

707.Karmarkar

Guest: Richa Karmarkar

VOXPOP: Biodata

TITLE IDEAS:

EPISODE DESCRIPTION:

Lorem Ipsum

SEG A

COLD OPEN

SIZZLE!!!

RS: Katelyn, have you ever dated someone your parents really disapproved of? Like, you had to climb out your bedroom window and jump off the roof to sneak off with him kind of thing?

KB: I would never! Though I'm not sure my parents were a big fan of my atheist high school boyfriend.

RS: My parents were very nice about everyone I dated. But I think they were just being polite about a few of them... lol.

KB: I mean, I kind of wish my parents had stopped me a couple times.

RS: You would have hated them for it.

KB: Yeah, but ... the guy with the bleached tips and emotional volatility? Would've saved me so much future embarrassment... [feel free to tweak to whatever...]

Theme bounces in

KB: From Religion News Service, this is Saved by the City!

A podcast from two Christian women swiping left and right through the mean streets of New York. I'm Katelyn Beaty

RS: And I'm Roxy Stone

TRANSITION

RS: Katelyn, I have a question for you. What do you think your parents would look for in your ideal spouse or partner? Like if they could pick someone, what qualities would they be on the hunt for?

KB: [answer - a little back and forth about this] ...

You are getting married this summer, so I take that to mean John is the embodiment of all the qualities your parents would have picked for you.

RS: LOL.

KB: But ... is he?

RS: [answer ... yes, plenty of them. Probably would have liked him to make more money and maybe have parents who lived in Colorado...]

KB: LOL, [respond.]

RS: So, do you think you'd like the person your parents picked for you? Would you trust your parents to pick someone for you?

KB: [respond]

RS: Parents being a part of the dating or courting or marriage process is a pretty old idea that has a history in most cultures. But we've dropped it almost completely in the U.S. in favor of finding true love ourselves.

KB: I feel like one of my first introductions to the idea that finding love is better or more authentic than marrying your family's pick for you was Romeo and Juliet.

RS: Ah, the star-crossed lovers.

KB: Yeah, it didn't really work out so well for them...

[do a couple minutes of back and forth on the modern ideal of finding romance and true love ourselves, rather than making a good, practical match that benefits the family... Pride and Prejudice? Jane Austen? Then transition to Richa forward promo...]

RS: Recently, at RNS, our Hindu reporter, Richa Karmarkar, did a really interesting piece on the rise of Indian matchmaking in the US. Or, rather, on how second and third generation Indian

Americans are turning back to the traditions of Indian matchmaking but doing so with an American twist.

FORWARD PROMO B SEG: KARMARKAR CLIP

KB: Our interview with Richa is coming up later in the show.

RS: But first, we are going to create a bio data sheet for you Katelyn!

KB: Er...

VOX POP: **Biodata**

RS: Richa writes about how in modern Indian matchmaking, young singles put together what is called their “bio data”

KB: Which I really thought, when she first said that phrase, that it was like a whole health screening or some kind of genetic testing.

RS: Right. It does give off some sci-fi, Galactica vibes. But it's really more like your dating profile. Sort of an Indian e-harmony set of questions. So, I looked some up online and they are fascinating to read. One of the more interesting things is how much family information there is on each of them.

KB: Which makes sense, Richa mentioned that Indian matchmaking has a strong focus on family.

RS: Right, most also have spots for your zodiac sign and horoscope based on time and place of birth, which are significant in Indian culture. I also found an AI tool to help you generate your biodata. It's got a series of questions. Which I have adapted slightly for our purposes, so it is a bit more culturally appropriate for you. Are you ready?

KB: yep

RS: OK, here we go. Get ready to meet your match!

OK, it starts out like a DMV sheet, name DOB, zip code, etc. I will skip those... Let's get to the good stuff.

OK, zodiac sign?

We won't do a horoscope, since I have no idea how to read that. Let's do enneagram instead:

Hobbies?

Your profession?

Parent's professions?

Siblings?

3 values you are looking for in a partner?

A lot of these bio datas have a paragraph about the person, which we are not going to write in real time. But they seem to often focus on how the person was raised and how those values have shaped them as an adult. So what would you say are your family's values that were instilled into you as a child and how they continue to affect you today?

NARRATIVE & DISCUSSION

KB: So the idea of this bio data is for a matchmaker to use it to help single people and their families find a match, right?

RS: Yes, and according to Richa's reporting, families really do play a big role in this. While, they may not have final say, or even necessarily be part of the matchmaking process in the US, the value systems of families as well as socioeconomic status, religious background and professions, are all part of what matchmakers (whether in real life or through computers) are looking for when they pair two potential single people together.

KB: I mean ... I do want to find true love myself. But ... like there's some appeal here right? To take some of the guesswork out...? And to have some help?

DO A LITTLE BACK AND FORTH ON THIS IDEA:

What might be gained from having someone else be part of the choosing process for our mate? Are there ways other people — family, friends (chosen family) know us better than ourselves or might be looking out for different qualities than we are?

TOPICS TO DISCUSS:

- Shared values and background
- Danger of homogeneity
- Fear of being trapped in something bad or being forced into it
- India has low divorce rates

RS: OK, so let's hear more from Richa about how young Indian Americans — of many religious backgrounds — are reviving the cultural practice of matchmaking.

KB: But first, a shoutout for our sponsors who make this all possible.

Wrap it up.

Theme music comes up underneath, & transition to:

SPONSOR SLOT

Theme music bounces in

- Rs Religion News Service is an independent, award-winning source of global reporting on religion, spirituality, culture and ethics.
- Kb From Holy Week to Holi, Religion News Service is the go-to destination for timely conversations on religions new and old.
- Rs Our listeners should know that Saved by the City has some podcast company! Religion News Service now has a podcast network. It includes Martini Judaism with Rabbi Jeffrey Salkin and The State of Belief with Rev. Paul Brandeis Rauschenbusch. Go give them a listen!
- KB: We'd also love to hear your feedback and ideas for future guests and topics. Drop us a review wherever you listen to your podcasts or shoot us an email at sbtcpodcast@religionnews.com. We want to hear from you!

Theme fades

SEG B

GUEST INTRO & INTERVIEW

KB: Richa Karmarkar is a RNS national reporter covering all things Hindu. She is a graduate of Columbia University with Master's degrees in Religion and in Journalism. She also holds three Bachelor's degrees in Religious Studies, History, and Journalism from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

RS: Hi Richa! It's so fun to have you on the show!

SEG C

WRAP IT UP:

KB: OK, so give me three qualities you'd look for in a mate for me?

RS: Answer

KB: OK ... fine ... you can be in charge of my love life...

[music]

RS Saved By The City is a Religion News Service production. The Producer is J Woodward and the Consulting Editor is Paul O'Donnell. We get production assistance from Julia Windom

KB Chaz Russo put together our look and Martin Fowler wrote our theme music.

RS We are Roxy Stone

KB and Katelyn Beaty

Rs&Kb Thanks for listening!!!

CUT NOTES

KB NOTES + RS NOTES

RS: 32:42 - 33:28 Let's cut Richa's references to biodata. Since we got into it for so long in VoxPop. Let's end with "gong to a matchmaker is you're going with your family to this person or this agency or this website" then start cutting where she says "and bio data" ... and then start back up again about halfway through Katelyn's next question (skip KB talking about biodata and jump to her asking about the status of families seeking matchmaking professionals). Start back up with Katelyn saying: "When families choose to go to a matchmaker or an agency..."

(I know Richa references the biodatas again with horoscopes later. We can leave that in I think b/c we've sort of set up that she WROTE about all of this and we described them earlier. So I think it's OK to have her reference biodata without her having already explained it. However, if you want to cut the horoscope reference you can, but I think it's interesting.)

~~**KB: 40:13–41:05** – I think we can cut the first part of Richa’s answer about not wanting to stand around, up to when she says, “Hindu ceremonies are very long...”~~

~~**KB: 41:48–42:38** – we can cut the first part of Richa’s answer about what’s unique to Indian weddings, up to where to says, “the groom will come in” (the food and guest thing wasn’t as interesting to me)~~

~~**KB: 46:44** – sounds like the episode ends here but then there’s the hairy thing at the very end of the recording, I assume we wanted to move that up as a little Easter egg :)~~