

Would a Marriage Proposal Ruin Your Graduation Day?

When Edgaras Averbuchas successfully [proposed](#) to Agne Banuskeviciute at her graduation ceremony, both were delighted. The romantic moment at Essex University, where Ms. Banuskeviciute received her Master's degree in English, was filmed and posted on the university's website to celebrate their engagement.

Then something weird happened. A couple of feminists called down fire and brimstone on Edgaras for "hijacking" Agne's graduation and making it about the engagement, because he felt "threatened by her intellect."

Aisha Ali-Khan, a core organiser of the Women's March on London, said it "smacked of egotism" and did not bode well for the relationship. "[W]hen someone craves such public attention and adulation all the time, there can only be space for one person and their ego in that relationship," she declared.

"All the time"? How does she know? They happen to have been dating for nine years – which Ms Ali-Khan evidently does *not* know, unless she thinks Agne is, like, not very bright. Either way her unsolicited marriage counselling is as patronising as any mere man's could be.

As others stoked the inevitable Twitter storm, Dr Jana Bacevic, a research associate in sociology at Cambridge University, wrote: "Imagine being a man and feeling so threatened by a woman's intellectual success that you have to force her to frame her identity/agency in relation to you on the very day she is being celebrated for her intellect. Oh wait, that's, like, 99.9 per cent men." ("An F for man who proposed at his fiancée's graduation," Telegraph, July 24, 2019).

None of that would matter, of course, except that Essex University, in the craven style we have come to expect from seats of learning, removed the romantic video clip from its website, succumbing to bullying by feminist warriors. Apparently, no allowance was made for ethnic diversity – the possibility that the couple's Lithuanian backgrounds might account for their approach to romance.

Until the day before yesterday the same approach was considered perfectly normal here too. Now, according to Rebecca Reid, writing in *Grazia* magazine, it is an imposition on the woman. If Ms Bauskeviciute had wanted to turn him down, she would have had to “break his heart in front of an entire auditorium of strangers,” she fretted. “Hijacking a big moment with something sweet or well intentioned doesn't make it OK. Just because something is sweet or well intended doesn't mean that it is appropriate.”

And yet it could be said that the risk of being turned down showed Edgaras' moral courage. He could also be seen as thoughtful for not proposing earlier when it might have distracted Agne from her studies – although hardened feminists would attribute any such delay to a misogynistic plot to propose only when he could be sure that by graduating she had considerably increased her earning potential.

But in case anyone is interested in what Agne herself thinks of the proposal, she has said that it made the day extra special. “That's so strange that Edgaras was getting a lot of criticism from people,” she [told](#) The Sun. “Well, I think that this day became even more beautiful with this proposal.”

It could be that Mr Averbuchas's feminist accusers have become unhinged by reading about the heinous crimes against women so often in the news, ranging from rape and female genital mutilation to the compulsory wearing of the veil. Logically, anyone who is enraged by a public proposal of marriage should go totally ballistic over these greater crimes against

womanhood. Yet critics of the veil (like Boris Johnson) risk being accused of Islamophobia, and the feminist response has been muted.

Moreover, there has been total silence from feminists at the horrendous toll of sex-selective abortion, which in some countries has severely skewed the sex ratio, claiming over [23 million](#) unborn female lives to date. Indeed, nearly 550,000 unborn girls are killed every year in India alone, giving a toll of approximately [15.8 million](#) girls lost to this deadly brand of sexism since 1990.

While feminists approve of abortion it seems they disapprove of marriage – heterosexual marriage at any rate – and one wonders whether criticism of forced marriage is motivated more by the marriage than by the force.

But if Dr Bacevic – who believes that 99.9 percent of men feel threatened by women's intellect – is concerned about these really deadly threats to females, she should be delighted that at least some men are prepared to lay their egos on the altar of mutual sacrifice that is marriage.

Most normal people would award Mr Averbuchas an F for faithfulness rather than an F for failure. Dr Bacevic's attempts at mathematics and mind-reading, however, suggest that her intellect should pose no serious threat to anyone.

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