

## Representation of Women through Sexist Language in *Bridgerton*

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### Abstract

This study aimed to analyse the use of sexist language utilized in *Bridgerton*, a classic television series released on Netflix in 2020 which was based on Julia Quinn's popular novels, to understand how women are socially treated and perceived during the Regency era based on the sexist language used in *Bridgerton*. Mills' (2008) theory of language and sexism were employed to depict the British women in the 19<sup>th</sup> century who were viewed as women that are unequally illustrated in *Bridgerton*, the "biggest Netflix series ever" as quoted by CNN because it has been streamed in over 82 million households. A mixed-method approach based on overt and indirect sexism from Mills' (2008) language and sexism theory was employed to identify types of sexist language and interpret the dominant sexist languages, revealing how Regency women are socially perceived and treated. The data source included transcripts of eight episodes in Season 1 and eight in Season 2. Individual words that can be objectively rooted in our linguistic use cannot reveal sexism against women; however, we must examine the embedded sexist ideology that depicts unequally perceived women. These issues were addressed effectively by choosing a historical media that utilizes language to perpetuate gender discrimination, such as *Bridgerton* through sexism, for a contemporary audience, as it is essential to understand historical problems that equip us with the knowledge to recognize patterns that might go unnoticed in the present. The key findings revealed 78 out of 115 data consist of indirect sexism, with script and metaphor as the most common type. This analysis shows how sexist language in the series reflects a patriarchal culture that socially constructed women during the Regency era, 19<sup>th</sup> century through subtlety.

**Keywords:** Sociolinguistics, Gender, Sexism, Sexist Language, Regency Era

### Introduction

#### Background of the Study

Language is essential for communication, allowing individuals to express ideas, thoughts, and emotions. Gender plays a significant role in language acquisition and development, with gender being associated with sex. Understanding the relationship between language and

gender involves understanding constructed linguistic features and patterns. Language exploration can reveal sexism, inequality, and stereotypes in communication, highlighting the importance of addressing these issues through linguistic features like lexical items, generics, semantic derogation, gossip, word orders, and sexist language.

Misogyny within societal structures contributes to sexist language rooted in gender disparities and stereotypical attitudes toward males and females. Sexism is crucial in societal regulation, and communication styles vary between genders. Sexist language is often depicted in media, with negative connotations towards females.

The representation of women in media, particularly movies and television shows, has been extensively researched in various academic fields. *Bridgerton*, a television show, focuses on sexism in language and gender relationships. The show portrays an aristocratic English family community in 1813 Regency London, where matchmaking and arranged marriage were first initiated. The show's characters, including the Bridgerton family and the Featheringtons, are portrayed as diamonds, highlighting the societal issues surrounding women's representation in media.

It is significant to study topics related to how women are socially constructed through sexist language because in stereotypical roles, women have historically been underrepresented and inaccurately portrayed in popular culture. The religious belief system of femininity, which some have dubbed the organisation of representations around, was frequently based on the conventional stereotypical female roles along with the principles of nurturing others, loved ones, marriage, and focusing on looks (Ferguson, 1980). So, this study aims to understand how women are socially treated and perceived during the Regency era based on sexist language used in *Bridgerton*.

### **Problem Statement**

Gender inequalities are gradually eroding but persist across time, place, and culture. Modernization has altered society's design to promote gender equality, but it is essential to create awareness of continual gender equality in various settings. Examining misogynistic and sexist ideology embedded in words and phrases can reveal sexism against women. Studies on sexism and sexist language in movies and T.V. shows are limited, but historical media like *Bridgerton* can effectively address issues related to sexist language. Analysing and understanding historical problems helps spot patterns that might go unnoticed in the present and future.

### **Significance of the Study**

The analysis aims to understand linguistic features, particularly sexist language, used by males and females in *Bridgerton*. It is significant to explore how sexist language stigmatizes misogyny and reinforces patriarchal culture during the Regency era which reveals how women are socially perceived. The sociological perspectives on women representation in historical media such as *Bridgerton* will benefit sociolinguistic lecturers and researchers to investigate social construction and perception of women in popular culture. It further provides knowledge which aids in promoting gender equality and reducing gender gaps for a safer environment.

### **Research Question**

How are the Regency women socially constructed through sexist Language in *Bridgerton*?

## **Literature Review**

### **Sexism and Women during the Regency Era**

Knowles (2011) explores the Regency era, highlighting the disadvantages faced by women during this time. They faced limited legal protections and were often considered the property of their fathers, brothers, or husbands. A prominent female author, Jane Austen, argued for a "women's place" in her novels, *Persuasion*, *Emma*, and *Pride and Prejudice*.

Badjinki (2019) questioned the traditional notion of marriage in *Pride and Prejudice*, questioning the harmful gender stereotypes and examining conventional methods of marriage. Golemac (2014) found that Regency regulations laid the foundation for female empowerment and emancipation, as women chose marriage to secure their future and economic security.

### **Sexism and Language (Sexist Language)**

Sexism, coined by Pauline M. Leet in 1965, refers to practices where gender is foregrounded when it is not the most salient feature. Sexism studies have long been influenced by the gender disparity between men and women, highlighting the gap in resources and decision-making. It stems from larger societal forces, institutionalized power inequalities, and conflict over who has rights to certain positions and resources.

### **Overt Sexism**

This study examines sexist representations in popular shows, resulting in linguistic prejudices called overt and indirect sexism. Overt sexism is expressed through linguistic features or usages, suggesting men are superior to women. It can be categorized into words and meaning, which include naming, dictionaries, pronouns, and insults, and processes, which include transitivity, reported speech, and jokes (Mullany & Mills, 2011; Mills, 2008). (Refer to Appendix I for the definition of each term)

### **Indirect Sexism**

Indirect sexism, a subtle form of sexism, often involves humour and irony but often promotes masculine hegemony and patriarchal beliefs. It emerged in the West as a reaction to cultural relativism and linguistic reforms. Mills (2008) categorizes indirect sexism into six types: humour, presupposition, conflicting messages, scripts and metaphors, collocation, and androcentric perspective (refer to Appendix IV for the definition of each term), despite its difficulty in defining overt sexism.

### **Relevant Linguistic Approaches to Women and Sexism**

Sexist language is a significant issue in various media, including movies, advertisements, news reports, books, political speeches, movies, and television shows. It discriminates against others and reflects societal ideologies and values regarding sex differences.

### **Sexist Language through Linguistic Features**

Research shows that sexism in the English language is pervasive in daily discourse and social interactions. Issues include derogatory use of female reference terms and gender-inclusive language discriminating against women. Santi (2013) suggests that sexist language is associated with negative and positive stereotypes of women and men. Widayanti (2014) explored linguistic features between men and women in *The Vow*, arguing that sexist language is closely associated with social attitudes. Al-Ramahi (2013) analysed sexist linguistic

features in nursery rhymes, revealing disparity and perpetuating gender stereotypes in children's literature.

### **Using Sara Mills' Language and Sexism Theory**

Muhammed (2020) studied sexism in the language used in Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, analysing its overt and discourse analysis levels. He found that Henry's attitudes towards women and his titles and names reflected slurs, misogyny, and bigotry. Sandra (2013) and Fi'aunillah (2015) also found sexism in *The Lord of the Rings* movies, revealing gender inequality and discrimination against women. Febrianti (2022) investigated sexist language in *Colette*, using Mills' (2008) theory and Weatherall's (2002) theory to reveal how women were depicted as oppressed by societal prejudices. Nwaenyi (2020) explored the use of sexist language in three Nollywood films, *Moth to a Flame*, *Melissa*, and *Intrapersonal*, using Mills' (2008) framework.

### **Understanding Sexist Languages through Different Analysis**

Auliya (2018) investigated sexism in Marvel's *The Avengers* movie using content analysis and Mills' (2008) language and sexism theoretical framework. She found that overt and indirect sexism were often embedded in the language used by characters. Ayu (2021) examined sexist language in the *Pitch Perfect* movie series, identifying eight overtly sexist categories and four indirect sexism types. The study highlighted the need for more research due to a lack of prior resources.

Sexism is also found in written discourses, such as reports and proverbs (Aslam et al., 2020). Chen (2016) found that sexism in English today manifests in derogatory words through transitivity, modality, transformation, and classification. Zheng (2018) analysed the manifestation of sexism in English proverbs based on feminism to create an awareness of the discrimination against women.

Abbaspour (2019) compared Nickelodeon's *How to Rock* and Disney Channel's *Liv and Maddie* sitcoms to explore implicit sexism in languages used in American children's networks. She found that teen sitcoms' indirect sexism can have a long-lasting harmful impact on how people view women and gender equality in society.

Hemmingsson (2010) examined the Language in *The Simpsons*, arguing that third-person generic nouns, occupations, and idioms played significant roles in perpetuating sexism and traditional male and female behaviour. Salsabila (2021) investigated sexism through a critical discourse analysis based on Mills' (1995) feminist theoretical framework, revealing that stereotypes and gender discrimination are always illustrated in first-person and third-person perspectives and are the root of sexist culture in a social phenomenon.

### **Social Perception of Women through Sexist Languages**

Mehdi (2020) studied subtle sexism in American political discourse, focusing on impoliteness, speech acts, and references between Trump and Clinton. The study revealed that patriarchal ideologies were reflected in the political domain, with Trump using sexist tactics against female competitors. Darweesh (2016); Jubran (2020) also examined sexism in Trump's political speeches, revealing his use of sexist, demeaning, and impolite language. Alam and Haque (2021) studied the language used in the reality game show *Big Boss Season 11* and found that it propagates stigma, prejudices, and negative stereotypes. Nayef (2016) examined the language in the Egyptian sitcom *Al-Kabeer Awy*, revealing that the show's language is often embedded with negative collocations and insults against women. This study highlights

the harmful impact of patriarchal culture on women's image and role in society, particularly in rural areas.

**Research Methodology**

**Theoretical Framework**

The researcher employed Mills’ (2008) language and sexism theoretical framework to identify the dominant types of sexism in the data and to analyse how women are depicted as oppressed during the Regency era through sexist Language in *Bridgerton*.

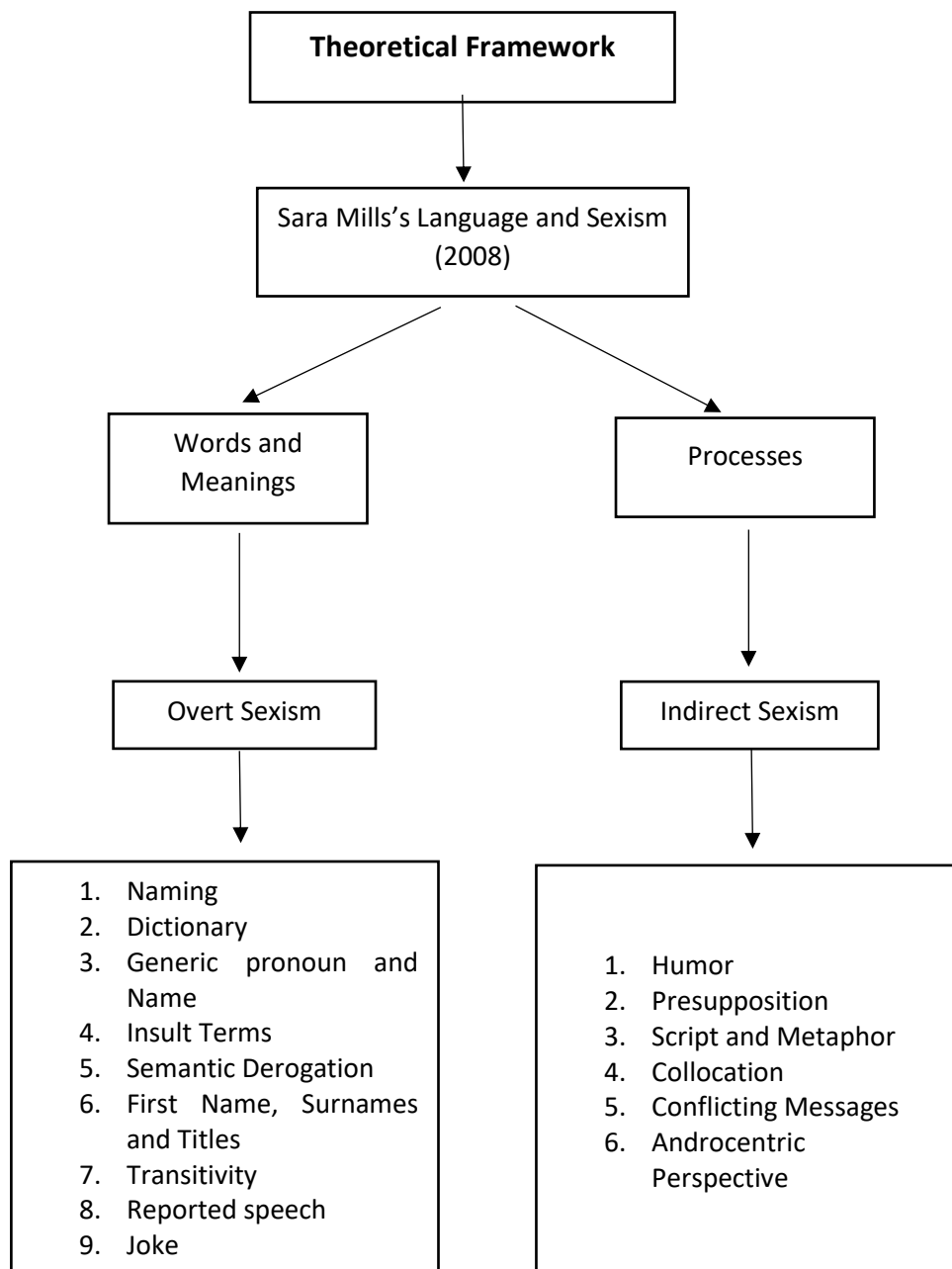


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

Mills (2008) highlights the ongoing presence of linguistic sexism, with women not being treated equally. She distinguishes between overt and indirect sexism, with overt sexism being targeted through discriminatory language. Indirect sexism, on the other hand, is influenced

by general sexism resources, allowing speakers to access sexist values and expressions. Addressing both types of sexism is crucial for a more equitable society.

## Data

### Data Choice

The study analysed data from the Bridgerton series, based on Julia Quinn's best-selling novel series. The series, which has become Netflix's most popular show, has over 82 million households watching it in its first 28 days of release. The voiceover of Lady Whistle down, a societal paper columnist, reflects feminine communication and perspective, reflecting gender inequalities during the Regency era. Critics argue that the show's sexist portrayal of aristocratic women still affects them today, but its success has led to a renewed interest in changing this societal norm (Insider, 2022).

### Data Collection

The data was extracted from transcripts of two Bridgerton seasons, containing lexical items indicating sexism in overt and indirect contexts. The transcripts were downloaded from 8FLIX.com and compared, highlighting sexist language.

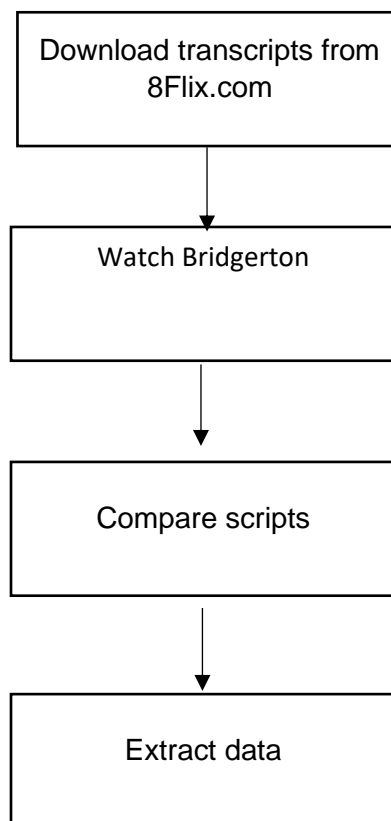


Figure 2: Data Collection

### Procedures of Data Analysis

The study used a mixed method approach, analysing data using Mills' language and sexism theory. Quantitative analysis classified sexist language codes for overt and indirect sexism, while qualitative content analysis described Regency women's social construction through sexist language in Bridgerton. The findings led to conclusions.

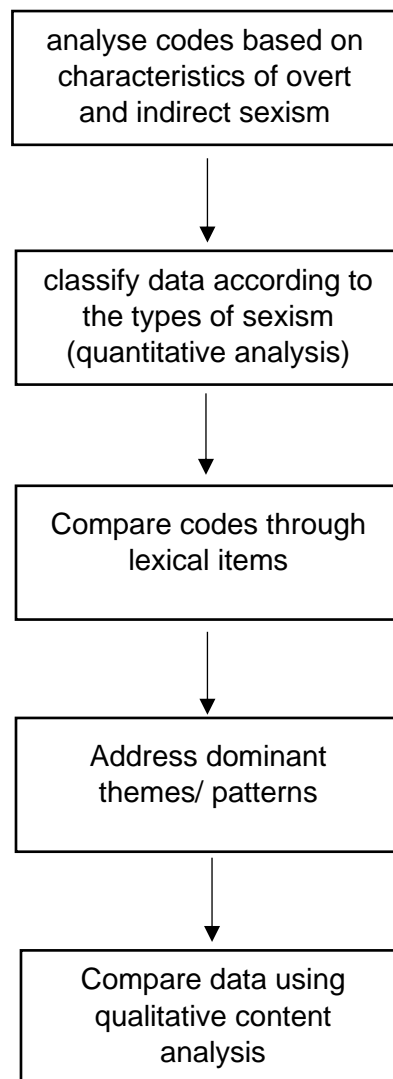


Figure 3: Data Analysis

Table 3.1

*Coding for Overt Sexism*

	<b>Types of Overt Sexism</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Characteristics</b>
1	Naming	<b>N</b>	Words that are used to illustrate women with negative connotations
2	Dictionary	<b>D</b>	Dictionary terms that have meanings associated with women
3	Generic Pronouns and Nouns	<b>Gpn</b>	Words used to generalize gender
4	Insult Terms for Women	<b>Itw</b>	Offensive words to demean women
5	Semantic Derogation	<b>Sd</b>	Words to derogate and disparage women
6	First Name, Surname, Titles	<b>Fst</b>	Discriminate genders by generalizing names
7	Transitivity	<b>T</b>	Women are associated with recipients of actions instead of the doers
8	Reported Speech	<b>Rs</b>	Women's statements are mediated into indirect speech in media
9	Jokes	<b>J</b>	Sexist humour to belittle another gender

Table 3.2

*Coding for Indirect Sexism*

	<b>Types of Indirect Sexism</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Characteristics</b>
1	Humour	<b>H</b>	Exaggerated comments to discriminate against one gender and attain solidarity
2	Presupposition	<b>P</b>	Statement which is exploited to assume and discriminate one gender
3	Scripts and Metaphors	<b>Sm</b>	Storytelling and scrips to talk about men and women in public spheres
4	Collocation	<b>C</b>	Connotations with stereotypical meanings associated with a gender
5	Conflicting Messages	<b>Cm</b>	Mixed messages between gender
6	Androcentric Perspective	<b>Ap</b>	Terms used to illustrate the male perspective

**Findings and Discussion**

The researcher found 115 data on types of sexism used in the series based on Mills' (2008) language and sexism theory. The data is illustrated in the chart below. The data is further discussed in detail in the following section.



## Overt Sexism and Representation of Women in the Regency Era

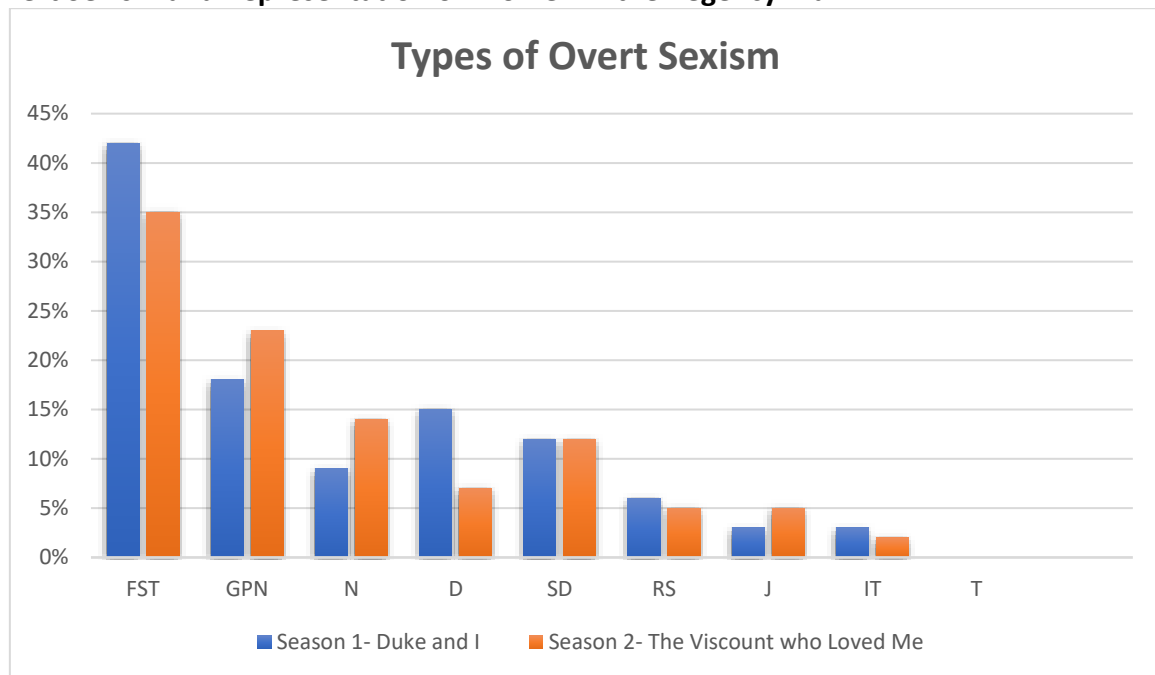


Figure 4: Overt Sexism and Representation of Women in the Regency Era

Mills (2008) highlights the need for feminist activists and theorists to change the language that denigrates women daily. Overt sexism is prevalent in Seasons 1 and 2, with first name, surname, and title being the most dominant type. Institutionalized conventions influence people's decisions about surnames, which are often taken for granted. Opposition to name changes for feminist or independent identities highlights differences. Traditional values, often portrayed as common sense, influenced women's naming practices during the Regency period. Many women believe their community enforces these values, creating pressure to conform, as shown in the data below:

*(Simon) "Lady Danbury, I must ask you to accept my regrets."*

The term 'lady' is used as a title for the wife or daughter of an aristocrat because it was originally the female equivalent of the word lord. However, it has gone through semantic derogation, in which the female term in a male-female pair loses status. Initially, the term lady was degraded to include upper-class and middle-class women. Later, it became acceptable to address a woman from any social status. "Lord and lady can be used as umbrella terms to refer to anyone with a peerage title unless they are a duke or duchess," Hemerding quoted in Express 2021. In the past, peers (representatives of the aristocratic class) were given lordship titles to denote their position and social standing within the monarch's circle and to distinguish them as a peer of the domain. Titles encompass five tiers and are given by the Queen or descended at birth, including duke, earl, baron, marquess, and viscount. While Lady Danbury undoubtedly demands respect, she is not significantly more important than those in her immediate vicinity. Moving on, given that Simon Basset is essentially a peon in *Bridgerton*, where he is known as The Duke of Hastings, Daphne (his duchess) becomes the envy of all the other women. The highest aristocratic rank, outside of the immediate royals,

is held by dukes and duchesses, according to Hermerding. Officially, the proper phrase when addressing a duke or duchess is "your grace."

Until the 1930s, it coincided with the husband taking possession of the wife's possessions and assets; feminists in Britain have argued that taking the husband's surname upon marriage shows a form of possession of the woman by her husband (couverture). In both Britain and America, feminists have engaged in a heated debate over the loss of the woman's surname upon marriage. Many feminists feel that taking one's husband's name clearly indicates that one is "sleeping with the enemy" and indirectly supports heterosexist attitudes (Wilkinson and Kitzinger, 1993; Maynard and Purvis, 1995). The fourth highest rank in the peerage is either a viscount or a viscountess. The word "vice comes," which means "deputy count" in Latin, was used to create the title. To elevate Viscount Beaumont above all other barons, Henry VI introduced the title "viscount" to England in 1440.

According to the description above, none of the feminine terms on the list have secondary sexual connotations to the same extent as the masculine terms. The term "semantic derogation" (Shulz, 1975), "semantic degeneration" (Miller and Swift, 1976), and "semantic polarisation" have all been used to describe the process by which words or terms that are associated with women frequently take on semantic characteristics that are consistent with social stereotypes and assessments of women as a group (Eakins and Eakins, 1978).

The least dominant type of sexism observed in both seasons is insult terms (I.T.). Feminist theorists argue that insults towards women are sexualized, leading to derogatory words like "bitch" and "old maid" being used in various contexts, resulting in a harsher and discriminatory impression, as shown in the data below:

*(Lord Hastings)--- "So long as I may remind you of your place, which is out of my sight and with your **bitch** mouth shut.*

The term 'bitch' was frequently used to insult women regarding their age and sex in this series. Generally, a bitch refers to a female dog. "The idea a woman being called a bitch was being accused of being worse than a prostitute because at least a prostitute stood to gain financially from the broad distribution of her sexual favours" (Hogdson, 2008). The word "bitch" is used in this data expression to refer to women in a derogatory way. Often words like "bitch" are used to disparage boys and men in the world of sports who play passively or who struggle to embody masculinity Messner (2002) successfully. By calling their opponents "bitches" to humiliate them, the women capitalized on and reinforced these patriarchal notions. The verb "bitching" in fact, exhibits the same trivialization of "bitch." The word's definition, "complaining," seems innocent enough. However, it has a female bias and is frequently used, leading us to associate a specific type of "complaining" with women rather than men. It's impossible to quantify how frequently men or women use the phrase to describe what men do, but we would anticipate that it would be applied to women more frequently. However, it is not the primary social damage that results from the term's widespread use. Instead, calling what someone says "bitching" when it is said by anyone reduces or invalidates it. Instead of the speaker's assessment, "bitching" is determined by the audience's negative response. Using the "bitch" term pejoratively against women clearly reflects misogyny. It depicts women as deceitful and only suited for sex. In comparison to, previous research by Ayu (2021), which indicated insult terms such as "bitch" is the most frequently used sexism in the *Pitch Perfect* movies.

## Indirect Sexism and Representation of Women in the Regency Era

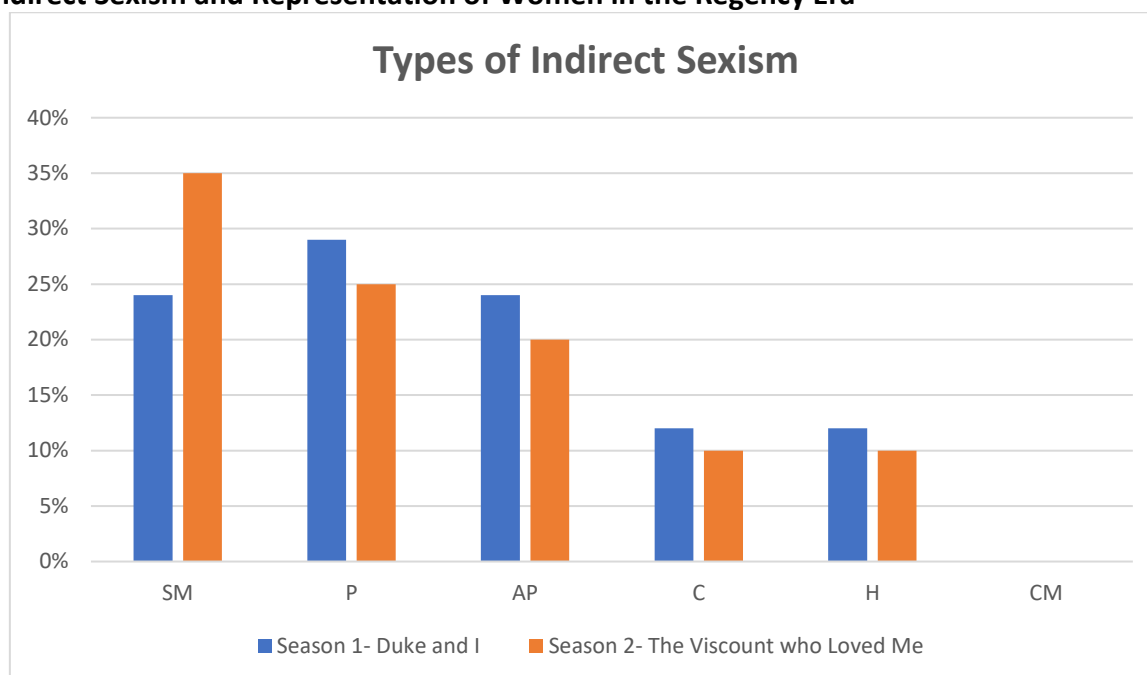


Figure 5: Types of Indirect Sexism

Based on the findings in the chart above, presupposition (P) is the most dominant type of sexism observed in Season 1 meanwhile, script and metaphor (S.M.) is the most dominant type of sexism observed in Season 2.

Since it is necessary to make the assumptions upon which the sexism is based explicit, sexism at the level of presupposition is also much more difficult to challenge; in fact, indirectness is frequently chosen in order to hide the sexism and allow the speaker to deny any intended sexism (Christie, 2001). The presupposition is highly dominant when it is associated to a term that depicts woman's honour, women's gossip, scandals, and curiosity in matters such as sex education and marital acts during the Regency period, as illustrated in the data below:

*"She's lucky her gentleman agreed to a hasty marriage after she went and **ruined** herself."*

*"When a young woman, let alone one's sister, is rumoured to be **dishonoured**, the consequences shall be deadly!"*

Chastity was valued as an honour during the Regency era; women also had to protect their own sanctity. Thus, it becomes clear why most unmarried women are restricted from meeting men outside their relatives. In order to meet men, they must do so at her family's house in front of all of her extended family, who acts as the chaperone, and the man must have the elder brother, who serves as the family patriarch's consent. A woman's notoriety at the time was linked to her abstinence. Women's sexual reputation is often associated with their own reputation. A female virtue or honour is also known as virginity. Virginity was highly valued during the Regency period because having sex before marriage was viewed as immoral. It is a double standard because it never applies to men. For instance, Daphne's chances of getting married are ruined by the mere suggestion that she may have had a sexual encounter with a man, but Simon is a known womanizer and faces no repercussions because he is a man.

Moving on to Season 2, which shows the highest frequency of script and metaphor, it is known that figurative language deviates significantly from what language users perceive as the typical meaning of words or the regular arrangement of words to produce a specific meaning or effect (Abrams, 1999). According to Dancygier and Sweetser (2014), "Figurative language was supposed to be one facet of what gives a text-in particular, a poetic text-special aesthetic value." Figurative language employs figures of speech to increase its potency, persuasiveness, and creativity. Metaphors, similes, hyperbole, personification, and alliteration are figures of speech that go beyond the literal meanings of the words to offer the reader fresh perspectives. The outcome of the metaphors mostly employed by Lady Whistle down in *Bridgerton* is depicted. These figures serve as the subject, the image, and the point of comparison because they serve as comparison figures in metaphor construction. Sometimes the metaphor is demonstrated through a shortened comparison because one or two comparison items were left to be implied, as shown below

*(Violet) "She calls you a **diamond of the first water.**"*

In Season 2, the terms "diamond", "season's diamond" and "precious stone" are frequently observed. In the data above, Lady Whistle down, in her columnist, questions the tradition whereby the Queen anoints a diamond every season, which regards women as objects rather than acknowledging their true values, characters, and accomplishments. A woman's face and body appear to be constantly scrutinized from a prejudiced perspective. It is depicted here that if a woman is named the diamond of the season, she will be able to capture the attention of suitors and be worthy of marriage. Women are objectified to please the male purpose in finding the perfect wife.

Humour frequently plays with stereotypes or exaggerates traits associated with a group for comedic effect. For instance, jokes that are meant to be humorous will assume that men and women are different and will exaggerate that assumption. Men and women can feel more connected to one another when they tell jokes like this. One may wonder whether sexist humour reinforces negative stereotypes or makes people more prejudiced against women, even though it is unquestionably a means of spreading these attitudes. Lakeoff (1990) quoted that "saying serious things in jest both creates camaraderie and allows the speaker to avoid responsibility for anything controversial in the message. It's just a joke, after all – can't you take a joke? In a lite and camaraderie society, worse than being racist or mean-spirited is not getting a joke or being unable to take one." Thus, sexist humour is a subtly condescending attitude against women and common prejudices. There are, however, limited data (least dominant) collected based on sexist humour. Mostly animal and plant puns were used to denigrate women humorously as exemplified in the data below

*(Penelope) "At least she did not see fit to dress you as a sunflower. I declare a bee might mistake me for the real thing."*

The data shows how Penelope Featherington is making fun of her yellow floral dress. Penelope wears yellow for nearly all her *Bridgerton* appearances, a hue that initially seems to reflect the character's vivacity and upbeat demeanor. Pen often jokes about not liking the colour, though the colour yellow was a very fashionable hue during the Regency period and was frequently regarded as the colour most frequently worn by young women looking for marriage. Despite her protestations, Penelope's continued fashion sense may represent her

true worth and beauty, even though she cannot recognize it for herself. The series makes fun of The Featheringtons' love of bracingly bright colours, but the implications of their garish wardrobe go far beyond their dubious fashion sense. The family's colour scheme contrasts with that of other members of high society, visualizing their standing as outcasts in their upper-class neighbourhood. The social insecurity of the Featherington family is brought to light throughout *Bridgerton* when the three girls struggle to find dates, and the outcast family is humiliatingly ejected from the Queen's luncheon after becoming embroiled in a scandal.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the research study, it can be concluded that both types of sexism are overt and indirect in *Bridgerton*. It is evident that discrimination against women is not only committed by members of the other gender (men) but can also be committed by women. Even in this show, most sexism is embedded and manifested in women's speech. Out of the total data collected in both seasons, three-quarter constitutes indirect sexism, suggesting that sexism in language has become more subtle throughout the seasons. Patriarchal culture is still in force; women's lives are authorized by their brothers or fathers. Women are socially treated and perceived as submissive and inferior to men. Besides, it reinforces the ideology of misogyny whereby a woman can express her dislikes towards another woman through indirect sexism such as presupposition and reported speech. The creator, Chris Van Dusen, and the producer, Shonda Rhimes, managed to demonstrate issues that are usually hidden through sexist language set in 1813, the Regency period, and addressed the underlying message subjecting to stereotype and discrimination that may be internalized in negative view by the people who watch this show. It is important to remember that the show is set in the Regency era when values, beliefs, and behaviours were very different. When it comes to sexism and misogyny, the expectations placed on women, the way society values a woman based on her capacity to be a wife and mother, the stigmatisation of single mothers, and the conversation on consent, there are still many parallels that construct women socially in the current time setting.

### **Research Implications**

More research and discussions about race and sexuality and positive depictions of people whose stories are not based on stereotypes should be conducted. When stereotypes are depicted on screen, society internalises those messages and begins to perceive those groups of people in that manner. Diverse approaches were implemented to expand knowledge and comprehension of ideologies embedded in *Bridgerton* and revealed the significance of how women were perceived and treated socially during the Regency era. Since English is the international language most frequently used globally, language users need to show sensitivity to sexist language. Additionally, the need to demonstrate critical cognition toward linguistic bias terms is greater as the modern world demands intercultural communicative intelligence in various settings.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

This chapter makes recommendations for future sociolinguistics research, particularly on sexist language. Future researchers could conduct field studies on sexist language with a large group of chatters to get the most information. The research findings will be more realistic without a scenario like in a movie. To determine whether gender discrimination still exists, future researchers can also look at sexist language in newspapers or other social media

reports. As a result, the researcher anticipates that these recommendations will aid future researchers conducting related studies. The researcher also hopes that readers and students will find this study to be a useful resource.

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## **Appendices**

### **Appendix I**

#### **Overt Sexism**

##### **Naming**

Naming refers to deliberate and exaggerate the use of terms to define and label women which may imply negative connotations. Feminists critically argued that dictionaries legitimized its use of sexist terminology in its definitions and examples which deem to be offensive to women. Mills (2008) quoted an example in her book to define ‘cosmetics’ which is “man-made chemicals that clog facial pores and cause eyelashes to fall out.”

##### **Generic Nouns and Pronouns**

Pronouns refers to generic forms that are elements of language which continue to generalize the idea that men are universal or the norm and stereotype women to be invisible since there is no gender-neutral generic form. While being implemented to refer to both male and female generally, the generic pronoun "he" is the most well-known example of gender-specific or sexist language and is frequently referred to as "he-man" language (Mills, 2008).

##### **Insult Terms**

Insult terms refers to terms that are explicitly and deliberately used to discriminate women such as utilizing words that refer to parts of a woman's body. These terms are deemed to be derogatory as they imply several 'offensive' meanings with the intention to demean a woman based on her age, race, sexual orientation, religion, culture and many more. Mills (2008) quoted, "Never trust a woman who wears mauve, whatever her age may be, or a woman over thirty-five who is fond of pink ribbons. It always means that they have a history."

### **Semantic Derogation**

Semantic derogation refers to words or phrases that are constructed for women who are adversely affected in a structured manner to portray sexism. Some terms which depict positive connotation when used for men may contradict when used for women.

### **Surnames, Names and Titles**

Adopting the husband's family name coexisted with a husband seizing his wife's assets and personal belongings, the surname has revealed her husband's method of possession of women at marriage (couverture) best explain surnames and titles. "Surnames have displayed a form of possession of the woman by her husband on marriage. Taking the husband's surname coincided with the appropriation by the husband of the wife's possessions and property" (Mills, 1995; 2008).

### **Transitivity**

Transitivity indicates how a man's action is often foregrounded to be the doer and giver with a positive connotation, but a woman's action is backgrounded to perpetuate the recipient of the action and represent them as oppressed and weak. Women's spoken discourse and verbal speech are often mediated into reported speech instead of direct speech to illuminate the man's voice.

### **Jokes**

Jokes can be regarded as sexist because the person telling the joke can typically argue that they are not inventing it themselves, thus, sexist jokes permit the utterance of typically inappropriate views about women

### **Indirect Sexism**

#### **Humour**

Humour often magnifies characteristics associated with individuals who employ stereotypes to create humorous implications to assume that men and women are different and overestimate that difference to show how poorly men respond to women's interests. An example of humour is using irony to direct humorous remarks towards women as suggested by (Crawford, 1995).

### **Presupposition**

Presupposition is complicated to transcend because it gives the speaker the opportunity to deny any intentional sexism indication due to the deceptiveness chosen to highlight sexism. For instance, when two or women are seen talking to each other, it is easier to assume that they are gossiping.

### **Conflicting Messages**



Conflicting messages refers to the occurrence of an event when contradictory messages about feminism and gender is given.

### Scripts and Metaphors

Scripts and metaphors can be defined as various narratives or scripts that are used in reporting about men and women in the public sphere which can be very fascinating to examine.

### Collocation

Collocation may not be sexist all the time but is often characterised by several negative connotations and a lexical field of negative terms that may implicate sexism. For instance, women are often depicted as damsel in distress and oppressed when collocations in phrases such as “women need to be protected” or “they should get married” are used.

### Androcentric Perspective

Androcentric perspective represents viewing matters from a man’s point of view which escalates a man’s position to be in power and influence in the society promoting misogyny and patriarchal culture.

### Appendix II

No	Lexical Word/ Phrase (Season 1)	Type of Sexism
1.	You are a meddling little <b>wench</b> , and you clearly do not understand the gravity of your situation.	Naming (n)
2	I don't care about a dish <b>wench</b> .	n
3	He is not the father, you <b>dunderhead!</b>	n
1.	Precisely what this new <b>rumormonger</b> should have published...	Dictionary (d)
2	Surely another rumor provided by that vicious, <b>scandal-mongering</b> writer.	d
3	I tasked you with unmasking the <b>scandalmonger</b> .	d
4	That noxious <b>gossip rag...</b> will finally cease to exist.	d
5	I could tell you a delicious tidbit about our former <b>scullery maid</b> .	d
6	Lightskirts.	d
7	You could always send the <b>willow</b> back to that farm, madam.	d
8	how do you imagine they would react six months hence when that <b>whelp</b> of yours pops out looking the picture of health?	d
9	<b>You are with child?</b> I do not understand. We were to be wed. You... You said you loved me.	d
10	The audacity. After they tried to entrap poor Mr. Bridgerton into marriage <b>with a woman with child</b> .	d
11	But do you really want to be alone? No rank, no protection, no support for you or your child.	d

1.	Every woman is not a lady.	Generic pronouns and nouns (gpn)
2	Avoiding certain people. -People? -Mothers.	gpn
3	-No place for a lady in there.	gpn
4	-Every eligible lady of breeding dressed in some lavishly trimmed frock, bloodthirsty mamas at their sides...	gpn
5	If the only gentlemen present this evening are your brothers, then we're in a great deal of trouble, indeed. You continue to say "we."	gpn
6	Fourteen single, eligible young ladies, all from excellent families.	gpn
7	Most <b>ladies</b> I have met cannot seem to reconcile their delicate sensibilities with the brutality of fights.	gpn
8	It does not matter. A boxing exhibition is no place for any young <b>lady</b> .	gpn
9	You are a <b>lady</b> , and I must maintain your honor and mine, no matter how... tempting otherwise.	gpn
10	Lady Whistledown is someone free and unencumbered by society. She is a single woman of means. Better yet, she is a <b>widow</b> .	gpn
11	Well, I believe her a <b>widow</b> .	gpn
12	But have you any idea those very things are precisely what have allowed a new day to begin to dawn in this society? Look at our Queen. Look at our king. Look at their marriage. Look at everything it is doing for us, allowing us to become.	gpn
13	We were two separate societies, divided by color, until a king fell in love with one of us.	gpn
14	He may have elevated us from novelties in their eyes to now dukes and royalty, and at that same whim... he may just as easily change his mind	gpn
15	Your <b>mistress</b> will not know the household staff	gpn
16	Does your <b>mistress</b> wish the cake to be soaked in rum or brandy?	gpn
17	That <b>mistress</b> of yours is going through the biscuits quick.	gpn
18	Surely your <b>mistress</b> does not plan on confining me to this bedroom forever.	gpn
19	After the death of my late <b>mistress</b> , the duke lived almost exclusively in London.	gpn
20	My mother taught me a great deal about being <b>mistress</b> of a household, but I am not sure either of us ever imagined a house as grand as this one.	gpn
21	After the death of my late <b>mistress</b> , the duke lived almost exclusively in London.	gpn
22	After all, I am a Bridgerton, so therefore your <b>mistress</b>	gpn

1.	[Lady Whistledown] It has been said that "Of all <b>bitches</b> dead or alive, a scribbling woman is the most canine."	Insult terms (it)
2	so long as I may remind you of your place, which is out of my sight and with your <b>bitch mouth</b> shut.	it
3	She has killed my child! You bitch! You bitch!	It
1	Oh! Is your plan to fuck her forever, your <b>mistress?</b>	Semantic derogation (sd)
2	is this not a dreadful circumstance, for us both to have been so duped by that <b>scheming hussy</b>	Sd
3	This is what comes of not sowing your wild oats. Proposing to the <b>first chit</b> you set your cap at.	Sd
4	thereby avoiding the dreadful, dismal condition known as " <b>the spinster.</b> "	Sd
1.	in the household of the widowed Viscountess Bridgerton.	First name, surname, title (fst)
2	Should your brother wish to be obeyed as Lord Bridgerton, he must act as Lord Bridgerton.	Fst
3	Miss Prudence Featherington, Miss Philippa Featherington, and Miss Penelope Featherington...all presented by their mother, the Right Honorable Lady Featherington.	fst
4	Miss Daphne Bridgerton, presented by her mother, the Right Honorable, the Dowager Viscountess Bridgerton	fst
5	"Lady Whistledown." -"Lady Whistledown"? -[Eloise] The author. -[Violet] Do we know a Lady Whistledown?	fst
6	Callers, ma'am. The Earl of Stafford and the Marquess of Finley.	fst
7	And secured three offers the very next day, one from an <b>earl.</b>	fst
8	Hastings! The Duke of Hastings, now known for evermore.	fst
9	Lady Whistledown has written about you again, <b>Your Grace.</b>	fst
10	How the <b>young miss</b> secured her newfound suitor is yet to be determined.	fst
11	-I am going in, <b>Your Grace.</b>	fst
12	The <b>duke.</b> I would recognize him anywhere.	fst
13	Simon Arthur Henry Fitzranulph Basset, the next Duke of Hastings!	fst
14	Prince Friedrich, this is the young lady I was telling you about, the season's diamond.	fst
15	Where I looking for a list of <b>debutantes</b> and their dubious accomplishments	fst

16	In a matter of days, I am to be a duchess, and you shall be just as you are now, unmarried and untitled.	fst
17	Her Majesty Queen Charlotte and her esteemed nephew, Prince Friedrich of Prussia	fst
18	You are to be a <b>duchess!</b>	fst
19	You are going to be a wonderful duchess.	fst
20	May I introduce to you the Duchess of Hastings? I am looking forward to making your acquaintance, Mrs. Colson. Thank you, Your Grace.	fst
21	If I am to be <b>duchess</b> of all of this, I must start learning the lie of the land.	fst
22	You are the viscount. Your responsibility will always be to that title, above all else. You shall marry, sire an heir, and guard your family. And I... I shall always be the woman you may love in darkness...-...but never in the light of day.	fst
23	This is Miss Addington, the <b>Earl</b> of Lindsay's niece.	fst
24	Once the ton see that we still have the favor of the duke and duchess, then the whispers may very well cease	fst
25	Other than finding and promptly declaring my intentions to my <b>new viscountess</b> , of course.	fst
1	Three misses foisted upon the marriage market like sorrowful sows by their tasteless.....tactless mama.	Reported speech (rs)
2	London's marriage-minded misses are presented to Her Majesty the Queen.	rs
3	[Lady Whistledown] Be it shame or slander, seduction or smear, there is but one thing that humbles even the most highly regarded members of our dear ton...a <b>scandal!</b>	rs
4	Might one former diamond's recent fall from grace turn out to be the most damning <b>scandal</b> of all?	rs
5	Well, dear reader, the <b>scandalous</b> accounts from last night's soiree at Vauxhall are quite shocking and delightful indeed.	rs
6	[Lady Whistledown] Let it be known, dear reader, that if this bizarre behavior portends yet another <b>scandal</b> , then be sure that I shall uncover it	rs
7	Of course, mere hearsay of such a <b>scandal</b> could wreak havoc on even the most influential of families. What would someone like, say, Lady Whistledown do with such unseemly information?	rs
8	Of course, there are only two reasons to procure a special license and race to the altar true love or concealing a <b>scandal</b> .	rs

9	[Lady Whistledown] As we all know, there is nothing this author loves more than a <b>scandal</b> , and tonight's soiree promises more than its fair share, courtesy of the recently widowed Lady Trowbridge.	rs
10	I would caution any young lady from getting caught up in the sensual nature of her fêtes. For one <b>scandalous move</b> between an unwed couple, a wayward touch, or heaven forbid, a kiss, would banish any young lady from society <b>in a trail of ruin</b> .	rs
11	For it was this couple's memorable affair that brought another scandalous London season to a close.	rs
12	[Lady Whistledown] Titled, chaste, and innocent, this is what they have been raised and trained for since birth.	rs
13	[Lady Whistledown] These days, the modern young lady must display a miscellany of talents in her quest for a suitor. She must be a witty conversationalist, an accomplished musician and an expert in the art of the swoon. For managing to faint with nary a petticoat out of place is a most coveted talent indeed.	rs
14	I have learned that a grave fraud is afoot. As if the Featheringtons did not have enough to be dealing with, <b>Miss Marina Thompson is with child...</b> and she has been from the very first day she arrived in our fair city.	rs
15	Miss Marina Thompson's recent fall from grace continues to echo through every drawing room in town, days after it was revealed her engagement to Colin Bridgerton was nothing more than a sham.	rs
16	[Lady Whistledown] While there is no parasol in the world strong enough to shelter a ruined woman, the fallen Miss Thompson can only hope she shall find a refuge... somewhere.	rs
1	I have never understood the fashion for feathers in hair. Why would a woman want to draw notice to the fact that she is like a bird squawking for a man's attention in some bizarre ritual?	Joke (j)
2	And I suppose I must be grateful for your restraint in not using any feathers.	j
1.	Mm, those blemishes on her face are quite difficult to conceal. Perhaps some arsenic and lead might help.	Humour (h)
2	Well, let us hope Miss Thompson is more presentable than the legions of unkempt animals she has spent her entire life -tending to back home. [laughs]	h

1.	[Lady Whistledown] It is only the Queen's eye that matters today. A glimmer of displeasure.....and a young lady's value plummets to <b>unthinkable depths</b> .	Presupposition (p)
2	She's lucky her gentleman agreed to a hasty marriage after she went and <b>ruined</b> herself.	p
3	This is all I have been raised for. This... is all I am. I have <b>no other value</b> . If I am unable to find a husband, I shall be <b>worthless</b> .	p
4	What I know is that even the rumor of my being alone with a man, let alone punching him, will <b>ruin</b> me.	p
5	For if I had already known <b>she was loose and damaged</b> , not intact -I never would have--	p
6	When a young woman, let alone one's sister, is rumored to be <b>dishonored</b> , the consequences shall be deadly!	p
7	He may decide to open his tiny mouth at any moment, and then I shall be <b>ruined</b> ...	p
8	If you do not marry me, I shall be <b>ruined</b> .	p
9	We've not had a caller in three days. My mother swears <b>we are ruined</b> .	p
10	But they will if Lady Whistledown does. <b>So, we shall do what women do. We shall talk</b> .	p
11	And I wish to avoid any further <b>scandal</b> attached to my family's name. I will remain here as a chaperone	p
12	I believe I would like to return home now. After all, we don't want another <b>scandal</b> attached to your family name.	p
13	Which one of your maids is married? -She is not married. How did she become with a child if she is not married? I do not know, but I will find out. You must. Otherwise, how can we make sure it never happens to us?	p
14	How does a lady come to be with child? -Eloise, what a question! -I thought one needed to be married. -What are you talking about? -Apparently, it's not even a requirement.	p
15	Marital acts..which, now that you are married, you may perform... If it is this difficult to discuss, how difficult must it be to perform?	p
16	How does a woman come to be with child? -Y-Your mother-- -My mother told me nothing.	p
17	A young lady must be well fed if she is to bear children.	p
18	Look no further than Lady Whistledown. She possesses a huge talent for writing, and yet she must hide away and publish under a false name.	p

19	Whistledown is a woman, therefore she has nothing, and still she writes. You're a man, therefore you have everything.	p
20	Tighter! -Is she to breathe, Mama? I was able to squeeze my waist into the size of an orange and a half when I was Prudence's age. Your sister shall do the same.	p
21	Who knows if Whistledown is even a she? -[Anthony] Fair point.	p
22	Do you know what is an accomplishment? [laughs] Attending university! If I were a man, I could do that, you know.	p
23	You think just because Madame Delacroix has a paid occupation, or because she does not reside within Grosvenor Square, she's different. Is that it?	p
24	You dallied with the prince purely to rouse the duke's jealousy, and then you lured him into those gardens to trap him into marriage.	p
26	But how could they know that? It is not always the woman who is barren	p
1.	[Lady Whistledown] It has been said that, "Of all bitches dead or alive, a scribbling woman is the most canine."	Script and metaphor (sm)
2	What she is is two stone heavier than she ought to be.	sm
3	She calls you a "diamond of the first water."	sm
4	I have the diamond of the season.	sm
5	The Bridgerton girl is the incomparable of the season	sm
6	Prince Friedrich, this is the young lady I was telling you about, <b>the season's diamond</b>	sm
7	The <b>season's diamond</b> even more precious and rare a stone than previously thought?	sm
8	The <b>incomparable</b> who captured the prince's eye.	sm
9	He may have let the <b>diamond</b> slip through his fingers for now, but I shall wager he is not a man to ever hide from a fight.	sm
10	Lady Whistledown has all but declared me ineligible...worthy of the affection of a detestable simpleton	sm
11	I believe there is a gaggle of young ladies waiting for your favor.	sm
12	"...making this author wonder if the crown has lost its luster."	sm
13	I certainly never want to cross the woman. Her word as good as gospel.	sm
14		sm

1.	Three misses foisted upon the marriage market like sorrowful sows by their tasteless..... <b>tactless mama</b> .	Colloctaion (c)
2	But when those <b>vulgar mamas</b> discover that there is an eligible duke present at tonight's fete, I shall be able to keep such a secret no longer.	c
3	Every eligible lady of breeding dressed in some lavishly trimmed frock, <b>bloodthirsty mamas</b> at their sides...	c
4	You know, I do suppose if it were not for an <b>overzealous mother</b> at every corner, this time of year in the city would not be so very dreadful.	c
5	<b>Ambitious mamas</b> rejoice, for the new Duke of Hastings continues to grace our fair city with his presence.	c
6	She's all but issued a challenge to London's most <b>ambitious mamas</b>	c
7	In a town filled with <b>ambitious mamas</b> and fortune-hunting gentlemen, marrying above one's station is an art form, indeed.	c
8	Every <b>presumptuous mother</b> in town will leave me alone	c
9	The purpose of this arrangement is to keep the <b>marriage-minded mothers</b> of the ton at bay, not hurl myself directly into the <b>lion's den</b> .	c
10	Were that true, I suspect you would need less protection from our beloved packs of <b>ambitious mamas</b> .	c
11	Perhaps it will keep that <b>horrid mother</b> of hers off her back.	c
12	<b>She is a prize</b> I have long coveted for her beauty, for her grace--	c
13	allow me to set my eyes upon you. Mm. Certainly healthy. Even if your countenance is a bit drawn.	c
14	I prize accomplishment over beauty.	c
15	it was done by a man who sees a woman as a <b>decorative object</b> . They are like... -Human vases.	c
1.	Someone must guard my poor sister from the bucks and pinks, ensure her virtue remains free of any kind of defilement.	Androcentric perspective (ap)
2	If anyone knows how this works, it is your eldest brother.	ap
3	I am looking out for you. I am protecting you. -It is my duty. -And what of my duty	ap
4	Lord Berbrooke's barony is over 200 years old. His lineage is legitimate. He has had an excellent	ap



	education, possesses no debts, never hurt an animal or a woman, and is even a decent shot. To speak strictly, there is nothing wrong with him. What should any of this-- -You are to marry him.	
5	-I had to find you a husband, Sister. Now, be grateful it is done.	ap
6	Your... Your father-- -Do not bring Father into this. Even if he were in want of a wife, you would most certainly not have the duke anywhere near Daphne.	ap
7	I have acted in your best interests, sister. One day, you will understand. One day, you will be most appreciative. The contract to Berbrooke will be drawn up, and you shall marry him.	ap
8	-Should I not be courting your sister? -No. And I can think of dozens of reasons why, starting with, "She is my sister," and ending with, "She is already engaged to be married," and then perhaps circling back to, "She is my sister."	ap
9	I have taken matters in my own hands and sought a special license for my wedding to Miss Bridgerton. I imagine you would have instructed your sister to take better care than to encourage certain attentions while alone with me on the Dark Walk at Vauxhall.	ap
10	And I shall save her, as well as your entire family, from the ruin which you could not protect them.	ap
11	Do you think yourself better than me? [Daphne] It'd be best for you to leave. You should be thanking me. I'm your last hope. No one wants you, Miss Bridgerton.	ap
12	I need her. Why can you not just let me have this one?	ap
13	When I am buying a horse, I do not negotiate with the horse.	ap
14	You've always amused me, Miss Bridgerton, ever since I was a schoolboy, and you were...All but... five?	ap
15	-You will marry her! -Brother! [panting] I cannot marry her. You have defiled her innocence, and now you refuse her hand?	ap
16	I should have protected you better. I knew his true nature from the start.	ap
17	Her well-being is my responsibility now. I take that duty with the utmost seriousness.	ap
18	You will be provided for, of course, in a manner befitting the duchess. But I shall not darken your doorstep again. Our lives will be entirely separate.	ap
19	(Nigel) "She is a prize I have long coveted for her beauty, for her grace—"	ap

### Appendix III

#### Types of Overt Sexism

<b>Naming</b>	
<b>Terms</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Inspid wallflower	4
Wench	2
Gatekeeper	2
Devil-doll	1
Dunderhead	1
Befreckled beggar	1
Newsboy	1
Chickabiddy	1
<b>Dictionary</b>	
Gossip-monger and its synonyms	9
With child	4
Fish head pie	1
Harridan	1
Scullery maid	1
Lightskirt	1
Willow	1
<b>Generic Pronouns and Nouns</b>	
Lady	17
Mistress	5
Viscountess	5
Widow	3
Dowager	3
Miss	2
Debutante	2
Generic pronoun- you/ we/ us	5
<b>Insult Terms for Women</b>	
Bitch	3
Old maid	3

<b>Semantic Derogation</b>	
Spinster	3
Ladies	3
Chit	3
Mistress	2
Scheming hussy	1
Scullery maid	1
<b>First Name, Surname, Title</b>	
Mr/Miss	17
Lord/Lady	11
Duke/Duchess	10
Viscount/ Viscountess	10
Her Majesty Queen	10
Earl	5
Your grace	5
Mademoiselle	1
<b>Reported Speech</b>	
Scandal	17
Reporting verb	11
<b>Joke</b>	
Feather	2

**Types of indirect sexist terms**

<b>Humour</b>	
Association to animal/ plants	4
Body shaming	1
Submissive to mamas	1
<b>Presupposition</b>	
<b>Terms</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Scandal/ Ruin/ dishonoured	35
Gossip	10
Women's accomplishment	5

Lack of sex education/ marital acts	4
Societal expectation on women	2
<b>Script and Metaphor</b>	
Naming of diamond	45
Author's capability	3
Associating women to animals	3
Body shame	1
bred hothouse flowers	1
bane of my existence, object of all my desires.	1
Queen's crown	1
<b>Collocation</b>	
Negative collocation for mothers Bloodthirsty, vulgar, ambitious	14
Women as objects	13
<b>Androcentric Perspectives</b>	
Responsibility towards women/ sister	13
Setting marriage prospects	8
Dominance over women (women objectification)	8
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