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Men were from Mars, Women from Venus...

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By Michele Levine, Chief Executive
Simon Pownall, Director of Analytics & Integrated Marketing
Marcus Tarrant, *The Chief Reactor*
Angela Brooks, *Director Advertising Research*
Roy Morgan Research Pty Ltd

Men were from Mars, Women were from Venus, *and the stereotypes were fairly useful*, and then came **ASTEROID** (the central processing unit for the millions of Roy Morgan interviews conducted around the world), *and some of the facts got in the way.*

WHY DO WOMEN LIVE LONGER?



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Roy Morgan Research Pty. Ltd.
A.B.N. 91 007 092 944

USA
Roy Morgan International Ltd.
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Roy Morgan Research Pty. Ltd.
A.B.N. 91 007 092 944

INDONESIA
PT Roy Morgan Research
NPWP. 02.194.412.9-058.000

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The gender game is a subtle but powerful one. The fundamental difference between the sexes has been the subject of much debate, research and humour.

The opportunities to capitalise on a real understanding of the psyche of the consumer in all its richness are great - including gender differences. But it is dangerous territory. No one can afford to play the gender game and lose.

Today, I'd like to talk about segmentation and statistics.

We all engage in 'segmentation' – when we meet someone for the first time, we segment – male or female? Old or young? It helps us orientate ourselves and build expectations until we know more....

Picture this – you are told your new boss's name is Joe (or is that Jo?). What's your first question? Is there an 'e'? Is it a male or female? Of course, once you get to know and work with your new boss, other issues will become much more important – is he/she focused on cost cutting or growth? Is he/she a 'big picture' kind of person – or is it all about the detail? Does he/she value your unique contribution or see you as a threat, or part of the old guard? These deeper issues very quickly become much more important than gender.

Of course, how you deal with the issues, and your new boss, will continue to be 'nuanced' by gender – yours and his or hers.

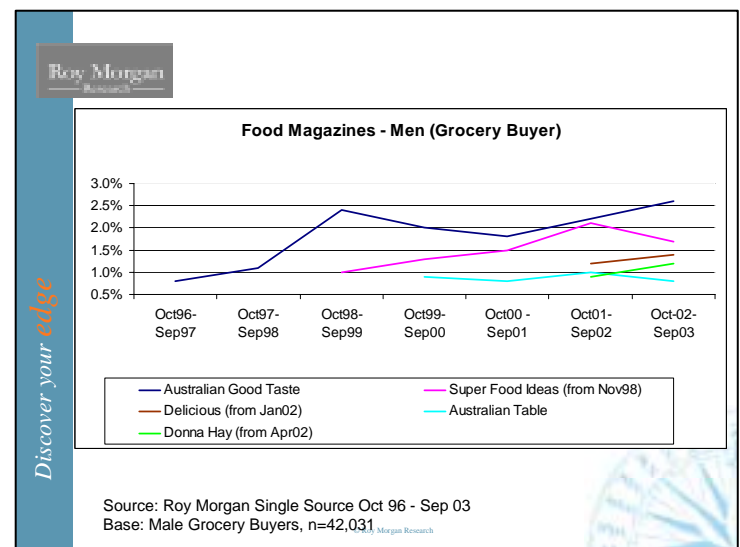
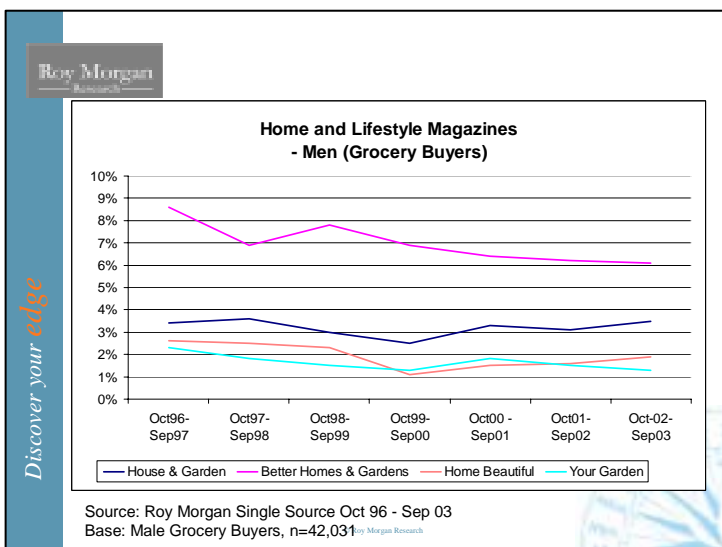
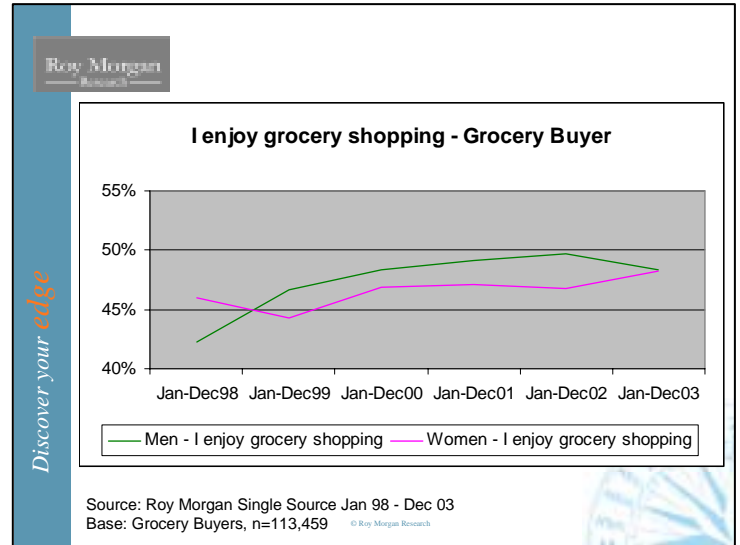
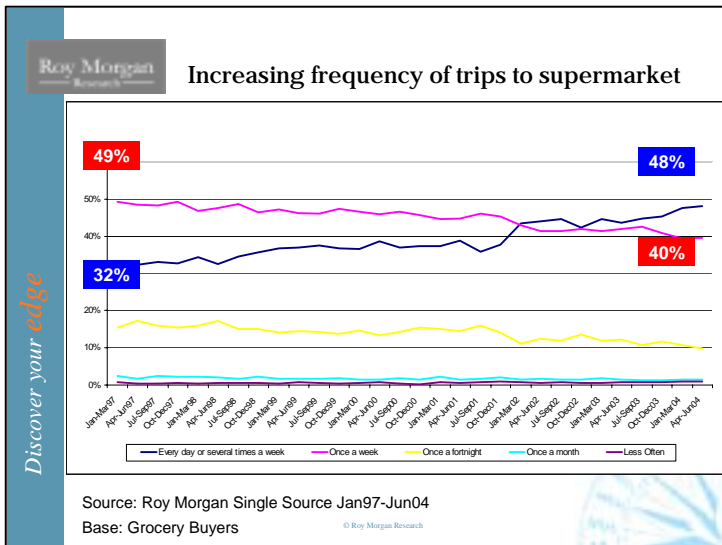
However, the real gender debate is more dynamic and more fundamental. It is rooted in society's needs, wants and expectations. At Roy Morgan Research we've been studying these things for years. In the 1940s, Roy Morgan asked questions about equal pay for men and women, whether women should be allowed to wear shorts in the street, and the age at which girls should be allowed to wear lipstick. The questions tell us as much about society at that time as the answers do. Some things change So let's look briefly at some trends.



The last 20 years or so have seen dramatic changes in gender roles – more women in the workforce, in senior decision-making positions, more two-income families, shared household, family and child-rearing responsibilities, more sole parent families both male and female.

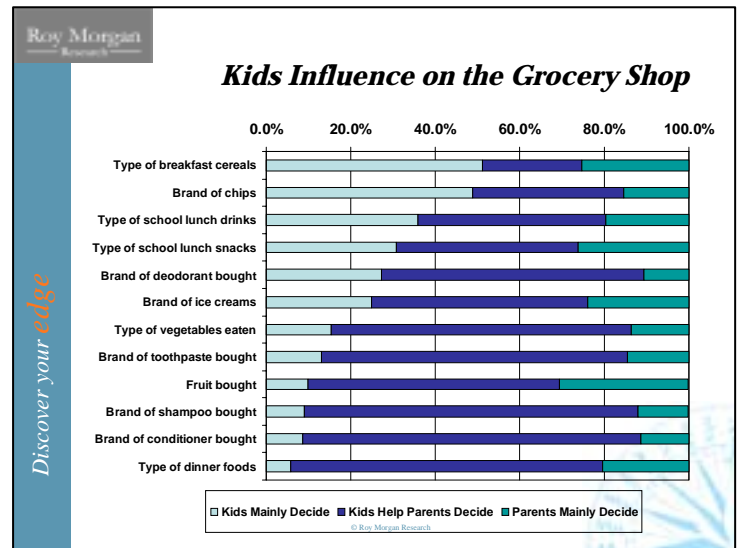
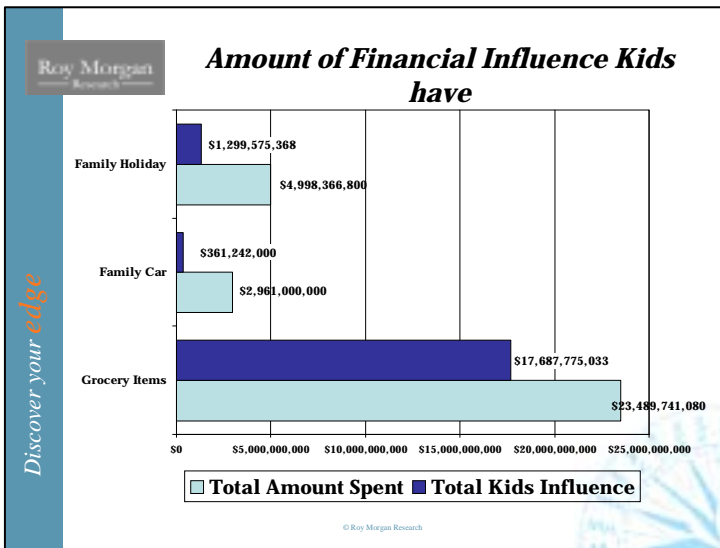
On the domestic front – we are shopping more. Since 1997 Australians now make 100 million additional trips to buy groceries annually.

The weekly shop is on the decline and more people are shopping every day, and men are enjoying grocery shopping (at least the increasing number of grocery-buying men). So are women. It is not that men are becoming ‘home’ conscious or nesting (their magazine habits tell us that), it is that they are more interested in food.

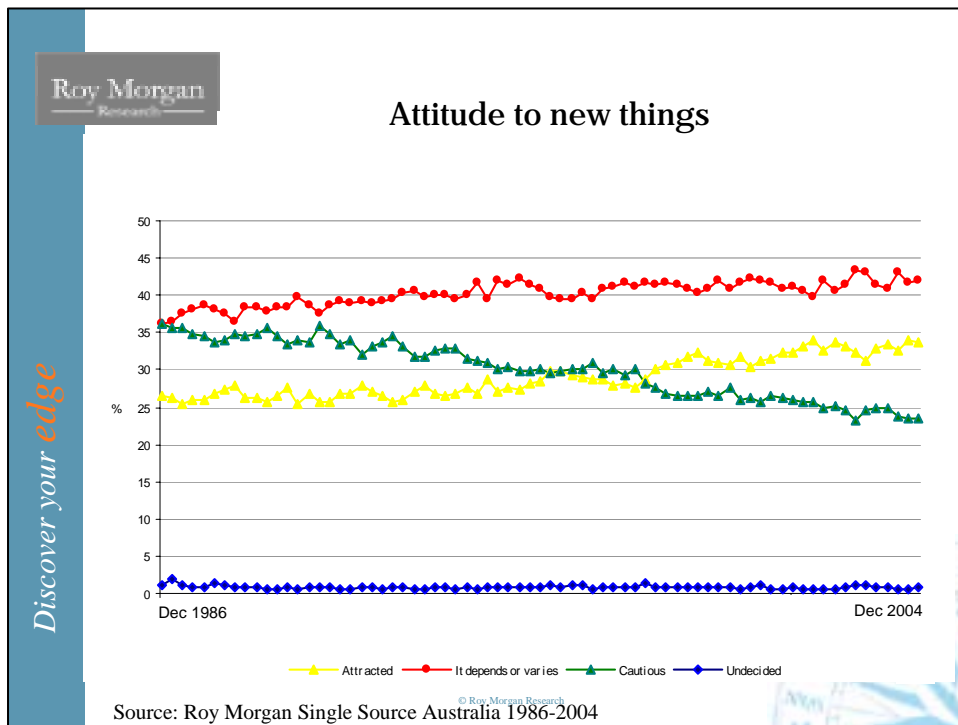


Coinciding with more male involvement in shopping and cooking we see women making decisions about cars, and real-estate, home renovations and engaging in hardware shopping.

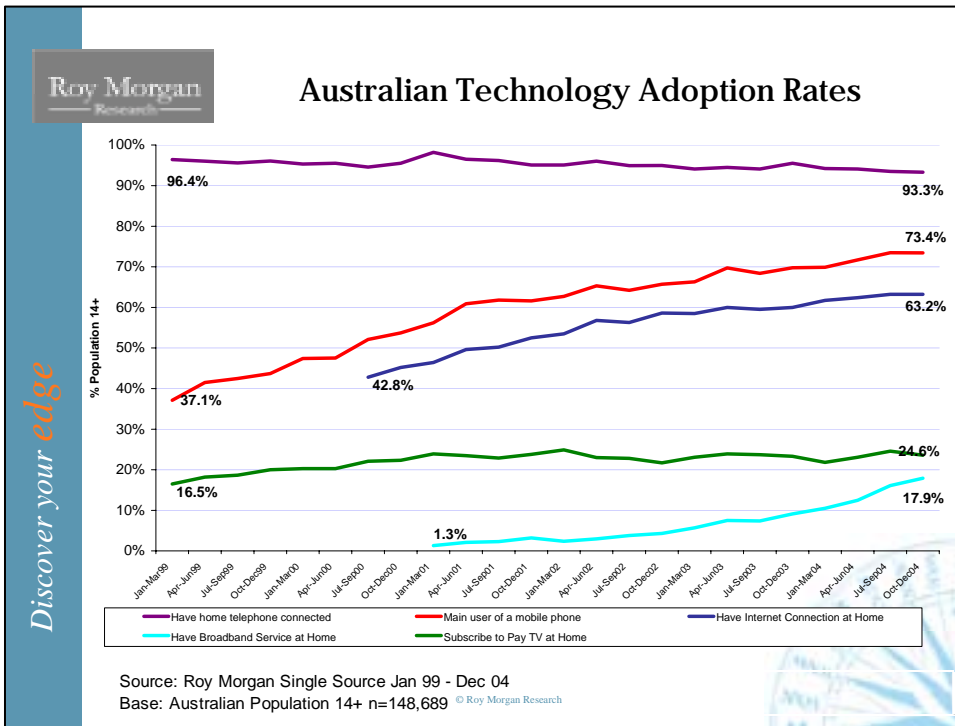
And it's not just about gender. In Roy Morgan's latest Young Australian Survey, the level of influence children have in purchasing is enormous. It's not only in the predictable areas of toys and games – they even influence the family car purchase! Kids also have a massive amount of input into family grocery purchases.



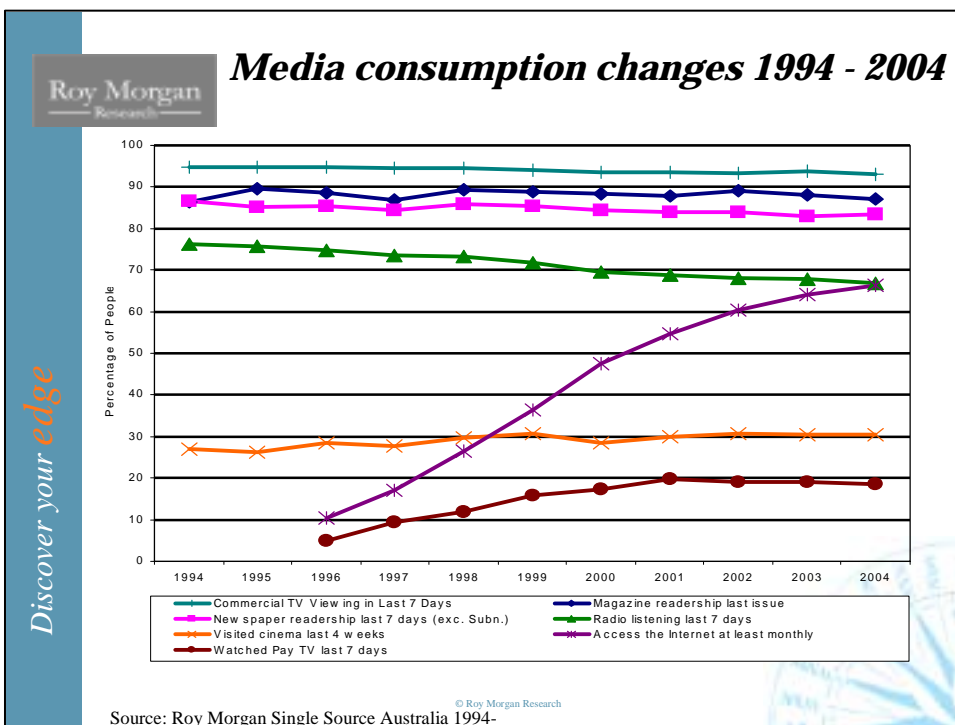
We are also seeing some very slow but fundamental shifts are emerging in the Australian psyche. Australians are becoming more open to new things. There are now more Australians who consider themselves “attracted to new things” than as “cautious”.



The last ten years have seen dramatic changes in use of media, technology and telecommunications. For instance in telecommunications broadly we see the impact of mobile phones, internet and broadband, and an indication of fall-off of fixed line telephony.



The dramatic change in media over the last 10 years has been predominantly focused on internet take-up. And if anyone thinks the Internet/technology is a male thing – forget it. (Internet usage is 52% male 48% female.)

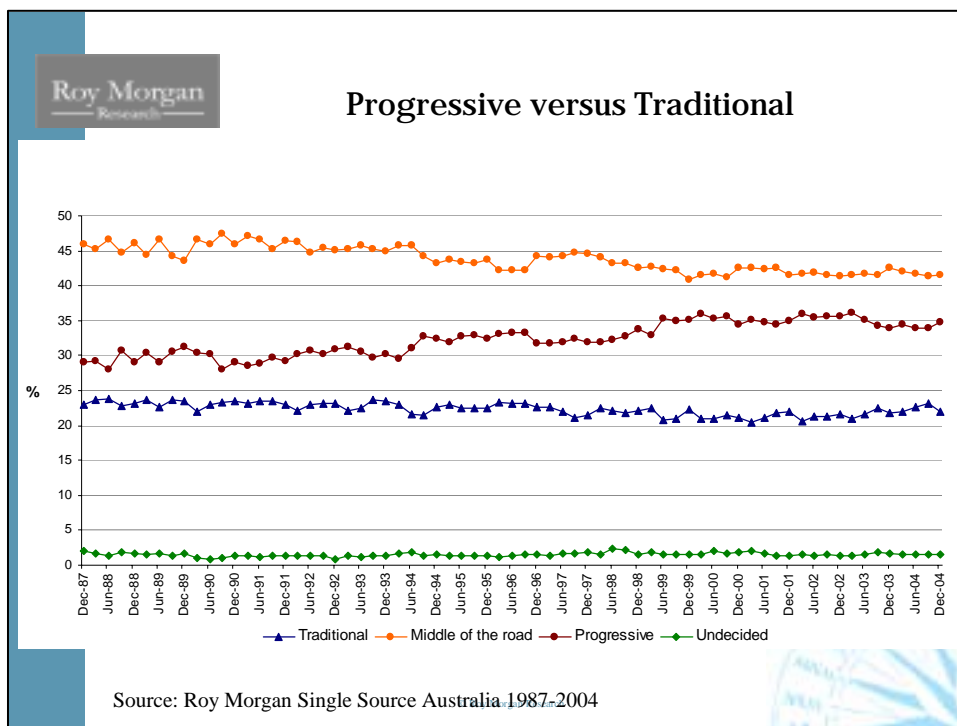


The flat line of the main media is somewhat misleading - suggesting as it does some kind of stability. This is anything but the case; the reality is more like dynamic turmoil. Take the magazine market – there is an ever increasing plethora of new specialist titles directed to women in every area of their lives, and seemingly as many especially for men.



It's the same for websites. At the same time as men's and women's activities and roles are blurring or becoming more similar, there is increasing evidence of our society valuing and celebrating the unique differences.

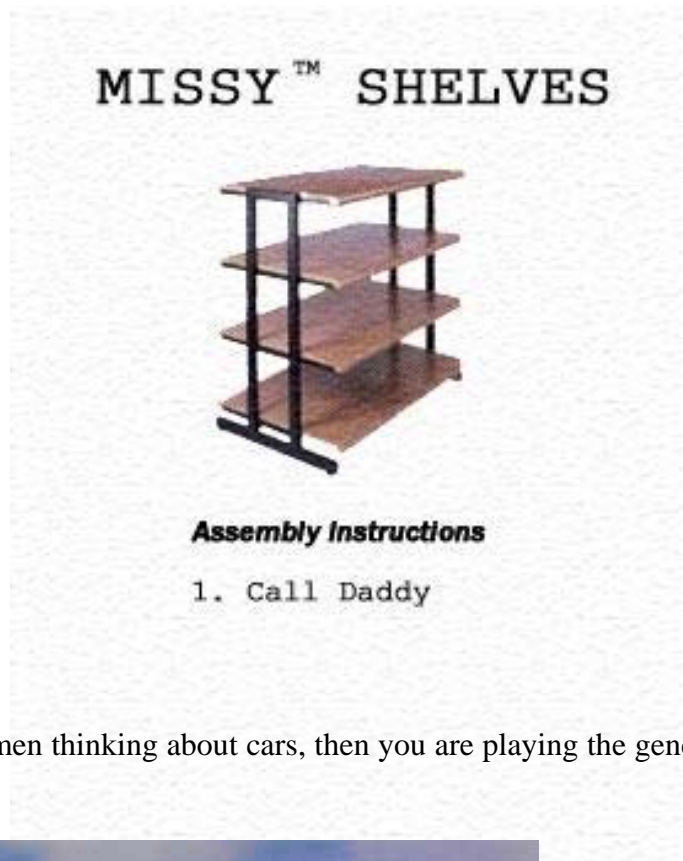
An important, and I believe related, issue is that fewer Australians are now classifying themselves as "middle of the road". As Australians, we are seeing ourselves more "socially progressive", "less traditional". These are big solid shifts. We are dealing with many hundreds of thousands of interviews (50,000+ each year). The trends are real.



We could go on with the data – but it's clear there are fundamental and large changes occurring in Australia – these changes will deeply affect the future direction of Australian society.

These things are fundamentally interesting from a sociological perspective. But the real question has to be how do we turn the understanding into \$s? What are dangers of getting it wrong, and how do we get it right?

With more women engaging with hardware stores and home renovations and an increasing willingness to look for new and different things, will we see new products and communications like these?

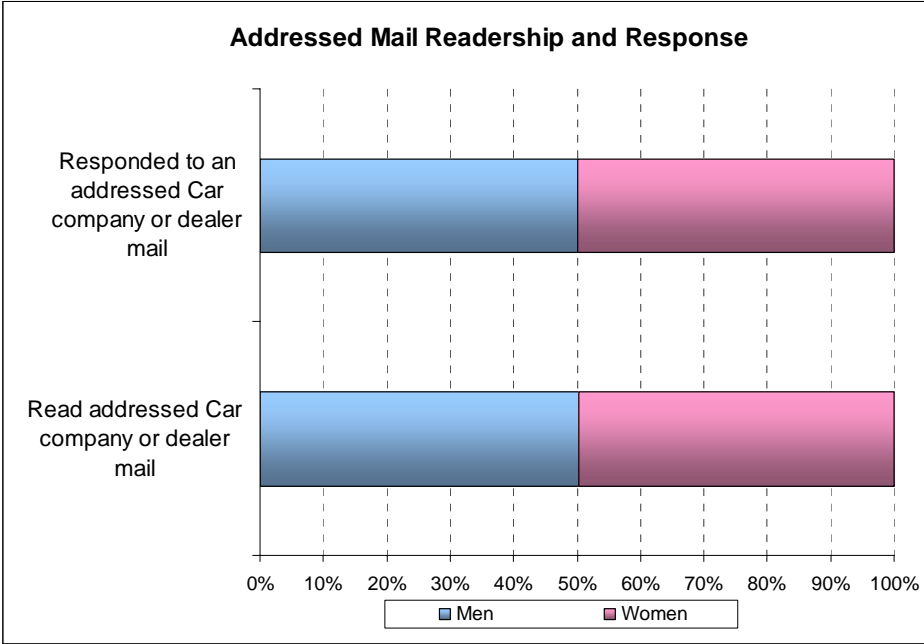


If this is your idea of how men see women thinking about cars, then you are playing the gender game – at your peril!



Why? Our latest research, just launched with Australia Post, for the first time measures direct mail on the same ‘metrics’ as other media. It reveals that just as many women read mail from car companies as men – and just as many women respond to these mailings!

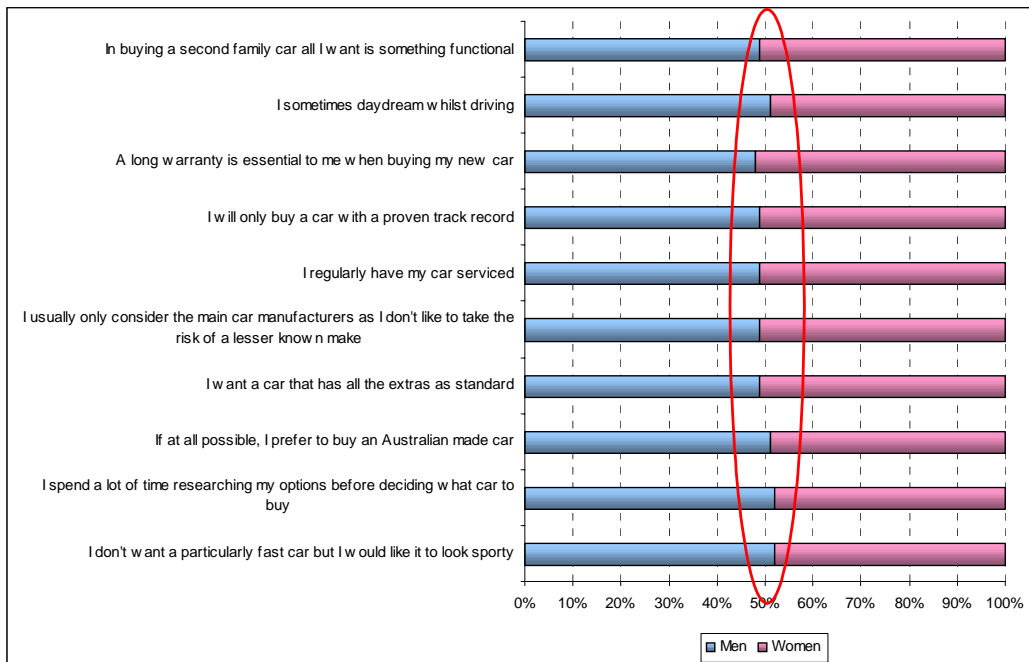
This raises another important issue about women and their role as family communication filters. The creation of the mail metrics required that we develop the concept of a “Mail Master” – the person who brings the mail in from the letterbox for the household. Two-thirds of “Mail Masters” are women. The choices they make about what makes it through the door are critical – “Martian messages” might not make it.



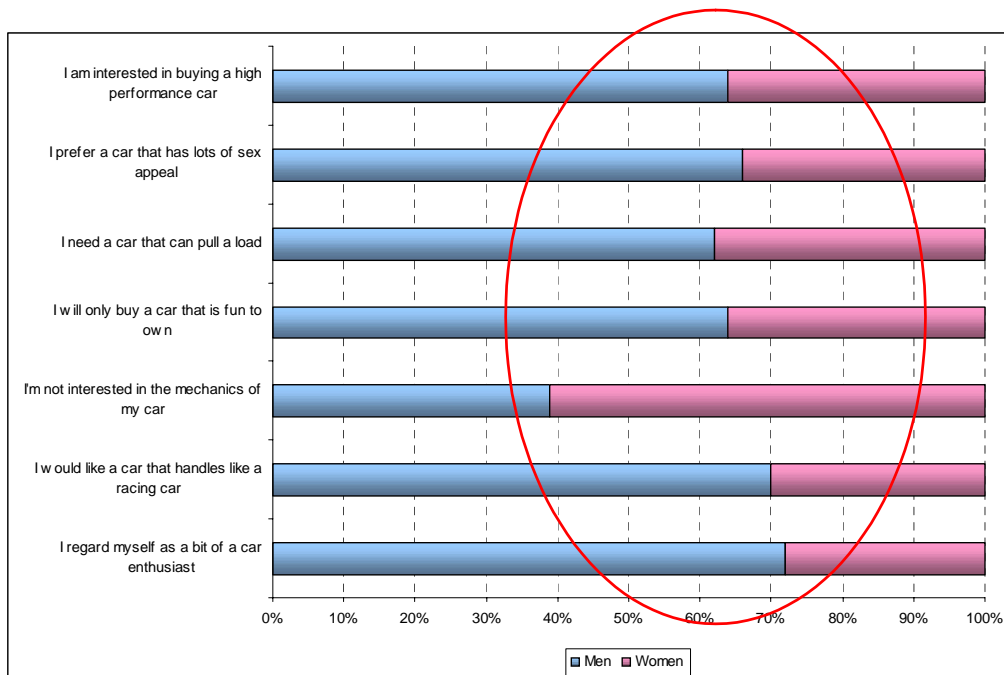
Many car companies (but not all) recognise this – but for us, it’s not surprising – let’s look at the attitudinal differences between men and women about cars...

The dramatic finding is that similarities and overlaps outweigh gender differences. When we look at say, people who say “*In buying a second family car, all I want is something functional*”, there are 49% men and 51% women. Even if you are targeting ‘real car enthusiasts’ some 28% are women.

Car attitudes



ROY MORGAN SINGLE SOURCE AUSTRALIA : APR 2003 - MAR 2005



ROY MORGAN SINGLE SOURCE AUSTRALIA : APR 2003 - MAR 2005

I mentioned earlier the dangers of playing the gender game and getting it wrong.....

It seems to me it's as simple and yet complex as getting a laugh about an Irish (or Jewish) joke. It's ok for an Irishman to tell Irish jokes in Irish company or any company for that matter, but the same joke told by an Englishman in Irish company is either NOT ok, or is pretty high risk.

The gender differences exist, they are nurtured and celebrated in some circumstances, and unmentionable in other contexts. Enough philosophy, let's see how men and women react to marketing messages through the eyes of consumers via *"The Reactor"*.

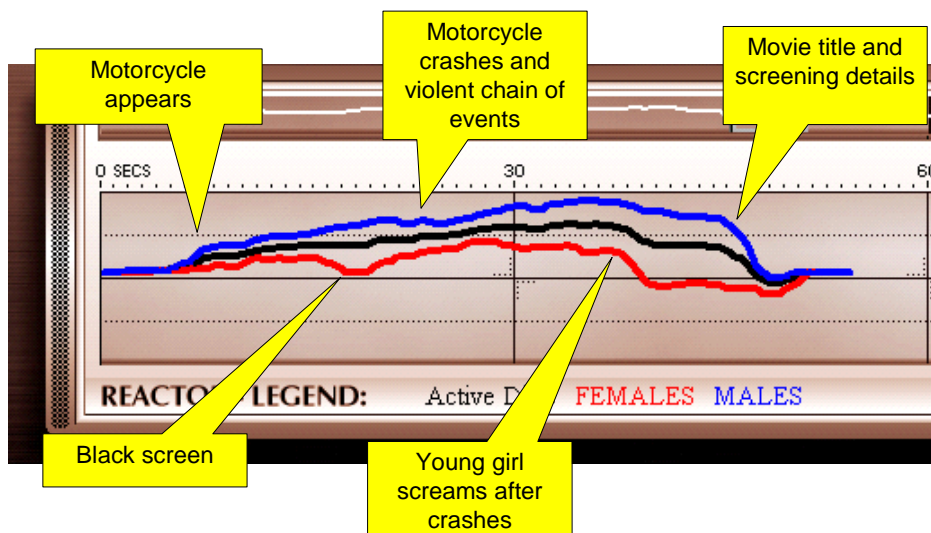
We searched through reels of ads, some male products and some female products, some just lousy ads that didn't work for anyone because they were just not good.

We have chosen examples of ads that are potentially relevant to both males and females. Obviously if an ad is for lipstick – the men will 'self-screen' out.

The first advertisement was for the movie, Final Destination 2.



Movie - Final Destination 2



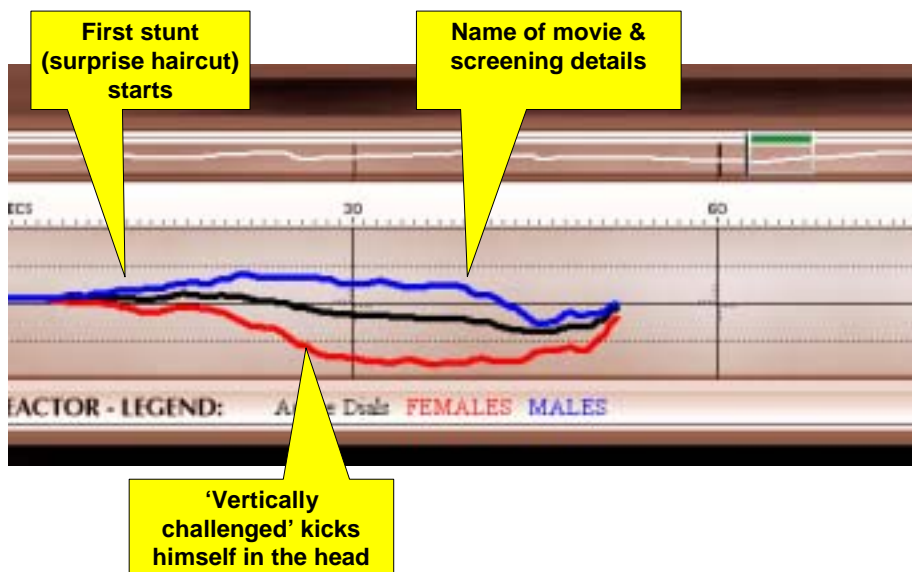
Men and women generally liked this advertisement, but violence polarised the genders. You can see women reacting to the violence and car crashes quite quickly turning them off, while men's interest increased.

Secondly, once it was clear the ad was about a movie, men responded to the offer and details with a total lack of interest.

The second was an ad for the movie, Jackass.



Movie - Jackass



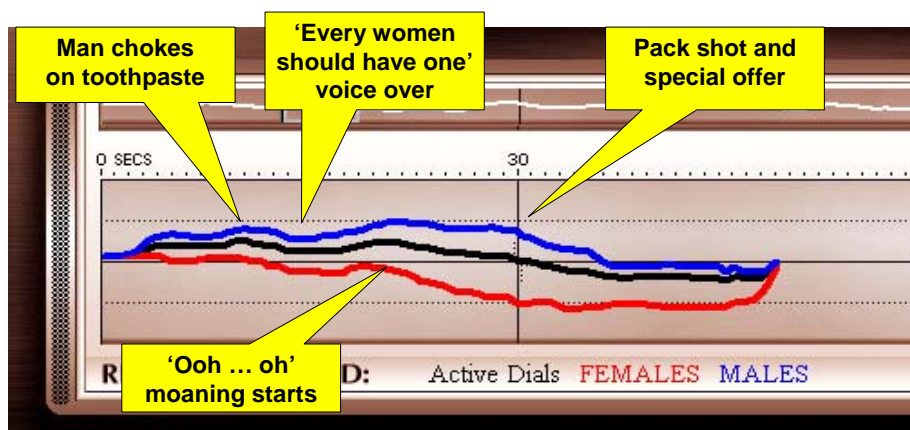
Men loved this to begin with – but women clearly think it's an extremely silly/pointless movie – a very strong negative reaction all the way through.

Men again reacted negatively as soon as the promotional element (ie where and when to see it) appeared, while women actually increased their interest.

The third ad was for Clairol Herbal Essences shampoo.



Commercial – Clairol Herbal Essences



Men start to like this ad – naked women seem to get interest from men. Women initially sit on the fence – but as soon as it ‘gets silly’ with the passionate “oh-oh-oh” noises women instantly turn off. Men remain somewhat interested – but again, as soon as the promotional element is introduced they lose interest. Women’s interest returned for the offer. You have to wonder who the advertisement was designed for. It really looks as if a simple message telling women that Clairol Herbal Essences Shampoo was on special at Safeway would have done the trick just as well without turning them off first.

An ASTEROID search on “brand differentiation” in the shampoo category would have told us that most actually believe most shampoo brands are fairly much the same. The believability of the romantic promise may have been doomed from the start. But beyond that, the creative approach just didn’t work for women.

As an aside the differences observed in reaction to various commercials were often much greater between different ages of the same gender as between gender. This is not surprising. 16 and 17 year old boys and girls have more in common when it comes to music than teenagers of either sex have with their parents.

So what will sell?

Today, in a world where gender differences are inextricably intertwined with and nuanced by culture, family, peer group, and environmental context, there is no magic formula, no prescription that will guarantee success.

One of the primary challenges to creators of advertising is to make sure it gets noticed in the first place, and engages interest. Jackass did this with violence and action; the Clairol Herbal Essences ad did it with 'sex appeal'. But as we saw, engaging interest is 'necessary' but not sufficient to ensure persuasion and success.

Today, with the acquisition of US-based communications and advertising research firm, Mapes and Ross, Roy Morgan Research is able to bring the same rigour to the measurement of the "creative" communications impact as we have done for the measurement of channels.

Mapes and Ross, operating for over 30 years, has developed a normative database and library of over 33,000 advertisements and their performance in persuading consumers to the brand.

It is about the consumer's change in brand preference. The data also includes the more traditional, but less predictive measure of 'recall'.

The experience and data demonstrates, not surprisingly, that not all advertisements perform equally. The thirty years of experience and evidence has also demonstrated the enduring importance of some fundamental principles of communications.

For example, below are two magazine ads for brands of ice cream. By looking at the illustration of each ad separately, how well could you answer what product is being advertised in each case, and what the advertiser is trying to tell customers about the product?

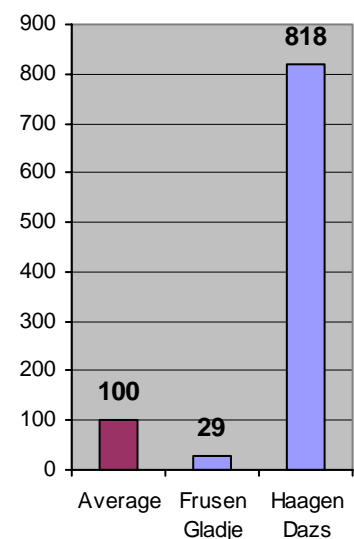
Frusen Gladje



Haagen Dazs



Ad ROI



In terms of persuasion performance, if an average ad returns \$100,000, the Frusen Gladje ad on the left returns \$29,000 while the Haagen-Dazs ad on the right returns \$818,000. That is a Mapes and Ross Ad ROI score of 818 relative to the Average Day-after-Persuasion score based to 100. Many print ads derive strength from having the visual and headline work together. Ads are more effective when the headline interprets and reinforces the story told by the visual.

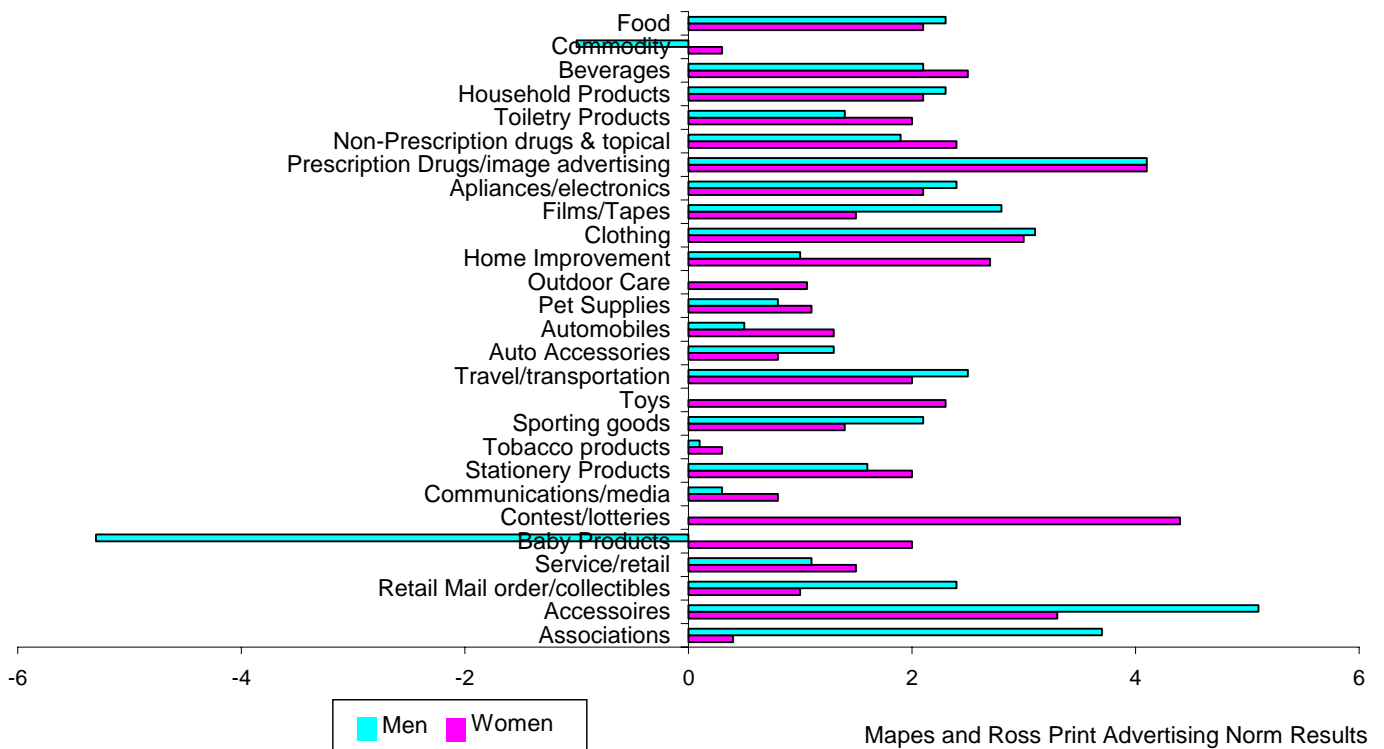
And men and women? We might hypothesise that the ad on the left with a pretty girl, short skirt, nice legs, out walking her dog – might attract and interest males more than females. Well, maybe it did (in fact men were persuaded a little more than women) – but the ad didn't work nearly as well as the Haagen-Dazs.



This ad, targeted to women, actually did not persuade them at all to the State Farm Insurance Board. However, men were persuaded a little (less than average).

The product category makes a difference to performance, and the target audience makes a difference to performance. The norm on brand preference change for baby products amongst men is -5.3% whereas it is 2.0% for women. Sporting goods has a brand preference change norm of 2.3% for men but only 1.4% for women.

'Brand Preference' Change Scores by Category - Males vs Females



This is not just a gender thing – it's more about relevance to the audience.

But these are all norms – or 'averages'. And advertising and creativity is all about going beyond average. There is enough evidence to suggest there are real differences between the sexes. And there's plenty of evidence of misdirected attempts to capitalise on these differences.

If indeed Men were from Mars and Women from Venus, the reality is today, they are both here on earth – and it's a whole lot more complicated.

What is really simple though is the fact that you spend the same amount of money to buy space on television whether your ad works or not. It costs the same to mail a letter or insert a catalogue whether or not the letter or catalogue is read or acted upon. The difference that makes a difference is the creative connection. The evidence is clear, there is no excuse for getting it wrong!

For further details contact:

Michele Levine, Chief Executive, Roy Morgan Research
 Office (0)3 9224 5215 Facsimile (0)3 9629 1250 Mobile (0)411 129 093
 E-mail: Michele.Levine@roymorgan.com