

Gender-ally speaking

The response of the world's largest democracy to help make the world a more secure place for women is to stifle a documentary that was brazen enough to speak the truth?



MAGANDEEP SINGH

✓ An unjust reward is one where we try and award merit to something that doesn't actually deserve it. The reasons for this ineligibility can be many: the achievement may have been reported erroneously, nefarious means might have been deployed to accomplish it or, in the rarest of rare cases, what is being termed an achievement is an instance of perfectly normal behaviour. In other words, set the bar low and pole vault over it to set a new record every hour!

When someone says that they don't steal, harass others or make extortionist threats, it isn't something that should be lauded as good behaviour. In any civil and sane society, these are the most basic tenets to enable the said group to survive beyond one generation. Without these very 'common sense' premises, the idea of society itself stands negated.

This is also why I always find it odd whenever a person on any talk show these days, states that he respects women and then instills a pregnant pause for the air to fill with oohs and aahs of reverence and appreciation. No, you

idiot! Respecting women, like not stealing, is a basic commandment of culture. Good upbringing decrees that such values be imprinted on us such that they become natural instinct rather than a distant second habit. In other words, to not respect women should be like not breathing.

In light of the recent banning of documentaries (how juvenile and naive of the powers that be, to think that they can actually ban something and keep it shut away in the age of the Internet), it pains me to realise how men really see women. I am not launching into a debate on whether it is so on account of the lack of education or poverty because, for me, respect for another human being is a basic instinct that supercedes all other needs, even hunger.

Seventy percent women in India face domestic violence, which means that I clearly belong to the minority that doesn't do anything to keep their wily wench under control. Most rapists are convicted after having committed the crime multiple times and this, in turn, means that not only does crime pay but seems to afford the culprits a seemingly convenient payment plan. And the response of the world's largest democracy to help make the world a more secure place for women is to stifle a documentary that was brazen enough to speak the truth?

fle a documentary that was brazen enough to speak the truth? For once, I feel ashamed. Worse yet, given how not only the uneducated but also those who are learned enough to practise law view the status of women in India, I am shamefully forced to reassess a few concepts of my own. The new alignment suggests that all men who display any basic decency towards women deserve an award.

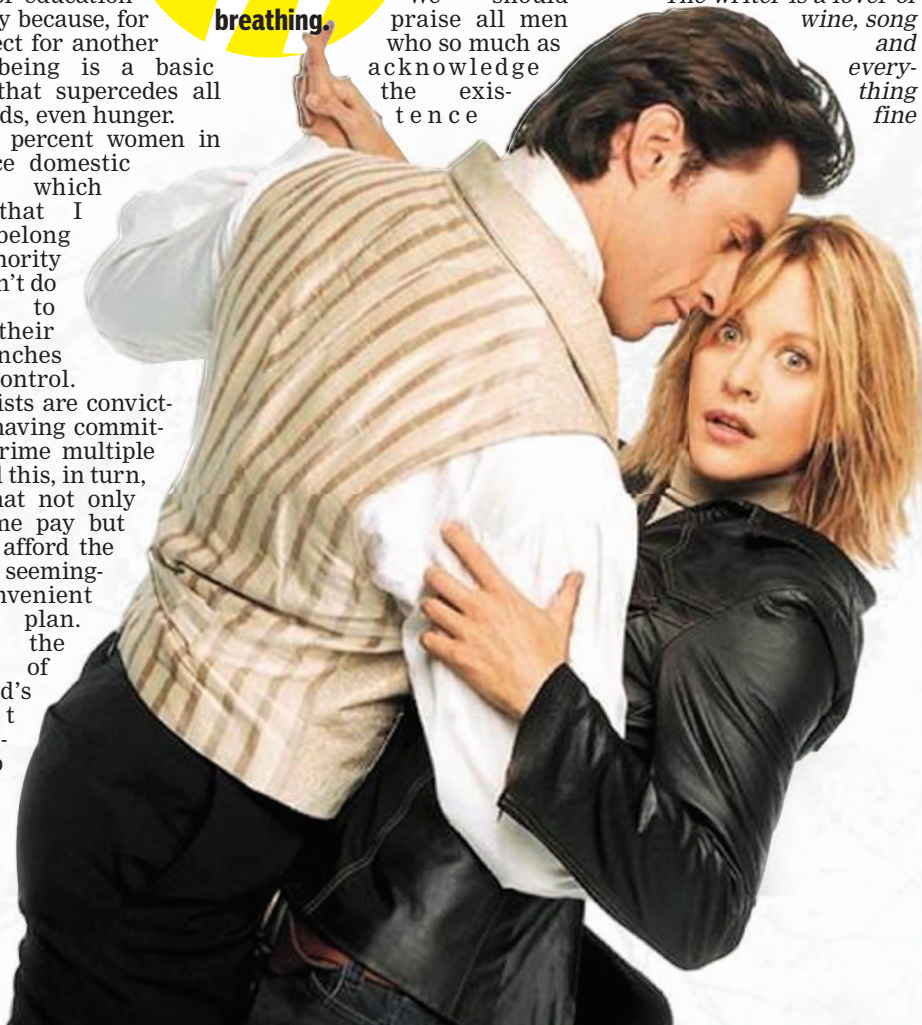
Respecting women, like not stealing, is a basic commandment of culture. To not respect women should be like not breathing.

So the next time a man respects a woman, he should not only be lauded but be made effigies of to be worshipped. We should praise all men who so much as acknowledge the existence

of women by composing hymns in their praise. And if any man mentions the idea of independence and women in the same sentence and allows his stoic mind to flirt with such a utopian concept, he should be deserving of the highest honour — something stopping only slightly short of canonisation would not be too extravagant, here.

As a side note, women will not be eligible for any awards — not even a gentle pat on the back. You get nothing for tolerating men or our inexplicable double standards. Every time you get home safe in the evening without having been entirely disgusted by lecherous gawking or lewd remarks, consider that a reward in itself.

The writer is a lover of wine, song and everything fine

Still from *Kate And Leopold*

BONDS OF LIFE

'Siblings are partners in crime'

SAMENTHA FERNANDES

✓ The one relationship that matters the most to me is my relationship with my brother. I feel that a strong bond with a sibling is the best way to learn more about life and the different kinds of people it will introduce you to as you go along. Your sibling can be evil at times, your partner in crime at times, your best friend at others, your enemy, your teacher and so much more. So yes, I can't believe

I'm saying this, but my stupid brother matters the most to me. If it wasn't for him, my childhood would have been so boring! It would also have been a lot more painless though, given that I've been at the receiving end of a lot of *maar* from my parents because of him. Whether it was my fault or his, I used to always be the one to get a beating!

Samantha is an actor and dancer



yin & yang

STANDARDS OF SEXINESS



DR NARAYANA REDDY

✓ What is sexy? Has this question ever perplexed you? It has been asked since the time of Adam and Eve and a tangible answer is yet to be found. The reason is simple. Various factors like upbringing, beliefs and cultural values influence what we find sexually attractive in another person. Since our beliefs and cultural values change from time to time, the standards of sexiness change with time too. Marilyn Monroe, for example, would be too gawky to get any modeling assignments today.

Pioneering sexologist John Money has introduced the concept of "Love Maps" to describe your own, very personal collection of erotic ideals. According to Money we all form our love maps between the ages of five and eight based on what we find appealing or unappealing in our parents, siblings, friends, relatives and acquaintances. We may be unaware of this process in our childhood, but when we reach sexual maturity these become our very own list of turn off's and turn on's.

In a study titled "Tactics for promoting sexual encounters" 50 students at the University of Michigan were given a long list of hypothetical tactics for getting someone into bed with them, and were asked to judge which were the most effective.

Men said that women would be most successful when using the direct approach, asking the man if he wanted to have sex or undressing in front of him. Women, on the other hand, said that men would be most successful when their advances are not overtly sexual but sex-related (love and commitment). Most women, though they find sex enjoyable, do not seek out sex as an end in itself the way men do.

Dear fellow men, do you now recognise an indubitable fact of life? Sexiness is obtained only in the pursuit of something else.

The writer is a sexologist. Mail him at dr.narayana@deccanmail.com

love bytes

Hollywood star Bradley Cooper and longtime girlfriend Suki Waterhouse are reportedly planning to take the next step in their relationship. The latter has reportedly been warming the *American Sniper* actor up to the idea of popping the question. The two have been dating since March last year.

