

## The Pretty Imperative: Handcuffing Policewomen in Indonesia

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The beauty myth is always actually prescribing behaviour and not appearance.

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### Introduction

1. In the first week of September, 2013, the popular Indonesian news magazine *Tempo* ran an article entitled 'Pretty Policewomen engage Social Media.'<sup>[2]</sup> The report went on to state that 'pretty policewoman Eka Frestya' had 18,000 Twitter followers and almost as many Likes on Facebook. In contrast, 'pretty policewoman Bara Intan' had 3561 Twitter followers and 2985 Likes on Facebook. Yet by far the most popular was 'pretty policewoman Avvy Olivia,' with 7212 Twitter followers and 10,548 Likes on Facebook. Such was the fame of Avvy Olivia that her fans set up a Facebook account called 'Brigadir Avvy Olivia Fans.' Not to be outdone, though, the article noted that 'pretty policewoman Annisa Prima Silsilia' had 35,447 Friend Requests on Facebook. The *Tempo* article then provided photos of the pretty policewomen alongside Twitter handles and Facebook links so people could directly contact them.<sup>[3]</sup>
2. But before the general consuming public assumed that being a policewoman was a shortcut to celebrity status, *Tempo* interviewed the head of the policewomen's academy, Commissioner Sri Handayani, who revealed that it is actually quite difficult to become a policewoman. Handayani noted that only never-married virgins (hymen checks may be conducted) between the ages of 17.5 and 22 years could apply.<sup>[4]</sup> Moreover, officers must remain unmarried for at least two years. Prospective candidates also needed to pass a number of psychological tests, have strong religious beliefs, have graduated high school, cannot wear glasses, and be prepared for transfer to any region across Indonesia. Of utmost importance, though, was that candidates be over 165cm tall, have a body that is in proportion (*berat badan proporsional*), and they must be pleasing to the eye (*pasti enak dilihat*). Handayani continued by reinforcing that being pretty was one of the most important requirements for becoming a policewoman (*kecantikan adalah salah satu prasyarat utama menjadi polwan*).<sup>[5]</sup> In a further article, Brigadier General Basaria Panjaitan, the current highest-ranked policewoman, also confirmed that being pretty (*tampang*) and having a good body (*fisik*) were key recruitment attributes for policewomen (*ada persyaratan-persyaratan yang memang harus dipenuhi*).<sup>[6]</sup> If a candidate fulfilled all of the above requirements, she would then become a fully fledged policewoman, with her own chance of becoming a celebrity.<sup>[7]</sup>
3. There is barely mention of policewomen in the Indonesian media without application of the prefix pretty (*cantik*). This symbiotic link between appearance and policewomen is revealed by typing 'Indonesian policewoman' into any search engine. Just one example of a search result is the site 'Do you want to know who are the 6 prettiest [*cantik*] and most popular policewomen in Indonesia?'<sup>[8]</sup> The clip shows photos of the pretty policewomen and asks 'Who wants to be arrested [*ditangkap*] by these pretty policewomen?' Other comments on social media sites such as Twitter reveal tweets stating 'Handcuffs miss, handcuff me (*Borgol mbak, borgol aku*) and 'Arrest me miss! Arrest me' (*Tangkap aku mbak! Tangkap aku*).<sup>[9]</sup> Such is the popularity of policewomen that an Indonesian soap opera has been developed entitled *Polisis Cantik Pengejek Cinta* (A Pretty Policewoman Looks for Love). This soap opera, screened on SCTV, tells the story

of a 'pretty young policewoman' who works undercover as a driver of a motorcycle taxi to bring down an illegal business; she ends up falling in love with the son of the business owner (See Figures 1–4).<sup>[10]</sup>



**Figures 1–4.** Images of pretty policewomen appearing on the site, 'Do you want to know who are the 6 most beautiful and popular policewomen in Indonesia?'

**Source.** *YouTube*, online: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=UnGfP0hLb\\_Y](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UnGfP0hLb_Y) (accessed 1 February 2014)

4. In order to analyse in more depth the framing of policewomen around notions of beauty, we embarked on a content analysis of all articles published by *Tempo* magazine during the months of September and October 2013. We found ninety-three articles that focused specifically on policewomen. The selection of these months was made to include 1 September, as this is the anniversary of the acceptance of the first policewomen cadets in 1948. Our identification of articles thus reflects a higher rate of coverage over the first few days of September, with seventeen articles focusing on policewomen being published on 1 September. We found that the number of articles appearing over the remaining two months averaged one per day. We selected *Tempo* magazine because it is one of the most critical and widely read news magazines in Indonesia, with a weekly hardcopy circulation in 2010 of 300,000.<sup>[11]</sup> While the first edition of *Tempo* was published in 1971, it was banned during Suharto's New Order (1965–1998) on the grounds that it was a threat to national security; *Tempo* was resurrected in the Post-Suharto era. While both Indonesian and English versions are published in print and online we limited our analysis to articles in the Bahasa Indonesia online format. After we had identified all articles focusing on policewomen, and had translated and entered the articles into a database, we searched for key themes. We found eleven key themes including inter alia career opportunities, gender discrimination, sexual harassment and veiling. The theme we focus on in this article is appearance, with thirty-eight articles (or 41 percent of the total), specifically discussing the appearance of policewomen. We also draw on a few articles published in November and December 2014 to further illustrate a number of points we make in the article.
5. This article is divided into five substantive sections. First, we provide an overview of policewomen in Indonesia. Second, we present literature on notions of beauty. Third, we show how policewomen are framed in *Tempo* magazine. Fourth, we analyse thirty-eight articles published in *Tempo* during our collection phase that focus on the appearance of policewomen. In the fifth section we conclude the article by arguing that the pretty imperative framing policewomen undermines women's contribution to Indonesia and reinforces the

harmful stereotype that women are passive objects of beauty unable to contribute meaningfully to society.

## Policewomen in Indonesia: An overview

6. Indonesia's police force was formally inaugurated in 1946 and units were quickly deployed to fight in the Indonesian National Revolution against the Dutch. In 1966, the police formally became part of the military and did not gain their independence until the final years of the twentieth century. At its inception, the police force was an entirely male domain, but within a few years the need for a cohort of women to handle cases involving women and children became apparent. In her coverage of the history of policewomen for *Tempo*, Hadriani notes that the case precipitating the inclusion of women occurred in Bukittinggi, West Sumatra, during conflict between Indonesian nationalists and Dutch military.<sup>[12]</sup> Specifically, it was large groups of refugees leaving West Sumatra, who were then searched by Indonesian police with the ostensible aim of uncovering criminals or people illegally in Indonesia, that provoked a group of women to demand searches be conducted by women.<sup>[13]</sup> The Indonesian government thus saw the need for policewomen and subsequently asked the Police Academy (Sekolah Polisi Negara) in Bukittinggi to open a woman's training centre. On 1 September 1948, after a tight selection process, six young women were accepted to be trained as police officers. Each year this date is celebrated as the anniversary of the inauguration of the policewomen's corp. A decade after the establishment of the corp, an independent school of policewomen, Sekolah Polisi Wanita, was opened in Jakarta in February 1958. After completing a one year course, current graduating trainees become policewomen with the rank of Second Brigadier (Brigadir Polisi Dua). In order to become an officer, selected candidates then enrol at the Police Academy (Perguruan Tinggi Ilmi Kepolisian).
7. During Suharto's New Order period (1965–1998) there was limited media coverage of the role of policewomen. One article to report on the achievement of policewomen occurred in 1985 when policewomen in Pati, Central Java, prevented illegal logging by engaging directly with the illegal loggers and requesting them to stop their activities.<sup>[14]</sup> In the following year, another article appeared in the press noting that a delegation of policewomen from across Southeast Asia visited Indonesia to network with Indonesian policewomen.<sup>[15]</sup> In 1987, a newspaper article detailed the appointment of Dwi Gusyanti as the first woman police station chief (Kapolsek).<sup>[16]</sup> In 1990, the inclusion of four women in Gegana, an elite police Special Forces group, made the news.<sup>[17]</sup> While there are undoubtedly many more stories in the Indonesian media about policewomen during the New Order period, all indications are that there was limited reporting on their achievements.
8. In the post-Suharto era there is still limited reporting on achievements made by policewomen. Moreover, the few media stories that mention policewomen undertaking actual police work frame the story around the appearance of policewomen, and how appearance more than skill led to a successful outcome. For instance, in our sample a *Tempo* article noted that 'seven pretty policewomen [*polwan cantik*] infiltrated a high profile prostitute network,' with one of the women disguising herself as a prostitute in order to become one of the pimp master's girls.<sup>[18]</sup> The prettiness of the policewomen, as opposed to investigatory skills, is framed as the key to the success of the operation.
9. Very few women have managed to secure high-ranking positions within the Indonesian police force. The number of women police station chiefs (*kapolsek*) and regional police chiefs (*kapolres*) remains low.<sup>[19]</sup> Only one woman to date has been appointed to the position of provincial police chief (*kapolda*), an honour given in 2008 to Rumiah Kartoredjo from Banten province. The fact that so few women have been appointed to positions of power is not surprising given the small overall number of Indonesian policewomen. At the end of 2012 the official number of policewomen was 13,200 out of a total personnel of around 400,000. Policewomen thus represent just 3.6 percent of the entire force.<sup>[20]</sup> The current highest ranked woman, Brigadier General Basaria Panjaitan, has argued that the number of women is too low, especially as police aim to have policewomen constitute 30 percent of the force, in line with the quota set for women in parliament.<sup>[21]</sup> Not only is the number of policewomen low, but they are assigned limited duties. While a few policewomen are involved in criminal investigation, almost exclusively with cases involving women or children, the vast majority are engaged in roles associated with administration, public relations exercises such



as performing dance routines to calm protestors, and presenting traffic reports on television.[22]

10. Perhaps the highest hurdle to be overcome in increasing both the number of policewomen and extending assigned duties is the dismantling of persistent stereotypes that work to restrict what women can and should legitimately do. One limiting stereotype concerns policewomen preferring to undertake office-based jobs. For instance, prominent criminologist Adrianus Meliala has argued that the role of policewomen remains peripheral and revolves around administrative jobs because policewomen prefer clean (*bersih*) office jobs. Meliala is quoted in *Tempo* stating 'As soon as policewomen get a nice [*enak*] job like that [desk job], they don't want to move. If they get accustomed to a desk job [*terbiasa di desk*] then they look neat [*rapil*], smell nice [*harum*], and they don't want to move [out into the field].'[23] Another limiting stereotype concerns tasks that policewomen do better than policemen. For instance, while efforts to increase the number of policewomen are no doubt well-intentioned, they are framed solely around the perceived need to have sufficient numbers of policewomen to handle cases involving women and children. This focus reinforces the notion that only policewomen can engage in such cases, and moreover, that these are the only investigative cases that policewomen should be involved in. The framing of policewomen as better able than policemen to perform certain tasks is just as restrictive as discourses about what policewomen cannot do.[24]
11. Indonesia is certainly not alone in stereotyping policewomen and research shows that policewomen globally are framed as suited only for particular policing tasks—generally non-confrontational ones.[25] Moreover, even when policewomen do undertake such tasks as chasing and arresting criminals, policewomen may still be framed as essentially nurturing and caring. For instance, in her analysis of *Female Forces*, a British reality television show, Cara Rabe-Hemp[26] shows how selective camera work and editing overemphasise policewomen as pretty, nurturing and caring. Indeed, media globally frames women as domestic beings regardless of actual undertakings.[27] The stereotyping of policewomen in Indonesia is thus not unique, but it is perhaps more obvious than elsewhere. It remains to be seen whether this obviousness makes it easier or harder for gender equality campaigns to make headway. One particular area that needs targeting is the literal requirement that policewomen be judged as 'pleasing to the eye'—no such requirement is made of men although both men and women have to be of a certain height and have a 'proportional body.' The pretty entry requirement for women is then used to define what policewomen can and cannot do.

### Notions of beauty

12. Notions of beauty vary across time and place.[28] This variance was seen vividly in a segment on Oprah Winfrey's chat show that revealed idealised faces of beauty in seventeen countries, resulting in quite different looks.[29] We also see variance in beauty such as when model Esther Honig allowed companies in twenty-five countries to Photoshop pictures of her face.[30] In some societies, bronzed skin is favoured, with tanning products heavily featured in advertising; in other societies, porcelain white skin is favoured, with bleaching creams on sale to create this effect.[31] Notions of beauty also change diachronically. In some decades, voluptuous women are idealised, with advertising products promising women a fuller figure; in other decades thin women are idealised, with associated products guaranteeing weight loss.
13. Yet despite variations, there are many commonalities across the beauty spectrum, and indeed as Denis Dutton has powerfully argued concepts of beauty have more to do with evolutionary psychology than cultural constructions.[32] Numerous studies have shown that symmetrical faces are perceived around the world as the most beautiful.[33] Moreover, global media shapes concepts of beauty through continually exposing audiences to certain looks that then mould perceptions of beauty and attractiveness, largely within a limited western framework.[34] Concepts of beauty that apply consistently across society include attributes such as large eyes, prominent cheekbones, full lips, shaped eye-brows, and a petite nose and chin.[35] The almost universal desire for such qualities suggests similar criteria for judging beauty.[36] The impact of this limited framing of beauty is seen in women from South Korea,[37] Egypt[38] and China[39] all undergoing procedures to attain similar ideals of beauty. For instance, up to 50 percent of young South Korean women undergo some form of cosmetic surgery, most popularly eyelid surgery (*sangapul*) to give the appearance of wide eyes.[40]

14. Much research has focused on the advantages accrued to attractive people. While there is no evidence that physical attractiveness correlates with intelligence[41] attractive people are more likely to have attention paid to them,[42] be engaged in conversation,[43] and have others initiate romance.[44]
15. In Indonesia, women are made aware of ideals of beauty from a young age. From the use of chemicals to produce fair skin,[45] to what type of women win beauty pageants,[46] to advertisements in magazines[47] and shopping malls,[48] women are presented with clear images of what constitutes beauty. If there was one feature within Indonesian culture that consistently underscores beauty it is fair skin, achieved by a having a modern indoor job that provides an income to purchase skin whitening products. Indeed, whiteness is considered femininity embodied.[49] While women actively submit themselves to such regimes of beauty, their agency is limited. Indeed, for prospective Indonesian policewomen beauty is not an optional asset, it is an entry requirement. To see the pervasiveness of the pretty imperative in Indonesia, below we analyse coverage of policewomen in *Tempo*.

### Framing pretty policewomen

16. All ninety-three *Tempo* articles that mentioned policewomen in the months of September and October 2013 implicitly referenced beauty. Whether articles were discussing policewomen as feminine,[50] motherly,[51] caring[52] or gentle,[53] whether they mentioned that policewomen are best suited to office roles[54] or being the public face of the police force,[55] or whether articles mentioned policewomen posting naked photos,[56] being veiled[57] or their previous employment as flight attendants,[58] they all framed policewomen implicitly around appearance. The appearance of policewomen was then specifically discussed in articles in terms of the advantages their beauty accrued to: the police force, through increased public support; policewomen, through social media fame; and society, who felt happy being served by a pretty face.
17. We could have analysed these articles with a focus on the stereotyping of policewomen as: naturally suited to looking after victims of sexual crime;[59] being unlikely to accept bribes;[60] or as better able than men to calm protestors.[61] We could have analysed these articles in terms of their assertion that the motherly approach (*pendekatan keibuan*) employed by policewomen was both effective in preventing the escalation of violence[62] and in ensuring that policewomen did not need to compete against policemen.[63] We could have also analysed discourses around sexual harassment and discrimination. One case that received a great deal of media attention during our collection phase was the case of Sergeant Rani, whose ex-boyfriend posted naked photos of her on Facebook without consent. Articles covering this issue were printed with titles such as 'How Naughty Sergeant Rani was'[64] and referred to her as 'a pretty policewoman with fair skin.' High-ranking male officers were quoted in *Tempo* as exhorting policewomen to uphold their honour and accusing Sergeant Rani of shaming the police force and smearing the name of all policewomen.[65] In a separate and unrelated case involving Sergeant Rani, she accused her commanding officer of sexual harassment before taking three months leave without permission.[66] At the subsequent trial, Sergeant Rani was fired for taking non-authorised leave, while her commanding officer, who was found guilty of improper behaviour but worryingly not guilty of immoral behaviour, was merely demoted.[67] While we hope to write further on these issues, in this article we specifically focus on the framing of the 'pretty policewoman.'
18. It is interesting to note that a key reason for the popularity of pretty policewomen in Indonesia is the nation's fascination with celebrities—those people who are watched, noticed and known by a critical mass of strangers.[68] Celebrity culture surrounds the lives of people in all urban contexts, indeed it invades life and shapes thoughts, styles and manners.[69] The proliferation of new media technologies has fostered the expansion of celebrity culture, enabling in the case of Indonesia ordinary policewomen to become famous not for personal achievement, but for merely being pretty. Indeed, outside the purely entertainment arena celebrities across the globe have emerged in arenas associated with politics,[70] food,[71] business[72] and academia.[73] In Indonesia, food celebrities are particularly idolised, such as Sexy Chef Farah Quinn.[74] While celebrity culture has devalued meritocracy in the sense that people are now famous merely for being famous, not for having demonstrated particular merit,[75] this decentralisation of celebrity status means that

celebrities are in essence 'just like us'[76] and therefore anyone can undertake a DIY celebrity project.[77] Even by becoming infamous, rather than famous,[78] as Leo Braudy says, we are saved from the 'living death of being unknown.'[79] Fascination with celebrities is thus a key reason for the popularity of Indonesia's pretty policewomen. We turn now to specifically explore how *Tempo* frames policewomen.

### To be a policewoman is to be pretty

19. Numerous articles in our sample from *Tempo* specifically referred to 'pretty' policewomen: 'Is it true that pretty policewomen are just decorations?';[80] 'Pretty policewomen may not have great careers';[81] 'Pretty policewomen also do push ups'[82] and 'Pretty policewomen are popular on social media.'[83] Appearance was also referenced as a safety net for policewomen looking to change careers: 'Sergeant Rani is indeed so pretty that she could become a singer if she doesn't continue with her police career.'[84]
20. In ensuring the public knew feminine beauty was a prerequisite to police recruitment, *Tempo* ran the story, 'Is it true that you have to be pretty to become a policewoman?'[85] The article concluded that yes this was the case, and to verify, the journalist visited the policewomen's academy and confirmed that all cadets were indeed pretty: 'Although their hair is cut short like a man [*dipangkas pendek seperti layaknya lelaki*] and they were sweating below the morning sun, the cadets still looked very pretty [*masih terlihat sangat cantik*].'[86] To confirm that having a 'pretty face and good body' was part of the selection criteria, *Tempo* interviewed Indonesia's highest-ranked policewomen, Brigadier General Basaria Panjaitan, who noted that as a 'policewoman's role is to serve the public, being pretty is essential; but while beauty is relative [*paras cantik ukurannya relatif*] beauty without a smile is meaningless, so in addition to being pretty the most important thing is to keep smiling [*hal yang terpenting dari paras cantik adalah senyum yang bisa terus dijaga*].'[87]
21. While articles in *Tempo* made clear that policewomen have always been required to be attractive[88] there was no discussion in any article of who decides if an applicant is pretty enough or by what criteria beauty is judged. Readers, however, are made aware of certain regulations: candidates must have their hair cut in a short bob, and there is to be no long hair, long nails or long earrings.[89] Policewomen must also have a beautiful smile and be able to communicate well to the public.[90] Moreover, a number of articles specifically noted that fairness of skin was the mark of a policewoman's beauty:[91] 'The face of policewoman Ranny is indeed pretty [*tergolong ayu*]. Her skin is white [*kulitnya putih*] and her black hair is in a bob [*rambut hitam lurusnya dipotong model bob nungging potongan*].'[92] Indeed, policewomen with darker skin may be entirely ignored in favour of policewomen with fair skin.[93]
22. Articles justified the need for pretty policewomen in a number of ways: pretty policewomen improve the image of police:[94] people feel happy when they see pretty policewomen on television:[95] and the duty of policewomen is to serve people and people like to be served by pretty policewomen.[96] Given the importance of appearance, some articles commented on the potential impact of allowing policewomen to wear the veil as part of their uniform. One article noted that 'if policewomen were allowed to wear the head veil they would look more beautiful because their *aurat* [intimate areas of their body] would be covered'.[97] Another article entitled 'Don't make wearing the head veil sexy,' quoted a high-ranking police officer arguing against allowing police women to wear the veil on the grounds that when worn with a tight fitting uniform policewomen would appear extra sexy and thus incite lust and sexual harassment.[98] Interestingly, this was the only article in our sample of ninety-three to assert that policewomen should downplay their beauty. As a side note, fifteen articles in our sample focused on whether policewomen should be allowed to wear the head veil, reflecting the debate Indonesia was having at the time. It was decided in late 2013 that policewomen would be permitted to wear the veil as part of their police uniform.[99]
23. A number of articles explicitly mentioned that while essential the possession of beauty was not enough to guarantee a successful police career.[100] For instance, it was reported that Brigadier General Basaria Panjaitan 'does not deny that beauty is important for policewomen [*tak menampik bahwa penampilan itu penting bagi seorang polwan*] but she argues that beauty is needed as well as intelligence.'[101] Articles to this effect also mentioned that 'beauty must be complimented by brains'[102] and 'a beautiful face is not

- enough—policewomen also have to be intelligent enough to solve crime.’ [103] Articles also noted in surprised tones that even though they are pretty, policewomen are actually physically and mentally strong [104] and they can and do defend themselves on the job. [105]
24. Despite being continually discriminated against on the basis of gender, very few articles in our sample quoted policewomen reflecting on this state of affairs. One article quoted a policewoman angry at being assigned only tedious office jobs and at being considered nothing more than a pretty police decoration. [106] Another article asked ‘Is it true that pretty policewomen are only decorations?’, [107] a question refuted in another article entitled ‘Policewomen reject the idea of being considered decorations.’ [108] One article mentioned that the masculine culture of Indonesia’s police force meant that policewomen were not used to their full potential and as a result, policewomen reverted to femininity—no further discussion was given to what was this ‘femininity.’ [109] Another article exhorted the media to stop focusing on policewomen’s appearance and instead focus on their policing abilities. [110]
25. Aside from these few articles raising the issue of gender discrimination, sixteen articles in our sample categorically denied policewomen faced discrimination within the police force, or within wider society. Articles suggested that policewomen who work hard are promoted at the same rate as policemen [111] and that a policewoman’s career is defined solely by her own determination. [112] Such claims came from high-ranking policewomen and policemen who neglected to mention that this discourse of equality is negated by the specific use of appearance as an entry requirement, and by the fact that policewomen make up a mere 3.6 per cent of the entire force.

### The pretty imperative: Policewomen’s handcuffs

26. The extraordinary media attention focused on pretty policewomen in Indonesia has provided tangible benefits for many individuals and organisations in the country, not least for the policewomen who have achieved celebrity status and the media industry that has capitalised on the popularity of the pretty policewoman phenomenon. Benefits have also accrued to Indonesia’s police force through both increased recognition of the existence of the institution, and on some level an improved public image. Indeed, international research shows that perceptions of attractiveness elicit positive emotional responses from people and, moreover, if someone is attractive they are likely to be perceived as having good personal characteristics. [113] Given this tendency, it stands to reason that pretty policewomen convey a sense of a noble police force. In addition, procedural justice research reveals that the presentation of a friendly, polite and approachable police force, potentially delivered in Indonesia through the stereotypical portrayal of policewomen as nurturing mothers, can improve public support for police, particularly when contrasted with the presentation of a militant police force. [114]
27. Despite these ostensible positive effects, the wider repercussions of the pretty imperative framing policewomen have been wholly negative. The expectation that policewomen will conform to a highly stylised image of beauty means that anyone falling short is liable to be critiqued, often in a very public manner. Indeed, public backlash has been levelled at policewomen deemed not pretty enough, with negative and derogatory comments about policewomen being posted to various social media sites. For instance, one person posted the following comments in response to an interview with policewomen: ‘Those policewomen are not really beautiful. My cousin’s maid is more beautiful [*pembokat sepupu lebi cakep*]. They look beautiful just because they wear the uniform [*Jadi terlihat menawan kalau pakai seragam dong!*]’ [115]
28. While the pretty imperative frames policewomen, there are hints that policemen are also judged in terms of appearance, although unlike policewomen the only official physical requirement demanded of policemen is that they be of a certain height and weight. There have been a number of newspaper articles published referring to ‘handsome policemen’ (*polisi ganteng*), with one article noting that in Indonesia ‘there are a lot of handsome policemen.’ [116] While again such focus on the appearance of police officers may help present a more humane side to Indonesia’s police force, a focus on appearance has overall negative results. For instance, in 2011 a clip of on-duty police officer Norman Komaru lip-synching to an Indian song went viral.



- Komaru is now reported to be unsuccessfully pursuing a singer career, with comments made that 'without his uniform Komaru appears just like any other regular guy.'<sup>[117]</sup> Komaru's qualities as a police officer, and latterly a singer, are devalued through attribution of appearance as the key criteria of evaluation.
29. Beauty everywhere is desired and revered, yet rarely is it so explicitly demanded as in Indonesian policing where being deemed pretty is a mandatory requirement for entry into the policewomen's academy. On a national scale, a policewoman is assessed not in terms of policing ability but by the fairness of her skin and how well she conforms to other restrictive models of nurturing femininity. She is reified as a passive object where her value is only as a decorative possession. She is expected to serve the public with a constant smile, content in the knowledge that society is made happy merely by gazing upon her. While she may be deployed in the front line in crowd control, she knows that if her dancing and gentle demeanour fail to pacify a rowdy crowd, a policeman is ready to come to her aid.<sup>[118]</sup> While all portrayals of her focus on her appearance, her beauty can only be presented in a limited number of ways—if any naked photos circulate she shames not only herself but dishonours all policewomen and indeed the entire national police force. Moreover, her beauty may be blamed for any mischievousness, and even choosing to wear the head veil makes her appear too sexy.<sup>[119]</sup> If she claims sexual harassment, she is put on trial, and that trial is often presided over by the man she is accusing of assault; the very strictures of beauty that she must conform to are used to frame her as guilty and newspapers report that the man found guilty of sexual harassment is the real victim because he was 'demoted for just playing a joke.'<sup>[120]</sup>
30. Handcuffed by sexist discourse that continues to privileged men and constrain women, policewomen in Indonesia deserve the right to be, and be seen as, effective police officers, not merely pretty police faces. If Indonesian police are serious about becoming a 'friend and partner of society' (*mitra dan sahabat masyarakat*), as their motto exhorts, this key security institution must implement policies that enable policewomen to be more than pretty faces reading traffic reports and making cups of tea. Indonesia needs to focus on improving relations between police and the public, but the tactic of framing policewomen within a pretty imperative limits the contribution that women can make to policing specifically and society in general.

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