because of their strength in numbers and their buying capacity, but because that was the only class that she knew very well (Ibid: 28).

Through discussion with the staff, I got the very strong impression that Widarti is known as a very ‘formal’ person by her subordinates. However, as she herself admitted, she found it easier to get along with her subordinates who mostly were females. However, she also recruited a certain number of male journalists as she believed that a mixture of women and men would guarantee that the work was done properly (Ibid: 29).

Her favourite sport was squash and she seemed to dislike gardening. It is also quite interesting to know that in spite of her job as a journalist, Widarti dislikes interviewing people due to a bad experience she had during her very first interview. She was ordered to interview Ni Polok, a Balinese woman who was also the wife of Belgium artist, Le Mayeur. Widarti asked Ni Polok if it was difficult to make living by selling her husband’s paintings in their museum, since they must contain many
sweet memories of her life with Le Mayeur. Ni Polok was reduced to tears by the question, and Widarti found herself too nervous to continue with the interview. She asked somebody else to take over (Ibid: 30). In 1988, when she was studying journalism at Stanford College, San Francisco, she was inspired to print the name \textit{femina} in red on the magazine’s cover (Gunawan, 1988: 3).

On \textit{femina}’s twenty-second birthday, in 1994, Widarti held an elegant and unique party in the Bogor Botanical Garden for which the media lavished her with many compliments. On that occasion, as explained by Dede Isharrudin, Widarti established the Mitra Environmental Foundation which is engaged in raising money to support the environment. Widarti, admitted to Isharrudin, that her activities are focussed on the environmental movement, but she has no objection if people see her as a feminist who is also an environmentalist (1994: 77).

4.3. Pia Alisjahbana

Supia Latifah Alisjahbana-Soerjomihardjo, usually called Pia, (Bestina Virgiati, 1991: 24) is the wife of Sofjan Alisjahbana. During the early years of \textit{femina}, Pia had an impact on the magazine because of her ideas on fashion. Pia was a regular spectator at the International fashion shows, held in Paris, London, New York and Milan. Her trips inspired her to report on those events, and eventually these fashion shows were attended by and reported on by both \textit{femina} and its sister magazine \textit{Gadis}’ journalists.
Pia's father was a clerk during the Dutch occupation. Ironically, her only brother was shot to death by a Dutch soldier in 1947 (Ibid: 25). During that period, they lived with much suffering, because they were forced to move from one area to another in order to maintain their life away from the war.

In 1958, Pia graduated in English literature from the University of Indonesia, and she became a lecturer at the same university. She married Sofjan Alisjahbana in 1959 and, in 1962, he encouraged her to travel with him to the USA, where he was undertaking additional study. For one year she was an assistant teaching Indonesian language at Cornell University, before being appointed secretary of the Military attache stationed at the Indonesian Embassy in the United Nations. When she returned to Indonesia in 1965, Pia was appointed to the chair of English literature at the University of Indonesia, a position she held until 1975.

In 1976, she became involved with a team who were establishing the Department of American Studies at the University of Indonesia. Pia was appointed as coordinator of the American Studies Department. In 1980, this department gained enough status to be officially entitled to conduct a Masters Degree Programme (Ibid: 29).

To Belinda Gunawan, Pia admitted that the early years of femina were difficult. However, in her capacity as the magazine's public relations officer, she was able to draw on the support of her wide circle of friends among the middle-upper class in Jakarta. She cajoled her friends to support femina. One of these friends, Prof. Haryati Soebadio, who was to become the Minister for Social Affairs in the fifth cabinet of the New Order, continually wrote short stories for the magazine (Gunawan, 1988: 3). Tuti Indra Malaon, femina's first cover girl was Pia's colleague.
at the University. Tuti’s photograph was taken in front of Pia’s carport by Pia’s husband, Sofjan Alisjahbana, who was a keen amateur photographer.

In addition, Pia’s involvement as a spectator at International fashion events encouraged her to conduct the International Mode Design Contest, which was first held in 1979. It should be noted here, that this Design Contest eventually became the pioneer of a similar event in Indonesia. As a result, nowadays, many of leading department stores in Indonesia set aside some of their profit margin in order to promote and sell the products of the winners of that contest. Prominent young designers like Chossy Latu, Arthur Harland, Alex AB, Itang Junasz, Samuel Wattimena, Anne Rufaidah are actually the product of femina contests (Virgiati, 1991: 27).

Despite her job as one of femina’s Board Directors, Pia is also acting chief editor for Gadis and general manager for Dewi, femina’s latest sister magazine. Her career made her life very busy indeed, but Pia still found time to participate in various sports and educational activities. She also became a presenter for Jakarta/English television, dealing with Indonesian traditional clothes and materials, and is also known as an art collector. She has two grown up daughters, Svida and Karin. Svida’s last name was given by Sukarno, Indonesia’s first President (Ibid: 28).

5. Changes in femina’s Editorial and Management Staff

The oldest issue of femina kept in the magazine archive is Number 23, 1973, which consists of 86 pages and cost Rp.200. It is assumed that earlier editions of femina
History and Development of *femina*

dating from 1972 and most of 1973 were lost in a fire. As a result, the structure of the editorial committee and the staff of *femina* in those early days is unable to be described.

From *femina* 23, December 10, 1973, it can be ascertained that the structure of the editorial staff was relatively simple. Mentioned were the positions of General and Vice Manager, Chief and Vice Chief Editor, editor, staff and special assistants. In all only 15 people were working for the magazine at that time, including Widarti's sister, Noesreini. However, a change in the magazine's editorial staff was reported in *femina* 40, August 6, 1974. The position of Vice Manager was discharged and the magazine's first photographer was appointed. In *femina* 64, July 22, 1975, further changes were indicated, this time to add four more people to the staff - one of whom was Dr. Kartono Mohamad, Widarti's brother in law. A year later, two new photographers joined the magazine along with six new journalists. By the time issue 102 was published on February 15, 1977, Widarti, who had been a regular staff member, became Vice Chief Editor. She formed the advertisement division and recruited two new people. In *femina* 119, published on October 25, 1977, it was reported that an Editor Coordinator had been appointed to supervise the editorial staff and the Division of Public Relations and Promotion was also established.

Another change was noted in *femina* 187, July 1, 1980, when Widarti promoted two staff - Coordinator to the editor and Coordinator for Production respectively. A substantial change occurred in *femina* 9, March 2, 1982. Mirtati, who was the Chief Editor, was replaced by Widarti Gunawan and the staffing structure included: General Manager; Chief Editor; Coordinator for editor; Coordinator for Production; Editor; Staff; Mode and Design; Artistic; Advertisement
Suzy Azeharie

and Promotion; Circulation; Experts and Reader’s Contact, a total of 32 people in all. Femina’s kitchen division was formed in issue 29, July 28, 1982 and on May 9 of the following year, Widarti took over the positions of Vice General Manager and Chief Editor.

In April 1985, it was recorded that of 28 editors, 26 were females and two were males. There were another seventeen staff working for various divisions, such as kitchen, artistic, mode, advertising and photography. In addition, Pia Alisjahbana resigned from her position as one of femina’s editors on March 11, 1986. This was followed by another change in 1987, in which certain new divisions were formed, including Health and Diet, housing and gardening. From 1988 to 1992, the magazine experienced a period of stability as far as staff were concerned with new editors being recruited only to replace older staff members who quit. Nevertheless, looking at the changes which occurred in the magazine over the years, it seems that there might have been quite a lot of tension among senior management. One which was quite striking to me was the appointment of Hilda Unu Senduk as Coordinator for Production in 1980. Unu Senduk had only begun to work for femina in 1977, and this meant that Noesreini (Widarti’s sister), Pia Alisjahbana and Marulina Pane, who had been staff members for longer were passed over to give her the promotion. Nevertheless, in terms of staff mobility and changes, compared to Kartini, femina’s staff is considered to have high mobility, not only among lower staff who appeared to quit from the magazine, but also among senior staff. For example, in 1986 there was an exodus of five senior editors of femina to Kartini - a fact that caused a great deal of attention in the print media. Further, in 1992, Irma Hadisurja, who had been working with the magazine since 1973 resigned along with another senior editor,
Hilda Unu Senduk. Officially, the reason for their resignation was that they wanted to start doing new things with their lives.

6. *femina’s Readership*

According to Survey Research Indonesia in 1991, *femina’s* circulation was around 130,000 copies. Today, however, each publication is read by Indonesian women from all parts of the region. These women come from middle and upper class society, are aged from 20 - 35 years, and are equally married or non-married. In addition, most of the readers are high school educated, office workers are the most important group of the readers with housewives and college students following closely behind. The following table shows *femina’s* reader categories

**Sex**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Age**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15-19 years</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-29 years</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29 years</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-34 years</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35+ years</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High school</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universities</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(as taken from Survey Research Indonesia 1991)*
### Occupation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Office workers</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housewives</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College students</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurs</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non married</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(data taken from Survey Research Indonesia, 1991)

The following is the pattern of *femina*'s distribution in 29 cities in Indonesia and overseas:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Island</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>% <em>femina</em>'s distribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sumatra</td>
<td>Medan</td>
<td>4.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Padang</td>
<td>0.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pekan Baru</td>
<td>0.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jambi</td>
<td>0.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Palembang</td>
<td>1.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tanjung Karang</td>
<td>0.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Java</td>
<td>Jakarta</td>
<td>54.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bogor</td>
<td>1.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bandung</td>
<td>8.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Semarang</td>
<td>7.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Solo</td>
<td>1.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yogyakarta</td>
<td>1.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Surabaya</td>
<td>9.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bali/Lombok</td>
<td>Denpasar</td>
<td>1.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lombok</td>
<td>0.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kupang</td>
<td>0.25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Kalimantan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pontianak</td>
<td>0.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palangkaraya</td>
<td>0.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banjarmasin</td>
<td>0.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samarinda</td>
<td>0.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balikpapan</td>
<td>1.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Sulawesi

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manado</td>
<td>1.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palu</td>
<td>0.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kendari</td>
<td>0.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ujung Pandang</td>
<td>1.50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Maluku/Irian

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ambon</td>
<td>1.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jayapura</td>
<td>0.25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Others

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overseas/others</td>
<td>6.35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*as taken from Survey Research Indonesia, 1991*

The figures above reflect the proportional number of Indonesian people per island. Java, as the most populated island in the country, obviously has the highest percentage of the magazine’s readers, which reach more than 82 per cent. Accordingly, other less populated islands do not have as many readers as Java. Jakarta is where *femina*’s circulation is greatest. The number is certainly significant, and the magazine’s editors more or less express the problems, views and life style of Jakarta’s readers. These, of course, differ to some extent from other readers in other cities.

According to Ami Wahyu, the first edition of *femina*, September 1972, was valued at Rp.200, and consisted of 42 pages (1992a :2). As mentioned above, the price was still the same in 1973. In 1975, the price had increased to Rp.300 and the
magazine had 78 pages. Along with inflation, on August 31, 1976, the price was again increased, this time to Rp.400 for 98 pages. By October 23, 1979, the magazine had 110 pages with a selling price of Rp.700. This price rose to Rp.900 for 134 pages on July 1, 1980. The magazine grew rapidly on April 28, 1981 the price was Rp.800 with 110 pages and the format changed to a weekly edition. At present, the magazine is valued at Rp.4,000, and the pages remain the same at one hundred and ten. However, this selling price is considered expensive, compared to the price of low quality rice, which is about Rp.600 per kilogram. A mother and child can consume around ten kilogram every month for a cost of Rp.6000. This emphasises the fact that the targeted audience is definitely middle class.

7. Cover and Contents: a twenty year overview

The impressions of Indonesian domesticity revealed by *femina*, in the early years, can be partly interpreted from the magazine's covers. There were six issues in which photographs of children were featured on the cover (*femina* 1974:41, 57, 60; 1977:111, 114; 1979:169). During those early years *femina*’s children’s section was included in the magazine as a whole and not as a lift-out supplement. However, when *Gadis* was published in 1973, as Widarti explained to Enny Kusmartiny, *femina* had to be more focused towards its target readers. Consequently, a policy decision was made that only women over eighteen years would be the main feature on the cover in future. This was to clearly differentiate *femina* from *Gadis*.

After *Ayahbunda* began publishing in 1977, further changes to *femina*'s covers were made. Although *femina* had depicted a mother and children on the
cover several times, it was felt that this maternal theme was more suited to Ayahbunda. Consequently femina never promoted this motherly image of woman again on its cover. When Dewi, another of femina’s sister magazines was, released in 1991, femina had to modify its image even further. Dewi’s covers were designed to appeal to readers in the big cities and its cover ‘girls’ were photographed wearing sexy dresses and in seductive poses. Due to its circulation throughout the whole Indonesian archipelago femina’s covers were created with women who could be friends for its middle - upper class women’s readership. As Widarti explained, femina’s cover girls were represented as friendly, cute, and sweet, just like the girl next door. To create this sense of friendliness and intimacy the model looked directly into the lens of the camera making it seems as if she had direct eye contact with the readers (Kusmartiny, 1992: 11).

Changes were continually being made to the format and content of the cover page in order to avoid monotonous repetition and to make the magazine appear more interesting. Strategies such as presenting either a portrait or a three-quarter length photograph of the cover girl were designed to achieve this end. Further, variety was introduced with the presentation of special events such as Lebaran or Christmas, with the woman in traditional kabaya or a white dress. During femina’s anniversary month of September, the magazine placed a couple as its cover. For about six months from the end of March, 1991, femina was published with a black cover. According to Widarti, the purpose was to achieve variety so that femina looked different and attractive to maintain the interest of the readers. However, when another magazine imitated the black cover, Widarti reverted to white (Kusmartiny,1992:11). femina’s cover girls were constructed to represent and appeal
to middle-upper class women, and city girls. They were well groomed and good looking, in the 19 to 25 year age range. They were certainly not ‘wild’ women.

Judging from the appearance of an early edition of *femina* (No 23, December 10, 1973), the magazine had a simple format. There were only seven rubrics which included *bunga rampai*, fashion, kitchen; short stories and ‘Hi & Lois’ comic. There are two rubrics which continue to be presented today: ‘*Dari Hati ke Hati*’ [‘Heart to Heart’], which is about family consultation, and ‘*Tanya Jawab dengan Dokter*’ [‘Asking Your Doctor’]. In addition, most of the short and serialised stories were translated from the West.

Up until 1978 the magazine remained relatively unchanged. Each issue normally consisted of 27 or 28 titles, which were basically divided under certain headings, including Exclusives, Short stories, Continued Stories, Kitchen, Mode, Beauty, Housing, Gardening, Articles (averaging about eleven articles per issue). There were also the regular rubrics which covered Celebrities, Humour, Asking Your Doctor, Film References, Etiquette, Opinions, ‘Heart to Heart’, ‘From the Readers’, ‘Ideas Centre, and ‘Hi & Lois’ comic. From *femina* 184 (1980), the Kitchen rubric was sub-divided into two parts - ‘Reader’s Favourite Recipes’, and ‘The Secrets of *femina*’s Kitchen’. Included also were some additional pages, such as; ‘From the Editor’, ‘Reader’s Stars’, and ‘Reader’s Stories’.

In 1982, in order to get readers’ responses and to celebrate the tenth anniversary of *femina*, a questionnaire was distributed to 6270 readers. The responses revealed that around 5217 readers picked ‘Kitchen’ topics as their favourite, especially if daily menus were offered (1982: 13). The second favourite was ‘Fashion’ which was selected by 3970 readers and this was followed by short
and serialised stories. Beauty was the readers fourth choice. Another popular preference was ‘Heart to Heart’, which was prepared by Kartina Soejono and Dr. Aznen Aziz. Kartina Soejono revealed that over the years there had been a slight change in the problems that the readers share. Matters which were once considered taboo, such as sex or the third person within the marriage, are now more regularly raised by the readers. She further explained that youngsters and ‘old fellows’, as well as women, asked questions (Ibid: 14). Interestingly, the questionnaire also indicated that the ‘Career Woman’ rubric ranked eleventh rank, after Kitchen, Mode, Short and Continued Stories, Beauty, Skilful Hands, Ideas Centre, Articles, Housing and Gardening, ‘Heart to Heart’ and ‘Asking Your Doctor’ (Ibid: 14).

The rubric ‘Career Woman’ was introduced in 1981, in cooperation with the Centre for Applied Psychology at University of Indonesia. The articles discuss problems faced by working women, either in a women’s environment works, families and social life. In the same year, to complement the ‘Career Woman’ rubric, a new rubric, ‘Portrait’, profiled particularly successful career woman sent in by readers. ‘Portrait’, as the title suggests, painted a picture of the woman’s type of work, as well as her family and educational background. The magazine paid for every ‘Portrait’ article that was published. In 1982 another new rubric, ‘Husbands and Wives’ was introduced, and a year later the title was changed to ‘You and Your Husband’. As expected the focus was on marriage and marriage problems.
8. Activities Conducted by *femina*

Throughout its twenty-two years, *femina* has introduced various public relations activities designed to build a bridge between the magazine and the readers with active promotion. Certain activities like the ‘Mode Design Contest’ or *femina*’s ‘Cover Girl Contest’, become a model for the society.

The first recorded promotional activity conducted by the magazine was a novelette competition in 1977. Because so many western novelettes were presented in the magazine, this competition was held in order to find the best stories written by an Indonesian author. Further, 1982 saw the introduction of the English Composition Competition, in which the goal was to motivate people’s interest in reading English books and novels. In fact, this was the only contest in this particular area. There were, however, several regular competitions for Short and Continued Stories, and True Stories.

In 1979, for the first time, *femina* held a ‘Mode Design Contest’, and this become the benchmark for the development of the fashion industry in the country. As a result of the contest, winners were automatically promoted to the world of fashion in Indonesia. Despite many similar events being conducted by other foundations, that presented by *femina* had a huge following by those involved in the fashion industry. In addition, to celebrate the eighth anniversary of the ‘Mode Design Contest’, in 1986 *femina* held a ‘Mode Festival’ in which the national garment industry’s products were presented, along with a designers’ conference. To the present day, this event is held annually.
The urgent need for *femina* to find a fresh and new face for its cover girl inspired the management to hold a ‘Cover Girl Contest’ in 1986. This event is also held regularly each year. From this activity the careers of several famous modelling figures in Indonesia have been born. In 1988, the ‘Accessory Design Contest’ was launched, aimed at motivating artists to create new design accessories.

On another front, in 1984, *femina* introduced a Recipe Contest for Tofu and Soya bean cake. Since then, there have been several other contests such as the Blue Band Margarine Recipe Contest, Pepsodent Smiling Contest, and Minced Beef Cooking Contest. One of the more prestigious events held by *femina* was the 1985 Food Festival. Held in Jakarta, the event was attended by the late Madame Tien Suharto. Through this event, *femina* succeeded in promoting one of its famous recipes - soya bean cake burger. This successful festival, was followed by others that similarly focussed on food. In this regard the Chicken and Eggs Week was so successful that it was held again a year later and attended by participants from all parts of Indonesia. In order to celebrate the week of Food and Nutrition, *femina* organised the Protein Food Recipe Contest. Neither were the men left out. To celebrate the magazine’s anniversary, a Male Cooking Contest was held two consecutive years -1989 and 1990. The contestants were high profile Jakarta men including The United States Ambassador, famous musicians, scholars and celebrities. To further promote the magazine, practical cooking demonstrations are frequently organised and the magazine’s kitchen team frequently exhibit their capabilities and cook *femina* recipes throughout Indonesia. These exhibition events are attended by many of the magazine’s women readers. The travel bug proved catching and throughout the 1980s, *femina* arranged overseas cooking tours to
Hongkong (1980), Bangkok (1987) and Bali (1988), and they even ventured to European countries (1981) and France (1986).

In 1986, the magazine introduced a new event, which moved the focus away from fashion, beauty or the domestic spheres. The first of these, the Best Secretary Selection, was followed by several seminars, one of which was designed especially for secretaries. A year later, in 1987, the Diet Programme Contest, which focussed on twenty selected overweight contestants was introduced. At the end of the contest, the winners were those contestants who had successfully reduced their weight. This contest was inspired by femina's Diet Club rubric. A similar contest was conducted the following year. All of these activities indicate that, apart from the seminars and competition for secretaries, and the writing contests, there is a tendency for the magazine to orient its focus towards beauty, fashion, and the domestic spheres.

9. femina: From the Researcher's Perspective

At the time I conducted my research, in 1994, femina occupied the second floor of a fourth-floor building in a first class and expensive area in Kuningan, Jakarta. The first floor was used for receptionists, advertising division, kitchen, dining room, function room, and the ‘presence machine’ for the whole enterprise. The third floor was used for Gadis, while Ayahbunda and Dewi, used a building door, because the fourth floor that Ayahbunda and Dewi used to occupied, caught fire in 1993.

The first floor occupied by femina was a roomy and fully air conditioned hall, with tables and computers for staff. Several separate rooms were available for
Widarti Gunawan, Sofjan Alisjahbana, with a finance section and meeting room. A lift connected the other floors.

When I conducted my research, femina employed seventy people. Thirty-eight were reporters, along with ten artistic staff, ten photographers, five who worked in the kitchen division, four tailors and six administrative staff. The photographers, kitchen staff and the tailors were shared with Gadis, Ayahbunda and Dewi. There were two cleaning staff (a man and a woman) who used the pantry to prepare beverages and snacks for the employees on all four floors. In the pantry, there was a dispenser, a sink and cupboard in which to place glasses and cups. Next to this, still inside the pantry, there was a very small, unairconditioned room, 1.5m x 2 m, in which previously published femina editions were archived in a cupboard. According to one staff member, before the fire on the fourth floor, that cupboard was situated on the fourth floor. But when the fourth floor was renovated the cupboard was placed off the pantry on the second floor. At one stage, some of the collection was badly damaged because of a leaking roof, but no one seemed to care about this.

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The biggest problem for the staff who are not satisfied in working for *femina* are the patterns and relationships between the chief editor and her subordinates. These seem to be very awkward, stiff and tough. According to several staff, there is very small scale of democracy conducted in the management of work in *femina*. They complained that their chief and several senior editors are very arrogant and
indifferent. There is no courtesy, friendliness or pleasant human relationships between the chief and staff. In terms of working relations, as several staff admitted it often happened that excellent ideas were refused by senior editors without any strong reason.

Another example was explained by a staff member who had been working for the magazine more than ten years. She had a wedding party for her eldest daughter and invited the chief editor. However, the chief editor never turned up to the party. The next day, when they met at work, the chief did offer any reason or apology for not attending, and neither did she offer congratulations for the marriage.

Another case occurred in the waiting room of a diet doctor located not very far from *femina*'s building. Some of the staff were there waiting to see a doctor, when the chief entered the room and saw her staff there. The chief pretended not to recognise anybody and just kept quiet, until one of them greeted her. The greeting was ignored and the chief did not respond in any way. Another case involved a former chief’s secretary. The woman was highly qualified. She performed excellent work, reorganising the filing system systematically. She also came from a wealthy family and was very nice looking. However, she left after only six months, because the chief used to scold and shout loudly at her in front of people.

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To sum up, as a women’s magazine, it seems that *femina* has survived for almost 25 years partly because the content of the magazine in general does not discuss aspects which are considered taboo for the New Order government. It is also very obvious, that this magazine’s founders are not only highly educated, but also strong and autonomous enough to make a name for themselves. The fact that *femina* is the oldest women’s magazine in the New Order period also suggests that these women are very professional in their job. They do not normally compromise their careers for domestic concerns, although Mirtati Kartohadiprodjo, in handing the power she had to Widarti Gunawan in 1981, is the exception. In contrast, the strong editorial convictions presented in the magazine do not translate to their behaviour towards the staff which continues to operate on a rigid patron-client relationship, despite that Widarti Gunawan considers herself a ‘feminist’. Clearly, there is little opportunity for staff to climb the corporate ladder with encouragement from her or any other senior management person. Moreover, through *femina*, these women advocate traditional values as far as women are concerned, which contradicts their own professional lifestyle. It is this contradiction that I discuss in the following chapters.
Throughout its twenty-two years, *femina* has introduced various public relations activities designed to build a bridge between the magazine and the readers with active promotion. Certain activities like the ‘Mode Design Contest’ or *femina*’s ‘Cover Girl Contest’, become a model for the society.

The first recorded promotional activity conducted by the magazine was a novelette competition in 1977. Because so many western novelettes were presented in the magazine, this competition was held in order to find the best stories written by an Indonesian author. Further, 1982 saw the introduction of the English Composition Competition, in which the goal was to motivate people’s interest in reading English books and novels. In fact, this was the only contest in this particular area. There were, however, several regular competitions for Short and Continued Stories, and True Stories.

In 1979, for the first time, *femina* held a ‘Mode Design Contest’, and this become the benchmark for the development of the fashion industry in the country. As a result of the contest, winners were automatically promoted to the world of fashion in Indonesia. Despite many similar events being conducted by other foundations, that presented by *femina* had a huge following by those involved in the fashion industry. In addition, to celebrate the eighth anniversary of the ‘Mode Design Contest’, in 1986 *femina* held a ‘Mode Festival’ in which the national garment industry’s products were presented, along with a designers’ conference. To the present day, this event is held annually.
The urgent need for *femina* to find a fresh and new face for its cover girl inspired the management to hold a ‘Cover Girl Contest’ in 1986. This event is also held regularly each year. From this activity the careers of several famous modelling figures in Indonesia have been born. In 1988, the ‘Accessory Design Contest’ was launched, aimed at motivating artists to create new design accessories.

On another front, in 1984, *femina* introduced a Recipe Contest for Tofu and Soya bean cake. Since then, there have been several other contests such as the Blue Band Margarine Recipe Contest, Pepsodent Smiling Contest, and Minced Beef Cooking Contest. One of the more prestigious events held by *femina* was the 1985 Food Festival. Held in Jakarta, the event was attended by the late Madame Tien Suharto. Through this event, *femina* succeeded in promoting one of its famous recipes - soya bean cake burger. This successful festival, was followed by others that similarly focussed on food. In this regard the Chicken and Eggs Week was so successful that it was held again a year later and attended by participants from all parts of Indonesia. In order to celebrate the week of Food and Nutrition, *femina* organised the Protein Food Recipe Contest. Neither were the men left out. To celebrate the magazine’s anniversary, a Male Cooking Contest was held two consecutive years -1989 and 1990. The contestants were high profile Jakarta men including The United States Ambassador, famous musicians, scholars and celebrities. To further promote the magazine, practical cooking demonstrations are frequently organised and the magazine’s kitchen team frequently exhibit their capabilities and cook *femina* recipes throughout Indonesia. These exhibition events are attended by many of the magazine’s women readers. The travel bug proved catching and throughout the 1980s, *femina* arranged overseas cooking tours to
Hongkong (1980), Bangkok (1987) and Bali (1988), and they even ventured to European countries (1981) and France (1986).

In 1986, the magazine introduced a new event, which moved the focus away from fashion, beauty or the domestic spheres. The first of these, the Best Secretary Selection, was followed by several seminars, one of which was designed especially for secretaries. A year later, in 1987, the Diet Programme Contest, which focussed on twenty selected overweight contestants was introduced. At the end of the contest, the winners were those contestants who had successfully reduced their weight. This contest was inspired by femina's Diet Club rubric. A similar contest was conducted the following year. All of these activities indicate that, apart from the seminars and competition for secretaries, and the writing contests, there is a tendency for the magazine to orient its focus towards beauty, fashion, and the domestic spheres.

9. femina: From the Researcher's Perspective

At the time I conducted my research, in 1994, femina occupied the second floor of a fourth-floor building in a first class and expensive area in Kuningan, Jakarta. The first floor was used for receptionists, advertising division, kitchen, dining room, function room, and the ‘presence machine’ for the whole enterprise. The third floor was used for Gadis, while Ayahbunda and Dewi, used a building door, because the fourth floor that Ayahbunda and Dewi used to occupied, caught fire in 1993.

The first floor occupied by femina was a roomy and fully air conditioned hall, with tables and computers for staff. Several separate rooms were available for
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Chapter 2

Women in Marriage

In the following chapter, I present an analysis of the way the theme of women in marriage is treated in three articles published in *femina* in 1977, 1986 and 1991 respectively. While the articles mainly discuss men’s and women’s infidelity within marriage, my own analysis concentrates on female - male relations and on the social representations of women which emerge from these articles. Furthermore, I use the articles to highlight how Indonesian women are socially constructed. I assume that ‘traditional’ representations of Indonesian women have been influenced by certain factors, such as the Hindu/Buddhist Javanese tradition, Islam, the ‘New Order’ government’s policies and Western culture. This study analyses the impact of these influences on the representation of women and gender relations as they appear in *femina*. The questions I explore include whether *femina* has been more or less influenced by the impact of traditional Javanese culture, Islam, the government policies and Western cultural values. I question whether there are any similarities among these factors in regard to the representation of women and gender relations. I outline and explore the contradictions for women that emerge from the syncretisation of religious and political ideologies.

This chapter is divided into two main parts. The first part describes the case studies presented in the three *femina* articles, starting with the first article which appeared in 1977, followed by the other two articles in chronological succession -
1986 and 1991. As a general pattern, each article discusses a number of studies and offers opinions and advice, often provided by ‘experts’ on the way women should manage their marriages in order to keep their husbands. The second part of the chapter presents a comparative analysis of the articles.

'Suami Menyeleweng Perlukah Minta Cerai?'
[If Your Husband has an Affair Should You Divorce?].

Article one was published in *femina*, 120, September 8, 1977, under the provocative title ‘Suami Menyeleweng Perlukah Minta Cerai?’ [If Your Husband has an Affair Should You Divorce?]. Because the name of the author is not stated, it is impossible to decide whether the article was written by a man or a woman. The article is illustrated by a sketch of three birds, two of which are flying, surrounded by happy heart symbols, while the other bird is crying heavily with a heart symbol broken in two (Appendix 2). The article is presented in two parts. The first part contains the story of three women whose marriages broke up because of their husbands’ affairs. The second part of the article mainly deals with six women who coped with their husbands’ affairs without resorting to divorce. Towards the end of each part, the author presents conclusions from the case studies.

The article opens with the story of a woman named Yani. Yani worked as a pharmacist and had been married for ten years to Dani. When Yani found out that Dani was having an affair with a colleague from his office, she understandably felt
upset and betrayed. Her friends tried to cheer her up by explaining that she was not the only woman to be cheated by a man, and the affair would be over soon. However, Yani was much too hurt and although her husband’s affair did eventually end, they could not get along together again. Ultimately, they got divorced.

The author comments on Yani’s story by pointing out that many years ago, a woman, who was betrayed by a man, had to resort to the old adage, ‘A man is a man. What else should a woman do?’ [Memang begitu laki-laki. Aku bisa apa?] (1977: 29). According to the author, due to the Indonesian Marriage Law Act of 1974, the situation in 1977 was beginning to change. In addition, many women were venturing forth to work in the paid labour force, and therefore were no longer dependent on their husband’s financial support. This in turn reinforced women’s dependent position within the marriage [kenyataan, bahwa sekarang banyak wanita Indonesia sanggup mencari naftah sendiri sehingga tidak perlu lagi semata-mata menggantungkan diri pada sang suami, telah lebih memperkuat kedudukan mereka dalam perkawinan] (1977: 30). This explanation of the author should be kept in mind when reading about the case studies that follow.

Susana, the second respondent, had been married to Beni for twenty-five years. They had three married children. Beni was always busy with his work, and Susana did the household chores. Throughout their marriage they had never had a holiday and they planned one when Beni retired. However, Susana discovered that Beni had been involved with another woman. Since they were both Christians, a
polygamous marriage was impossible and they agreed to divorce. Susana was given sufficient alimony to meet her needs, but she felt lonely. Despite her financial capability, she refused to go on holiday and enjoy herself. She regretted her divorce. She regretted not agreeing to Beni’s romance with another woman, as she eventually came to believe that Beni would have ended the affair sometime [seandainya aku dulu tidak mau disuruh minta cerai, aku tentu tidak kehilangan Beni. Bila dulu kubiarkan, tentu affairnya akhirnya begitu saja berlalu] (1977: 30). The third respondent was a teacher, Nina, who divorced her husband because he had had an illicit affair with their neighbour. Nina felt that it was impossible to live peacefully with him even though she assumed his affair would one day be over.

The author sums up by asserting that for Yani and Nina the jobs were an amusement for their failed marriages. Also, since both women were relatively young, it was likely each would start a new life with another man. Unlike them, Susana was older and had been married for longer. She had no experience in the paid work force, and consequently she had condemned herself to a life of loneliness. In addition, she was considered too emotional.

Offering a different perspective, the author suggests that besides Yani, Nina and Susana, there were other women who coped with their husband’s affairs in different ways. This, the author said, required patience and sacrifice, but the outcome was fairly satisfactory. These women, by exploring the reasons why a man would fall for another woman could save their marriages. As the author argues, there
are several reasons for men having secret affairs. Some men have a mistress simply for fun [iseng-iseng] (1977: 30), whereas for others, it is a serious and on-going relationship. Therefore, the author suggests, it is important for a wife to diagnose the type of her husband’s involvement and the reader is given several examples. He could easily fall into someone else’s arms, not because he does not love his wife, but rather because he wants to prove that he can still attract another woman. Another reason could be that he is disappointed with his job and feels that an illicit romance will provide new excitement. It could also be conceivable that he is anxious about approaching old age. An older man could be fearful of his declining sexual capability and, by having an affair with another woman, his confidence would return.

The above arguments lead to the story of Dina. She married Andi who had been unemployed for sometime. Gradually, he lost confidence and locked himself inside the house. Pushed by the situation, Dina had to work in the paid work force to support the family. Eventually, she found out her husband was having an affair with their widowed neighbour. Far from being panicky, she did not even level accusations or make him feel guilty. She realised that he had been through a very difficult period as an unemployed person, and the much younger widow was able make Andi feel superior and important and comfort his insecurities. Dina assumed that if Andi had a steady job his romance would be over and she encouraged him to find a job. He was eventually successful and ended the affair. The author confidently concludes that Dina’s marriage was saved because she sacrificed a bit
Suzy Azharie

[mengorbankan sedikit], and put a great effort into the relationship [betul-betul berusaha] (1977: 30).

The author extrapolates from the four case studies so far presented that an affair is not solely triggered by factors which exist in the mind of the man. An affair can also be caused by a difficult wife, whose attitude forces the husband into scandal. This type of wife, says the author, is demanding [terlalu banyak menuntut], too talkative [terlalu cerewet] and her sexual response to her husband is not adequate. This woman, according to the author, is too busy with herself, the children or her job to be able to satisfy her husband’s sexual needs.

Tita is given as an example. She is 37 and had been married for ten years. The couple had different sexual needs. Tita felt that having sex with her husband twice a week was adequate. However, her husband was not satisfied. They never discussed the issue until Tita discovered that he was involved with another woman. She realised that her husband had been frustrated with their sex life and she blamed herself for forcing him into the illicit liaison. She began to increase the frequency of their sexual activity and he stopped seeing his lover.

Ratih provides another case study. She was described as ‘bossy’ and a very organised and ‘correct’ [sangat teliti] (1977: 79) house wife. Everything in her house had its own place and she became upset if her husband put something out of place. She also, it was said, interfered in his business and he resented the way she controlled and ruled his life. At work he was the head of a government office and he
was respected and highly regarded by his staff and colleagues. He became involved with another woman who, the author points out, honoured and dignified him. When Ratih found out, she convinced herself that it was her attitude that was at fault. She changed in an attempt to get her husband back, and was successful. As a pharmacist, Marina, another respondent, was tied up with her work. Her husband felt neglected and had no place in her working life. As compensation, he had an affair. When Marina found out, she reorganised her activities to involve him. She also deferred to him asking for his opinions and suggestions. He broke off his secret liaison.

The author then presents several cases in which women deal with their husbands’ affairs in different ways. Sriani is one of this type. She knew that her husband had been involved with another woman for some years. He had in fact let everybody know by proudly making the affair public and bragging to his male friends. However, Sriani pretended her marriage was still going smoothly and her friends lost their respect for her because she continued a legal but nonetheless empty marriage.

On the other hand the author suggests that some women deliberately get involved with another man as a matter of retaliation. These women want to pay back their husbands for their betrayal. However, because their intention is merely to attack their men and not to satisfy their own needs, the author warns that many of them end up with an unsatisfactory affair. The author argues that such a retaliation is not the best way out, because it raises new problems and eventually leads to the
woman's humiliation [*hina*] (1977: 80).

In addition, there are other women who deal with their husband's infidelity by making a compromise with themselves. Rini is in this category. She married a man whose position is important in the country. He had an affair which, if disclosed, would wreck his position. Rini did not react strongly. She was, however, worried that the disclosure of the romance would threaten her husband's position which would impact negatively on her life as well. She hoped that he would be discreet. In the same vein, is Murni. After major surgery she was unable to satisfy her husband's sexual needs. As a result, she was not opposed to him having a relationship with another woman on condition that he would not bring a second wife to the house. Eventually though, when the mistress delivered a baby, Murni was forced to accept a polygamous lifestyle. She made the sacrifice for the sake of the children.

In a short conclusion, the author argues that the way a woman copes with her husband's affair depends on the type of affair and the woman's temperament. If she is able to understand [*menyelami*] the husband's problem and is prepared to sacrifice a bit [*sedikit mengorbankan perasaan*], divorce will not be the answer. However, if she is much too hurt and feels unable to forgive him or tries to retaliate by also having an affair, then divorce is an option.
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'Koq, Tega,ya, Ia Nyeleweng Padahal Istrinya Baik'
[How Heartless a Husband to have an Affair while His Wife is Devoted to Him]

The second article on which I focus appeared in *femina*, 47, December 2, 1986, under the title, 'Kok,Tega,ya,Ia Nyeleweng Padahal Istrinya Baik' [How Heartless a Husband to have an Affair while his Wife is Devoted to Him]. While the writer is again anonymous, the magazine invited a woman psychologist, Indrawati Ridwan, who works for the Jakarta based Foundation of Legal and Consultation Aid for Women and Family, to present the case study. There is no illustration accompanying this article which focuses on a husband and wife, both of whom are interviewed.

The subtitle of the article highlights that, 'It is not only a troubled marriage which could be abandoned by the head of the family, but a good wife may be deserted by him as well. Why is that?' [*Bukan hanya rumah tangga yang penuh cekcok yang ditinggalkan kepala keluarganya. Bisa jadi istri baik-baik pun ditinggalkan suaminya. Mengapa?*] (1986: 42). This is followed by the story of Achmad Sobirin and his wife, Dr. Sobirin, who had been married for more than twenty years. Throughout the article, Dr. Sobirin is referred to as 'Mrs.' Sobirin, thus marginalising her educational qualifications and medical degree and situating her always in her relationship to her husband. In addition, the reader is not made aware of Dr. Sobirin’s given name. ‘Mrs.’ Sobirin was known as a truly devoted mother and wife while her husband was a successful business man. Their friends and family considered they were a perfect match and their children caused them no
problems. Therefore, when everybody found out that Sobirin was involved with another woman, it was a shock, particularly to his wife.

The psychologist provides an analysis. She suggests that from the beginning of the couple’s married life, there were differences of opinion and attitude. ‘Mrs.’ Sobirin was a perfectionist and an exact person, while her husband was optimistic and easy going. As his business expanded, he liked to entertain his friends and colleagues without worrying about the expenses. On the other hand, the psychologist describes ‘Mrs.’ Sobirin as being ‘unfortunately’ very careful with the household expenses, even criticising the way her husband spent his money. She was not able to enjoy his lavish entertaining. Consequently, ‘Mrs.’ Sobirin did not involve herself with her husband’s lifestyle, instead limiting herself to accompanying him only on very limited occasions. Sobirin met a woman with the same interests, ways of thinking and living as himself. He explained that he got really bored and tired following his wife’s disciplined lifestyle. They did not divorce but neither was their marriage peaceful.

What is the woman supposed to do in order to cope with such a situation? Ridwan insists that the key is mainly in the woman’s hands. As a wife, she has to be very sensitive to her husband’s attitude and to balance his mood. As Ridwan urges, anger against anger will explode [panas kalau dilawan panas, kan bisa meledak?] (1986:43), and therefore a wife is always expected to be wise [bijaksana], unemotional [tidak emosional] and attentive to the husband [mau mendengar apa
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*yang dikemukakan suami*. She explains further that ‘Mrs.’ Sobirin was a woman who did nothing to save her marriage or to change [merubah] her perfectionist behaviour until the other woman came into her husband’s life. Quoting empirical data, Ridwan said that the male was believed to have higher self esteem than the female. She referred to unspecified ‘research’ which pointed out that eighty-five percent of Oriental men placed their pride one grade above that of women. She argues that it is important for a woman to show the man that he is needed. Ridwan explained further that many erring husbands wanted to return to their wives if only the women would express that they need them.

Ridwan uses ‘Mrs.’ Sobirin as an example. She explains that if ‘Mrs.’ Sobirin had told her husband, ‘I realize your mistress is much more attractive and can offer you things which I do not give. But the children and I desperately need you. How are we going to live without a strong person like you? Do not leave us. I will really try to understand your position’, then this strategy, Ridwan assumes, would break up Sobirin’s affair [*Aku memang tahu wanita itu lebih menarik dan bisa memberikan apa yang tidak kuberikan, tapi aku dan anak-anak sangat membutuhkanmu. Bagaimana kami bisa hidup tanpa pendamping yang begitu kokoh seperti dirimu? Jangan tinggalkan kami, aku akan berusaha memahami apa yang jadi pendirianmu*] (1986: 47).

Ridwan further suggests that, as with any human being, a husband is very pleased when his achievements are acknowledged and respected. Accordingly, she
argues, a woman does not need to spend a lot of energy in giving just a little bit of positive attention or sacrificing her feelings in order to save the marriage. Thus, as Ridwan points out, a man does not only get upset when he arrives home exhausted after office hours, to be greeted by his wife in a simple house coat, but he would consider that she did not respect or appreciate him. It could be that he is also disappointed not to find a pretty, well groomed wife to give his eyes pleasure.

In her conclusion, Ridwan reminds the wife to make the husband feel that he plays an important role in the family and that he is needed. Accordingly, the wife should bear in mind, that she must not treat her husband as an enemy or a superfluous being. She should never act without his support and she must be able to handle the children as well as bring extra earnings into the family.

‘Setelah Affair Berakhir’
[After the Affair is Over]

Article three appeared in femina, 20, May 23, 1991 with the title ‘Setelah Affair Berakhir’ [After the Affair is Over]. Erlita Rachman, now senior editor for the magazine, for which she has been working since 1987, is the author. Featured as experts are a male psychiatrist, Dr. Al Bachri Husin; a woman who heads a Foundation of Legal and Consultation Aid for Women and Family, Nani Yamin; and a woman lawyer, Isnania Singgih.¹ For the first time since the magazine started

¹ An interesting observation is that through the articles in both chapters two and three, the
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discussing ‘affairs’ in 1972, this article introduces the woman who has an affair. Of
the five case studies offered two discuss where the woman has an affair while the
other three present the typical scenario of the infidelity of the man.

The photograph which accompanies the article shows a woman who is sitting
demurely and submissively on a chair in what seems to be an office setting. Her legs
are tightly crossed, hands clasped and she is listening to a man who is standing in
front of her, looking down on her, with his legs astride and his hands gesticulating.
From the centre top the photograph is torn between the two to a point opposite the

Rachman begins the article by briefly introducing three of the case studies.
Anita is thirty-six years old and a mother of three children. She promised to forget
her husband’s betrayal and to look to the future, but whenever his affair comes into
her thoughts, it is like a raw wound, her heart is hurt and she begins to cry. Anita
believes that she dealt with the problem wrongly. The second case study is about
forty-six year old Jeffri, the father of two children. His wife, Erni, had an affair and
he explained that his main consideration was to forgive her because she is the mother
of their children. However, he keeps his deepest feelings to himself. The third case
study is about Yayuk, a thirty-five year old mother of two. She explains that for her

women’s names are mostly prefaced with an honorific (Mrs) [нечыя], thus stressing their marital
status, whereas the names of men not only stand alone without their relationship to the women being
stressed, but if they do have a title for example, ‘Dr’, the title is stressed. This is the opposite to the
way the article writer dealt with Dr. Sobirin.
the most important thing is that her husband's secret liaison was over and he had returned to his family. She also had forgiven him. She added that when her mother had been in a similar situation, she had forgiven her husband who cheated her (1991: 33). Yayuk explains that she was convinced that forgiveness was the most honourable attitude [paling luuur] for a woman (1991: 32).

Nani Yamin, who heads the Legal Aid Foundation, explains that affairs are not a new phenomena, but adds that because of the modernisation and development of Indonesia, affairs are booming (1991: 32). Dr. Al Bachri Husin, the psychologist, adds that the definition of an ‘affair’ is becoming less clear. He suggests that as society changes, friendships apart from marriage, are taking on an increasingly important role and it is up to the individual to decide whether or not the friendship constitutes an affair. Al Bachri Husin implies that this changing definition is relevant to females and males are concerned. Rachman, the author, then introduces the fourth case study featuring Bob (37) who has been involved with his colleague, a married woman, Wanti, for a year. Bob and Wanti explained that it was really difficult not to see each other every day at work. Bob said that it did not bother him to express his feeling to Wanti in various ways, like ‘serving’ her, holding her hand, hugging and even kissing her (1991: 33). Unlike Bob, Wanti was troubled. She experienced internal conflict and guilt feelings about cheating her husband, Ismet. Behind the romance, she felt sad, confused, fearful and guilt-stricken. She was mentally tortured and finally asked Bob to end their liaison. As Rachman explains,
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Wanti overcame her feelings for Bob and returned to her husband as a good wife should [istri Ismet yang baik] (1991: 33).

Rachman then picks up Anita’s story again. When Anita found out about Tommy’s affair, she not only lost her temper but she also challenged Tommy’s lover. She called upon both their extended families to confront the issue, so that Tommy was ridiculed and chastised by them. Many of the relatives came and gave Tommy advice, which made him upset. In the article, Tommy complained that no one had tried to understand his feelings [tidak ada satu pun yang berusaha mengerti perasaan saya] (1991: 33). He said that the family was acting as if they knew what was best for his life. Tommy eventually returned to Anita and their three children, not because he wanted to mend the relationship, but because he felt forced into it through family pressures. Dr. Al Bachri Husin suggested that Anita did not help the situation as she still felt hurt and brought up his affair many times when they argued (1991: 33).

Anita’s position is contrasted with that of Yayuk, who behaved quite differently towards her husband’s infidelity. Yayuk acted as a mother who forgives her children. Despite her hurt feelings, Yayuk remembered her mother’s lesson that a real [sejati] woman should have a heart, vast like a lake (1991: 33). Both Yayuk and her mother, preferred to be submissive. Yayuk did an introspection to discern her failings - whether she was too dominant or too weak, or whether her appearance was at fault or perhaps it was the way she handled the family expenses. She also
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asked her husband to criticise her [mengritik saya] (1991: 33). However, the article does not indicate whether the husband asked for Yayuk’s criticism in return. However, Yayuk expresses the belief that her self-examination, coupled with her husband’s criticism, meant that as a couple they gradually became more open to each other.

Rachman reintroduces Jeffri and his wife of twenty years, Erni. When Erni had an affair Jeffri exploded and felt like chopping [mencincang] her up (1991: 33). He demanded she stop the affair, but she kept seeing her lover. She even moved out of the house and left the children with their father. During this time, Jeffri tried to evaluate himself and he even visited a psychiatrist. For the sake of the children, for their social life and for his and Erni’s positions, he chose to reunite with his wife. When she returned, Jeffri put a great effort into trying to understand her and her love life. He changed his attitude towards her, because he realised she used to think of him as a self-oriented, bad-tempered person who paid little attention to her. In spite of their growing relationship Jeffri felt something was missing. He considered her as a friend rather than his wife because he knew that she was still involved with her lover.

Another case study in which the husband of a woman who has an affair is presented. Tomo’s wife, Susi, had a secret liaison with another man. Tomo explained that when he found out, he ‘forced’ [paksa] Susi back to the house (1991: 34) even though she explained that she was not happy with their marriage.
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Nevertheless, Tomo reminded her that her duty was not merely to be a wife, but also a mother. He locked her inside the house and left his extended family on guard. He forbade her to leave the house or use the telephone. As a counterpoint to Tomo’s excessive reaction, Dr. Al Bachri Husin suggested that having an affair does not always have negative implications. Indeed, he argued that an affair could cause the married couple to examine themselves and their marriage, thus leading to a better relationship. He also urged that the extended family from both sides must not interfere with the couple’s problems. Rather, he suggested that a neutral outsider be the mediator. Meanwhile, Nani Yamin said that in her experience as a marriage counsellor, she found that women tend to forgive their husbands relatively easily and they forget the betrayal. However, in general men find it difficult to accept that their wives cheated them.

In a final note, the woman lawyer, Isnania Singgih, explains that many men are able to understand the secret liaison of their wives. However she qualifies this by adding that ‘understanding’ husbands were restricted to open minded men who go abroad. She believes that a man who is strictly tied to the adat still finds it very hard to accept his wife’s betrayal.

Comparisons and Analysis
A number of issues were indicated and raised by femina in the three articles presented above. Among others, the issue of the expectations of a ‘good’ woman is obvious. Within these articles, certain criteria for defining what constitutes a ‘good’ woman are set up within the framework of a good/bad dualism which, by implication, also describes what a ‘bad’ woman is supposed to be. Woman is represented as guardian of her own fidelity and that of her husband. She is mother to her children and wife to her husband with emphasis being placed on maintaining her relationship with her husband at all costs. The tendency to keep an empty marriage prevalent in middle-upper class Indonesian society is also one of the topics raised in the articles. In addition, the issue of the male’s sexual promiscuity is brought up as a main issue. As a consequence, the problem of polygamy is unavoidably discussed. However, the male is never presented within a good/bad dualism and no moral judgement of his actions are presented. In the following analysis of the three articles I divide my response into three parts. Firstly, I analyse the general representations of women in femina against the background of the different cultural layers which constitute Indonesia today. Secondly, I explore the differences between the behaviour expected from women and men, and lastly, I examine what conditions allow women to compromise.
1. General representations of women

   a. Women are ‘bad’ by nature

The unequal partnership between Indonesian women and men has its own long history. It is believed to have its roots in Hinduism and Buddhism, both of which, to a large extent, have substantially contributed to the Javanese ethic. The ninety million Javanese people constitute the majority and therefore represent the dominant cultural group of Indonesian (Cooley, 1992: 230). The religions traditions that have had an impact on the original Animist substratum that formed the basis of the culture of Indonesia are Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity (both Catholicism and Protestantism) and Islam.

The Hindu traditions, as Khalil argues, dictate that a woman’s first god must always be her husband, and that she must refrain from expressing her own wishes and preferences. In Hindu thought, women are created only for the purpose of bearing sons and gods and in this milieu having a daughter is shameful for the mother (Berninghausen and Kerstan, 1992: 32). According to some streams of Buddhist thought, a woman’s karma is much lower than that of a man and a woman must be reborn as a man before she can hope to attain Nirvana (Ibid, 31-4). In a religion where the celibacy of monks is of prime importance, Latza argues, women are represented as sexual seducers, whose uncontrolled sexuality threatens the culture and wisdom of men (Ibid, 32). He also points out that Buddhism teaches that
interest in worldly possessions and material values is a sign of egotism and greed which one should strive to overcome. He further explains that it is no coincidence that in Thailand, trade and financial administration are areas traditionally reserved for women. This is in tune with Shelly Errington’s position. She argues that the control over money and worldly matter by Javanese women does not provide the women with access to the spiritual ‘power’ that men can accumulate. Engaging with practical things is in fact considered as an indicator of lower status (1990: 7).

However, the subjugation of women cannot be laid solely at the door of the great Indic religious traditions. According to Nawal El Saadawi, the great religions of the world uphold similar principles as far as the submission of women to men is concerned and within the monotheistic traditions masculine characteristics are attributed to God (Saadawi, 1982: 193). According to her, the representation of the female’s sinful body as the continuing source of carnal temptation is at the root of the devaluation of women (1982: 193). Within the great monotheistic traditions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam), the creation myth of Adam and Eve, with Eve being constructed as the temptress has had negative ramifications for women. Indeed, Islam, like Judaism and Christianity, does hold that woman was created from Adam’s left rib, and that Adam bit into Eve’s apple of temptation (Bukhari, Muslim, at-Tarmizi in Shihab, 1993: 5). One of the hadiths [sayings of the Prophet] even stipulates, ‘no good will come to a nation that submits to the leadership of a woman’, (Shihab, 1993: 13).² Islam also stresses male superiority. As An-Nisaa verse 34

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² In Arabic, ‘La nayfaha qaum wallai amrahum imra’ah’.
indicates, ‘Men have authority over women because Allah has made the one superior to the other’.

Islam allows divorce as stipulated by the verse An-Nisaa 130, ‘If you separate, Allah will compensate you both out of His own abundance’. Islam, too, offers the possibility for Muslim men to have polygamous marriages, as indicated clearly by the verse An-Nisaa 3, ‘If you fear that you cannot treat orphans with fairness, then you may marry other women who seem good to you: two, three, or four of them’. This passage is consistently referred to by men to justify polygamy. However, this particular verse is being reread from a different perspective and used as an argument against polygamy. Because I return to this issue later, it is worth noting at this point.

Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam have become widespread throughout Java and their impact has formed certain distinctive ethics. Benedict Anderson argues that many of the elements of a unique Javanese traditional culture derive historically from the influence of Indic civilisation (1972:3). According to Clifford Geertz, Javanese believe that every person has two parts: lahir [body] and batin [soul]. Lahir is ‘the outer realm of human behaviour’, whereas batin is ‘the inner realm of human experience’ (1960:232). He further explains, that in general, the goal of each

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3 According to Islam, the holy Qur'an is considered as the primary source of Islamic jurisprudence and theological orientation. Next in order comes the sayings and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad; hadiths, followed by the consensus of religious thinkers and leaders, and last of all the methods of inference and analogy (see Saadawi, 1982:198).
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human being is to conquer the animalistic, uncontrolled needs, emotions, passions and egotistical interest of the lahir, and to transform them into the state of spiritual perfection, free of base, egotistical motives. Geertz argues, as in Buddhism, that the orientation toward material values is considered a lowly goal (Ibid, 240-5). His discussion is in tune with Anderson, who explains that the Javanese ruling class contend that they are distinguished from the rest of the population in that they are halus (1972:50-1). The meaning of this term is smoothness. 'Smoothness of spirit means self-control' 'smoothness of behaviour means politeness and sensitivity'. The antithetical quality of being kasar means 'lack of control', 'coarseness' and 'impurity'. There is no required effort to achieve kasar, because it is the natural state of human beings. On the other hand, being halus requires constant effort and control 'to reach a reduction of the spectrum of human feelings and thought to a single smooth radiance of concentrated energy' (1972:50-1). However, as Anderson notes, it is only men, who, to borrow Keeler's word, have the 'potency' to achieve the spiritual control over both themselves and the environment. For Anderson, the ultimate expression of Power in Javanese culture is derived from asceticism (1972:13). In this line, according to Keeler, possessors of 'potency' are able to control their own impulses and desires, most pointedly in ascetic practices, and they thereby maintain and foster that store of 'potency' (1990:131). They are identified with the highly valued cultural pursuits of ascetic exercise, spiritual learning, and refined, cultivated speech (Hatley, 1990:182).
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In contrast, women are considered to be by nature more emotional and impatient (Hull, 1975:113). Women tend to be described as emotional, crude, uncontrolled and likely to be somewhat ill-bred (Keeler, 1990:130). In spite of these 'impediments', women may perform ascetic exercises, but it is not considered usual for them to do so for they are seen as incapable of the outward reflection of accumulated spiritual strength (Hatley, 1990:182). The major reason why women are deemed unable to attain inner enlightenment and unity with the cosmos, as Djajadiningrat argues, is due to their role as mothers and servile wives. Women are constrained within social and material dictates to a much greater degree than men, since one prerequisite for spiritual power is a certain distance from the worldly trappings of life - from which it is difficult for women to disentangle themselves (Djajadiningrat-Nieuwenhuis, 1987:47). However, it is obvious from my case studies of the femina articles that women are not given the time to pursue spiritual goals to the same extent as men. Indeed, Djajadiningrat argues that women contribute to the peace and well being that allows men to pursue their spiritual goals that bring them power (1987:47).

Since women are not entrusted with any formal authority, Rosaldo argues, they exert their actual influence and power on an informal level below that of official societal norms. Women gain this kind of power because they are identified as closer to 'nature' than men. Shelly Ortner argues that this representation, derived from woman's ability to lactate, is associated with tying mothers to their children. From
this association, women are also expected to be the primary caregivers and to teach children proper manners. Ortner argues that these gender distributed tasks, along with women’s reproductive capacity to give new life to a newborn infant, often mean that woman is represented as ‘both life and death’ (Ortner, 1974:73-85). This informal power, in part, is seen to make women dangerous and polluting and gives men the legitimacy to make women morally inferior and to tie women down through marriage (Rosaldo and Lamphere, 1974:3-11).

b. What constitutes a ‘good’ woman?

In the aristocratic tradition of Java, young women were trained to be wives rather than mothers. This focus can be seen from the Serat Centhini, an early nineteenth century Javanese encyclopedia, in which woman are compared to the five fingers of the hand.

A wife must be under a man’s thumb, she must obey all his commands which is symbolised by the index finger. She must always hold her husband in the highest possible esteem (by the middle finger). She must always appear sweet (by the ring - literally - the sweet finger). She must be always careful and industrious, like the little finger and this ends with the promise to women, that if they remember all this, they will surely achieve happiness (Tiwon, 1996:57-8).

Since childhood, an Indonesian woman is taught that her essential duty in life is mainly to be a submissive wife. In a Javanese wedding, as presented in Sally
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Ingleton's video *Silk and Steel* (1996), there is a ceremony item called *Ngidak Wiji* [stepping on a seed]. It is carried out in the following way: on their way to the elaborately adorned seat for the bridal couple, the bride and groom have to pass a point where an egg has been placed in a small, open container. The bridegroom steps his right foot into the container and breaks the egg. The bride then squats and washes her newly wedded husband's foot with water. He remains standing. She also dries the foot with a cloth. This symbolises that a wife should obey and be subservient to her husband. In my own case, during the wedding ceremony, in my traditional wedding dress, I had to kneel before my husband, who was seated on a chair. I was required to acknowledge him with a *sembah* [traditional bow] and to kiss both his knees for about a minute while he patted me on both shoulders.

Kartini, the second daughter of an aristocratic Regent in Japara, north coast of Java, wrote to her Dutch friend that when one of her blond girl friends asked her what she was going to be when she grew up, she did not know the answer (August, 1900). When she asked her father and brother, she was told that a girl should become only a *Raden Ayu* [a Javanese married woman of high rank] (1976:57). On November 8, 1903, Kartini was married to a noble man who had been to Holland.

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4 Within her social world, Kartini's position was similar to that of princess. She was allowed, by her progressive father, to have a primary education along with her brothers, which was exceptional for that period. She articulated her life experiences in a series of letters to her Dutch friends. She died when giving birth to her first child on September 17, 1904. Her letters have been published under the title *Letters of A Javanese Princess*, Kuala Lumpur, 1976. Kartini is acknowledged by the Indonesian government as one of the national heroines and her birthday, April 21, is always commemorated.
He was the Regent of Rembang, Raden Adipati Djojo Adiningrat. She refused to perform the ceremonial item *Ngidak Wiji*. In contrast with Kartini’s decision, nowadays almost every ‘modern’ Javanese bride performs the ceremony without question. This is either because the bride has not been sensitised to the issues involved and just performs it without thinking, or, because of the considerable concern being expressed over the growing tide of Western influence which is seen as a ‘threat’ to the traditional culture. To demonstrate her allegiance to traditional culture rather than Western ways, the bride performs the *Ngidak Wiji*. David Hitchcock agrees that pressures from Western influence, which have touched every aspect of the socio-political, economic, and cultural spheres in many Asian countries, may activate local efforts in order to renew the cultural background (1994:6-11). He further contends that many Asian leaders believe that the West should be blamed for, ‘all the “evil” influences’ that their countries face. As an example, Mahathir Mohammed, the Malaysian minister, argues that in the Western psyche there is no room for, ‘values based on the spiritual, on peace of mind, and on belief in feelings loftier than desire’ (Ibid, 5-6). In spite of the ‘negative’ influences of Western culture, Hitchcock reveals many Western values which he asserts have benefited Asian countries. They include an equal role for women, a willingness to adapt to new ideas, social mobility, equal opportunity and equality (Ibid, 4). In Western societies, a woman is expected to be a good wife and mother. According to a study done by UNESCO, the western media represents women as loyal housewives
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(Steeves, 1989:90) as if women's activities are confined merely to the domestic
domain. In Western advertising also, women's roles are likely to be limited to good
housewives and mothers (Culley and Bennet, 1976). These representations of
dedicated housewives are also found in femina, as I discuss in the following.

In the three articles from femina that I have described above, the notion that a
woman's primary job is to be a loyal and dedicated wife is clearly reflected. Article
one (1977) discusses what is expected of a woman. She is not allowed to interfere in
her spouse's business matters, but she must integrate him into all her plans. If the
case arises, a married woman should be wise enough to know the motive, type and
stage of her husband's illicit romance. She should be able to forgive his betrayal and
sacrifice her own feelings. She should not easily give up her marriage, 'only'
because her husband is having an affair. Rather, she has to perform a serious self-
examination and be critical of why 'she' forced 'him' into another relationship. If
she asked for a divorce, she would, the article suggests, regret her decision. She has
to adjust herself to her partner's wants, because, it is assumed that she is the one who
'pushed' him into another woman's arms. She must never think to retaliate by also
having a secret romance, because it will end up being an unsatisfactory relationship.
She is expected to keep her husband's affair secret, otherwise the disclosure of his
romance will rock his position, and therefore affect her position also.

Nonetheless, it is permitted, for her husband to have a 'snack' [jaran], as long
as it will not lead him to bring a new wife home. But in the situation where the illicit
romance causes a baby to be born, a polygamous marriage becomes possible, even inevitable. As Saadawi suggests, monogamy is a moral code for women only and polyandry is not even considered (1982:195).

Article two (1986) presents similar material. A wife should be a sensible creature who understands the couple’s problems. If she discovers her husband’s infidelity, she is expected to remain cool. To win back her husband, she must show how badly she needs him to protect her and the children. And finally, she should dress up nicely to greet her husband after his long, exhausting day at the office. Article three (1991) presents the expectation that a ‘true’ [sejati] wife is the one who has a vast heart like a lake, therefore she will forgive and forget her husband’s affairs.

According to Hildred Geertz, Indonesian women are represented as tolerant of their husbands’ infidelities because men are considered to be by nature irresponsible (1961:131), which seems to be in direct contrast to what the religious traditions teach. In Indonesian culture, as Geertz further discusses, men’s sexual promiscuity is deemed nakal [naughty], which is the same term applied to disobedient children. There is no word to describe male adulterers. However, a woman who has adulterous liaison is negatively labelled as gatal [itchy] or liar [wild, bitch]. While sexual relations outside the marriage for a man are considered minor misdemeanours, for a woman it is a serious offence, labelled as adultery and therefore the precursor to divorce.
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Article three presents another expectation from a ‘good’ woman (1991). She should never betray her husband by having an affair, because she will feel guilty. This guilt feeling is seen as a powerful weapon to prevent the woman from going too far. If a woman, nevertheless, does feel attracted to another man, she must return to her husband’s side and be a good wife \textit{[istri yang baik]}. The notion of being ‘attracted’ is limited to an emotional allure because it is demanded that a woman never have sexual contact, except with her legal husband.

A good woman also, as article three indicates, is a woman who follows her mother’s footsteps (1991). In this regard, Yayuk, follows her mother’s example of forgiving Yayuk’s father when he had an affair. She should not complain and should avoid divorce at all costs, even at the cost of her self esteem. In a contradictory message, the third article problematises the direct or indirect involvement of the extended family, especially as far as the husband is concerned. In other words, while a woman is expected to be obedient to her mother’s example, the man complains bitterly about the involvement of the wider family in forcing his compliance as a monogamous husband faithful to his wife. However, Al Bachri Husin does suggest that neither the wife’s extended family nor the husband’s should be involved in a couple’s problems.

Hildred Geertz explains that there is a tendency for a daughter, after her marriage, to maintain a close relationship with her parents and to return to live with them if she is divorced by the husband. However, sons tend to drift away
emotionally and rarely return to live at home as adults (1961:45). There is a notion in Indonesian culture that to marry someone has an implication of attachment to both extended families as well, and the involvement of the extended family, especially during times of trouble is generally accepted. To date, the role played by parents in socialising their children to traditional custom, adat, is fundamental. The socialisation process is transmitted from one generation to the other, from elderly to the young and especially from mother to daughter. Kartini explained that there was a hegemonic process by which everyone in the home indoctrinated the males, even the very young boys, to be selfish. Mothers were most active in this regard. The boy was taught to regard all girls and women as creatures of a lower order than himself, whereas a mother trains her daughter to be submissive to her older brothers, her father and her future husband (1976:62-3).

Despite being submissive and subordinate to their husbands, ‘good’ women are also the ones whose place is in the home, handling the domestic chores and being responsible for the children. In Christianity, the biblical texts do not explicitly define a gendered public/private domain, although certain passages do suggest that the man is the ‘head’ of the woman. Within Islam, it is explicitly stated that the man’s responsibilities are to be main breadwinner as stated in the verse An-Nisaa 34, ‘Men have authority over women because Allah has made the one superior to the other, and because they spend their wealth to maintain them’. Nevertheless, Islamic women, as I will show in chapter three, are not specifically discouraged from
working outside the house. Indeed, the Prophet's first wife, Khadijja, to whom the
Prophet was married for twenty years, was well known as a successful business
woman in her time. In contrast, the Indonesian Marriage Law 1/1974, obviously
locates husbands’ and wives’ tasks differently. Article 31 of its regulation stipulates
that, ‘the husband is the head of the family and his spouse is the housewife,’ and
Article 34 states that, ‘the husband has the obligation to protect and support his wife
to the best of his abilities, while the wife has the obligation to take care of the
household to the best of her abilities’ (Soewondo, 1977:287-8).

In all three femina articles the general picture that emerged conforms to the
Quranic model - whether the women are professionally trained or housewives, they
alone handle the domestic tasks. ‘Mrs. Sobirin, a doctor, is described as 'doing the
domestic tasks with her own hands’ (1986:43). The message for all readers is that,
regardless of the educational qualifications or employment circumstances, domestic
work is the prime duty of wives. This unpaid labour is women’s sole responsibility
and paid work can only be taken up after the domestic chores have been completely
carried out.5

An additional article published in femina, 26, July 8, 1993, although not
specifically focused on the issue of extra-marital affairs, is worth mentioning as it
supports the stance taken in the earlier articles analysed here. It is entitled, 'Kalau Istri

5 In Sally Ingleton's video entitled Silk and Steel, a well known feminist lawyer, Nursjahbani
Katjasungkana is also shown performing household chores and reading to her daughter.
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*Sekolah Lagi* [If a Wife Goes to College Again]. In it, Srikandi Waluyo discusses the responsibility of a wife who returns to college after marriage. The difficulties of combining her education with her mothering role are discussed, and the example of a wife having to be absent from class because she had to take her child to the doctor was highlighted. Another respondent was in the unusual position of studying in another city. She visited her family only once a week at which time she prepared the family menu for the week, gave instructions to the maid and organised the local vegetable vendor to bring fresh vegetables daily to the family home. Since the buying of vegetables is woman’s work, her husband would not accept that responsibility. The article reinforces for the readers that no matter how busy a woman is, the burden of the household chores sit on her shoulders. Rosaldo argues that this responsibility for the private realm is derived from the fact that women give birth to and nurse children. Therefore it is assumed that they are absorbed primarily in domestic activities (1974:23-4). In the same vein, Madelon Djadiningrat-Nieuwenhuis coined the term *Ibuism*. *Ibu* originally meaning mother, but the term has been stretched to cover a range of meanings for respected women. Even ‘good’ women with no children are addressed as *Ibu*. *Ibuism* describes the combination of Dutch petit-bourgeois values and traditional *priyayi* [high ranking Indonesian class] values (1987:44). According to

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6 Srikandi Waluyo, ‘If a wife goes to College Again’ *[Kalau Istri Sekolah Lagi]*, *femina* 26, July 8, 1993. Srikandi Waluyo is one of the magazine’s senior editors and has been working with *femina* since November 1, 1983. In writing the article, she was helped by Tjaturari, who did the interview and Azmi as a photographer. Four women were photographed and interviewed. One had completed her bachelor degree and the rest were finishing their master degree programmes.
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Djaadiningrat-Nieuwenhuis, it is an ideology that sanctions any action taken by a mother who looks after her family, a group, a class, a company, or the state without demanding any power or prestige in return (Ibid).

The round of domestic work is all in the hands of the wife. In a Javanese wedding ceremony, there is another ceremonial item, *Kacar kucur*, which emphasises the symbol of woman as the manageress of a household. In the *Kacar kucur* ceremony, the bridegroom pours a bag of yellow rice, nuts, seeds and some coins into a cloth laid upon the bride’s lap. As soon as the bridegroom’s bag is emptied, the bride ties up her bundle and hands it over to her mother. This signifies the role of the husband as breadwinner and the wife as manageress of the household (Tomagola, 1990:85). However, the ceremony exists only in the realm of the metaphorical, and in some ways it is quite contradictory since neither before nor after the ceremony is an Indonesian man ever likely to go to the market to buy rice or nuts and bring them home.

In my own case, even though my mother was a lawyer, she reprimanded me after seeing my husband buy an onion at the market. She told me that I was never to embarrass her in this way again since everybody in the market saw her son-in-law doing the work of women. This, she said, reflected on her training of me. As her daughter I should be doing my own ‘woman’s work’ more consistently. Consequently, whenever my mother was around, I had to pretend to be the traditional housewife. I would never let her know that I had successfully trained my husband to mop the floor.
everyday.

Since women are assumed to be naturally bad and needing to be controlled, the expectation assigned to them by the five fingers (a wife must be submissive to a man, she must obey all his commands, she must always hold her husband in the highest possible esteem, she must always appear sweet, and she must be always careful and industrious) is contradictory. How could a woman, if she was so bad, perform these tasks? And how could an ‘inferior’ creature with ‘no’ potency play such an essential role regarding gender hierarchy? Indeed, women are placed in a permanent double bind situation - on one hand conforming to unreasonable societal expectations while on the other enforcing conformity by the next generation of women.

c. 'Bad' women

The three articles examined here all intimate that bad women are working women and widows. In article one (1977) Yani’s husband had a secret romance with his colleague, Susana’s husband left her for a working woman, Tita’s husband satisfied his sexual needs with his business partner, while Ratih’s husband fell into his woman associate’s arms. Dina’s husband, on the other hand, had an affair with the neighbour-widow. In 1986, Sobirin’s mistress was his business colleague. In 1991, Bob was involved in an affair with his colleague. Working women and widows are presented as the seducers who lure the male; the temptresses who destroy some other woman's happy marriage.
To use a different example, Hildred Geertz explained that during her research in Indonesia, one of her respondents, Juminah, discovered infidelity at least three times on the part of her husband. But Juminah feels that it was not her husband’s fault, rather it was because the women, one of whom had sold him a cigarette, who had seduced him.

Geertz argues that a common Javanese attitude is that it is the woman who seduces and who is passionate (1961:129-30). This represents a form of horizontal violence between women rather than addressing the inequitable gendered hierarchical structure and indeed, in the articles, women are pitted against one another; married woman against widow, housewife against working woman, married woman against the single woman.

Mather’s findings further reveal that in Indonesian society, young and middle-aged divorced or widowed women are seen as sexually seductive and are usually suspected of luring men into affairs (1985:165). For her, this is likely because widowed women are not under the control of a male. A man cannot hold up his five fingers to a widow. He cannot dominate and command her, and neither do widows or single women have the obligation to serve the male. Nonetheless, it is true that from the three articles, only one article (1977) explicitly states that Dina’s husband fell into the arms of a widowed women. However, in the following analysis, I place widowed and single women in the one category, because they are considered by society as ‘dangerous’.

In terms of their sexual life, the lust, which in women is supposed to exist and
need controlling, means widows and single women can choose whichever men they like. In a contradictory statement, Hatley suggests that a woman is seen to be usually dependent on a husband for sexual protection which she believes serves to tie the women into marriage (1990:184). However, it could be argued that women do not need protection from other women who have been represented as the seducers. Instead, it is other men that husbands provide protection against.

For a Muslim woman, being widowed or single also means that she does not have to ask a man’s permission to venture outside the house. One of the hadiths teaches that women should have men’s permission if they want to explore the public world, for women’s place is in the domestic domain (Mas’udi, 1993:158-9). Moreover, female sexuality, in Islam, is seen as being more powerful and destructive, than that of a man, and is identified as fitna or chaos. This conceptualisation of female sexuality is epitomised in Imam Ghazali’s work. As a Muslim scholar, he sees civilisation as, ‘struggling to contain women’s destructive, all-absorbing power. Therefore, ‘women must be controlled to prevent men from being distracted from their social and religious duties’ (quoted in Zeenatunnisa, 1988:20). As a result, as discussed by Rochaini, there is a tendency for lack of respect shown to be to widows, divorcees or single women, and to push them into polygamous marriage where their sexuality and what is seen as their ‘potential to disturb the established order’ can be controlled (1982:67).

According to the third article (1991), an obvious shift is now occurring. This
article presents the case study of Jeffri, whose wife was involved in an affair. Interestingly, like the women in the previous articles, Jeffri explains that he tried to assess his own weaknesses and even visited a psychiatrist to ascertain why his wife was being unchaste (1991:34). Out of the many case studies presented by *femina*, this is the only one in which a man, Jeffri, came to evaluate himself. This suggests for the first time that in a troubled marriage, not only should a wife be aware of her ‘mistakes’, but a husband too has to reflect on his attitudes and behaviours.

2. Differences in the behaviour expected from women and men

Having described that women’s nature is seen and understood as bad, from the point of view of social and religious discourses, I now put my attention to the expectations of men as outlined in the three articles. In Indonesia, the common perception is that it is mostly men who are involved in adulterous liaisons. Indeed, two Indonesian magazines, *Matra* (26 September, 1988) and *TEMPO* (September, 1988), conducted surveys that revealed that one out of three Jakarta males have affairs. Significantly, they did not present figures for the number of women. During her research in Indonesia, Mather uncovered similar perceptions, which suggest that males are more independent with regard to sexually related decisions. In addition, the woman who does not marry carries a burden of ostracism while the bachelor does not, and a woman who bears children out of wedlock may be ostracised while her male partner is not
(1985:161). When a married woman is unfaithful, she is depicted as losing her dignity
[kehilangan harga diri], as indicated by the first femina article (1977:80). The
portrayal of this representation of woman is supported in another article, entitled
‘Kalau Anda Tertarik pada Pria Lain [If You are Attracted to Another Man].’ It must
be noted that this is the only article which discusses the case of a woman being lured to
another man during the twenty years of femina publication (Kartawinata, 26, July 9,
1987). In it, the author, Jenny A. Kartawinata, discusses three married women. The
first one, Yani felt guilty when she became acquainted with a widower in a fitness
centre because she kept thinking and dreaming about him. Erna, the second example,
became good friends with a man when they were on a computer course. She too felt
uneasy when she began dreaming of another man during her sleep. Pushed by her
sinful feelings, she gave extra attention to her husband. Finally, Sasti was attracted to
her widowed boss at the office and they lunched together. When their colleagues
started gossiping about their ‘relationship’, she felt embarrassed and really guilty
[sangat bersalah] (1987:39). Eventually, Sasti realised that her husband was the best

This internal conflict felt by women is very similar to the case study in the
1991 article. Wanti’s reaction to her affair with Bob was guilt. Eventually, she gave
up the romance and returned to her husband as a good wife. Interestingly, Bob did not
bother at all about his romantic liaison. There is no indication that he desired to return

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7 The article was written by Jenny A. Kartawinata, a senior editor for the magazine, who has
been working with femina since September 8, 1981.
to his wife as a ‘good husband’. According to Mather, Indonesian men can become involved with divorced or widowed women (and even with a married woman, like Wanti), or engaged in polygamy without stigma. This is in contrast to women, who have very little room to manoeuvre (1985:161).

Those wives who become aware of their ‘mistakes’, and change their attitudes toward ‘more positive’ ones, femina suggests, will end up in smooth and happy marriages. For instance, Tita who realised that her husband wanted more frequent sexual contacts, offered him what he wanted. As a result, her husband gave up his mistress (1977). Interestingly enough there is no indication whatsoever in the article that Tita’s husband is sexually promiscuous, or sexually addictive, and that he could have changed his behaviour. It is almost always the woman’s behaviour that must change. In this regard, even Ratih, a very correct [sangat teliti] home maker in the best Indonesian tradition, was forced to lower her standards and change her attitudes and behaviour in an attempt to stop her husband from seeing his lover (1977). Marina reorganised her schedule and involved her husband in order to break up his romance (1977). Yayuk, the woman with a vast heart like a lake, forgave her husband’s betrayal so he would return to his family (1991).

In contrast, the marriages of those women who do not want to be submissive and surrender to their husbands’ suffer. ‘Mrs.’ Sobirin is an example. She does not strive to make her husband feel important and consequently her marriage is troubled (1986).
a. Men’s relationships with women

Judging by the three articles, male promiscuity is always related to fertility and to sexual potency and prowess. Murni’s husband’s mistress (1977) delivered a baby from their adulterous liaison. Tita’s husband (1977) found sexual satisfaction from his lover. Sobirin kept a mistress during his marriage. For men there is no stigma involved in being engaged in an adulterous liaison. This can be interpreted from a man’s ability to concentrate spiritual Power within himself. According to Anderson, one of the social signs of the concentration of power is fertility, and there is no fertility without copulation (1972:15-16). In his studies on classical Javanese rulers, he indicates that the sexual fertility of the ruler is one of the essential signs of the power that he holds, for ‘his seed is the microcosmic expression of the power he has concentrated’ (Anderson, 1972:16). According to Anderson, ‘the fertility of the ruler was seen as simultaneously invoking and guaranteeing the fertility of the land, the prosperity of the society, and the expansionist vitality of the empire’ (Ibid). Accordingly, in Javanese culture, it was common for Sultans and aristocrats to take plural wives and concubines. Indeed, as argued by Suryakusuma, it was an honour for a family, if a young girl became the concubine of the king (1996:104). The sexual prowess of the handsome and mysterious Pakubuwana IX is legendary. He was the man who reigned as king of the Kraton Surakarta from 1861-1893. At his court, he
maintained a massive harem including two queens and fifty-one concubines. It is said that these women had their own conflicting agendas which produced a troubled bed of intrigues. The harem was characterised by deadly rivalry among the cowives and there were rumours of black magic, murder, and suicide. His first queen is reputed to have suicided in jealousy over the ascent of her rival (Florida, 1996:211-14). This rivalry between women in the harem certainly confirms the horizontal violence between women, as already discussed in the previous pages regarding the articles in *femina*.

In contemporary society, the ‘possession’ of women is still considered as a natural attribute of power. Among bureaucrats and technocrats sexual prowess symbolises success (Suryakusuma, 1996:103). As models for society in general, the behaviour of these elite men provides a model to be imitated by lower class men, and their multiple wives and concubines exemplify the position of women. Wolters argues that images for the male in South-East Asia as a whole, emphasises ‘virility and potency’ which harks ‘back to pre-colonial attributes for kingship and leadership which idealised a leader with "spiritual potency", a "man of prowess"’ (1982:6, 101-4). Researches on contemporary politics in Indonesia reveal that the first Indonesian President Sukarno’s affairs with women had improved his image as a distinguished man of prowess. Anderson argues that Sukarno’s well-recognised sexual activities were a political advantage and that the Javanese people expect their rulers to act in this way. Conversely, any marked decline in sexual activities could be taken as ‘a sign of waning power’ (1972:18). It is worth noting that outside Java, even in a matrifocal
society like that of Minangkabau region, this model can also be found. My grandfather on my mother’s side, who was the head of the adat leaders of his clan, was married legally to thirteen wives during his life time. He could only be married to four women at any one time (as allowed under Muslim rules) and he simply divorced one of them if he planned to take a new wife. My grandmother was his second wife.

As Mina Roces’ findings demonstrate, the link between male virility, sexual prowess and power is not a phenomenon limited to Indonesia. The Marcos period provides a striking modern parallel to this phenomenon. In the Philippines, a man is expected to show virility and aggressiveness and the machismo associated with war heroes, and Marcos capitalised on his image of the war hero (Roces, 1996:1).

Having described how spiritual power can be achieved from the possession of women and that sexual prowess is seen to increase this power, it is understandable that Indonesian males’ infidelities are more acceptable than those of women. Men, in general, are proud if they can have mistresses as exemplified by Srian’s husband (1977:79), and Sobirin (1986:43) who proudly introduced their lovers to their friends and colleagues.

Regarding wives who have affairs, it is only men who have had the opportunity to travel abroad who are most likely to understand these (1991:34). In contrast, men who are still tied to the traditional values, are unlikely to understand their wives’ infidelities. It is apparent that there is a contradiction between the traditional Islamic values and western accepted behaviours. Adat, parallel with religious norms, demands
that women guard their chastity. Therefore, implicitly ‘conventional’ men who are tied to *adat* are firmly holding the ‘truth’ norms and rules, while ‘modern’ men, influenced by western lifestyles, are viewed negatively as ‘broadminded’ and ‘progressive’.

**b. Women’s relationships with men**

The fact that men are not discouraged from having affairs boosts the practice of polygamy in Indonesia within the Muslim majority. This has continuously been a controversial and complicated issue which in many ways affects the happiness and the welfare of the family. The first wife is the one who suffers most from this practice. The misery caused by polygamous marriages was clearly described by Kartini in one of her letters. She wrote,

> Can you imagine what hell-pain a woman must suffer when her husband comes home with another - a rival - whom she must recognize as his legal wife? He can torture her to death, mistreat her as he will; if he does not choose to give her back her freedom, then she can whistle to the moon for her rights. Everything for the man, and nothing for the woman, is our law and custom (Kartini, 1976:17).

However, since polygamy is allowed in Islam, there is no likely possibility to strive for its abolition, although efforts have been made to adopt legislation to restrict polygamy (Soewondo, 1977:287). It must be noted here, nonetheless, that even among religious thinkers, opinions differ widely (Saadawi, 1982:198). According to Saadawi, one group of religious thinkers believe that polygamy should not be allowed. Interestingly, they base their argument on the Qur’an as I have already quoted, ‘If you fear that you
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cannot treat orphans with fairness, then you may marry other women who seems good to you: two, three, or four of them. But if you fear that you cannot maintain equality among them, marry one only or any slavegirls you may own. This will make it easier for you to avoid injustice’ (An-Nisaa, 3). Those who oppose polygamy argue that it is impossible for a man to treat his wives equally and not differentiate between them even in a slightest degree. To prove their point, they refer to the Prophet who himself always favoured Aisha, his youngest wife, as his deeply beloved. On the other hand, the conservative group strongly believes that Islam does allow polygamy, arguing that the Prophet married several wives and that equality between wives is possible (Saadawi, 1982:198). While it is estimated by Hull that nearly five percent of all Indonesian households still practice polygamy (in Berninghausen and Kerstan, 1992:43), Mather found out that from 14 hamlets where she conducted her research, 17 per cent were practising polygamy (1985:161).

The practice of perkawinan bawah tangan [hidden marriage] is also commonly accepted. In this practice, the bride and groom conduct their marriage ceremony only according to Muslim laws while the civil contract is not observed. According to the Indonesian Marriage Law 1 (1974), art 2, a marriage is legal if contracted according to

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8 Aisha bint Abi Bakr as-Siddiq (613-678 CE), was known as a Muslim intellectual and a good orator. She compiled 2210 hadiths, and stood against Usman bin Affan, who was considered a tyrant during his rule. She was also the chief commander in the war against Ali in Jamal (Huzzaemah, 1993: 30).


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the laws of the respective religion and beliefs of the parties concerned. Every marriage, moreover, shall be registered according to the regulation in force (Soewondo, 1977:286). The practice of *perkawinan bawah tangan*, despite being legitimised by Muslim law is therefore never acknowledged by the Civil Office since it is never registered. So, it is legal but at the same time it is not official.

In this context, the hidden wives are in a very weak position. Many cases recently revealed to the public, demonstrate how these wives demanded official acknowledgment for themselves and their children from this type of marriage. They brought their cases to the court in order to demand financial support from those men, ‘husbands’, who had abandoned them. A child born out of this kind of marriage, according to the Indonesian Marriage Law, is considered as a child born out of wedlock. The husband has no financial obligation to a child born from this relationship. Accordingly, the child has only a civil relationship to her mother and her mother’s relatives and cannot bear the father’s name or inherit from his estate.

In the articles, I analysed, the use of ‘violence’ words is quite striking. In article three (1991) Jeffri explained that when he found out about his wife’s affair, he *meledak* [exploded] and felt like *mencincang* [chopping] her up (1991:33). Another case study in the same article, revealed that Tomo *menarik* [dragged] his wife forcefully [*dengan paksa*] back to their home, despite the unhappiness she suffered from the marriage (1991:34). Tomo described that he locked her inside the house, guarded by the extended family, and prohibited her from using the telephone. These
words indicate an underlying element of violence which appears to legitimate that males have the right to use their physical strength on females. One verse in the Qur’an is always quoted to justify abusive practices of males towards females. The verse An-Nisaa states, ‘As for those from whom you fear disobedience, admonish them and send them to beds, apart and beat them’ (An-Nisaa 34). In spite of heavy criticism and attempts to reinterpret the verse, the violence against women is justified and legitimated by the Qur’an and appears unquestioned in the article. However, opposition to this situation is mounting, and, as shown in Sally Ingleton’s video, Silk and Steel, many women, including Lies Marcoes-Natsir, are demanding that the Qur’an be reinterpreted.

The situation is quite different if a wife finds out about her husband’s infidelities, far from exploding, meledak or dragging, menarik her husband home, she is expected to forgive the betrayal. A wife also must adjust herself to meet her husband’s needs. However, what is most striking is the fact that there is no reaction whatsoever from the three experts to this gendered discrepancy.

In the articles, although men’s affairs involve a sexual component, women are represented as having a mere emotional engagement. This discrepancy can be explained by the fact that men and women are represented differently by femina. After all, if men are having a sexual relationship, they have to have it with somebody. It is demanded of women that they guard their chastity and not be adventurous. When women crossed this line between monogamy and interest in another man, they bore
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feelings of guilt associated with ‘sinful’ acts. This is clearly demonstrated in article three (1991) and in the article that focuses on women who have affairs (1987). Wanti admitted that she experienced internal conflict and guilt feelings about cheating her husband (1991). Being mentally tortured, she decided to break up her affair with her colleague and be a good wife [istri yang baik] for her husband (1991:33). Like Wanti, Yani, Erna and Sasti (1987) all felt guilty and sinful, because they became acquainted with other men and started to think about them (1987:38-40). None of these women indicated that they had had sexual contacts with their new male friends. Yani met and talked to the man only during her fitness time. Erna’s only contact with the man was during a computer course. Sasti occasionally had lunch and chatted with her boss. There is certainly no indication that the men felt romantically involved with the women or indeed whether there was even a romance at all outside of the women’s imaginations. But they all ended up expressing similar feelings that related to guilt and betrayal of their husbands. Being loyal to the legal spouse is an important moral code for woman only.

Nevertheless, it must be noted here that there is an evolution in femina’s articles. In the 1973 and 1986 articles there is no mention of married women being attracted to other men. However, in 1987 and again in 1991, women were at least represented as being attracted to other men. This shift could be taken as evidence of a move towards a more honest and real representation of Indonesian women.

In relation to culpability, the wife was continuously blamed when her husband
fell into another woman’s arms and the marriage was going wrong. The woman into whose arms he fell was also blamed, especially by the wife of the recalcitrant husband (Suryakusuma, 1996:111-12). In this regard, ‘Mrs.’ Sobirin, well known as a truly devoted wife and mother, was criticised for not adjusting to her husband’s lavish lifestyle (1986). Unlike men, women are expected to ‘repair’ the troubled marriage in spite of their husbands’ infidelities. As already mentioned, article one (1977) shows that it was Dina who encouraged her husband to find a job in order to make him less dependent on his mistress (1977:30). Tita increased the frequency of sexual contact with her husband, so he stopped seeing his concubine (1977:79). Ratih changed her attitudes to please her husband who had an affair with his colleague (1977:79). And Dina reorganised her plans by involving her husband in the decision making process (1977:79). Rini was forced into silence about her husband’s romance, because disclosure to the public could result in the dismissal of her husband from his employment, and corresponding diminution of her comfortable lifestyle (1977:80). After major surgery which prevented her satisfying her husband sexually, Murni was forced to let her husband bring another wife into her home in a polygamous marriage situation (1977:80). In 1991, Yayuk forgave her husband’s betrayal and self-evaluated herself (1991:33). All these women’s stories serve to remind women readers that it is their responsibility to fix their husband’s infidelities. And it reinforces for men readers that women are responsible for their indiscretions and it is in women’s hands to restore troubled marriage situations.
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*Sarinah,* a Jakarta based women’s magazine shows that religion, especially Islam, encourages this notion of the subservient wife.\(^{10}\) In one of *Sarinah’s* article, one Islamic woman speaker at the Friday prayer time for women, [*Ustazah*] emphasised to the assembled women that heaven is guaranteed by God for the wife who is very patient in dealing with her husband’s cruelty [*Surgalah janji Tuhan pada istri yang sabar menghadapi polah jahat suaminya*] (Tomagola, 1990:123). Tomagola further argued, that this kind of eschatological promise pushed women to silence and to swallow their suffering into their smiles. This silence, he referred to as a ‘mute culture’, [*kebudayaan bisu*], which encouraged women to keep to their suffering to themselves (1990:124).

3. What allows for compromise

   a. Marriage for the sake of appearance

Most Indonesian families want to achieve the norm of *rukun*, social peace and harmony (Wolf, 1992:59). *Rukun*, as Wolf explains, ‘is the ideal underlying social relationships, [which] represents cooperation and minimal conflict’ (Ibid, 59). Seeking *rukun*, in a Javanese cultural context, encourages compromise or sacrifices, something that Hildred Geertz noticed during her research (1961:48). Accordingly, partly in order to attain

\(^{10}\) *Sarinah* has not been published since early 1995 due to internal conflict between the owners.
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*rukun* and partly to provide family standing, the extended family is likely to interfere in a couple’s conflicts. In Indonesia, when two people marry, they initially live within an extended family context\(^\text{11}\) and yet the family standing is partly determined by the reputation of the offspring (as I shall discuss in the next chapter). To date, only two articles, overtly discuss the involvement of the extended family in solving a couple’s friction. In one case, Anita, asked the help of both families to counsel her husband to forget his mistress, a state of affairs about which he was very annoyed (1991:34). The other case in which the extended family was involved, was to prevent Susi, wife of Tomo, from having contact with the outside world. In this instance, members of the extended family were used as prison guards (1991:34). According to my personal experience the extended family in Indonesian culture has an enormous social impact on the life of the married couple, and I fail to understand why the other two articles (1977 and 1986) do not discuss the role played by the extended family. In fact, as mentioned before, Al Bachri Husin, the expert psychiatrist, counselled to avoid extended family interference.

For the sake of saving face and appearance, the magazine advises married women stay within their otherwise empty marriages. Rini, rather than filing for divorce, decided to remain in wedlock. She was not ready to concede material comforts and facilities derived from her husband’s important position, in spite of his adulterous liaison (1977:80). Murni also lived an empty marriage, because her

\(^\text{11}\) This can be either matrilocal or patrilocal according to tribal traditional custom or alternatively depending on the wealth of individual families.
husband entered into a polygamous marriage with his mistress who had given him a child (1977:80). Sriani was in this situation as well. She kept silent and pretended to be blind to her husband’s relationship. In 1986, ‘Mrs.’ Sobirin continued her marriage, despite her husband’s betrayal. These women, made the decision that to ‘share’ a husband was better than not having a husband at all.

In the case of a woman leaving her husband for another man, it is interesting to note that the husband indicated that he wished to carry on his marriage for the children’s sake, as well as to save face (1991:33). Rather than divorce his wife, who honestly admitted that she was not happy with him, Tomo preferred to continue his marriage, rather than be embarrassed by divorce. The prevalence of ‘saving the face’ marriages indicates the significance of status considerations. However, it is always the man’s status, the man’s dignity, and the man’s face that is being saved.

In coming to understand why a woman, would prefer to ‘share’ her husband rather than have no husband at all, the financial factor is important. She may be dependent on her husband’s financial support, partly because of the children. For the sake of the children and their financial needs, a woman may be reluctant to file for divorce even though Islam offers her the chance to repudiate the marriage. However, if a man chooses to continue an empty marriage, the article indicates that his main consideration is his pride along with his desire to have the children living under his roof with his wife caring for them. If the man works as a civil servant for the Indonesian bureaucracy, promotion is based on four criteria, as judged by his
supervisor. The four criteria are *Prestasi, Dedikasi, Loyalitas* and *Tidak Tercela* [PDLT] or Achievement, Dedication, Loyalty and Perfection. These criteria are evaluated every year and therefore an official whose affair is made public or whose marriage is troubled, is unlikely to get promotion or career advancement. In this sense, Suryakusuma explains that the key requirement is to prevent scandals, and for men to be discrete. There is an obvious double standard which goes like this. Promiscuity is bad but tolerated as long as it is kept under wraps. If it becomes public the perpetrator will suffer (1996:117).

In this regard, despite the enactment of the Indonesian Marriage Law in 1974, the New Order promulgated additional laws to control the marriage and divorce of civil servants [*Peraturan Pemerintah, Government Regulations 10/1983*] (PP 10/1983). It is said that PP 10/1983 reflected the anxiety of the president’s wife, the late Mrs. Tien Suharto who had much influence on the fate of high-ranking government officials who were divorced or in polygamous relationships. Reflecting the importance and influence of regulation on women’s lives, the regulation, PP 10/1983, was enacted on Kartini Day, April 2, 1983 (Suryakusuma, 1996:104). The regulation applies to civil servants and high officials of all state ministries. Since they serve as models for the rest of the society, they should keep a clean sexual image, because it is assumed that having multiple wives might well lead officials to corruption (Suryakusuma, 1996:102). Among other things, PP 10/1983 stipulates that a civil servant who intends to take an additional wife must obtain permission from his superior (1996:106).
Women in Marriage

Accordingly, polygamy in the state bureaucracy is discouraged, despite its legitimacy by religious and legal rules. Nevertheless, in spite of the legislation, it is assumed by Suryakusuma that sexual adventurism among high-ranking government official is rampant, and this regulation serves to make people more adept at finding ways around the rules. She argues that its repressive, legalistic approach eventually induces 'hypocrisy and deceit' (1996:115-6). It could be argued that this kind of hypocrisy may also be influenced by the adoption of western values, which suggest that polygamy is no longer considered 'modern' in civilised society.

b. Middle-upper class women tend to compromise

As seen in the articles presented above, it is clear that a woman is reluctant to file for divorce even if her husband has a second wife or mistress. It is my impression that *femina* presents a construct of a woman who is both inferior and subordinate to a man. Since *femina* is especially designed to reach the middle-upper class women in big cities, the respondents who appeared in the articles and who hesitate to file for divorce, are women from this particular class.

These women represent the *priyayi* class, whose traditionally dominant ideal of womanhood is seen, according to Hatley, as characteristic of the social elite; that is grace, modesty, refinement, fragility and dependence (1990:109).\(^{12}\) In general, the

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\(^{12}\) *Priyayi*, is the ruling class of traditional Java. See Ben Anderson, 'The Idea of Power in Javanese Culture', 1972: 50. Despite the fact that *priyayi* is a Javanese concept, it has a strong
priayi women are very likely to depend on their husbands for protection and guidance, and in return, they compensate by caring for the emotional and domestic needs of their husband (Hatley, 1990:180). These women believe that their own concerns are of secondary significance compared to men.

As Indonesia is a class society, status is important. Marriage is seen as security for the priayi wives, who perceive divorce as shameful and morally wrong. A priayi woman will avoid divorce, because she relies on her husband economically. However, as Wolf argues, it is essential to realise that class differences between women in Java, are as great as gender differences (1992:62). Therefore, it is likely that marriage ideas vary according to class, which leads to a very significant difference in the incidence of marital disruption between priayi and lower class women (Hull, 1976:43). The percentage of divorce among the priayi women is much smaller than that of lower class women (Ibid, 43).

Unlike priayi women, among village women [abangan], divorce is not seen as morally wrong, but rather, as Geertz argues, it is the best solution to a conflictual and potentially harmful situation (1961:137-9). Therefore, as research conducted by Hull reveals, for lower class women, marriage is highly unstable, especially in cases where the marriage has been arranged by parents (1976:44-5). This sort of marriage practice, as Hull further argues, can even end in divorce without ever having been consummated by the couple (Ibid, 34). The high proportion of unstable marriages among the lower

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influence on the entire Indonesian society.
class women in Java, highlighted in a study done by Singarimbun, shows that forty per cent of 772 respondents' marriages ended in divorce, one-fifth of them had experienced five divorces, while forty percent were still virgins when the first marriage broke up (Singarimbun, 1992:135). This is similar to research conducted by Hull which reveals that over sixty percent of lower class Javanese women, experienced marital disruption several times before they reached the age of 50 (1976:vii).

This fact indicates that unlike priyayi women, the lower class women are more independent and self sufficient (Hildred Geertz, 1961:137-9). They tend to lead more segregated lives with their husbands, because the couples have to work to support the household expenses. Therefore, lower class women are more likely to be in a situation to be economically able to take care of their lives once the marriage is over (Hull, 1976:44-7).

Although Islam allows women to file for divorce and PP 10/1983 stipulates that both parties in marriage have the right to divorce, femina does not provide any discussion regarding divorce. As already mentioned, one of the reasons why the magazine hesitates to discuss this topic, is because femina can be said to represent the priyayi class. The majority of its editors and experts who engaged with the writing of the three articles are obviously educated women for whom economic motivations for

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13 When Laila Bint El-Khatim, one of the Prophet's wives asked him for a divorce, she simply said, 'I am a woman with a sharp tongue and cannot bear your other wives. So let me free.' Then the Prophet replied to her, 'I have let you free.' (See Saadawi, 1982: 194 and Soewondo 1977: 87-8).

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working are not an issue. But as Palmier argues, the process of *priyayization* is an attempt to merge social status and class status as much as possible. According to her, it is possible to have a minimal class status and yet belong to the *priyayi* class, whereas to have the highest class status does not mean that one is automatically a *priyayi*. Here, class status applies to the production system. Consequently, being a symbol of the middle-upper class, *femina* do not expose heavily the divorcee-respondents, but rather tries to provide models who only reluctantly file for divorce, despite their intolerable marriage conditions (Djajadiningrat-Nieuwenhuis, 1987:48).

In conclusion, there are constants in the constructions of women as presented in the three articles. In regards to women’s relations to men, the existence of hierarchy is very obvious. The *priyayi* women are subordinate to men. They should be submissive and *pasrah* [accept] their ‘women’s nature’ or ‘destiny’ [kodrat perempuan]. They ‘know’ that men are superior and therefore become the leaders. In enforcing the traditional customs, *adat* and religion, it is demanded of *priyayi* women that they guard their husband’s honour. However, slight changes can be indicated across the three articles. It is eventually acknowledged that women can become attracted to another men, which implies that women too have their own feelings and needs. Despite men’s infidelities, it should be noted here that men are also depicted as more ‘human’, by being sensible and understandable in regards to the women’s affairs. *femina*, I think tries to construct the image of these ‘traditional’ pictures and to slight the notion of a situation that is changing, simply because this magazine wants to gain its reader
markets. By conveying these ‘traditional’ constructions which prevail strongly within the society, it is likely to be a *femina* marketing strategy.

**Conclusions**

The representations of women in *femina* have been influenced by various elements. The Hindu influence introduced the notion that women are bad by nature because they are created only for the purpose of bearing sons and gods. Islam sees women as carnal temptation, for the mythical Eve was constructed as the seducer. The root of the devaluation of women has its source from the belief that Eve was created from Adam’s left rib. Melded with the Javanese tradition, is the perception that, unlike men, women are unable to have spiritual power due to their role as mothers and servile wives. It is only males who have the ‘potency’ to achieve the spiritual power and thus attain a ‘refined’ life. In the aristocratic tradition of Java, since childhood, women are trained to be submissive wives rather than mothers.

As the articles in *femina* show, the married woman is presented as a sensible, forbearing creature who should forgive and forget her husband’s affair. However, she should never betray her husband by having an affair. Her heart should be vast like a lake. Her place is in the home, handling the domestic chores and being responsible for the children, regardless of her educational achievements or employment circumstances. However, there is a contradiction here. Since woman is believed bad by nature, it is
contradictory to expect her to perform her primary roles, of dedicated wife and good mother.

Another contradiction I found from the article is the presentation of working women. ‘Bad’ women, as revealed from the case studies, are the working women. They are the temptresses, who destroyed somebody’s ‘happy’ marriage. However, *femina* contends that in the case of divorce, the wife who works in the paid workforce is better prepared to cope with the situation and to stand up again on her own two feet, than a woman who works full-time in the home. A working woman, in the 1977 article, was presented as economically independent and therefore able to support her children once divorce occurs.

Not only are the representations of women contradictory, but so are the rules and traditions which influence those constructions of women. As has been mentioned, Islam does not discourage women from working outside the house. However, the Indonesian Marriage Law 1/1974, article 31, divided men’s and women’s jobs into two rigid areas - the public and private domain. The Islamic rules also allow polygamy as the Indonesian Marriage Law does in article 3,4 and 5. However, partly imposed by the Western values which perceive polygamy as a practice which degrades women, the New Order government introduced the government policy PP 10/1983, which controls the marriage and divorce processes among civil employees. In this additional law, polygamy is discouraged. However, in regard to polygamy, Islamic rules mirror Javanese tradition. Because one of the social signs of ‘Power’, according to Anderson,
is fertility, the Javanese hold that the ‘possession’ of a woman is considered a natural attribute of power. Restricted in this regard by government policies, but permitted by tradition and Islamic rules, hidden marriage or extra marital affairs continue to prevail.

As both Islam and Javanese traditions assign the male as the breadwinner, it is worth noting that, from the articles examined here, there was no criticism whatsoever of the male who was not able to support his family, and neither was he labelled a fallen leader. In fact, even when the male is the breadwinner and thus involved in worldly matters, he is still attributed with the potency of spiritual power and is assumed to be able to achieve inner enlightenment and unity with the cosmos. This is not so for the female. She is deemed to have no spiritual power and her involvement with worldly matters demotes her to a class lower than the male.

Between Western and Islamic values there is an irreconcilable tension as expressed by a lawyer in the 1991 article. A man who used to travel overseas and was correspondingly influenced by Western values, was described as more able to understand his wife’s infidelity. This is, nevertheless, contrary to both Islamic values and the adat, which demand that a woman guards her chastity.
Chapter 3

Working Wife

In the following chapter, I present an analysis of the way the theme of the working wife is treated in three articles published in *femina* 1976, 1982, 1992. In the previous chapter I have examined the ways in which *femina* represents the Indonesian women in their household domain. In this chapter I examine articles which problematise the situation of a wife earning more money than her husband, thus focussing on representations of women in the public domain. As revealed in Chapter 2, contradictory images of working wife emerge from *femina*. On one hand, the working wives are praised because they can support themselves in economic terms, as demonstrated by Yani and Nina in the 1977 article, but, on the other hand, women who work outside the home are seen as the seducers, who lure another woman’s husband into infidelity. These contradictory representations will be analysed in this chapter, by making an assessment of the representations of ‘working’ women as presented by the magazine.

Over one hundred and sixty-two articles regarding gender relations appeared in *femina* between 1973 and 1992. There were six articles regarding ‘working’ wives from which I have chosen three which represent the 1970s, 80s and 90s, for analysis. The structure of the chapter is organised around these three articles. Firstly, I present each one, followed by a comparative analysis which is divided into two parts focussing on Indonesian working women in general and the reasons why
Indonesian middle class women work outside of the home. Each part will be
categorised into several subtitles. At the end of the analysis, a conclusion will be
given.

1976 Article

‘Menyoroti Penghasilan Ganda’ [Focusing on Double Income]

This 1976 article appeared under the rubric ‘Marriage Problems’ with the title
‘Menyoroti Penghasilan Ganda’ [Focusing on the Double Income]. There is no
description of the background of the author, Day Amir, who does not contribute
again to the magazine, therefore it is difficult to determine whether Day Amir is a
male or female writer. However, Day Amir’s opinions can be considered as
indicative of the voice of femina because, as normal procedure dictates, the article
would have been edited and approved by an editorial committee.

A photograph of a woman carrying an office bag towards a car with a man
walking one step behind her is the illustration which, at a glance, sets up the problem
to be addressed in the article. Generally, Day Amir discusses the problem within
marriages where both the husband and wife contribute financially to the family
income. The article is divided into two parts. The first part outlines the perceived
problem, while the second part informs the intended female reader by referring to
two case studies. The respondents are a male doctor, whose wife, significantly, is
not interviewed, and a couple who were both given a voice in the article. The
woman, Santi, works as a secretary for a national oil company, while Irawan, her husband, works as a lower ranking clerk at a private bank. A two paragraph introduction to the topic is followed by the comments of a psychologist, Dewi Sawitri, who was invited to give her opinion. Most of her statement was reported in indirect speech which has a less personal impact than the narrative of the respondents which is often quoted directly. Finally, at the end of the article, the author summarises the main prints.

To contextualise the 1976 article in its socio-cultural situation, it is important to note that in Indonesia at that time only a few wives would have had higher incomes than their husbands. Therefore, in the first part of the article, Day Amir introduces the topic as being fairly sensitive to the personal relationships of career couples. In addition, the psychologist suggests that the marriage will go smoothly only if the wife ‘behaves appropriately, does not overact, always shows respect to her husband in the way that is commonly accepted’ \[selama sang isteri tetap bersikap wajar, tidak overacting, tetap menghargai suaminya sebagaimana lazimnya\] (1976:65). Sawitri further argues that in the case where the husband earns less that the wife, he should have a very strong personality and the wife should not be arrogant. In other words, the wife must respect, obey and be submissive to her husband in the traditional Indonesian manner,\(^1\) because men are believed to have spiritual power and to be able to control their own desires. Unlike women, men can

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pursue ascetic exercises in an attempt to achieve a more 'refined' and 'superior' state of life. This spiritual power gives men superiority over women.

According to Sawitri, and in line with the articles explored in the previous chapter, the attitude of the wife determines the atmosphere of the marriage. If a wife feels more successful, and more powerful than her husband and feels that her husband lacks in all things, she will lead her marriage to destruction (1976:66). In other words, Sawitri does not question the stereotypes of men and women in a marriage. Rather she recommends that the status quo should remain. She suggests that even if the wife is more successful than her husband in the work place environment, she must not let it show, as this will make her husband feel insecure and threaten the marriage. Furthermore, Sawitri states the opinion that basically women are pushed into the work force because of factors of uncertainty. These include whether the husband earns enough income to support the family, and the fact that since male life expectancy is lower than that of females on average, a woman might feel forced into the paid work environment to secure her future. There is not, however, even one sentence which suggests that a woman should have the right to develop herself.

In the second part of 'Focusing on Double Incomes', Day Amir presents the case study of a woman Santi, which Amir insists is 'not her real name' (1976:66). Santi works as a secretary for a national oil company, whilst her husband, Irawan, (not a real name either), works as a lower ranking clerk at a private bank. They have
three children and since Irawan’s salary is not adequate to support the family, Santi has to contribute financially. She makes four times as much as Irawan and this success has brought a change in her relationship with him. In a direct quotation, Santi admits that she has lost respect for Irawan and no longer wants to listen to his advice on how to spend her salary. She also indicates that she no longer feels the necessity to consult Irawan on every issue. In short, she disregards her husband [Ia telah kehilangan rasa hormat terhadap laki-laki teman hidupnya itu] (1976:66).

Irawan, on the other hand, in direct quotation, reveals 'his feeling of suppression', by saying that, 'my wife often pays no attention to my small amount of salary and this really makes me depressed' [isteri saya sering menganggap remeh penghasilan saya yang lebih kecil itu dan ini benar-benar membuat saya tertekan] (1976:66).

Sawitri elaborates on the impact on Irawan’s self esteem brought about by the changes in Santi’s attitude towards him. She comments that when the wife earns more money than the husband, the husband’s pride is affected and he feels that the wife no longer shows him the respect the society conditions him to expect and he can no longer demand this respect from his wife. She also discusses the importance of the age factor. In other words, if the husband is not considerably older than his wife, Sawitri expresses the opinion that the husband cannot exercise his leadership over his wife (1976:68). This notion stems from the idea that only a man is believed to have the potency derived from spiritual power, therefore, a man is expected to be older than his wife so he can keep his charisma and ascetic strength to ‘lead’ her.

In the same vein, the doctor, A. Siregar, concurs that the husband’s self
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esteem plays an essential role in a marriage. He argues that the husband should maintain his leadership so that his wife will always respect him regardless of the situation (1976:68). However, what is striking, is that he considers a wife should not be too dependent on her husband and, moreover, he suggest that the husband should be proud of his wife if she succeeds in achieving her career goals and making good money, even though her salary might be higher than that of her husband. Nevertheless, he stresses that the husband should not abandon his roles and obligations in protecting the family. Finally, Siregar has no complaint about a woman attempting to better herself with a paid job, because of inherent factors of uncertainty in life. He suggests that due to the fact that male life expectancy is lower than the female’s, women should have a job as security in case the worst should happen.

In summarising, psychologist Sawitri insists that if the wife makes more money than her husband, he should compensate in another area [jika sang istri menduduki status yang baik maka sang suami berkompensasi untuk sukses di bidang lain] (1976:67). Unfortunately, she does not give any precise suggestions to men who find themselves in the situation on how they can compensate their wives. The author’s conclusion belatedly advocates that to create a harmonious marriage in the circumstance of unequal remuneration between the couple, not only are character and personality fundamental, but a deep understanding from both the husband and wife are vital.
Article 1986

‘Kalau Istri Berpenghasilan Lebih Besar dari Suami’
[If the Wife Earns More than the Husband]

The second article appeared in *femina*, 6, February 9, 1986 under the title ‘Kalau Istri Berpenghasilan Lebih Besar dari Suami’ [If the Wife Earns More than the Husband]. The author is anonymous. The article begins with two paragraphs on how money becomes a sensitive matter because it is usually connected to power. It is suggested that money becomes the source of spousal conflict in the situation where the wife’s income is higher than her husband’s. Three respondents are interviewed, Nuning, Sri and Tiurna, who all live in Jakarta. In this article *femina* does not present a psychologist’s explanation, but rather offers a comprehensive discussion of the three case studies. The language used can be categorised as everyday language, using narrative and direct quotations. Illustrating and depicting the nature of the article is a picture of a man and a woman sitting back to back in an enormous pile of money. In a separate part of the article, moreover, there are tips from two career couples which were translated from a book written by western authors, Marjorie Shaevitz and Morton Shaevitz. In the final note it is the anonymous author of the article, who gives a conclusion summarising the case studies.

The first case study concerns Mrs. Nuning who works as a secretary for a foreign oil company in Jakarta. She has been working since she was in college and has no intention of giving up her job because she has made a great effort to
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finish her studies. She married a sailor whom she knew would often leave his family because of his job. When they got married, Nuning’s husband earned more than she did, but as a consequence they had to contend with long periods apart. While her husband attended a course required for his promotion, Nuning took his place as breadwinner. Subsequently, this double career couple managed to save some money to support their two children, but, after sailing for years, Nuning’s husband decided to quit his job and find a new one. In his new job he earns less than Nuning, and she manages their two incomes. They nevertheless consistently discuss their expenses together, and, as with other Indonesian families, they also allocate some money in order to help their respective families. However, Nuning has no autonomy to contribute to her own family independently and the matter must always be discussed with her husband (1982:11).

In addition, the article, ‘If the Wife Earns More than the Husband’, focuses on the husband’s leadership by explaining that Nuning’s husband is never belittled by his wife even though her income is higher. Neither does he feel inferior, but rather he maintains his role as the head of the family (1982:11). This situation is acceptable to Nuning and her husband. Nonetheless, Nuning does explain the repercussions of her expected subservience to her husband. She had been offered a house by her company, but was forced to turn it down because her husband refused to move. She asks a rhetorical question, ‘What else can I do, I do have to respect my

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2 According to Shelly Errington, in Java, it is usually women who deal with money and control family finances and men tend to receive spending money from their wives (see Atkinson and Errington, 1990, p. 4).
husband’s opinion?", \textit{apa boleh buat, saya juga harus menghormati pendapat suami} (1982:11). Obviously, she would have liked to move for several reasons - the backyard was pretty big, there was a nice fresh atmosphere in the house which she thought would benefit the children and the rent was cheap and long term.

The second case study is about Mrs. Sri. She was born and raised in Javanese culture before she moving to Jakarta. She married an artist with whom she had two children, now aged eight and four. After she got married she quit her job and only returned to the paid work force when her first child turned two. She is now manager for a big company and earns more than her husband. Like Nuning, she also manages the household income and she explained that in order to make her husband feel like the breadwinner, she intentionally spends her husband’s salary for daily expenditures like the electricity bill, school fees, food and the maid’s wages, whereas her own salary is spent on clothing and incidental expenses.

As her career has progressed, Sri is required to travel abroad quite frequently but she does not want people to see her as superior to her husband, in terms of her position, money or social life. When the company offered her a company car, she refused to take it because her husband drives a motorcycle. She explained that she decided to buy a second-hand car which satisfied her and left her husband’s dignity in tact (1982:12). Unlike Nuning’s husband, Sri’s husband was not annoyed by the fact that his wife was offered a company car. Instead it is Sri who felt she had to maintain the traditional balance \textit{[karena itu nyonya Sri sering menjaga kesetimbangan walaupun ia tahu bahwa suaminya tidak ambil pusing]} (1982:12).
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The last case study in the article recounts the story of a woman, Mrs. Tiurna, who is married to a major in the army and lives at the military compound. She runs a beauty salon located at her house because her husband quite frequently leaves the family for long periods of duty. As they originally came from a Batak group in Sumatra, members of their extended family from time to time come to visit and stay at their house in Jakarta. Some times the visits are short, but on occasion relatives have stayed for a year, which really upset Tiurna, because most of them were her husband’s relatives.3

Within a year, Tiurna’s salon became very successful and her income increased until it was higher than her husband’s. They repeatedly argued about money. According to Tiurna, it was her husband who constantly criticised her for spending money. For instance, her husband considered as unnecessary a cupboard which Tiurna bought because she had wanted it for a long time. Tiurna also complained that every time she tried to discuss an item that she wanted to purchase, her husband never responded. She felt that she had to make her own decisions without having to repeatedly defer to him [saya mengambil keputusan sendiri tanpa menanyakan dia lagi] (1982:106). The tension between the couple increased until one day he refused to give his salary to Tiurna. Until that time Tiurna had managed the family income. This caused a serious disagreement.

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3 In the Javanese context, according to research done by Hildred Geertz, in cases where two nuclear families join within a single household, or where single adults are attached to a nuclear family household, the linking relative is more often a woman than a man (see Geertz, 1961:45).
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At this critical stage, Tiurna’s mother visited and offered her advice, which, Tiurna suggested, saved the marriage. Tiurna’s mother explained that although her work as a vendor brought in more than Tiurna’s teacher father, she successfully maintained her husband’s self-esteem so that he never sensed that he was superseded as far as income earning capacity was concerned. She warned her daughter that as a woman, Tiurna was obliged to take cognisance of her husband’s sensitivities.

In conclusion, the author argues that money is a sensitive matter because it is always related to power. The person who contributes most, theoretically, should be a decision maker. In Tiurna’s case, as femina suggests, the conflict arose because she felt that she had more power than her husband, who did not respect her efforts. Her husband, on the other hand, felt displeased with this circumstance. At this stage, the author, introduced a widely known philosophy, adopted from Javanese culture - ‘suwarga nunut, neroko katut’, which means ‘follow your husband to heaven, get dragged with him into hell’ (1982:106). Implicitly, the author wants the reader to adopt this philosophy as examples of the two previous respondents are recalled.\(^4\) Because she was raised in Javanese culture and desired to maintain the traditional gendered hierarchy in which her husband was always above her [ia ingin agar suami selalu lebih darinya] (1982:106), Sri turned down the company car. Nuning refused to move to a new house because she did not want her husband to feel beneath her, even though, he understood the circumstances. In addition, Nuning, by constantly

\(^4\) Not only does the Javanese philosophy refer to an ‘ideal’ marriage concept, but it also sets the criteria of beauty for Indonesian women. The two most popular traditional cosmetics in Indonesia are claimed to be representative of the Javanese admired past. They are; ‘Mustika Ratu’ (the Queen’s Precious Stone) and ‘Martha Tilaar’. It is true that ‘Mustika Ratu’ draws heavily in its advertising by promoting the secret beauty of Javanese princess.
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discussing important matters with her husband, maintained his superior position. These examples are all inspired by and reflect Javanese philosophy. The author argues that Nuning’s marriage will be peaceful.

Article 1992

‘Masihkah Suami Cemas Bila Istri Bekerja?’
[Does a Husband Still Worry if his Wife Works?]

The third article in femina (26, July 2, 1992) was entitled, ‘Masihkah Suami Cemas Bila Istri Bekerja?’ [Does the Husband Still Worry if the Wife Works?] under the rubric: ‘You and Your Husband’. Ami Wahyu wrote the article with the help of Dani Purwono, who did the interviews and with the assistance of the photographer, Sanjaya. Ami Wahyu is definitely a woman and Sanjaya is definitely a man. However, it is impossible to discern whether Dani Purwono is a woman or a man. In addition, a female psychologist, Ieda Purnomo Sigit Sidi, who works as a marriage counsellor for femina, comments on the five case studies which are presented.

The article is illustrated with four photographs. With the title are individual photographs of a youngish man and woman. The man, taking up two thirds of the page, is seated in thoughtful pose with his mind flying to a woman, supposedly his wife, who is sitting in his ‘thought bubble’ in front of the computer. The photograph of the woman has been modified to make it appear as if she sits alone. In addition,

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5 Ami Wahyu is now one of femina’s senior editors. She has been working with the magazine since September 8, 1981 and was previously a technology agriculture engineer of University of Gadjah Mada.
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although the ‘thought bubble’ takes up only one sixth of the page, there is still a lot of empty space around the woman. In other words, in ‘Does the Husband still Worry if the Wife Works?’, the illustration constructs the male as the centre of attention, with the female as a mere figment of his imagination, without an identity of her own. Juxtaposed with this image, are two photographs of happy families. In each of these pictures, the husband is famous - one is a musician and the other is a very popular radio broadcaster. In both instances, the wives work outside of the home and the photographs emphasise their ability to maintain a happy family by attending to their domestic duties as well as their paid employment. However, there is a contradiction between what these two photographs depict and the written text as far as the interviews are concerned.

The article begins with the stories of three respondents followed by the opinion of the psychologist. The comments of the celebrities are highlighted and separated into special boxes in the text. Ami Wahyu introduces a woman named Rina, who has been working as a secretary in a private company for two years and who undoubtedly enjoys her job. She is absent from her home for eight hours every day and is also occasionally required to work late if her boss asks her to entertain the company guests. Initially, her husband, Dicky, was not annoyed with the circumstance, because he had ‘let’ Rina work (1992:76). However, his attitude gradually changed. He began to grumble whenever Rina came home late, and he resented it in the morning, when Rina readied their only daughter for the day. He became even more upset when he saw Rina prepare herself for work and he chastised
Rina for coming home late one evening when she had been busy preparing a company exhibition. Ultimately, Dicky demanded that Rina quit her job and stay at home to manage the household. Rina, suggests the author, Wahyu, was ‘obviously frustrated’, because, she enjoyed her work and felt gratified by it. Eventually, however, to maintain peace at home Rina quit her paid work.

The second respondent is Gita. Her husband, Haryadi, ‘allows’ [membolehkan] her to work under several conditions (1992:76). Gita has to make sure that the house is organised and all the household chores are completed before she leaves in the morning. Gita, however, is not ‘allowed’ to work overtime and nor is she ‘allowed’ to bring work home. In addition, if Haryadi’s job take him out of town, he demands that Gita takes leave so that she can look after their three children. Consequently, Gita loses many opportunities offered by the company to improve her skills. Nonetheless, Gita admitted to feeling luckier than other wives who are forced to stay home because their husbands will not ‘allow’ them to work even if the wife has a higher degree of education. Gita adds that her destiny is better because, compared with other women, she is ‘allowed’ to work even if her husband gives his permission only reluctantly and with a ‘sour face’ [Saya lebih beruntung daripada istri-istri lain yang ‘dirumahkan’ oleh suami. Saya cuma dikasih muka asam. Juga nasib saya lebih baik daripada istri-istri lain yang sejak awal perkawinan memang dilarang bekerja, seberapa pun tinggi pendidikan sang istri] (1992:76).6

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6 Sour face’ [muka asam] is an expression known in Indonesian language, to express some one’s dislike of a particular thing.
The third respondent, Mira, works as a manager in a private bank. Her husband wants her to stay at home to look after the children, because he thinks his income is adequate to support the family. It was only after a long discussion that Mira explained that money was not the only consideration. As an economist she wanted to do something besides working in the home. Her husband relented. However, as she explained to the interviewer, she strove to keep her husband happy so he would not change his mind about ‘letting’ her work (1992:84). As a result, she tried very hard to complete the household chores, educate the children and pay attention to her husband. She explained that it is really difficult to work outside while at the same time making sure that everything is running smoothly with the family. Since she really wanted her bank job, she had to manage the double work load.

Ieda Sidi, the psychologist, explains that there are husbands like Dicky and Haryadi who do not ‘permit’ their wives to work, or if they do they lay down rigid conditions. This basically means that it is valid for wives to work as long as they can manage to handle the children, husband and household. Those husbands tend to forget that their wives are not super women who are able to manage everything by themselves. But the question must be asked regarding what it is that makes these husbands dislike the idea of their wives in the paid work force. According to Sidi, these males have seen the role played by their mothers who worked entirely as housewives, at a time when their fathers were absolute breadwinners. Therefore, for these males, the ideal mother is the one who stays at home. When they are
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contfronted with the idea of women working in the public domain, they worry whether they or the children will be neglected.\(^7\)

However, Ieda Sidi, the psychologist, suggests that the situation is slowly changing. According to her, in 1992, the young husband is more realistic. Not only will he ‘permit’ [mengizinkan] (1992:76) his wife to work, he does not demand that his wife do the household chores herself, or give him her absolute attention. Ironically, the psychologist’s point of view contradicts the above presented case studies. In this third article, like in the previous two articles, where the wife is ‘allowed’ to work, she must be on her best behaviour, so that her husband’s ego is not threatened and his role as head of the family is not jeopardised [istri harus pandai-pandai membawa diri, agar si suami tak terusik egonya. Antara lain, istri perlu membuktikan bahwa walaupun dia bekerja, tak akan mengancam peranan suami sebagai kepala keluarga] (1992:76). If the experiences of the wives presented in femina are typical of the situation in Indonesia, it would then appear that there has been no change in attitude towards the working wife in sixteen years.

Sidi argues that many working wives use the wrong strategy when their career is progressing and deliberately earn more than their husbands. In this instance, if the family is in financial difficulty, rather than to consult with their husbands, these wives cope with the crisis by themselves as if their husbands are superfluous. In this circumstance, the psychologist suggests that those husbands feel

\(^7\) According to Ihromi, 95 per cent of Indonesian male-middle class, responded positively to a statement that married women should be allowed to work in the paid work force. However, only 40 per cent were married to working wives. Ihromi argues that this is an indication that the majority of Indonesian husbands agreed with the idea of working wife, as long as it is not their wife. Quoted in Chrysanti H. Sedyono, 1996, p. 221.
unwanted, because their roles are being superseded by their wives. Echoing the articles I analysed in Chapter 2, this psychologist argues that this insecurity leads these men to start looking for another woman.

The author further contends that a way to measure the 'success' of a working woman is by not looking simply at her achievement, position or her salary, but rather, at her ability to manage her household. A woman can only be a 'success' if she lives in a harmonious marriage with her husband and if her children succeed in their school work. The author argues that an executive woman, even if she headed several companies could not be called a success if one of her children was involved with drugs or her spouse was having an affair with another woman. Therefore, Wahyu, like Sawitri contends that the wife's responsibility is particularly difficult especially because she must maintain a harmonious marriage (1992:77).

One of the celebrity case studies in the article, 'Does the Husband still Worry if the Wife Works?', tells a slightly different story, although on the whole, it confirms the psychologist's conclusion that wifely and motherly tasks are highly valued, but unpaid. Proof of this can be made with reference to Chandra Darusman, the musician, who 'allows' his wife to work as an account manager. He said that her knowledge as an accountant would be wasted if she did not work (1992:84). He contributes to the household by occasionally 'playing with the children, and taking them to the doctor if they get sick' (1992:84). He insists that he does these tasks willingly, because he demanded his wife not follow her career until after the

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8 This is parallel to Confucian which promote, among other things, reverence for education and a strong family (see David I. Hitchcock, 1994:2).
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youngest child was three. However, while he might look after the children in an emergency, he continues to demand that his wife complete her duties as a housewife before she leaves the house. He said, 'I ask her to give instruction to the maids on household tasks, shopping, cooking and fetching the children from school' (1992:84). He also adds, 'a career couple should have good family management, otherwise they will argue all the time' (1992:84). Darusman has set up a chain of command from himself, to Dini, his wife, to the maids that has the effect of absolving him from any household duties. It must be noted that Dini is not interviewed and therefore her understanding of 'good family management' is not canvassed.

In the second celebrity interview, on the other hand, it is Diah Setiowati, the wife of the celebrity broadcaster, Krishna Purwana, who is interviewed. Setiowati, works in a private clinic in Jakarta. The family does not have a live-in maid, because Setiowati and her husband decided they wanted their son to form a close relationship with his parents, rather than a maid (1992:85). The consequence of not having a full time live-in maid, is that Setiowati becomes the maid to her husband and son. She explains that she must bathe her son, prepare her husband's clothes, polish his shoes and make a substantial cooked breakfast for him before she gets ready for work. In addition, no matter how tired she is, she has to serve her son, Abi, and her husband when she arrives home. She rationalises her double work load by saying that although she works hard at the clinic, she wants to 'succeed' as a wife and mother as well.
Comparisons and Analysis

In the articles described above the issue of an ideal ‘humble’ working wife is transparent. In addition, certain criteria for defining a successful career woman are set up along with emphasis on what constitutes a ‘good’ working wife. A working wife is represented as the manageress of the domestic domain, who should also maintain her husband’s pride. Furthermore, the conditions under which it is acceptable for women to work are highlighted. In the following, I take up these issues on the background of the general situation pertaining to Indonesia.

1. Indonesian working women in general

   a. Women’s Destiny

More than half of the total population of Indonesia are women. The 1990 Census indicated that there were almost 90 million women and 89.5 million men\(^9\) (Sensus Penduduk, 1990), belonging to more than three hundred main ethnic groups each, with its own language and traditional customs. Thus, the heterogeneous ethnic groups of Indonesian women, the complexity of the culture and the plurality of the religions, add to the difficulty of drawing a picture which can claim to represent all Indonesian women. Most of my discussion will refer to the largest of Indonesia’s

\(^9\) Women 89,873,406, and men 89,448,235.
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ethnic group, the Javanese, although I agree with Raharjo and Hull that by specifically referring to the Javanese culture, I may portray an imperfect picture of the cultural context for Indonesian women as a whole (Raharjo and Hull, 1984:114). The reason for my referring to the Javanese, however, is threefold. First, as has been mentioned in Chapter 1, it is certain that Javanese women are one of femina's target audiences, since there are more than 90 million Javanese in Indonesia (Cooley, 1992:230). While femina is printed in Jakarta, most of the magazine editors were raised and received their education in Java. Secondly, the social and political dominance of the Javanese is a feature of Indonesian society and stems partly from Dutch colonialism. It was only under Dutch colonisation that the archipelago united as one political unit (Crockett, 1983:4). Colonial economic policies focused on Java were reinforced by the post-independence Indonesian government, which decided to make Jakarta the capital city of the country and thus the centre of the national government and trade. Finally, as I have already explained in the previous chapter, Javanese society was sharply stratified with a division between priyayi and abangan. Boosted by the political and cultural hegemony of Java, past and present, the formal education system and the media, priyayi lifestyle and views have become the source and standard reference for many of the ideals and values of the larger community (Raharjo and Hull, 1984:115).

The priyayization process has a great deal of influence on women. Djajadiningrat strongly believes that the process of priyayization has swayed the entire modern Indonesian society (Djajadiningrat-Nieuwenhuis, 1982:47). The
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*priyayi* view is that ‘*kodrat wanita*’ or women’s destiny, is primarily centred on a woman’s role as wife and mother. This gendered concept which has been assigned to women has remained unchanged and even reinforced by Islam, as has been discussed in the previous chapter. Indeed it is stipulated by a verse in the Qur’an,

> Men have authority over women.  
> Good women are obedient.  
> They guard their unseen parts because Allah has guarded them  
> *(An-Nisaa 34).*

Hence, as was pointed out in Chapter 2, women continue to perceive their wifely duties as the most essential ‘natural’ duties along side being care-giver for the family. Eventually, no matter how much she achieves in any other career, a woman is always a mother first and foremost. Despite there being no official restrictions to restrain women from working outside the home, to work in the public domain is considered acceptable only if it does not interfere with a woman’s ‘biological destiny’ which consigns her to domestic duties in the home. This is presented clearly by the 1992 article, in which Rina was forced by her husband to quit working so that she could stay home to manage the household and Mira strove hard to make sure that she completed the household chores before she was ‘allowed’ to work outside the house.

The domestication of Indonesian women is reinforced by the State. The political swing, brought about by the New Order regime in 1966, as Wiriyani argues, dismissed any genuine forum for women to articulate their own ideas *(Sen, 1993:116).* Partly because of Western influences, in 1973 the New Order officially implemented the PKK *(Pembinaan Kesejahteraan Keluarga)* [the Family Welfare
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Programme]. The State’s goal, as Berninghausen and Kerstan argue, was to free women from the burden of income-producing activities, so that women could devote themselves solely to their family’s status production (1992:37). Suryakusuma coined this phenomenon as ‘state ibuism’ which she refers to as the domestication of women as dependent wives who exist for their husband, family and the state (1996:98). However, an interesting shift appeared when Sulasikin Moerpratomo, was appointed to the position of State Minister for Women’s Affairs in the fifth Cabinet (1988-1992). In pointing to the way Indonesian society genders its population she began to explode the ‘truth’ of the concept of kodrat wanita. Moerpratomo explained that kodrat wanita refers to things that are given biologically to women. In this regard, she suggests, that only menstruation, pregnancy and breast feeding, are what differentiate women from men. But these ‘differences’ have become an all encompassing destiny limiting women to the domestic sphere. Wifely duties, she said, are not biological destiny or kodrat. Instead, they are a matter of chance imposition on women.

However, in the 1980s, with the growth of the female labour force growth, and education gradually being widened to include women, the New Order began to expand a second role that they had assigned to women. The PKK directives provide evidence for this shift and that woman’s role as ‘caretaker of the household’ was being expanded to include woman as ‘the secondary household income provider’ (Aripurnami, 1996:61). Interestingly, Emma Yogie, the present head of the PKK and wife of the Indonesian Minister for Internal Affairs, has begun to promote the
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need to change both the first and second roles of woman as loyal backstop and supporter of her husband and as the secondary household income provider.¹⁰ For Yogie, since women are considered to play a crucial role in development, they should be exhorted to participate in fruitful development activities (Bianpoen, 1996:197-9). Yogie also believes that women’s needs in the past were different from what they are now. She makes a powerful case for the first and second roles be replaced urgently. She said that woman’s role as the supporter of her husband should be changed to be the equal partner of the man and she should not be considered merely as a secondary income provider (Ibid, 197-9). Implicitly, she agrees that the Javanese ideology does not reflect or even pertain to other Indonesian groups. This is proven by the study done by Pujiwati which shows that about twenty percent of Indonesian households are headed by women (Pujiwati, 1987), while Crockett also suggests that one in five of all working females head a household (1983:76). In Aceh, where married men spend much of their time away from the villages in informal sector trading, women head the households and control their own rice land as well as the house (Tanner, 1974:137-139). This convinced Emma Yogie that woman can no longer be considered as only a secondary income earner. Indeed, the articles examined here, reveal the fact that some wives, like Santi (1976), and Nuning, Sri, Tiurna, earn more money than their husbands (1986).

¹⁰ Her husband, Yogie S. Memed, is the Minister for Internal Affairs in the sixth Cabinet of the New Order regime (1993-1998). He was a West Javanese Governor before being appointed by President Suharto as one of his ministers.
b. Discrimination of working women

As mentioned above, the Indonesian female labour force is growing rapidly. Data taken from the National Census Bureau shows that in 1971, 33 per cent of the total paid labour were women. By 1990 women comprised 39 per cent. In 1995, the National Census Bureau estimated that the number of women in paid work force would increase to 45 per cent which is equivalent to 33 million (in Sedyono, 1996:213). Despite the Constitution of the State (UUD, 1945) granting women the same legal and political rights as men, it cannot be denied that Indonesian working women are still handicapped in some respects, and that discrimination still exists.

The existence of discrimination against female workers was admitted by the Minister of Education and Culture, when he delivered a speech in Jakarta in 1994 (KOMPAS, 1994). According to the Minister, women in general get paid less than men. Furthermore, not only do woman receive less pay than men, they are also treated differently from men (Oey-Gardiner, 1996:11). More female workers work part time with or without contracts and get paid on a daily basis, without any bonuses, with uncertainty of employment and no career path. They have very limited access to union and net-working facilities. Those women who work in the formal sector are likely to be the last to join a course provided by the employers (Ibid, 11). Raharjo and Hull explain that certain protective policies, like menstruation leave and maternity leave, may work against the hiring of women, as employers
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seeks to maximise the output of their labour force and avoid interruptions in job continuity (1984:118-119).

Although equal pay for equal work is legally guaranteed in law books, it is very clear that women get less pay than men. Sedyono in her recently published text states that a female graduate earns Rp.85.840, per month while a male gets Rp.128.038 (1996:213). Among administration workers, females earn Rp.155.564 a month and males Rp.203.934 (Ibid, 213). In my own case, special allowances, such as spouse and child income support and the customary rice quota, were paid to my husband as the head of the family. Even though I worked full time I had no access to these benefits unless my husband signed them over to me. It is most unusual, however, for a husband to give up the symbol of his status as provider. In addition, because all women who work with the government are considered single, regardless of their marital status, as a woman, I had no access to housing credit.

Moreover, there is a glass ceiling which restricts the number of women in decision making positions. Less than 12 per cent of the positions in Senate are held by women and less than 10 per cent in Congress (Tan, 1991:xiv). At the Supreme Court level, 15 per cent are women and not one of these is represented in the Supreme Audit (Oey-Gardiner, 1996:13). And from 66,371 villages scattered all over Indonesia, only 927 are lead by women which amounts to only 14 per cent (Ibid,13).

It should be noted here that despite so many handicaps faced by the Indonesian working women, there is, nonetheless, an impressive tendency for
women to engage in areas which have traditionally been dominated by men. For example, in 1980, only 5,000 women were manageresses, but this number had increased to 15,000 by 1990 (National Census Bureau 1992 in Sedyono, 1996:213). In regard to the number of manageresses, women comprise only seven per cent of the total managerial work force (Meliala, quoted in Sedyono, 1996:215). Entrepreneurial women increased from 183,000 in 1980 to 223,000 in 1990 (National Census Bureau 1992 in Sedyono, 1996:213). The number of women who work as civil employees has also increased quite dramatically, from 700,064 in 1984, to 1.1 million, out of the total 3.6 million, in 1989 (Tan, 1991:68). Women who become bank directors have increased from five in 1983, to forty in 1992 (Sedyono, 1996:215). It is true that these numbers represent a huge gender imbalance since women comprise less than one per cent of the 4,075 bank directors (Ibid, 215). However, it is pleasing to note that this number is expected to increase.

These figures, which show the growth of women in certain sectors of the paid work force, may explain why *femina* introduced the topic of the working wife. With more wives working outside the home, comes the possibility of a wife who earns more than her husband. This situation is likely to be seen by the male owners of *femina* as a threat to male hegemony while at the same time presenting an opportunity to sell more copies of the magazine. It is within the context of this tension that the magazine sets certain conditions which apply to the ‘acceptable’ working wife.
2. Why do Indonesian middle class women work?
   
a. Islamic and Javanese points of view

The Qur’an, in, implicitly stipulates that women are not to be discouraged from working outside the home,

Men as well as women shall be rewarded for their labours. 
Give them their dowry for the enjoyment you have had of them as a duty; 
but it shall be no offence for you to make any other agreement 
among yourself after you have fulfilled your duty. 

(An-Nisaa, verses 24 and 32)

There were many prominent Muslim women who lived in the time of the Prophet (Saadawi, 1982:196). As has been mentioned in Chapter 2, one significant woman was Khadijja, the first wife of the Prophet who was twenty years his senior. She was the first woman to convert to the Muslim faith (Huzaemah, 1993: 30). After her death, the Prophet involved himself in polygamous relationships until he met Aisha, the youngest and beloved wife. She was a chief commander in the army during the Jamal war and she was also well known as an intellectual (Ibid, 30). Among other prominent women in Islam are Asy-Syifa and Rufaidah. Asy-Syifa was the first woman teacher who taught reading and writing and Rufaidah became the founder of the first hospital (Ibid, 30).

In spite of these powerful female role models, according to the Qur’an, after a man and a woman marry, the man has an obligation to provide the wife’s necessities as stipulated by two verses,
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Women are your fields; go then; into your fields as you please.
Do good works and fear Allah.
Men have authority over women because Allah has made the one superior to the other,
and because they spend their wealth to maintain them.

(Al-Baqarah 223 and An-Nisaa 34)

As Huzaemah suggests, a wife’s necessities are daily needs, like drink, food, clothes, and shelter in line with the providing capacity of the individual man (Huzaemah, 1993:24). There is some dissension among scholars about whether a married woman who earns cash from her work is freed from the obligation of contributing her income to the household (Ibid, 24). Wasit Aulawi, in his oration delivered in Jakarta in 1992, strongly argued that a husband can be freed from his responsibility to provide daily necessities for his wife, if she, on his consent, earns money (Ibid, 24). On the other hand, Huzaemah argues vehemently to the contrary by supporting traditional interpretation. In addition, it should be noted that within the last few years, there has been a growing voice from both female and male Indonesian Muslim scholars requesting that the verses in the Qur’an and the Hadiths be reinterpreted.

For example, in 1993, a Muslim male scholar, Jalaluddin Rakhmat published the article, *Bidadari itu Perempuan Saleh* [That the Angel is a devoted woman] in TEMPO (November 6: 97). This scholar, in presenting the angel as a woman rather than a man, provides a disruption to the Qur’anic male hegemony which presents angels as male. It must be noted that the critical tone of the magazine caused it to be banned by the New Order government in June 1994, after more than twenty years of publication. In a similar vein, Nursyahbani Katjasungkana has written, ‘Kedudukan Wanita dalam Perspektif Islam’ [Position of Women under Islam] (1993),
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Since it has traditionally been lower class women who work outside the home, Hull explains that low social status has therefore always been given to women who work in the public domain (1974:6).

In addition, within the priyayi, there existed a very different idea about a woman’s place. Her household tasks were generally undertaken by maids from the lower socio economic class. The priyayi woman, as Vreede-de Stuers argues, was traditionally confined to house compounds and she tended to live an idle confined life (1960:50). There was no economic necessity for her to work in the public domain. And if she had to work, then she was expected to have a ‘fitting’ occupation, so that she would never degrade her husband’s high status. The fact that a woman is not in paid work indicates that her husband provides sufficiently for ‘his’ family.

The high social value attached to the marital and maternal roles of Indonesian women priyayi, causes a husband to disapprove of his wife working because his macho status is undermined and he perceives that there is conflict between her public and domestic tasks. This view seems to have its root in old Javanese philosophy which considered profit oriented economic activity as reprehensible (Berninghausen and Kerstan, 1992:38). According to Anderson, ‘the image of asceticism is the prime expression of power’, rather than profit oriented activity (1972:12). Consequently, women who are continually dealing with practical matters and money in maintaining the family are considered as having lower prestige. Taking care of the mundane, practical and material needs of daily life, ties women to the physical
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world where they are prevented from achieving spiritual potency. In addition, women, by their reproductive biology, are also socially marked as a group tied to worldly life. For these reasons, women are seen as unable to attain the spiritual potency which is so highly valued (Errington, 1990:7). As a result, careers for priyayi women are ideologically devalued as being contrary to kodrat wanita, women’s destiny.

Nonetheless, a wife can work outside the home with the consent of her husband. In this regard, a study conducted by Raharjo and Hull, in Jakarta, showed that sixteen per cent of wives who were not in the paid work force, claimed that they could not get their husbands’ approval. Another forty per cent of workers explained that work was permissible only if it did not conflict with a woman’s motherly and wifely roles (1984:121). In my research in femina magazine, as the 1992 article shows, there is a clear example of a woman, Rina, who was forced to quit her job because her husband was upset when she was unable to fulfil her domestic chores to his satisfaction. In the same article was the example of Gita, who lost many opportunities offered by her company to improve her skills, since her husband laid down rigid conditions for her involvement in the paid work force, so that it would never conflict with her wifely and mothering roles. Even so Gita admitted, despite her husband’s ‘sour face’, that she felt that her ‘destiny’ was better compared with other women who were not ‘allowed’ to work by their husbands.
b. Benefits gained by 'working'

From the three articles examined here, several reasons can be deduced as to why middle class women go out to work. Article one (1976) reveals that the only reason for a wife to work is to provide economic security for herself and her family in case her husband dies. However, in the later articles, a shift in motivation is revealed to expose that women are 'working' for a variety of other reasons including the desire to use their education - as explained by Nuning (1986), Mira (1992) and Dini (1992), and for their own job satisfaction. None of the respondents admitted working because they wanted to earn additional income. These new role models and aspirations of working women may have been influenced by the mass media, either electronic or printed, carrying stories and presenting pictures of 'working' women. It may also indicate that economic motivations are not an issue for these priyayi class women. More probably however, these women are attempting to present themselves as halus (refined), by not expressing their worldly interest in money, which is definitely not 'fitting' to their high social status. Nevertheless, this silencing of the economic motive is contradicted by a recent interview done by Sedyono which reveals that among Jakarta women manageresses, earning money is part of their motivation for working outside of the home (1996:216-18).

In the working environment, these women have their own 'space' and 'freedom' where they speak and act more freely than they can in the presence of their husbands. Furthermore, in the workplace, women have access to information that
they would not normally have in the home. They can use this information to reconstitute the forms of informal power about which Keeler wrote (Keeler, 1991:140). In addition, they can exercise power and autonomy. In a small village environment, as Keeler observes, women, despite having ‘less dignity’ than men, are able to maintain their own ‘freedom’. He explains that in the official Javanese traditionally male sphere of marriage negotiations, women are likely to be neglected. However, in spaces out of public scrutiny, women do manage to gather important information, as far as the negotiations are concerned, through neighbours and friends (1990:140). This is somewhat similar to Hildred Geertz’ argument that, traditionally, women who live in villages, maintained their private space and freedom in the domestic sphere (1960:45-6).

The increasing economic growth in Indonesia, the family planning programme, which has been promoted over the last thirty years, and the spread of education, especially to women, may explain the impetus for middle class women to ‘work’. Nevertheless, in spite of the spread of education after Independence, a gender bias is still visible. According to the Department of Education and Culture, fewer females participate in higher degrees of education. For example, in 1992/93, of those students of secondary school age, 48 per cent of females and 55 per cent of males attended school. At high school age level, the percentages for both male and female students dropped with only 32 per cent of all eligible female students attending compared with 40 per cent of males. At university level for both sexes even fewer manage to attend, but proportionately there are more than twice as many
male as female students with 6 per cent female students compare to 13 per cent male (Oey Gardiner and Sulastri, 1996:7).

Inez Smyth argues that the Indonesian Family Planning Programme does not provide women with the means to autonomously regulate their fertility (1991:789). However, she does concede that developments in contraceptive technologies have impacted on women. Over the years, family size has decreased quite drastically, because according to Singarimbun and Manning, a woman over 45 years, in 1976, had average 5.3 children (Hull,1976:4), while in 1991, this number had decreased to 3.3 (Singarimbun, 1992:190). As Hull explains, many *priyayi* women are choosing to have smaller families, which they consider as ‘ideal’ (1976:31). This is borne out by *femina* articles which indicate the number of children of several respondents. In each case, the women have fewer children than the national average. Santi (1976) has three children, Nuning and Sri (1986) have two. Rina and Setiowati (1992) have one child each, while Gita (1992) has three, and Dini (1992) has two. On this count, it must be noted that, there has been an informal two child policy in Indonesia for many years. While this is not enforced throughout the entire population, strategies to encourage civil employees to conform include limiting the rice quota and child supplementary payments to two children.

Middle class women also benefit from the relatively cheap domestic labour. Typically, more than three out of four domestic servants are female, which contrasts with less than one in three of all urban workers being women (Crockett, 1984:69). Young migrant women work as household servants because they consider domestic
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service has a function as an urbanising agent or ‘port of entry’ to urban life (Ibid, 68). Work in domestic service, eventually is seen as one of the few alternatives opened to them, besides work in factories, as street vendors and as prostitutes, for neither requires higher education and previously developed-skills. According to Papanek, this urban drift is due to changes in the agricultural sector and the use of new technologies in industrial production which reduce the earning opportunities for uneducated women (1990:166).

This presence of a large labour pool of migrant women, frees up priyayi women from some domestic tasks, so that the latter will be able to work in the public domain. There are some priyayi class couples, however, who are unwilling to have their children in the care of lower class maids. They worry that there will be a negative impact on the children affecting their intellectual, physical and moral development. This concern was demonstrated in my analysis of the femina article (1992) by Setiowati, who refused to have a live-in servant. In that case, the working wife willingly assumed the additional unpaid labour and became as a maid to her family. There are, though, alternative solutions to this problem which are rather more expensive. A woman graduate from high school, and trained as a nurse/‘nanny’ can be the solution for a wealthy family’s child care. These women, suster (translated from Dutch word ‘zuster’, meaning nurse), work, usually, in white uniforms and get paid almost double that of a servant. Their tasks are exclusively focused on the children and they do not do domestic work. This means that domestic staff still need to be employed. Alternatively, the rapid expansion of private child
Working Wife

care facilities in many big cities also benefit middle class women. In addition, certain Ministerial Departments located in Jakarta provide child care facilities which are open to the public.

Unfortunately, from the three articles I analysed there were no clues regarding the extent of involvement of the extended family as far as child care is concerned. Not one of the articles reveals that members of the extended family look after the children, which could be consistent with the fact that about half of the middle class Jakarta women are living in a nuclear family environment (Raharjo and Hull, 1984:121). This is in contrast to the mention in the 1986 article, analysed in Chapter 2, in which the extended family is mentioned in relation to troubled marriages. Despite the seeming relative isolation of the nuclear family, Wolf contends that parents continue to exert control over their daughters even after marriage (1992:193).

3. Conditions acceptable for women to ‘work’

a. What is expected from a ‘working’ wife

Within the three articles femina articles examined here, certain expectations are set up for working wives which are expressed by the magazine respondents and experts. First of all, each article emphasises that, a working wife should respect her husband and not be arrogant because she earns money. This attitude is presented in the case of Santi (1976) who was criticised by the expert for disregarding her husband.
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Maintaining a husband’s role as the head of the family was clearly at the bottom line of the expectations. A husband should always feel he is the breadwinner. He should be convinced that his ego would not be threatened and his role as head of the family was not in jeopardy. Since there is a belief in Indonesia that women are subordinate to men, working wives are expected to remain subservient to their husbands. This view helps us to understand why Sri (1986) turned down the company car offered to her. Sri wanted to ‘maintain the traditional balance’, which is really a traditional gender imbalance, between herself and her husband (1986:12). Nuning’s husband felt superfluous, because Nuning was offered a company house (1986). He certainly did not want to be superseded by his working wife.

In relevance to the stratified nature of Indonesian society, where middle class women ‘work’ they are expected to take employment which equates with their educational ability and social status. As Raharjo and Hull argue, middle class women believe that they should work at a job equal to their high education, and that lower-status jobs, which usually require physical strength, are degrading (1984:120). Although, the three articles do not explicitly mention it, most of the respondents work as white collar employees: Santi is secretary for a national oil company (1976); Nuning is secretary for a foreign oil company (1986); Sri manages a big company (1986); Tiurna owns her own beauty saloon (1986); Rina was secretary for a private company before she quit (1992); Mira was manager of a bank (1992); the musician’s wife Dini, was an account manager (1992). Not one of the respondents worked as a maid or a cleaner. In addition, a priyayi working wife is also expected to work at a
Working Wife

job which is slightly inferior to that of her husband. It is minimally acceptable if the job is equal in status, but, as Raharjo and Hull argue, it must never be higher than her husband’s (Ibid, 120).

Because age is highly respected in Indonesia, article one (1976) suggests that a husband should be older than his wife in order to project his leadership onto her. Being older than a woman, means that the man can maintain his charisma and spiritual power. As Anderson contends,

the most obvious sign of the man of Power is, quite consistently, his ability to concentrate: to focus his own personal Power, to absorb Power from the outside, and to concentrate within himself apparently antagonistic opposites (1972:13).

A man may not be able to project his charisma if his wife is older, more respected and, in some ways, ‘superior’ to himself because the ‘tense, electric balance’, about which Anderson writes, which is maintained by holding together the conflicting masculine (superior) and feminine (inferior) elements, would be out of balance.

It is also expected from a working wife that she will ensure that it is valid for her to work as long as she can handle the children, her husband, and the household as well. She has to assure her husband that when she leaves for work, the house is organised and all the household chores are completed. This double work load is not easy, as Mira explained in the 1992 article. Like Mira, Setiowati (1992) also chose to be a maid for her family, polishing her husband’s shoes, laying out his clothes, preparing his breakfast, and bathing their child, before preparing herself for work. Hildred Geertz points out that in Indonesian society, a husband often ‘appears’ to withdraw his attention from household affairs (1961:45-6). However, I would like to
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challenge her argument and state that it is not only in appearance that men withdraw their attention from household chores, they do in fact avoid domestic duties as repeatedly shown in *femina*.

The prestige values which are always attached to the activities done by men, makes women internalise the notion that their own tasks are of secondary importance. A woman, who does not work outside the home, usually writes down her occupation in an identification papers, as *mengikuti suami* [following the husband], or will give a shy answer *dirumah saja* [only staying at home]. Whereas, the husband, whose wife is employed full time in household duties, may say that she is only his *konco wingking* [rear friend] referring to her involvement in the kitchen which is usually situated at the rear of the house. Hatley explains, that while it is true a woman controls the household or trading activities outside the home, these do not provide her with high standing in society (1990:184). Errington concurs by suggesting that although women have ‘control of practical matters and money, their economic “power,” may be the opposite of the kind of “power” or spiritual potency that brings the greatest prestige; it may assure them of lower rather than higher prestige’ (1990:6-7). This can be seen from the articles examined in *femina*. Despite her higher income than her husband, Nuning has no autonomy to contribute her own income to her own family. Indeed, she has no power to influence her husband to accept a house offered by her company (1986).

This lack of status leads to a lack of self confidence among housewives. It also prevails among certain women who have achieved measurable success in
Working Wife

educational endeavours. A study done by Raharjo and Hull among the most privileged women in the country (half with University degrees and over twenty per cent with master’s degrees or even higher) revealed that their most important achievement in life is centred on their husband, children and home. Surprisingly, one-sixth of them admit that they have had no meaningful achievement, and only nine per cent mentioned their educational accomplishments. Only two per cent admit that their work or career is their positive attainment (Ibid, 119). The lack of confidence of women described in the literature was also found in the femina articles. For instance, Gita, still felt luckier than other women, in spite of the reluctance of her husband in ‘allowing’ her to work (1992).

To conclude this section, from the articles presented by femina, there are certain criteria for a so-called successful career woman in Indonesia. She should be the one whose children are achieving well in school and who never get involved with drugs. Her husband has no affairs with another woman and her marriage is harmonious. It is argued by the magazine, that regardless of how many companies a woman may head, she will never be called successful, if her house is not organised or if her husband falls into the arms of somebody else (1992:77).

A widely known Javanese philosophical maxim, repeated by femina, suggests that a successful career woman should, ‘follow your husband to heaven and get dragged with him into hell’ [suwarga numut neroko katut]. Nuning and Sri (1986) are presented as examples of good Javanese women, who placed themselves in positions both subordinate and submissive to their husbands. Both Nuning and Sri
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explain that they try to maintain their husbands’ sensitivities so that these men never felt their male ego was insulted.

*Femina* took pains also to promote Javanese culture as superior to other cultural groups in Indonesia especially in regard to what Hatley has defined as the traditional Javanese ideal of femininity - a woman who is gentle, devoted to her husband and ‘refined’ (1990:188). Unlike Nuning and Sri, Tiurna (1986), belongs to the Sumatran Batakinese group, which is known as more egalitarian than Javanese culture. Tiurna was blamed because she did not want to be inferior to her husband, and as a consequence, her marriage was troubled. Implicitly, the magazine promotes to the reader, the Javanese concept of a wife being passive and subservient to her husband. In this way, Javanese culture is presented as the ‘mecca’ for a working wife.

Another criterion presented by femina for a successful working wife is the ‘proper’ management of both incomes. In Java, as Errington discusses, women traditionally deal with money and manage family expenditure. Although a husband tends to receive money from his wife (1990:4), both husband and wife cooperate on financial decisions regarding the family (Keeler,1990:129). In the magazine article, Tiurna (1986) was blamed because she bought a cupboard without having consulted her husband.
Chapter Conclusion

Having presented the representations of working women, several contradictions appear in the analysis. Above all is the contradiction between the State Constitution and government policies as far as the working women’s payment is concerned. Despite the Constitutional stipulation that women and men have equal rights, the government policy still discriminates against the working woman. By regulating that a working woman is not considered as a breadwinner, different pay, treatment and facilities between a working women and men exist. This certainly has substantial impact to all working women, either in government or private sectors. The women’s employers are obviously the ones who take advantage of this situation by treating all their women’s employees as mere ‘additional’ income earners.

The idea that a woman is not the breadwinner, is derived in part from the Javanese view which places high value on the marital and maternal roles of priyayi women. Only abangan women, who work outside the home, have been accorded low social status. This Javanese view has impacted on other government policies by introducing the five roles of women in the PKK’s programmes. Eventually, women’s maternal roles come first and foremost, as the articles examined here point out. Regardless of a woman’s educational qualification or her employment circumstances, her prime duties are domestic chores. However, Islam, as stipulated in the Qur’an, does not discourage women from entering the paid workforce.
Conclusion

In this study I have analyzed and interpreted six articles that appeared in *femina*, in order to gain an insight into the way Indonesian women and gender relations are represented in the magazine. The six articles were selected from the twenty year period between 1972 and 1992. Two of the six works were signed by women, one was signed, but the signature did not clearly show whether the piece was written by a woman or a man, and three were anonymous. In addition, experts were invited by the authors to give views and ideas regarding the topics. These included two women psychologists, one male psychiatrist, one woman activist, and a woman lawyer.

At the onset of the dissertation, I established two overlapping directions of research. The questions that I asked in this study were focussed on the representations of Indonesian women as they appeared in *femina*, and what kind of representations of gender relationships were revealed from the magazine? I explored whether these representations changed over the twenty years period, and, if yes, how did the changes manifest? As the study progressed, I asked the question as to whether the magazine had a tendency to reinforce existing gender values or to oppose the patriarchal ideology.

Formed by several outstanding and educated middle class women, like Mirtati Kartohadiprodjo, Widarti Gunawan, and Pia Alisjahbana, *femina* has grown to be the oldest, and the magazine with the largest circulation of any other women’s magazine in the country. Partly because of the *priyayi* social and economic background of its founders, the representation of the ‘modern’ Indonesian women
Conclusion

promoted by *femina*, is a woman who is supposed to maintain *priyayi* values, Islamic norms and governmental policies. These three sometimes fit uncomfortably together and raise contradictions which were teased out in the thesis. The Hindu Javanese traditional values, Islamic rules, government policies, and western influences have dictated ideologies and social relations in Indonesian society. This is heavily reflected in *femina* where those influences are seen to overlap in many ways.

Furthermore, as there are almost ninety million Javanese Indonesians (Cooley, 1992:230), Javanese culture has an unavoidable influence on the values of modern Indonesian society as a whole (Djadaningrat-Nieuwenhuis, 1987:47).

Since childhood, Indonesian women are taught to be loyal and submissive wives and mothers. This is further described in the *Serat Centhini*, the early nineteenth century Javanese encyclopedia, which give the attributes of a good wife, comparing her to the four fingers of the hand under the thumb which symbolised her husband (Tiwon, 1996:57-8). In the Dutch colonial period, the aristocrat Kartini also was told that her essential duty in life was to be a *Raden Ayu* (a Javanese married woman of high rank) (1976:57). Almost a century later, the articles analysed here show that the ideology underlying *femina* magazine remains consistent with this traditional view of women. From these articles emerges a limited and somewhat confining representation of women. According to *femina*, a ‘good’ Indonesian woman is one whose place is in the home, being a loyal, submissive and supportive wife, handling the domestic chores and being responsible for the children. Regardless of a woman’s educational qualifications or professional achievements,
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she is, first and foremost, a wife and a mother. This *Ibuism* ideology (Djajadiningrat-Nieuwenhuis, 1987:44) is reinforced by the New Order’s interference in the 1970s when the so called wives’ organizations, such as the PKK (the Family Welfare Programme) were introduced. In spite of the 1945 Constitution which has granted Indonesian women full and equal rights with men, the State, through the PKK’s structures and policies, has heavily reinforced the domestication of women.

The magazine even suggests that the way to judge a ‘successful’ working wife is by making her ability to maintain a harmonious marriage, and to raise her children, a condition of her success (1992: 77). Her professional achievements, her salary or her position are not taken into account. As implied by *priyayi* values reproduced in *femina*, a woman is expected to downplay the significance of her own employment, and devote her energy to her household and her husband. This was indicated in the 1992 articles in which Gita and Mira have to make sure that their houses are organised before they were ‘allowed’ to work outside the house (1992: 76). Darusman, in the 1992 article, also demanded that his wife, Dini, give orders to their maids, before he ‘allowed’ her to work (1992: 84). In many ways, *femina*, also reflects the traditional Islamic norms. Even when a married woman has to earn money outside the house, her principal duties as a wife and as a manageress of the household should not be neglected.

Regarding gender relationships, from the articles, it is very obvious that for an Indonesian male there is no stigma involved with being engaged in an adulterous
Conclusion

liaison. This contrasts sharply with the female, who is expected to be faithful and guard her chastity. A woman is not allowed to be sexually ‘adventurous’, but those who do become interested in a man other than their husband is represented by the magazine, as full of guilt. This construction of woman which relies on her feelings of shame and remorse for her actions, real or imaginary, seems to be a weapon to prevent her from crossing the line. Indeed, as Saadawi argues, monogamy is a moral code for women only (1982:195). While *femina*’s articles do, somewhat reluctantly, represent women as being as capable as men in relation to having extra-marital relationships, the women tend to be portrayed as having ‘emotional’ attractions only, rather than physical ones. As far as women are concerned, an emotional attraction is regarded as just as sinful as a physical relationship would have been.

If the marriage was going wrong because the husband fell into another woman’s arms, the magazine blamed the wife. It can be seen from the 1986 article, in which ‘Mrs’ Sobirin was accused for being too careful with her household expenses (1986:43). Tita was criticized for not able to satisfy her husband’s sexual needs (1977:79), and Ratih was blame for being a ‘bossy’ and ‘correct’ housewife (1977:79). According to *femina*, it is entirely in women’s hands to restore a troubled marriage situation, no matter who or what caused the problem initially.

From the articles, it seems that any economic independence which an Indonesian woman may gain from paid employment does not entail social or psychological freedom from her husband. The 1982 article indicates that despite her higher income, Nuning was forced to turn a house offered by her company in order
to respect her husband’s opinion (1982:11). Sri also felt that she did not want people to see her as superior to her husband, in spite of the fact that her career has progressed impressively. Being socialised, mainly by cultural tradition and religion, teaches females, from childhood, that it is ‘natural’ for her to be subservient to her husband, and that the order of things is not ‘proper’ if she has higher position compared to her husband, or even if she earns more than him. This is tied to the idea, drummed into women from an early age, that men are superior to women in that they have spiritual power. It is crucial then for women not to threaten their ego. For those women who refused to be submissive to their husband, *femina* represented them as having trouble with their husbands, and thus with their marriages. Tiurna, who refused to discuss her expenses with her husband, was facing critical period in her marriage (1982:106). ‘Mrs’ Sobirin’s marriage was not going smoothly because she was not prepared to sacrifice her feelings (1986:43).

Since, for the *priyati*, status is important, therefore, divorce is seen as shameful and morally wrong. As a consequence, husband and wife tend to stay within their otherwise empty marriage in spite of Islamic rules which allow them to divorce. However, the New Order, by enacting the Indonesian Marriage Law 1/74 and later the PP 10/83, has discouraged divorce, especially for civil servants. As a result, mainly civil servants and military staff bend the rules and have concubines. They become hypocrites for the sake of their own position in the service. This is similar to what Hildred Geertz argued that Indonesian men are by ‘nature’ irresponsible, as far as fidelity is concerned. Through its articles, *femina*, represents
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male infidelity as the norm, rather than the exception, compounds this by suggesting that men's infidelities are more acceptable than women's. On this point femina actually goes against the grain of Islamic doctrine which, as stated in the Qur'an, explicitly stipulates that the male as the leader of his family, is supposed to be a good model for his wife and children.

Since the priyayi perceive marriage as a form of security, the enactment of the Marriage Law 1/74 and PP 10/83, guaranteed Indonesian women relatively more protection, in the sense that the man can no longer simply repudiate the marriage and divorce the woman. Further, the economic boost brought by the New Order, also has benefitted many Indonesian women, who can now work to earn cash outside the home and pursue their educational degrees and careers.

However, it should be noted here that despite the fact that the magazine is still dominated by patriarchal norms, there are slightly different changes in the representations of women and gender relationships. Women, for example, are represented as having high educational backgrounds. They are portrayed as professional women who are still able to manage their household duties. Some men, on the other hand, are starting to get involved in domestic chores by helping their wives to run the household. This is particularly, evident in the 1990s articles, where husbands are shown as taking part in looking after the children (1992:84), or allowing wives to pursue educational degrees, while they help to run the households. There was also an indication that some men are taking, at least in part, the responsibility for marriage breakdown. In this regard Jeffri, whose wife was
involved with another man, tried to assess his own weakness and visited a

In the final analysis, I contend that the idea to form the *femina* magazine in
1973 was quite progressive. However, despite its outstanding and well educated
women founders, especially the chief editor Widarti Gunawan, who considers herself
a feminist, *femina* obviously still reflects very much the existing traditional gender
values. The echoing of patriarchal ideology and the way the magazine is run along
very rigid patron-client relationships stand in stark contrast to the progressive idea
of a magazine for women. Indeed, the content of the articles I studied absolutely
contradicts the magazine’s slogan, ‘Part of Your Lifestyle’ [*Bagian dari Gaya Hidup
Anda*], with its undertones indicating modern and independent young women.
Instead, tradition, and the magazine’s founders’ own *priyayi* backgrounds, are the
foundations upon which this magazine has been built. Myths, based on a biology is
destiny world view, are what *femina* continues to promote.
Jakarta, 2 Desember 1994

Dengan hormat,

Saya adalah mahasiswa Pasca Sarjana pada School of Humanities di Murdoch University Australia yang sedang menyusun tesis dengan tema "Konstruksi dan perkembangan citra perempuan Indonesia dalam majalah wanita". Untuk itu mohon dengan segala kerendahan hati Ibu/Bapak berkenan meluangkan waktu untuk mengisi daftar pertanyaan di bawah ini dalam melengkapi riset yang sedang saya lakukan. Bantuan dan budi baik Ibu/Bapak sungguh saya hargai. Untuk itu saya ucapkan terima kasih.

Hormat saya,

Suzy Azeharie

Nama : 
Lama kerja : 

1. Menurut Ibu/Bapak, citra perempuan Indonesia seperti apakah yang ingin ditampilkan oleh majalah "femina"?

Mengapa ?

2. Apakah Ibu/Bapak pernah membaca buku-buku tentang feminisme? Dapatkah Ibu/Bapak menyebutkannya?
   a.
   b.
   c.
   d.
   e.

3. Menurut deskripsi Ibu/Bapak, seperti apakah konsep feminisme itu?


4. Apakah konsep feminisme tersebut ikut mempengaruhi gambaran citra perempuan dalam majalah "femina" seperti yang Ibu/Bapak tulis dalam artikel?

5. Menurut pemikiran Ibu/Bapak, bagaimanakah gambaran ideal perempuan Indonesia itu?
SUAMI MENYELEWENG!
perlukah minta cerai?


Penyelewengan suami bukan suatu gejala yang menjadi monopolis jaman sekarang. Sudah sememjak dahulu kala terdapat kasus suami yang menyeleweng. Namun pada masa lampau, meskipun tidak kurang rasa sakit hatinya, wanita yang dihadapkan pada kenyataan itu kebanyakan menganggap itu sebagai "masalah hidup".
Lembar-lembar
paht dalam kehidupan itu sudah
berlalu. Selesai
bagi salah satu
pilihan, belum tentu
finish bagi yang lain. Tapi
 demi berbagai pertimbangan,
lembaran hitam itu harus
sekali lagi ditutup. Untuk dibuka
lagi dengan lembar baru yang
masih kosong dan siap dipisah.

"Saya berjanji melupakan
nya, dan berusaha menatap
ke depan. Tapi bila tergingat,
rasanya luka itu terbuka lagi.
Air mata tak dapat saya ta
han. Tiba-tiba saya merasa
pilihan untuk menyesuaikan
nyanya adalah keliru," ujar
Anita (36 tahun), ibu tiga
anak.

Jefri, 46 tahun, syah dua
anak, "Pertimbangan saya
untuk menerima dia kembali,
karena dia ibu anak-anak saya.
Tentang bagaimana per
asaan di dalam sini, bila
saya sendiri yang tahu," ke
lamanya sempat menunjuk da
danya.

"Bagi saya yang terpening
mempunyai betul-betul sudah se
lesai. Mas Anto sudah ke
bali ke dalam keluarga lagi.
"Saya suka memandang semu
nya. Dia bisa dianggap
besar lagi," ujarnya se
gayang itu dan mena
sang, "walah!" tukas Ya
yuk, 35 tahun, ibu dua anak.

Direkat sebelum
pecah
Affair memang bukan ce
rita baru, sejak zaman dulu
sudah terjadi dalam perka
winan-perkawinan tradision
al," ungkap Nani Yamin, Ke
tua Lembaga Bantuan Hu
kum untuk Wanita dan Ke
luarga. "Tapi zaman seka
rang ini seolah (Epoching).
Tampaknya ini merupakan
dampak ketidaksesuaian ma
syarakat kita menghadapi modernisasai dan pemba
ngunan. Muncul banyak ke
inginan-keinginan di luar bat
tas kemampuan. Sering ter
asa ada perbedaan menco
lok antara situasi di dalam
rumah tangga dengan kea
daan di luar. Nah affair munc
cul pada saat orang lalai."

Dr. Al Bachri Husin, ahli ji
wa yang menangani juga

Setelah Affair
MENYOROTI PENGHASILAN GANDA

oleh: DAY AMIR

Dalam kehidupan sehari-hari banyak kita jumpai ibu-ibu rumah tangga yang turut mencari nafkah. Biasanya bermacam-macam, bisa disebabkan sang isteri ingin memanfaatkan pendidikan yang telah diperoleh, atau pula disebabkan situasi ekonomi rumah tangga yang membutuhkan bantuan yang isteri agar dapat bisa terus berasap, atau lain alasannya. Memang, situasi di mana sang isteri turut mencari nafkah adalah suatu hal yang lazim di dalam masyarakat kita. Tetapi bagaimanakah kalau ternyata sang isteri memperoleh penghasilan yang melebihi penghasilan suaminya, bahkan kadang-kadang jauh lebih besar? Meningkat kebiasaan dalam masyarakat kita dominasi dalam keluarga masih berada di tangan suami, adakah timbul hal-hal yang buruk bagi rumah tangga mereka sebagai akibatnya?

Untuk memperoleh gambaran tentang masalah ini kami telah menghubungi beberapa kalangan. Kesulitan yang kami hadapi dalam usaha memperoleh data-data ini erat hubungannya dengan sifat bangsa kita yang umumnya masih tertutup terutama dalam hal-hal yang menyangkut kehidupan pribadi.

KEPRIBADIAN PEGANG PERANAN

"Sebenarnya, semua itu tergantung kepada kebijakan dan karakter suami isteri yang bersangkutan," demikian pendapat Dra. Dewi Sari, seorang psikolog yang aktif di bidang psikologi sosial Fakultas Psikologi Universitas Indonesia. Menurut Dra, Dewi semuanya akan berjalan baik sepanjang kedua belah pihak memberikan pengetian yang baik terhadap situasi yang demikian. Selama sang isteri tetap bersikap wajar, tidak over...
Kalau Istri
Berpenghasilan
Lebih Besar
dari Suami

Unggul adalah uangmu, uangku
adalah uangku." Kata seorang suami
sambil membentak istri-nya. Perselisihan antara kedua suami istri tersebut tidak dapat dielakkan lagi. Padahal mulanya mereka hanya omong-omong sambil mencicipi sajian pembelinya minc uci. Rupanya hal sepe-
ri itu sudah sering terjadi. Terus berulang tahun terakhir ini ketika penghasilan istrinya jauh lebih besar dari suaminya. Adapun hal yang rawan membahas soal keuntungan dalam rumah tangga mereka. Memang kedua pasangan itu sejak sebelum menikah pun sama-sama telah bekerja. Di kota-kota besar di mana kini se-

Seorang wanita bekerja, penekan sel-
do kecanduan, menciptakan bahwa benua perlu melalui rumah tangga-
ya gara-gara hal yang serupa. Mun-
man, dua wanita lain, seorang man-
zer dan seorang seorang seorang se-
merupakan penghasilan jauh lebih besar dari suaminya. Karena mereka tidak merasa adanya konflik tersebut. Bagaimana-
kah seharusnya sikap kita dalam masal-
lah yang peka ini?

Tidak mau tinggal di perumahan
perumahan istri

Nyonya Nuning yang bekerja sebagai sekretaris perumahan minyak asing, se-
jak sebulan menikah sudah bekerja. Bahkan ketika masih kalah di aka-

 demi sekretaris pun ia sudah mulai me-

minta karirnya. Karena itu kerja

memang gertong hidup baru. Ny-

onya Nuning memutuskan untuk tidak

merupakan keputusan yang telah di-

perolehnya selama ini. Kebeletan sua-

mi pun tidak berkeberatan.

"Pertama, saya mau tagih mesra yang kalau apa yang telah saya capai, dilepas begitu saja. Saya "kan sudah

sera-lerah-sekolah, masa ilmu yang
diperoleh tidak dinamakan. Kedua,

keputusan saya mendapat seorang

pelaut, yang tentunya akan se-

ring meninggalkan kebinaan," demik-

ian Nyonya Nuning.

Ketika mereka menikah penghasilan

sang istri jauh lebih besar. Namun hal

ini harus dibiarkan dengan seringnya)
suami tidak hadir di tengah-tengah

keputusan. Konsekuence menikah dengan

seorang pelaut, ialah bahwa Nyonya

Nuning pernah untuk suatu periode

menjadi pencari nafkah utama. Semua

ini demi karir suami yang harus meng-

ikuti kursus untuk kenaikan pangkat.

Selama kursus itu suami berbenah

belajar untuk beberapa waktu. Un-

tinggal mereka sudah merencanakan

keuangan dengan baik. Tabungan yang

telah disiapkan sebelumnya men-

jadi penyokong biaya hidup kekuasa

nyang harus dibayar dua orang ini.

Bagaimana seorang istri selalu

mendapat biaya suami untuk ter-

tara dan sebagainya. Karena itu, se-

lah bertahan-tahan melalang ja-

gad akhirnya suami menyerahkan

uangnya untuk bekerja di darat. Hal ini disam-

but gembira oleh Nyonya Nuning.

Tapi ini berarti suami harus me-

riniti dari nol, dengan konsekuensi uang

maksud jadi berkurang.

Baik ketika penghasilan suami le-

bih besar, ketika suami dalam masa

"onggoong" maupun sekaran ing ini, Ny-

onya Nuning tetap memegang keuangan

dalam rumah tangga mereka. Semua

pengeluaran dijajalikan satu dan pege-

liaran direncanakan setelah itu. Bagi

mengurus yang tidak ada nafkah yang tinggi atau uangannya.

Kalau suami "kotbah reje-

ki", itu pun disertakan kepada istri-nya.

Demikian sebagainya.

"Untuk pengeluaran yang besar, mi-

nanya untuk membantu suami baru, bia-

nya kami berunding terlebih dahulu.

Namun untuk pengeluaran sehari-hari

sangat biasa.

Berdasarkan dengan Nyonya Nuning yang dibuka di Jakarta, maka Nyonya Sri telah dan menjadi dewasa di daerah (Hawang). Nyonya Sri

boleh dikatakan adalah tipe wanita yang suka dalam karirnya. Dan se-

mus ini diciptai di ibu Kota.

Sebagai seorang manajer yang me-

ngempalai bidang promosi di sebuah per-

usahaan besar, ia cukup sibuk. Ka-

dang-kadang ia harus kurang waktu untuk keu ranaknya yang ber-

umur 8 dan 10 tahun. Suami Nyonya

Sri, seorang seniman, juga ternasik orang sibuk. Dan dia juga dibesar di dalam sebuah keluarga.

Sebelum menikah Nyonya Sri sudah bekerja. Ia memang menikah bekerja ke-

ras. Begini menikah dan dibiyong suami-

nya ke Jakarta, ia menjadi ibu ru-

mah tanggung saja sambel memantik

kelahiran anak pertama. Untuk bebe-

rampas saat, Nyonya Sri mengikuti
tidak pusing penghasilan.

Ia mulai bekerja lagi ketika anaknya

berusia 2 tahun. Perusahaan swasta di

manakita, ia bekerja, memang perusahaan

baru yang mulai berkembang. Demi-

kian pula Nyonya Sri mulai bekerja di
Membuka mata suami

Membuka mata suami yang menyadari bahwa perjuangan wanita dalam dunia kerja tidak hanya terbatas pada sukses dalam pekerjaan, namun juga pada kehidupan pribadi. Beberapa wanita, termasuk suami, mungkin merasa tidak adil dengan keberhasilan suatu wanita. Mereka merasa bahwa wanita yang sukses itu berhak untuk mendapatkan pengakuan dan penghargaan dari masyarakat. Suami yang menerima pengakuan dari masyarakat, termasuk sukses dalam pekerjaan, akan merasa bangga dengan keberhasilan suami.

Menjaga keharmonisan

Sebagai halaman berikut, Anda akan menemukan informasi lebih lanjut tentang cara menjaga keharmonisan dalam keluarga. Khususnya, bagaimana suami dan istri dapat menjaga keharmonisan dalam hubungan mereka.

Najer Bank swasta yang punya masa karir cerah


Semua informasi ini diperoleh dari sumber yang tidak disebutkan dalam dokumen. Semoga informasi ini bermanfaat bagi Anda.
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