

Feminist satire and redefinition in the digital age: Man Who Has It All

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Abstract: Man Who Has It All is the online persona behind a satirical Facebook page that offers a look into a world where gender roles have been reversed and men are constantly bombarded with the same kinds of condescending and sexist ideas women face in real life. This presentation describes and analyzes the strategies utilized by Man Who Has It All (and the community in his Facebook comments) to satirize patriarchal and misogynistic gender ideologies, identified in general as *reversal*, *allusion*, *distillation*, and *collaboration*. These strategies, taking advantage of the multimodal affordances of social media, operate on both a linguistic and paralinguistic level. My analysis focuses especially on the use of strategic reversal to bring the absurdity of deeply entrenched sexist attitudes to the level of conscious awareness, and on the role of language in reproducing gender ideologies.

Keywords: *satire; language and gender ideologies; social media; multimodality*

1 Introduction and background

1.1 Man Who Has It All and other feminist satire

The online influencer Man Who Has It All (MWHIA) is (seemingly) a busy working dad juggling a domestic life and a career, on a mission to offer helpful advice to similarly frazzled fathers as well as ask genuine questions about gender such as “How are men’s brains different from normal brains?” (Figure 1). In reality, MWHIA is a satirical online persona whose posts offer a look into a version of our world where gender roles have been reversed and men are constantly bombarded with the same kinds of condescending and sexist ideas women face in real life.

While certainly a popular and successful example, MWHIA did not invent this brand of satire. Such pointed and strategic reversals of gender roles for the purpose of ridicule can be found elsewhere in our broader media environment. On Tumblr, The Hawkeye Initiative redraws Hawkeye (a male superhero) in the same oversexualized outfits and poses as a variety of female superheroes to point out their ridiculousness and impracticality (The Hawkeye Initiative, n.d.). The French film *I Am Not an Easy Man* (French: *Je ne suis pas un homme facile*) follows a typical womanizing misogynist who is transported to an alternate universe where institutional sexism operates in reverse. The protagonist finds himself newly on the receiving end of many of the sexist practices and attitudes he was once indifferent to, including social pressure to marry, marginalization in the workplace, and sexual harassment from the opposite gender (and the trivia-

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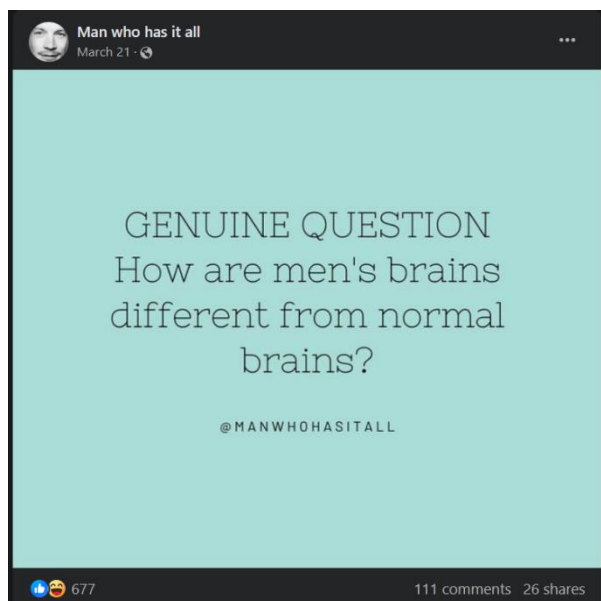


Figure 1. MWHIA Facebook post, posted March 21, 2024.²

lization thereof). In another non-English example, a 2018 Chinese short film, several young men take part in job interviews from an all-female panel who ask a series of sexist and condescending questions such as “Will you cry if you face too much pressure at work?” “Would you be okay with not having children within the next three years?” and “Will you be requesting time off during that time of the month?” while the interviewees visibly grow increasingly confused and uncomfortable (時報金像獎 & 金手指獎, 2018). In terms of television, the *Baroness von Sketch Show* episode “Dinxxx” (the name of the fictional strip club where the sketch takes place) has the characters behaving as if gender stereotypes and relations have been reversed: the two female detectives talk in a stereotypically gruff and masculine way and objectify the scantily-clad male dancers, calling one of them “sweet cheeks” and flirtatiously asking another one to call them (CBC Comedy, 2018). In the science fiction novel *The Power* by Naomi Alderman, women have gained the ability to shoot electricity from their hands, which they use to overthrow the patriarchy and establish a new social order. 5,000 years in the future, a male author struggles in the matriarchal publishing world and is told by a female author that he should use a female pen name to have his work taken seriously.

In popular culture, there is a name for this type of story: the “persecution flip”—and it can operate along other axes as well, such as race and sexuality.³ In general, all of the above examples use the persecution flip story to subvert hegemonic norms, often to humorous effect, which can be considered a kind of critique in that it turns sexism into a punchline—something worthy of ridicule. While MWHIA’s satire similarly treats institutional sexism as something to be mocked, it is unique from these examples in its use of the collaborative nature of social media (see Section 3, “Discussion”).

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<https://www.facebook.com/MANWHOHASITALL/posts/pfbid0HYyzXj63MrpamEnBBJBeknc6NFLrhiHNZSbV2LH8iQBCtSF1yydxcqajokaEW511>

³ <https://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/PersecutionFlip>

1.2 The history and satire of Man Who Has It All

In addition to running a Facebook page with posts dating back to October 2015 (Man who has it all, n.d.), an X (formerly known as Twitter) account since May 2015 (@manwhohasitall, n.d.), an Instagram account since October 2018 (@themanwhohasitall, n.d.), and a Bluesky profile (@manwhohasitall.bsky.social, n.d.), MWHIA also sells clothing including men's slogan tees that read "Not Just a Pretty Beard" (manwhohasitall, n.d.) and has authored two satirical self-help books titled *From Frazzled to Fabulous: How to Juggle a Successful Career, Fatherhood, 'Me-Time' and Looking Good* (Man Who Has It All, 2016) and *The Man Who Has It All: A Patronizing Parody of Self-Help Books for Women* (@ManWhoHasItAll, 2018). The social media accounts are clearly labelled as satirical in their respective bios; however, there are very few other indications that MWHIA is just a persona. The anonymous creator of the page remains in character when giving interviews (e.g. Gorman & Archer, 2022; Knight, 2016; Murphy, 2018), completely breaking character only on rare occasions, such as on the C&W Agency website:⁴

I live an ordinary family life in the UK with three children and my partner... Everywhere I go, every conversation I have and everything I read is material. No one and nothing is spared. If you follow @manwhohasitall, get the joke, comment and play along, although I am anonymous, you already know me. Through shared experiences and shared anger, we are connected. We are, ahem, brothers, doin' it for ourselves.

Only in MWHIA's most recent book, *Flipping Patriarchy: Imagining a gender-swapped world*, does the creator explicitly identify herself as female, or more specifically as "just another woman having to write bloody books about 'this exasperating, time-wasting bullshit'" (Man Who Has It All, 2025). In this book, she goes on to discuss her experiences growing up as a girl and navigating the world as a woman and identifies the main functions of MWHIA as critique of patriarchy and "a place of refuge and comedic relief, lessening the pain at the same time as making you laugh" (Man Who Has It All, 2025).⁵

As of August 2025, MWHIA's Facebook page has amassed 669,000 followers. He is a prolific poster (as of August 2025, he posts about 3–5 times per day) but does not seem to interact directly with the hundreds of comments he receives. MWHIA has received media attention from several websites including Feminism in India (Bandyopadhyay, 2019), the *New York Post* (Dawson, 2015), and *The Independent* (Ritschel, 2019; Wills, 2016).

Both MWHIA's posts and the social media community he has cultivated envision an alternate universe in which institutionalized misogyny and patriarchy have become institutionalized misandry and matriarchy: men are expected to keep themselves looking youthful and beautiful for women (but also remain modest), tokenized by women in fiction and in the workplace, and assumed to be biologically predisposed to fatherhood and domestic servitude. MWHIA often phrases his posts as discussion questions, inviting commenters to take part in the joke. These commenters (most of whom appear to be women) roleplay as inhabitants of this alternate universe, casually throwing around gender-flipped sexist talking points.

The goal of this paper is to describe and analyze the ways in which MWHIA, as well as the community that has developed in his Facebook comments, identify and satirize—that is, ridicule and criticize—patriarchal and misogynistic gender ideologies, taking into account the multimodal nature of the posts and the collaborative nature of Facebook. I argue that MWHIA

⁴ <https://cwagency.co.uk/client/man-who-has-it-all>

⁵ This paper refers to the real person using she/her, but to the persona using he/him.

employs strategic reversal in order to make us aware of the absurdity of the deeply entrenched sexist attitudes in our society that we have internalized, thus challenging and delegitimizing them. MWHIA also provides a space for women and AFAB (assigned female at birth) individuals to feel understood and validated in their anger towards patriarchy. I also discuss the role of language in constructing gender roles; MWHIA acknowledges language as an important vehicle for the reproduction of gender ideologies, and so androcentric language—gender-flipped to gynocentric language—is a frequent topic.

The structure of the remainder of the paper as follows: Section 2, “Methodology and data,” outlines how I selected the data to be analyzed and the scope of my analysis. Section 3, “Discussion,” defines some of the strategies MWHIA uses to satirize misogyny and patriarchy, then explores a few major recurring themes, followed by an examination of what makes MWHIA’s critique emotionally impactful and effective. The paper concludes with Section 4, which summarizes the significance and impact of the page on feminism in the modern age.

2 Methodology and data

The data I am using for analysis are drawn from the MWHIA Facebook page, as well as the comments under his posts. Over the course of the data collection, several strategies were impressionistically identified, as well as some recurring themes (defined and explicated in more detail below in Sections 3.1, “Strategies,” and 3.2, “Themes,” respectively). The data reproduced in this paper was selected to exemplify these strategies and themes, as well as show commenters’ uptake and interpretation of MWHIA’s style of satire (see Section 3.3, “The significance of Man Who Has It All,” below). Though MWHIA has presences on several social media platforms (and runs other websites), for simplicity, my analysis here is limited to Facebook. Some of the selected posts are very recent, while some are much older. As the scope of this paper is relatively small, and as the Facebook page contains approximately 10 years of data and still posts frequently, the discussion is necessarily limited, and my qualitative analysis and observations are fairly impressionistic: a more detailed and complete analysis should take into account more data, potentially using collocations and other quantitative and experimental methods.

The gender categories of “man” and “women” are frequently treated as binary and oppositionally defined, as well as conflated with biological sex; therefore, many of the heterosexist and cissexist ideologies intertwined with gender ideologies feature prominently in MWHIA’s posts. In addition, the majority of the photos posted feature white subjects, and the sexist ideologies satirized by MWHIA were produced within a white-centric culture. An analysis of the histories and intersections of these ideologies as they relate to these posts would also be worthwhile; however, this is beyond the scope of the present paper.

3 Discussion

3.1 Strategies

In this discussion, four main strategies utilized by MWHIA (and his audience) are identified; for the purposes of the present analysis, I have termed them *reversal*, *allusion*, *distillation*, and *collaboration*. These strategies are defined and explained in more detail below alongside some illustrating examples. Though I define them individually below, these strategies are most often used in combination. These strategies are utilized across multiple modes, both linguistic and paralinguistic; in the case of MWHIA’s Facebook page, these paralinguistic features are visual and include features such as font, colours, photos, and graphics, which is facilitated by the multimodal nature of the internet (Jewitt, 2013; Vásquez, 2019).

3.1.1 Reversal

The most salient and all-encompassing strategy employed by MWHIA is his *reversal* of the gender roles and stereotypes we are socialized into: characteristics and functions traditionally associated with one gender are pointedly treated as belonging to the opposite gender. Instead of masculine words being treated as the default, “firewoman” is matter-of-factly presented as a gender-neutral word that encompasses both male and female firefighters (Figure 2); men in the workplace are subject to scrutiny, objectification, and strict dress codes imposed by their female superiors (Figure 3); and the term “testicular” has replaced “hysterical” to refer to overly emotional men (Figure 4; the reference to testes mirrors the etymology of the word “hysteria,” from the Greek *hystera*, “uterus” [Merriam-Webster, n.d.-a], which references female reproductive anatomy). In the fictional world constructed by MWHIA and his commenters, androcentrism has become gynocentrism, women freely sexually objectify and police men from their positions of power, and men are pathologized for their emotions and reactions to their own subjugation. This strategy is discussed further in Sections 3.2, “Themes,” and 3.3.2, “Reflection, defamiliarization, and de-invisibilization.”

3.1.2 Allusion

Often, MWHIA satirizes misogyny through parody—that is, he *alludes* to sexist culture and media by selecting elements of his source material (e.g., common phrases, talking points, visuals and graphic design features) and humorously referencing them or integrating them into his posts, recontextualized. The first and perhaps most obvious intertextual reference appears in the name of the page: “Man Who Has It All.” The concept of women “having it all,” which has basically come to refer to having both children and a career, seems to have been popularized by the publication of Helen Gurley Brown’s book *Having It All: Love, Success, Sex, Money... Even if You’re Starting With Nothing* in 1982 (Szalai, 2015). The way in which the media sometimes

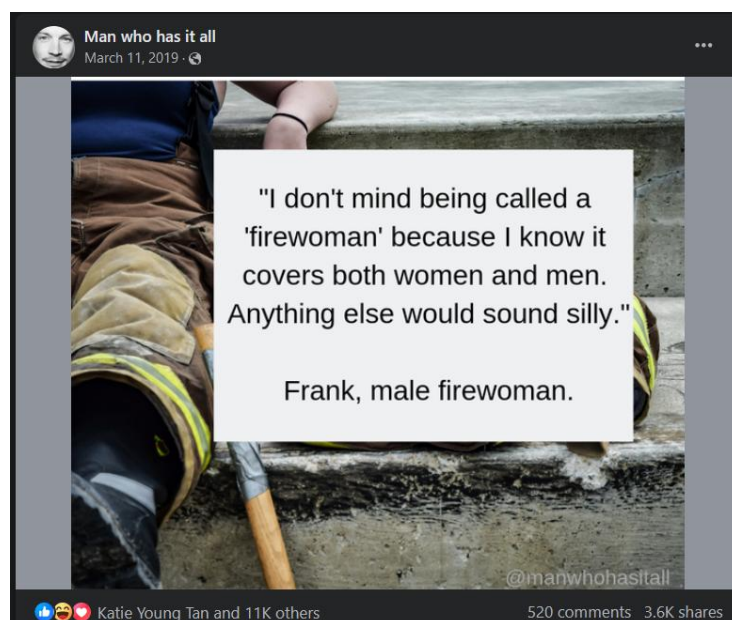


Figure 2. MWHIA Facebook post about the phrase “male firewoman,” posted March 11, 2019.⁶

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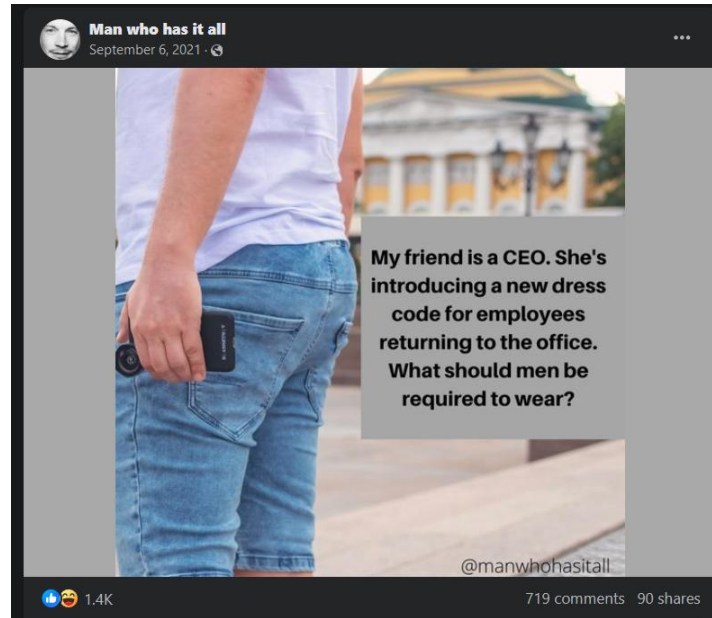


Figure 3. MWHIA Facebook post about workplace dress codes for male employees, posted September 6, 2021.⁷

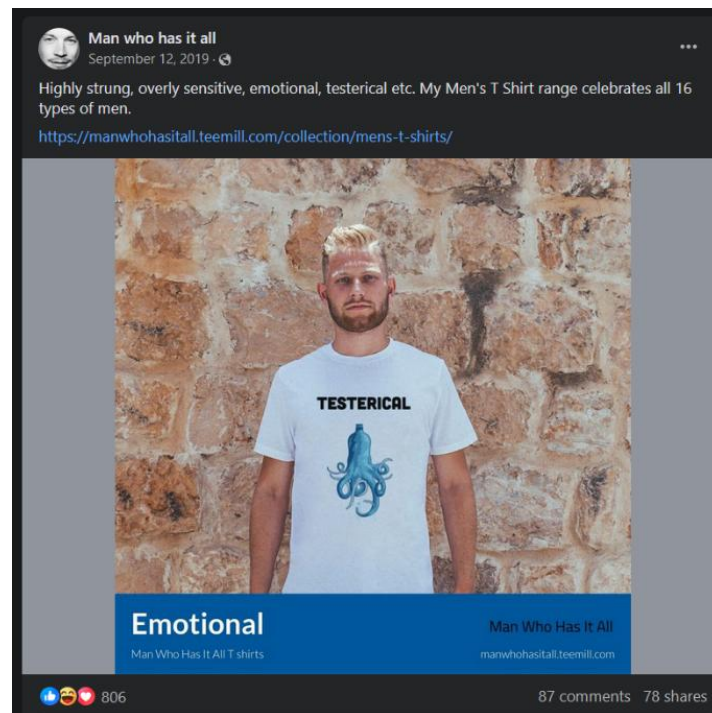


Figure 4. MWHIA Facebook post about the term “testicular,” posted September 12, 2019.⁸

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<https://www.facebook.com/MANWHOHASITALL/posts/pfbid0369AdVQgB4E28HBuAm7oRKGbqYC2dz42mKoNAGCEwEMGeuNiACnPVvHZigCsmBsSI>

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<https://www.facebook.com/MANWHOHASITALL/posts/pfbid027xCpHfSzQNTjKdygTqPp6VTzHjPUgJTCKhbokzTGNfMADqgUPvGkinrg9NEBxqdfI>

uses this phrase has been criticized as sexist: for example, in 2023, when Jessica Ardern resigned as New Zealand prime minister, the BBC responded with the headline “Jacinda Ardern resigns: Can women really have it all?” The BBC faced immediate backlash, prompting them to change the headline and issue an apology (BBC, 2023; T. Wong, 2023). Cosslett (2023) points out that the wording of this concept as “having it *all*” “suggests a uniquely feminine greediness,” and that the framing of these conversations perpetuates a double standard against women, as it is “virtually never asked of fathers” whether they can have both children and a successful career. I would argue as well that these conversations perpetuate the idea that women’s primary value is as mothers. Often, it is silently assumed that all women want to have children (in order to feel truly complete and have it “all”), and that a career will interfere with their supposed most important functions in society: birthing and taking care of children. A man’s ability to have children while also having a career is not questioned, perhaps, because it is assumed that the responsibility of raising the children he fathered will rightly fall to his wife.

While the recent BBC controversy demonstrates that some still uncritically put forth the question of whether women can “have it all” well after the 1980s, MWHIA and his community have instead taken up this phrase ironically, with one commenter mock-innocently asking whether a man really can “have it all” and wondering whether the “rigors of academia” will impede his ability to be a good husband and father (Figure 5).

Some of the other kinds of texts *alluded* to by MWHIA and his commenters include sexist advertisements from the 1950s, as well as websites, Facebook pages, and Facebook groups offering business and lifestyle advice to busy mothers. MWHIA borrows both the language and the aesthetics of these texts. In Figure 6, an advertisement for paint dated around 1950, the woman featured in the ad is condescendingly referred to as a “clever girl” who “painted it herself,” while a post by MWHIA (Figure 7) features a woman drawn in a similar art style, wearing a similar style of clothing, and discussing gender in a similar old-fashioned-sounding way. Figures 8 and 9 provide examples of genuine Facebook groups for so-called “mom bloggers,” while Figures 10 and 11 are taken from Facebook posts offering unironic self-care tips for mothers such as “wake

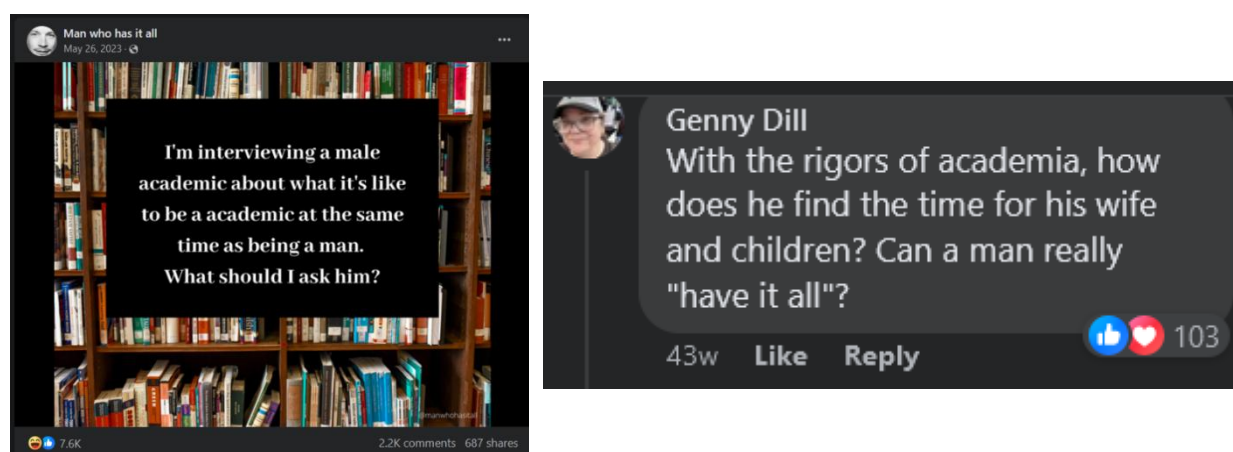


Figure 5. MWHIA Facebook post about being a man in academia, posted May 26, 2023 (with comment).⁹

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<https://www.facebook.com/MANWHOHASITALL/posts/pfbid034AiRkFMTxtAZuRX1Zu9YLcABMHF3VQKZyLAPf64fCoLv3xsY6oFtyYemPavGX6SAI>



Figure 6. Advertisement for paint, dated c. 1950 (archived at Alamy).¹⁰



Figure 7. MWHIA Facebook post about men's reproductive rights, posted December 29, 2022.¹¹

¹⁰ <https://www.alamy.com/stock-photo-advertisement-featuring-woman-having-painted-her-house-with-darkaline-32308663.html>

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<https://www.facebook.com/MANWHOHASITALL/posts/pfbid02gqoMo8JjiL7QzmGjS3D77KbBjtbdGixiwkuw3zh1Kxv2xGtqK3NcbgfmoJnqU9wv1>



Figure 8. Facebook cover image for the group “Blog & Business: Moms who do it all.”¹²



Figure 9. Facebook cover image for the group “Ready Set Blog for Traffic (From Mom to Mompreneur).”¹³

¹² <https://www.facebook.com/groups/blogandbusinessmoms/>

¹³ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/momtommompreneur/>



Figure 10. Image from smartsimplemom.com, shared by the Facebook page Powerfully Essential on April 11, 2020.¹⁴



Figure 11. Facebook post by LifeCell on November 12, 2023.¹⁵

¹⁴ https://www.facebook.com/powerfullyessential/posts/i-recently-came-across-this-self-care-tips-for-busy-moms-and-thought-how-appropri/3035937083300357/?paipv=0&cav=AfZ_xXGZU2rJHUV1pslsMsE91vjZmwLIp7uIZwam9kgB3DS9lo_nih57em5yQ8-gl2o&_rdr

¹⁵ https://www.facebook.com/LifeCellInternational/posts/1400451060569003/?paipv=0&cav=Afap8TneHKKAAb-ISK6xqkOwabnQzVqy3_HfmZ0xONMc5tgh0Scjxco6AUTc0TapvDdc&_rdr

up before your kids,” “do [your] hair and makeup in the morning,” and “schedule your ‘me’ time.” MWHIA designs his posts in Figures 12 and 13 using similar bright and cheerful colours, cutesy handwriting-style fonts, cartoonish graphics like a smiling sun, and images of idyllic domestic life such as a tidy living room. These posts make linguistic reference to the sites in Figures 8–11 as well, using phrases and tips like “me time” (this is borrowed by the commenter in Figure 14 as well) and getting up before the wife and kids.



Figure 12. MWHIA Facebook post about chores and other responsibilities men have, posted August 31, 2019.¹⁶



Figure 13. MWHIA Facebook post about men’s chores and “me-time,” posted October 5, 2021.¹⁷

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<https://www.facebook.com/MANWHOHASITALL/posts/pfbid02JVaybNGzRw2CZGn2Sxjs2AhGx8pTu7NZ6bdYW7n6a1JeQgMKLbpmw8agYNwm4oRzl>

¹⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=4339092296209728>

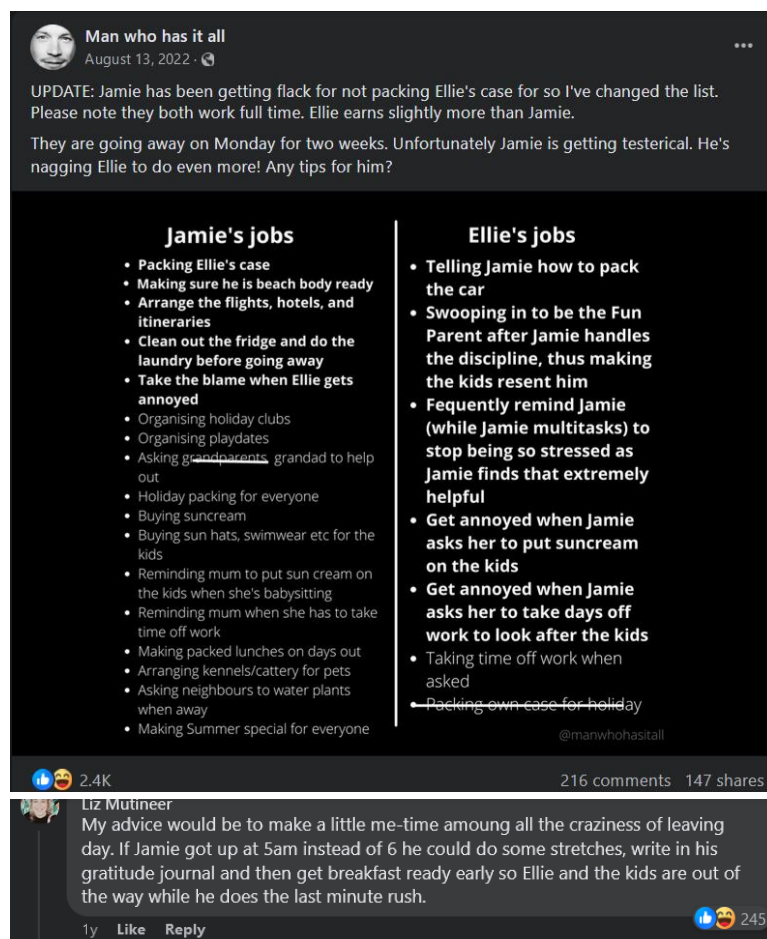


Figure 14. MWHIA Facebook post about domestic responsibilities, posted August 13, 2022 (with comment).¹⁸

It may or may not be MWHIA's intent to critique these kinds of "mom blogs" and lifestyle pages specifically, but it is clearly his intent to critique the overarching attitudes of the culture that produced them: namely, that women ought to first and foremost be mothers and domestic servants who complete their daily chores effortlessly, all while keeping themselves adequately attractive and maintaining a positive attitude.

In general, these *allusions* serve to both situate MWHIA's satire in our broader culture, and to identify the elements of that culture, such as gender roles and ideologies, that MWHIA seeks to critique.

3.1.3 Distillation

MWHIA's posts are not necessarily hyperbolic per se; rather, they make the implications of sexist talking points explicit by *distilling* them to a brief statement and/or taking them to their logical extreme, such as in Figure 15, which points out the absurd and sometimes contradictory beauty advice given to women by placing the phrases "avoid opening your eyes" and "don't close

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<https://www.facebook.com/MANWHOHASITALL/posts/pfbid028pmYXVteEs6EQaYen1v273wJsdoV8w8gasWdv7mKi562J44p6FpyNQjzAePVag5El>

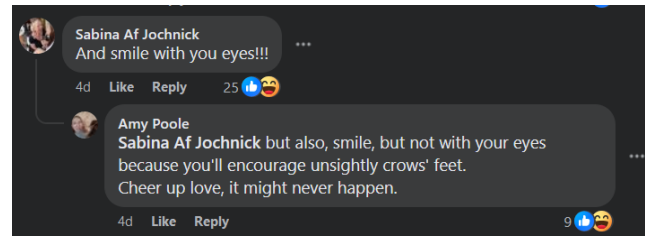
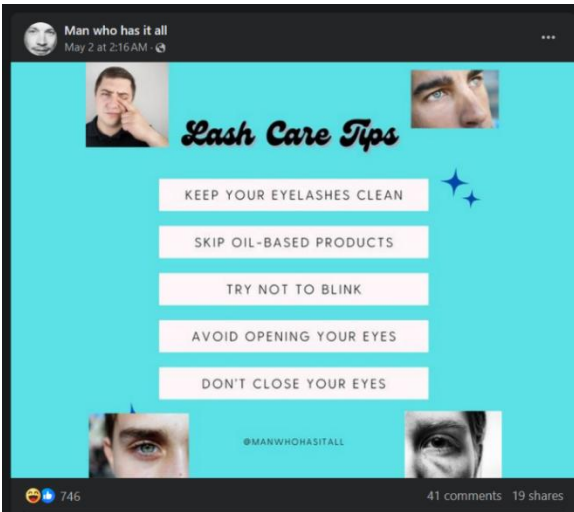


Figure 15. MWHIA Facebook post about eyelash care tips, posted May 2, 2024 (with comments).¹⁹

your eyes” one after the other; the comments catch on to this, telling men to both “smile with you [*sic*] eyes” and “smile, but not with your eyes because you’ll encourage unsightly crows’ feet.” His posts are very short-form, most often a single image with a few lines of text that state his point plainly. Part of this may be motivated by the nature of social media, where users tend to scroll through their timelines rapidly and not spend much time on any one post in particular, so longer posts might not be as successful (Gligorić et al., 2019); however, it also has the effect of giving his posts a humorously blunt and matter-of-fact tone, as if these gender roles are simply common sense (Figure 16).



Figure 16. MWHIA Facebook post about men and humour, posted April 21, 2024.²⁰

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<https://www.facebook.com/MANWHOHASITALL/posts/pfbid0Gbq73CkMLFpDLwuZwa2TB72zCj3QxR9ay3BfyqTXwVsTLVeVc1vkSb7STyP2tzudl>

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<https://www.facebook.com/MANWHOHASITALL/posts/pfbid02QLU1JiVrqiGD5M2g1w7sw1YTFbDj2ff19XMian28zbUgUBW2UFezmxeffFpjiJl>

When the posts themselves are somewhat more open-ended and/or offer the floor to commenters, the comments are often willing to take on the task of *distilling* the sexism by being more explicit: one commenter, in response to a question about men over 50, simply states “Obviously they’re void of any *real* merit, (what man past thirty is valuable anyway?)” (Figure 17). Bandyopadhyay (2019) identifies this “aggression” and pointed “lack of political correctness” as a notable feature of MWHIA’s comments section.

3.1.4 Collaboration

Social media is designed to be participatory: Facebook users can directly interact with posts by liking/reacting, sharing, commenting, and replying to other comments. Users can see each

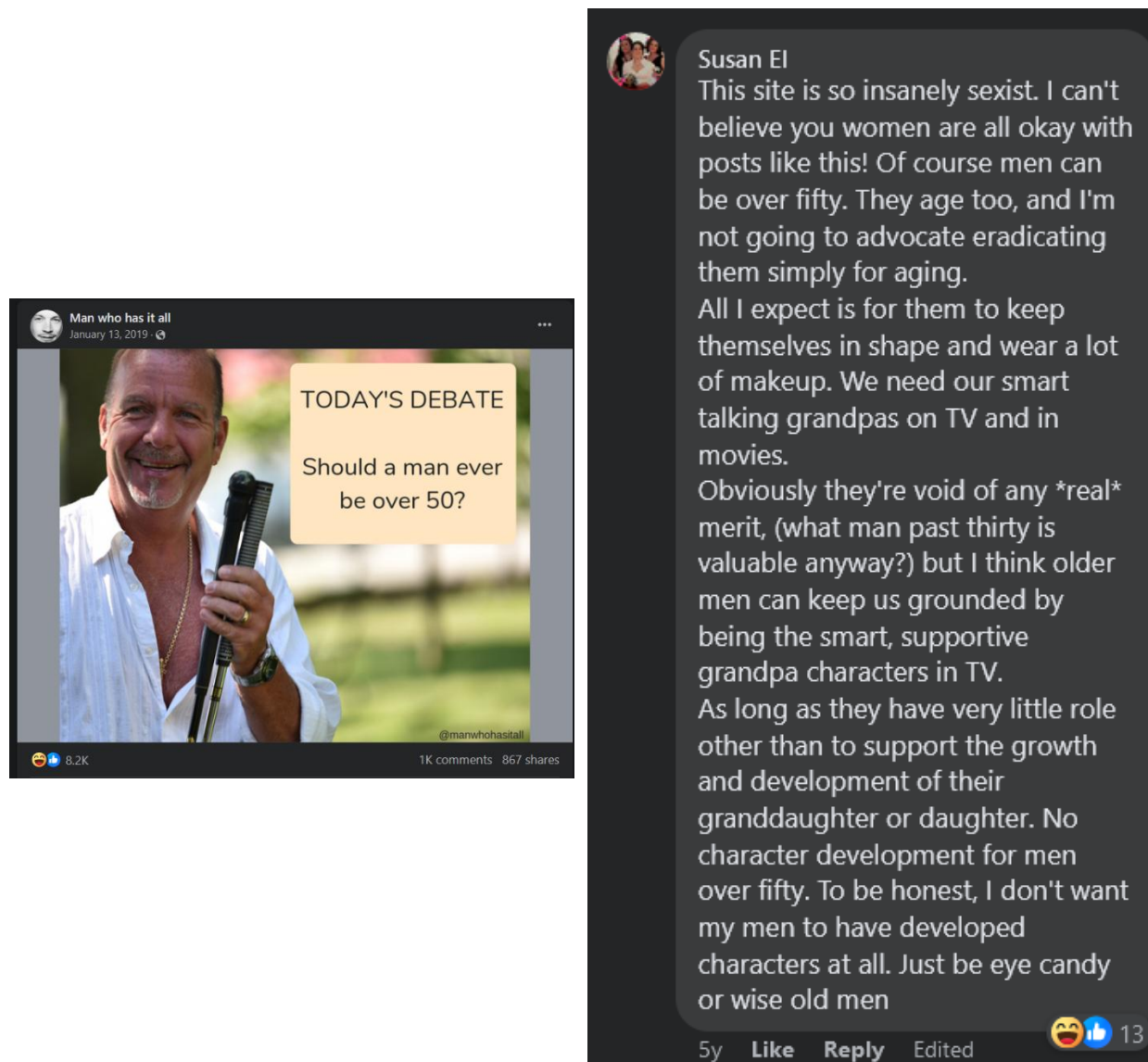


Figure 17. MWHIA Facebook post asking commenters about men over 50, posted January 13, 2019 (with comment).²¹

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<https://www.facebook.com/MANWHOHASITALL/posts/pfbid02WxmxXS8a6SPCofwswBuR2Ui4pVCe241VUus1HvUBEjjCHCLE5nAn1fNjpDpescLfl>

other's reactions, shares, and comments, and are therefore able to interact not only with the page, but also with each other. Commenters are offered an opportunity to co-construct an alternate universe with different social rules by roleplaying as its inhabitants and effectively create their own satirical texts that adopt and reuse elements of the original posts and other comments, *collaboratively* forming a network of intertextual satire across MWHIA's Facebook page. Given how short-form and minimal the posts themselves usually are, and given that these posts are sometimes explicitly formulated as discussion questions (Figures 18–20), commenters are often just as essential a part of the satire as the posts themselves.

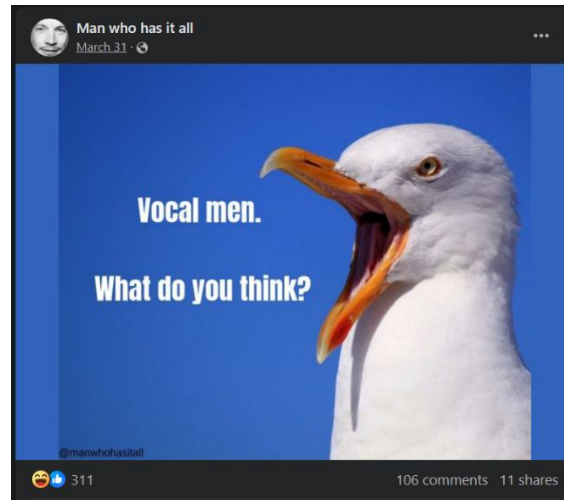


Figure 18. MWHIA Facebook post asking commenters about vocal men, posted March 31, 2024.²²

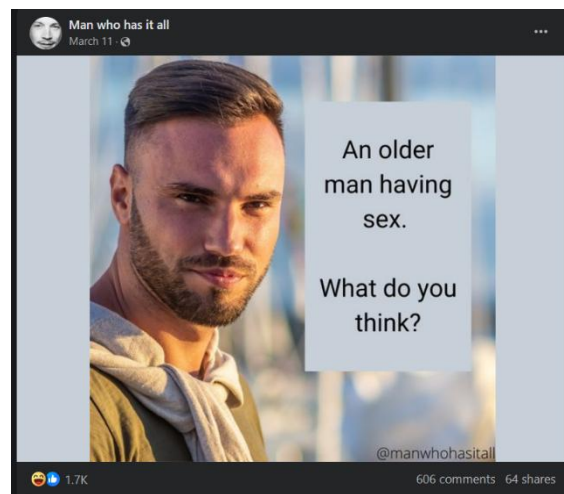


Figure 19. MWHIA Facebook post asking commenters about older men having sex, posted March 11, 2024.²³

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<https://www.facebook.com/MANWHOHASITALL/posts/pfbid0ThjU48fZ14RcVFsvxpQ9cdbfj75TWzetQ4CgTJk6mNFJrGEoNFArJM6s2kZftYsZl>

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<https://www.facebook.com/MANWHOHASITALL/posts/pfbid02AM2ydfBHDW5A9m1gxf1YEQtbpdPg3s3PKyuXAkCEWcmaMYBtG2PreoMp3xPntYwl>



Figure 20. MWHIA Facebook post about urban planning for men, posted May 2, 2024.²⁴

3.2 Themes

MWHIA's posts discuss a range of subject matter, including professional roles, domestic roles, the role of language in enforcing gender stereotypes, physical appearance, biological essentialism, sexist infantilization, and policing of men's bodies. Two of the most prominent recurring themes were broadly identified as follows: 1. gynocentrism, and 2. the intersection of domestic and professional roles (Sections 3.2.1 and 3.2.2, respectively).

3.2.1 *Gynocentric language and worldviews*

In the real world, many cultures and languages operate under androcentric paradigms: in English, for example, words like “mankind” are assumed to apply to all of humankind, occupation names like “policeman” are touted as gender-neutral, and prescriptive grammarians have argued for the generic, supposedly gender-neutral “he” over other options like “he/she” or singular “they” (Bodine, 1975). In MWHIA's universe, these paradigms are *reversed*: the word “matron” replaces the word “patron” (which derives from the Latin *pater*, “father” [Merriam-Webster., n.d.-b]), “woman and husband” replaces the phrase “man and wife” at weddings, and “womankind,” “countrywoman,” and “firewoman” have become supposedly gender-neutral (Figures 21, 22, and 23, respectively). As he often does, MWHIA poses questions to his audience, inviting them to *collaborate* in the satire (Figures 22 and 23).

Such gender biases extend beyond—and are reinforced by—language. Clinical trials, for instance, have historically underrepresented women (Holdcroft, 2007). In Figure 24, this is again *reversed*: a female scientist states that they only use “normal humans” in their clinical trials. In Figure 23, a commenter specifically claims that gynocentric language exists because women are simply more competent: “important roles in a company or organisation usually have the word woman in the name of the role... because women are the best qualified for these positions.” Language is inextricably tied to other gender ideologies and biases: for example, the ideology that

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<https://www.facebook.com/MANWHOHASITALL/posts/pfbid02jDqmfJHsBxd8mqPmPHGjQGU5mDxa2WCCwr dhw24Hapz3VWPWM7wiSWWh39GA44g1yl>

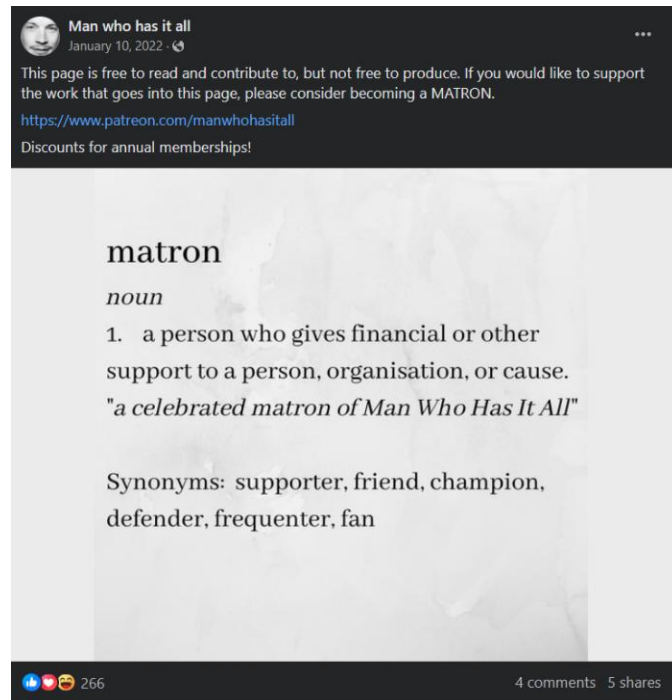


Figure 21. MWHIA Facebook post asking followers to provide financial support through the site Patreon, posted January 10, 2022.²⁵



Figure 22. MWHIA Facebook post about the phrase “woman and husband” (a parody of “man and wife”), posted April 4, 2021.²⁶

²⁵

<https://www.facebook.com/MANWHOHASITALL/posts/pfbid022ZERXzCYiJeLsori2WUYbkQdkZf8gjXRdvpCU43dJ97jdVpGJLqtshmQL8gLUEPI>

²⁶

<https://www.facebook.com/MANWHOHASITALL/posts/pfbid0ogXR1KvoNABKRauLDGd8MpiZPpftf7sV2B7x4FXiobpqEDjgsyRSNFaeYjQQvnuKl>



Figure 23. MWHIA Facebook post about gynocentric gender-neutral terms, posted March 23, 2024 (with comment).²⁷



Figure 24. MWHIA Facebook post about gender bias in clinical trials, posted October 11, 2019.

²⁷

https://www.facebook.com/MANWHOHASITALL/posts/pfbid0q1zWGoYXpe95oWrWFN1GyQ4fXoFi8vgHrCN_EhgEvr75TuNHP73S4SX6TE2vPb7kBl

²⁸

<https://www.facebook.com/MANWHOHASITALL/posts/pfbid0aGSWpLbCpNSPEaKSaVH9Bwi1FvX7JC4pSQ4mD7GyYbiVjQkiA8kZA15vDfGJntgTl>

men are the unmarked gender and women are the marked gender contributes to assumptions that a man in a senior position was simply and straightforwardly the most qualified candidate, but that a woman in a similar position must have been put there for some secondary reason having to do with her gender, such as political correctness or a diversity quota. The commenter in Figure 23 *distills* these kinds of sexist assumptions into a straightforward, matter-of-fact statement that women are simply “the best qualified” for these positions, which is supposedly natural reflected in language.

While the above examples (Figures 23 and 24) have more to do directly with medicine and the workplace than with language, language is still a tool that reinforces common-sense ideologies about gender. In Figure 25, like in Figure 24, women are explicitly referred to as “normal”: in Figure 24, the opposition is between “men” and “normal humans,” while in Figure 25, it is between “male board member[s]” and “normal board members.” By explicitly labelling women as “normal” (and men, implicitly, as deviations from normal), these posts *distill* the tacit assumption in medical research, language, and our wider culture that men are the default, meaning that anything that is true of men should be generalizable to the rest of the human population. As well, they draw attention to the role of language in normalizing androcentric social structures.

3.2.2 *Domestic and professional roles*

As discussed in Section 3.1.2, “Allusion,” patriarchal belief systems often value women only insofar as they are able to carry and raise children. Women are relegated to domestic and mothering roles, while men are supposedly better suited to professional and leadership roles. MWHIA identifies these ideologies and *reverses* them. In Figure 26, he strongly implies that a man sounds “comic and fraudulent” when he advertises his doctorate. This phrasing directly



Figure 25. MWHIA Facebook post about the term “male board member,” posted April 5, 2017.²⁹

²⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=1247317832053872>

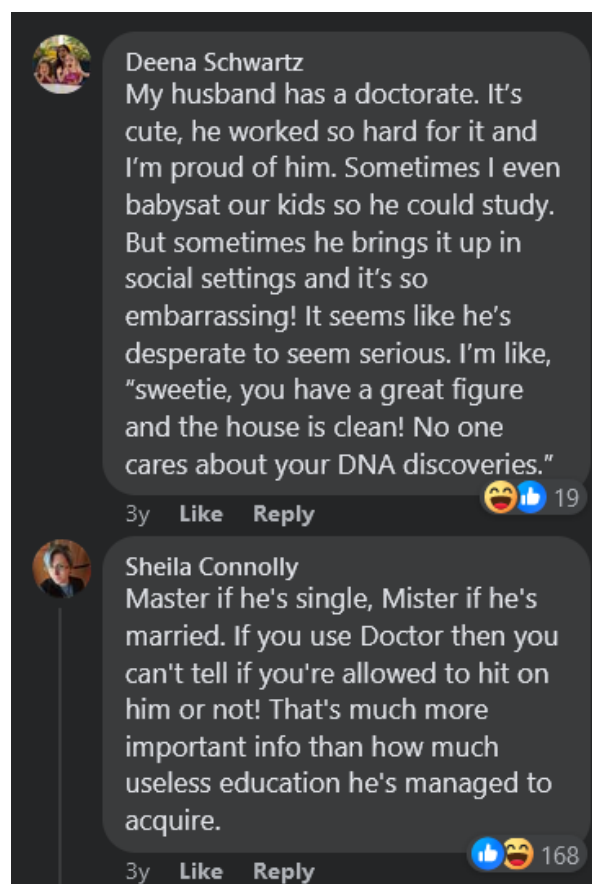
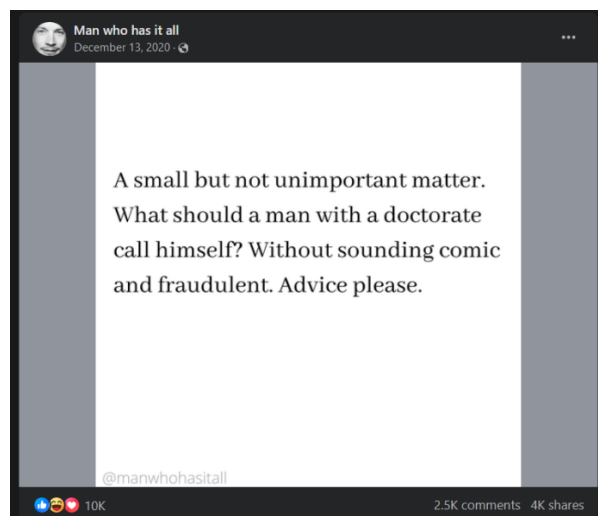


Figure 26. MWHIA Facebook post about men with doctorates, posted December 13, 2020 (with comments).³⁰

alludes to Joseph Epstein's *Wall Street Journal* opinion piece, published just two days earlier, in which he claims Jill Biden calling herself Dr. Biden "feels fraudulent, even comic" (Epstein, 2020).

This is not an isolated occurrence; women in academia are often viewed with skepticism and scorn and reminded that their place is supposedly in the home. The community surrounding MWHIA recognizes this supposed incompatibility between professional and domestic roles, even when domestic labour and fathering are not mentioned explicitly in the original posts. Under this same post, a commenter mentions that she has bluntly told her PhD-holding husband "No one cares about your DNA discoveries" because "you have a great figure and the house is clean!" Another commenter explicitly points out the devaluation of women's accomplishments, as well as how patriarchy strips women of personhood in their own right by defining them through their relations to men, by claiming that a man's marital status is "much more important info than how much useless education he's managed to acquire." Under another post about men in academia (Figure 27), commenters stress the importance of men's "fatherly and husbandly duties" and "find[ing] the time for his wife and children," all while infantilizing them by referring to them as

³⁰

<https://www.facebook.com/MANWHOHASITALL/posts/pfbid0baznAQfDbuwBadVuQ7rEQSGCWdbGUHYyTS2xZYRG1LnCKRhY2Rwp2PuW4ebRgs8kl>

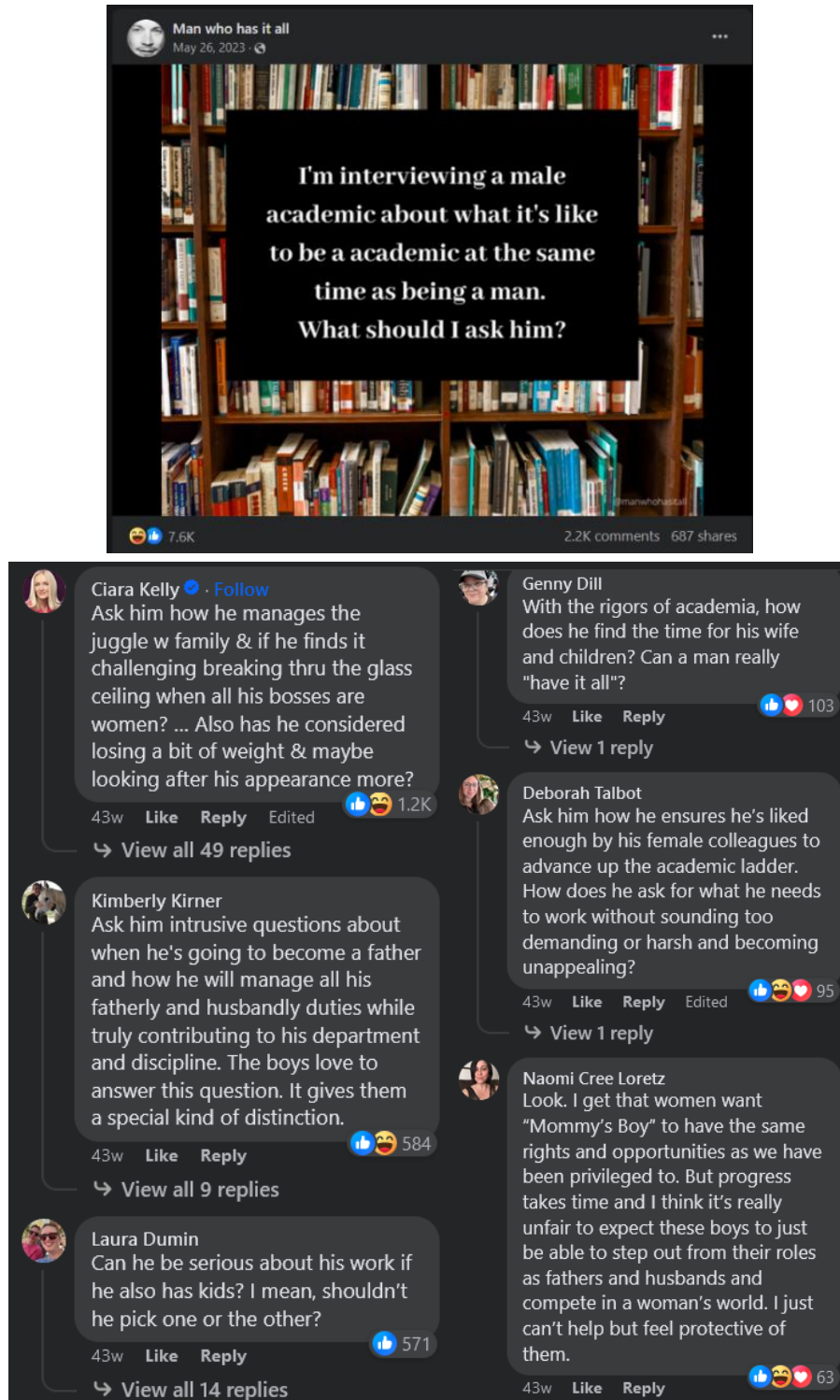


Figure 27. MWHIA Facebook post about being a man in academia, posted May 26, 2023 (with comments).³¹

31

<https://www.facebook.com/MANWHOHASITALL/posts/pfbid034AiRkFMTxtAZuRX1Zu9YLeABMHF3VQKZyLAPf64fCoLv3xsY6oFtyYemPavGX6SAI>

“boys.” Finally, in Figure 28, under a post sarcastically celebrating men in the tech industry that includes infantilizingly cute cartoon images of men, a commenter claims to be a “male System Administrator,” to which another commenter, completely unprompted, brings up his supposed responsibilities as a father: “don’t you feel bad about what you’re doing to your family?” The *distilled* implication is that all men ought to prioritize their real calling, fatherhood, over any individual personal goals such as professional success.

In Figure 29, MWHIA claims that “men have a natural talent” for domestic work. This mirrors the stereotype that a woman’s place is in the home, while also evoking the pseudo-benevolence and condescending praise offered to women who do domestic labour for being supposedly “equal but different” to men in ways that “we should absolutely celebrate”; in this case, being supposedly universally good at household chores, whereas men are universally incompetent. This particular justification for gender roles—that they are merely reflections of innate biology—is prevalent; it has been claimed in popular discourse that women have better language skills than men, for example, often with appeals to neuroscience research. This is in spite of research indicating that sex-based brain differences are neither as pronounced nor as binary as the popular discourse would lead one to believe (Cameron, 2014; Saguy et al., 2021). The comments take up this bio-essentialist argument, feigning objectivity by claiming that it is “just a fact” and “genetic,” so it “can’t be changed,” while also asserting that earning money “is harder and more important” than domestic labour, one even admitting to weaponizing their perceived incompetence to ensure that their spouse remains the one who has to clean the house: “‘I do it wrong’ so that I don’t have to do it.”³² These comments, along with the absurdity of the idea that an entire group of people could be biologically hard-wired for a task as hyper-specific as “cleaning the house before guests

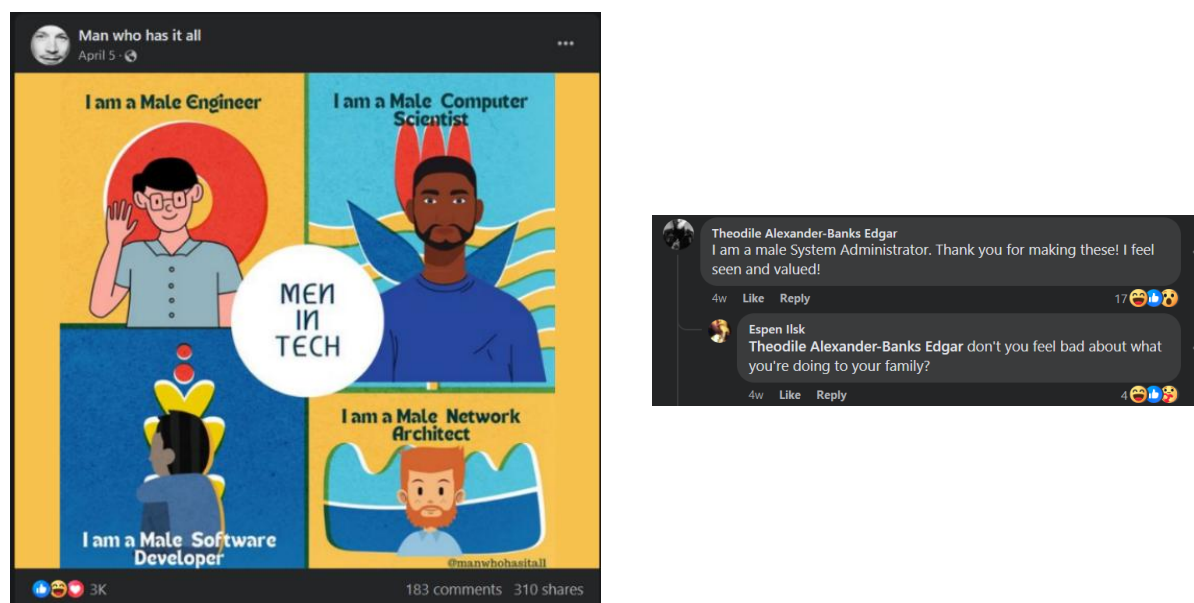


Figure 28. MWHIA Facebook post about men in tech, posted April 5, 2024 (with comments).³³

³² B. Wong (2022) defines the concept of “weaponized incompetence” as the “act of feigning incompetence at any one task... to get out of doing it”; it has been taken up by social media to criticize husbands who contribute to domestic inequality.

³³

<https://www.facebook.com/MANWHOHASITALL/posts/pfbid0P1h7EEBMnu4Qo446ZDcZbZU9rgF6XQ2oMZqDzZaQTBzrhwc4xVMRSEt8NHfrV2UUl>

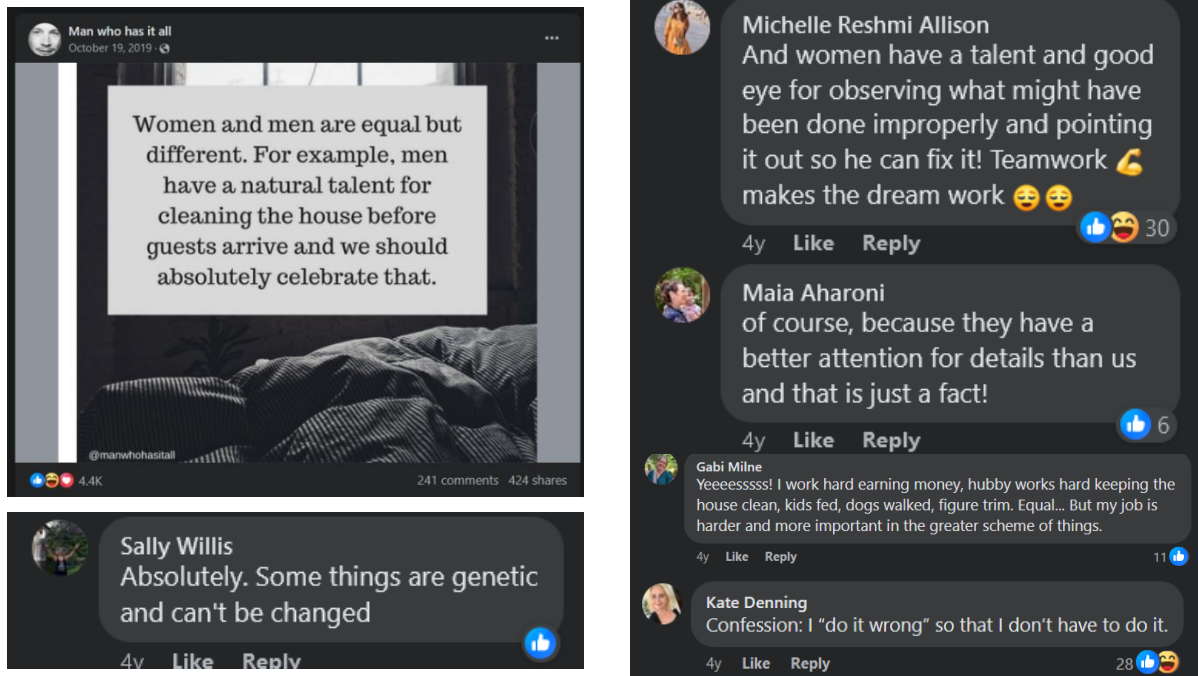


Figure 29. MWHIA Facebook post about men's supposed natural talent for domestic tasks, posted October 19, 2019 (with comments).³⁴

arrive,” *distill* and reveal this argument for what it is: uncritical support for a status quo that devalues women's autonomy and labour.

Functionally, the bio-essentialist argument for gender roles is simply a means of reinforcing existing power structures that limit the spheres of life in which women can be seen as legitimate actors and keep women out of positions of power. In addition, painting men as innately incompetent at chores gives them an excuse to not even attempt to accept some domestic responsibility while simultaneously trapping women in their role as homemakers. This is a recurring asymmetry in such bio-essentialist talking points: whereas some supposed innate biological difference denies women agency and power, the same supposed difference as applied to men relieves them of responsibility. Cameron (2014) notes a similar asymmetry in her discussion of ideologies of brain sex: “Some women may be flattered, or consoled, by the idea that they excel in verbal communication, while for some men the idea that they are naturally poor communicators may serve as a convenient excuse for insensitive behavior” (p. 293).

3.3 The significance of Man Who Has It All

Finally, it is worth discussing how MWHIA's strategies help contribute to feminist resistance and redefinition. Below, I consider what MWHIA does for the individuals within his Facebook community, as well as how his satire prompts us to reflect on our lived reality in the binaristically gendered world we occupy together.

³⁴

<https://www.facebook.com/MANWHOHASITALL/posts/pfbid02KtQGSLnDRcnYTekbXmqQwGsCVruo2uG4RflwZjqQ5QbYalTGEYUxnoJuvUHU7Jf6l>

3.3.1 *Community, support, and lived experience*

Because the internet is such a heterogeneous place, consisting of users across a range of backgrounds with a range of beliefs, MWHIA's audience is probably likewise heterogeneous, and it cannot be assumed that all or most commenters have the same goals in mind; it is possible that some see the page as mostly a source of entertainment. However, after reading through the comments section of several dozen posts, some general patterns do seem to emerge.

As seen in the samples of data, based purely on names, most commenters appear to be women and/or AFAB (though of course this is difficult to verify for every commenter). Most often, they simply play along with the joke and take on the role of fictional misandrists. However, some will occasionally break character to express how the page has personally helped and comforted them as victims of patriarchy and misogyny. For example, in 2019, the official Facebook page for IRONMAN England (a full-distance triathlon) announced a side event called "Iron Girl" (Figure 30), drawing social media backlash (Smith, 2019). In response, MWHIA posted a parody of this announcement, turning "Iron Girl" into the equally infantilizing "Iron Boy," which he mockingly



Figure 30. Facebook post by IRONMAN England announcing Iron Girl on January 17, 2019.³⁵

³⁵ The original IRONMAN England post is no longer available; screenshot archived by Smith (2019)

called a “woke side event” (Figure 31). One professional female athlete commented under MWHIA’s post to express gratitude, mentioning that “we really do have all these arguments and more levelled against our participation, earnings and equal treatment on a daily basis, so seeing a thread of people unanimously rip the piss out of them has made my day!” Under a different post mocking the asymmetry and paternalism of the phrase “man and wife” by *reversing* it to “woman and husband,” another woman commented a personal anecdote about a sexist minister who lectured her about a wife’s submission to her husband, simply because she refused to be introduced as “Mrs.” followed by her husband’s name. She added that this incident “still makes [her] boil with anger” and that MWHIA is her “happy place,” and other women replied with sympathy and similar stories (Figure 32).

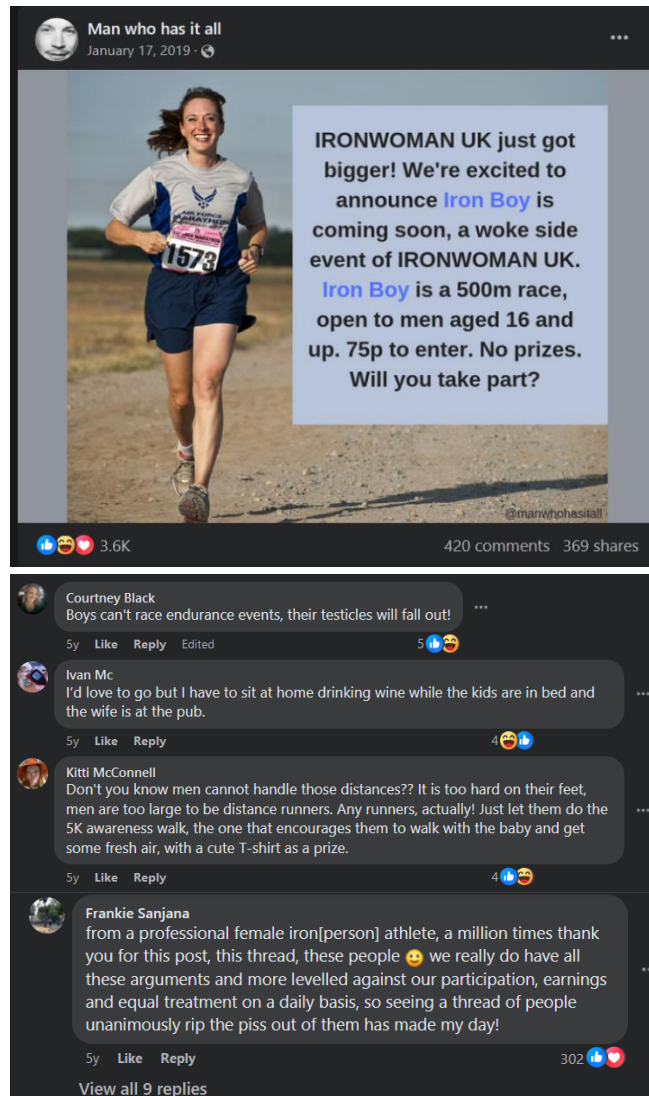


Figure 31. MWHIA Facebook post in response to the Iron Girl controversy, parodying the original post, posted January 17, 2019 (with comments).³⁶

³⁶

<https://www.facebook.com/MANWHOHASITALL/posts/pfbid033oCX2ckZZBkwHpjKVrz22efowpfFBaWsx4c7p43oWh77rdYfnuXyYDU9zLit5bl>

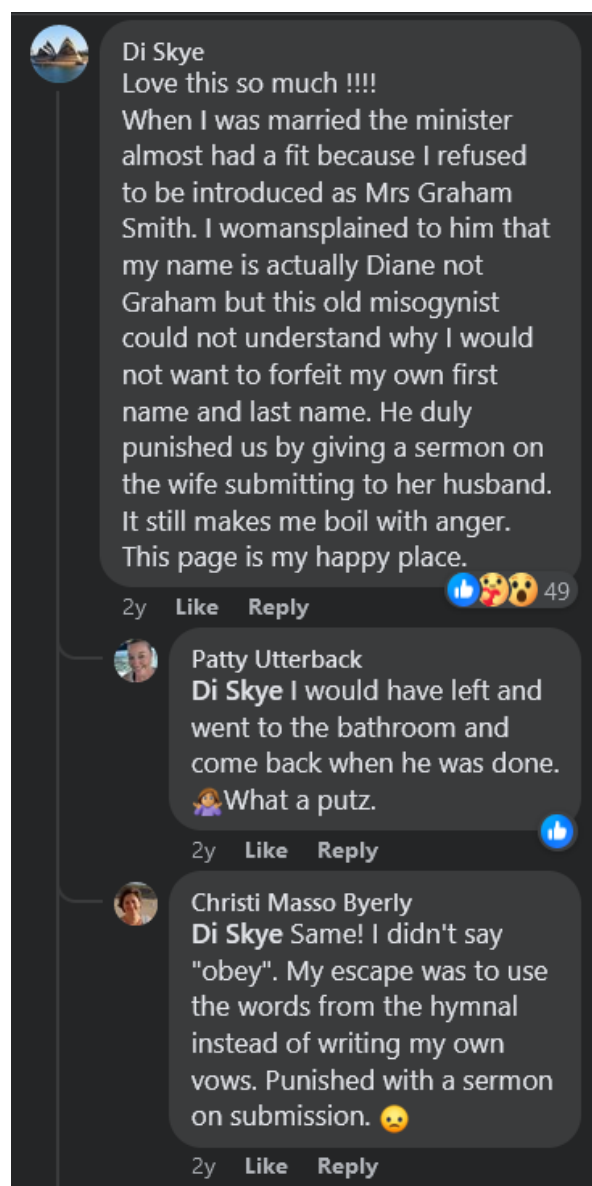


Figure 32. MWHIA Facebook post about the phrase “woman and husband” (a parody of “man and wife”), posted April 4, 2021 (with comments).³⁷

Even when comments stay in character, they often carry bitter and aggrieved undertones, likely because the real-world subject matter referenced by the posts is a source of a great deal of pain and frustration to many women and AFAB individuals: under a post about men in clinical trials, a commenter claims that “men just imagine their pain” in a sarcastic mirror of how women’s pain is often dismissed by doctors (Figure 33). In a different post about self-care for men, one commenter coins the term “wife stitch,” a reference to the husband stitch, a medical procedure

³⁷

<https://www.facebook.com/MANWHOHASITALL/posts/pfbid0ogXR1KvoNABKRauLDGd8MpiZPpftf7sV2B7x4FXiobpqEDjgsyRSNFaeYjQQvnuKl>

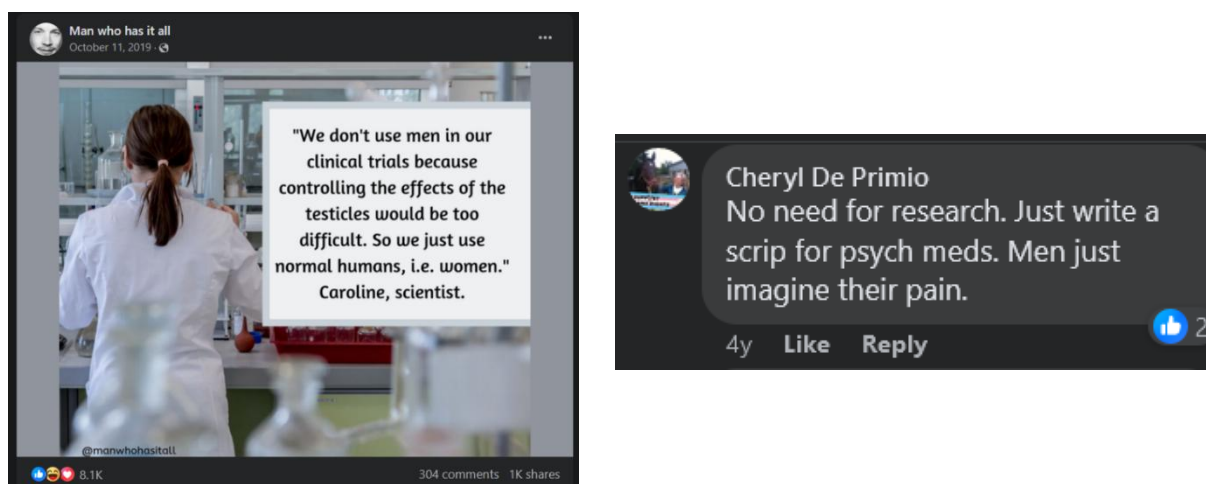


Figure 33. MWHIA Facebook post about gender bias in clinical trials, posted October 11, 2019 (with comments).³⁸

sometimes undertaken after vaginal births in which tearing has occurred; in this procedure, one or more additional, non-medically necessary sutures are added in order to tighten the vaginal opening and thereby increase sexual pleasure for the woman's husband during future intercourse (Kosi, 2025). Another commenter replies to this point with a graphic description of childbirth—"spending 20 hours forcing a screaming human out of their private parts (without the use of pain medicine, of course, for the full 'men empowerment experience')"—and scathingly remarks that "a good husband would be making sure to think about how to please his wife at all times" so that his wife does not "[leave] right after the kid is born because a man is no longer desirable after all that" (Figure 34). Under the same post, another commenter wonders if "we laugh at these [posts] because when we think about what they really mean for women we would either revolt or sob uncontrollably."

The *New York Post* claims that MWHIA's posts are "funny because they're true" (Dawson, 2015); I would go further and argue that they are also funny because that truth—the reminder of the lived reality of women and AFAB people—hurts. To some commenters, MWHIA provides a place to vent their anger towards patriarchy and commiserate with a community of people who have similar lived experiences and can empathize. Bandyopadhyay (2019), writing for *Feminism in India*, describes her experience of browsing the page:

When I first went through the page, I felt a sudden, powerful surge of relief. The world created was convincing enough to strip me of the fear of harassment every time I stepped out, to make me feel that my beauty wasn't the only thing the world cared about, to make me feel the way the dominant sex can currently afford to, for a half hour. I would find myself returning to it every time I needed a mental break... If I was no longer using my time and energy, thinking of ways to escape sexual harassment, that would free up a lot of my physical and mental space. I understood what it truly was to not feel that threat anymore, and understood what privilege the dominant sex still has... This page opens one's

³⁸

<https://www.facebook.com/MANWHOHASITALL/posts/pfbid0aGSWpLbCpNSPEaKSaVH9Bwi1FvX7JC4pSQ4mD7GyYbiVjQkiA8kZA15yDfGJntgTl>

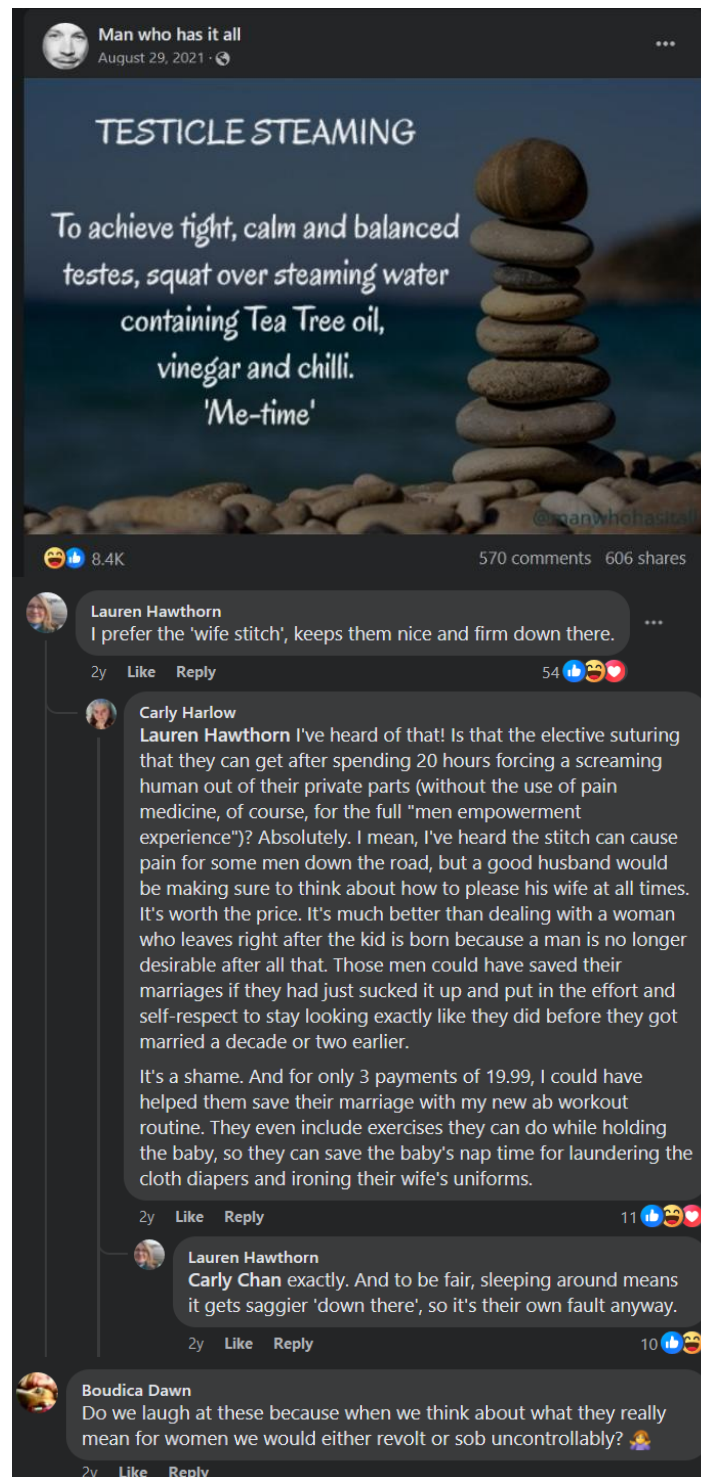


Figure 34. MWHIA Facebook post about masculine self-care, posted August 29, 2021 (with comments).³⁹

39

<https://www.facebook.com/MANWHOHASITALL/posts/pfbid028yRHGD4Gv5KPiodEoHnKJfz8Lag8qxsZogvcdLBP7iyfgrFXfX2rpFBSbzn24tD51>

eyes to how large the gap still is between the sexually privileged and the unprivileged, now in 2019... (Bandyopadhyay, 2019)

For her, the experience of reading through the page was simultaneously a comforting escape from the sexist world she lives in and a source of reflection. Temporarily stepping into the fictional role of a person who does not live in constant fear of gender-based harassment and discrimination allowed her to understand the injustice of our non-fictional world on an emotional rather than just an intellectual level. It appears that browsing MWHIA's posts can serve multiple purposes for different people, and that these are not at all mutually exclusive: coping with and temporarily escaping from patriarchy, finding like-minded community and thereby validation and comfort, and becoming more aware of sexist double standards, both on an individual and a community level.

3.3.2 *Reflection, defamiliarization, and de-invisibilization*

This paper has argued, in line with Ochs and Schieffelin's conceptualization of language socialization (e.g., Ochs & Schieffelin, 1984; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986), that language and its usage are deeply intertwined with socialization—that is, the process of learning the norms, conventions, and practices of a society. As we are socialized into a sexist world, and as its sexist practices and norms become unremarkable everyday conventions, the social inequalities propped up by these practices and norms have a tendency to become invisible to us. The kind of satire constructed by MWHIA serves to make these issues more salient to us; it de-invisibilizes these inequalities through defamiliarization. MWHIA provides a mirror image of our world where gender roles are transposed onto the “wrong” gender. This *reversal* helps us look at these roles from a new angle. While the roles themselves are usually unchanged (e.g. men, rather than women, are relegated to parenthood and an unremarkable domestic life; see, for example, Figure 29)—and indeed, they must be familiar and recognizable to us for the satire to be intelligible—the reversal of genders makes them suddenly seem comical partly because they instinctively feel “wrong.” The phrase “woman and husband” (Figures 22 and 32), for example, probably sounds silly and awkward to many when they first hear it, and therefore humorous; however, when one stops to consider the real-life phrase that it brings to mind, “man and wife,” it raises the question of why the latter should sound “normal” when the former sounds “wrong,” despite the fact that they are, on a linguistic level, asymmetrical in basically the same way. This reaction of amusement is ultimately an aesthetic judgment conditioned by patriarchal values; rather than being a reflection of the “natural” order of things, it is a reflection of language's role in invisibly naturalizing the social order of gender. Similarly, the mental image of a man staying at home and cheerfully doing chores (Figures 9 and 10), or steaming his genitals “to achieve tight, calm and balanced testes” (Figure 34) is ridiculous and laughable at first glance, even though this is no more ridiculous and laughable than the idea that all women should be relegated to the domestic sphere, or that they need to use specially formulated products to clean their vulvas and control what the company Vagisil has called “period funk” (Gunter, 2021; Smothers, 2021). The difference is that our patriarchal society has not conditioned us to think of male domestic servitude or testicle steaming as normal, correct, and unremarkable. Only when we reverse the reversal and reflect on the world we actually live in is the absurdity obvious and recognizable, with the help of the increased critical distance afforded to us by defamiliarization. Suddenly, the wrongness of a society where these things do in fact happen to women regularly becomes apparent, though perhaps less laughable (as one commenter in Figure 34 points out: “Do we laugh at these because when we think about what they really mean for women we would either revolt or sob uncontrollably?”).

Although individual social actors are shaped by the society they are raised in, cultural attitudes are not static and fixed, nor are language or the people who use it. While there is a tendency for many to react to social change with anxiety and resistance, it is possible to pause and reflect on the status quo, then disrupt and challenge it by rethinking how we conceptualize and reproduce gender relations, both in language and in other modes of social meaning-making. It is not enough to merely change words themselves: as Ehrlich & King (1994) demonstrate, the malleability of meaning goes both ways, and terms intended to be non-sexist “can undergo a kind of ‘semantic reversal’ (Seidel’s 1988 term) in the mouths of a sexist culture” (p. 72). Though language can be a useful tool of resistance, as seen in the potential of MWHIA’s sarcastic gynocentrism to provoke thought and reflection, language reform by itself will not necessarily dismantle patriarchy; the attitudes that inform how we use language must also be reformed. Recognizing that a problem exists is a prerequisite to begin addressing it; the defamiliarizing power of MWHIA’s pointed reversal of gender roles can help create mental space for that recognition to occur.

4 Conclusion

MWHIA’s satire is conceptually quite straightforward: he simply takes the institutionalized sexism we have become far too familiar with and transposes it onto the opposite gender. In so doing, he provides room for us to step outside ourselves and the invisibly normalized ideologies we hold about gender roles and relations. He helps bring the absurdity of our asymmetrical gender relations to the level of conscious awareness, and he does so on social media, where anyone with uncensored internet access can read and actively contribute. By envisioning a world where patriarchy is flipped and matriarchy rules, MWHIA helps us better see our own world and deconstruct our ideas of “normal.”

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