

Having spent most of my 30s thus far in relationships, I find myself single and back on 'the scene'. From the way the media painted

it, I expected a seething mass of eye-gouging, taloned women in an oestrogen fuelled version of the Rugby World Cup. A male, preferably with a pulse and fertile sperm will get you across the try line.

The 'single 30-plus scene' is about men and fear. Fear that every woman over 30 who says hello has a turkey baster in her back pocket and she's not afraid to use it. Fear that a simple 'hello' will have them walking down the aisle and pushing strollers before they can blink.

Single 30-plus females are threatening. We earn our own

THE SINGLE THREAT

Being 30-something and single makes me a threat to both men and women



money, have full lives and know what we want. I was still shocked recently to read of new book *The Program: How to Find a Husband After Thirty* by Rachel Greenwald, but obviously there is a market as it has walked off the shelves.

Like *The Rules* before it, this book encourages women to change their behaviour in order to change their single status. No matter how many bookstores I scour, I still find it impossible to find a book for single men suggesting they do the same.

When asked what I do for a living by one gentleman in a bar recently, I informed him of my role as a successful writer, corporate speaker and author and was told 'I feel so inadequate next to you'. And there lies the problem. I should have said 'oh gosh, do you? I'm sorry, let me downplay my role in society so you can feel more potent and I can quiver by your side. Better still, let me and all my female friends take lesser career roles so you can feel like a real man'.

Instead, I asked him about his job and built him up with empty phrases. My girlfriends do this all the time – apologise for their career as if they've stolen it right out of the hands of the man they are talking to. We lie about our salaries lest we emasculate them and we wonder why we still only earn 84 cents to the male dollar.

I dared to take a holiday in coupled holiday paradise last month. Five days on a five-star private island where the animals come in two by two. As the single chick, I began to feel like the lame stowaway who would be shot at any time. Which is why I was put on the single table at the back of the restaurant on the one night I dined alone.

Looking around I realised I had more to say to myself than some of these couples had to say to each other. I also noted the female part of the couple reach across and touch their male counterpart while staring back at me as if to say 'hands off, single predator, he's mine'.

Five-star, tropical atolls and white sand are not reserved for couples alone and I refused to be bullied out of paradise.

There are benefits to be had for being single and benefits for being coupled. It's just a shame that singles are made to feel less than whole when they choose not to be someone's other half.