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Brahman Naman

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Brahman Naman

Abstract

This is a film review of *Brahman Naham* (2016) directed by Q.

Author Notes

Rubina (Ruby) Ramji is an Associate Professor in the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies at Cape Breton University. After serving as a Chair of the Religion, Film and Visual Culture Group for the American Academy of Religion and then on the steering committee, Rubina continues to serve on the Executive Committee for the Canadian Society for the Study of Religion as President and is the Film Editor of the *Journal of Religion and Film*. Her research activities focus on the areas of religion, media and identity, religion in Canada, and religion and immigration.

Brahman Naman
(2016)
Directed by Q.



Brahman Naman is a sex-driven comedy set in the 1980s. The movie follows the exploits of three lust-filled male university nerds from Bangalore who use the money they win on the quiz circuit to buy nudie magazines, whiskey, beer and more whiskey. The boys find themselves heading across country when they qualify for the National Quiz Championships and decide they are going to lose their virginites on the trip.

With the Doors song “Whiskey Bar” (or “Alabama Song”) playing throughout the backdrop of the film, we follow young Naman (who is from the Brahman caste, the priestly caste, played by Shashank Arora), and his two friends, Ajay and Ramu as they fantasize about sexual conquests and become inebriated drinking lots of whiskey. Naman meets his match in Nana, a female quizzer.

Although filled with interesting and insane ways to masturbate (a fridge door, a fish tank, a ceiling fan), *Brahman Naman* is interspersed with religious questions and condemnations. Naman carries out prayers and rituals with his father, and then takes off to drink whiskey with his

friends. Although raised to think he's of the highest caste and therefore "above" others, Naman treats a non-Hindu girl cruelly, and also treats an "unappealing" lower caste Hindu girl brutally. Naman learns, through his malice, that he is in fact not above others just because of his caste by birth. Even the chaperone of the Bangalore University Quiz team is aware of this hypocrisy, when he tells Naman, "Brahmans are the most racist on the planet – enjoy your supremacy." Nana, the beautiful Brahman quizzier with whom Naman has fallen in love, describes Naman aptly as a "Brahman fundamentalist sexist." In the end, Naman and his friends realize that no matter what caste or religion one is born into, "boys are assholes because they think with their dicks."