Twitter Thread by Kavita Krishnan



Kavita Krishnan
@kavita_krishnan



Recently heard the podcast by @sikhyaent on Saravana Bhavan founder P Rajagopal, who stalked the young daughter of an employee & had her husband killed. Observations: the podcast's title ('Dosa King') glorifies PR, the script trivialises his crime, calling it a mere "scandal"

It refers to the whole stalking and murder episode as something that led to Rajagopal's "fall" - i.e a story of crime against a woman is turned into a story about the impact of the said crime on its perpetrator, not its victim.

It refers to the stalking victim as a fit antagonist for the protagonist Rajagopal, as Rajagopal's nemesis. But the point is, she set out to be neither. She didn't make him part of her life story. He forcibly, violently disrupted her life.

The podcast ends by telling us how Rajagopal's employees and friends and many others abuse the woman he stalked, for pursuing the case of her husband's murder and bringing Rajagopal to justice. It also tells us that some admire her. And it "asks us to decide" where we stand

I find it disturbing that a story of a powerful man feeling entitled to ruin a woman's life & trying to get away with murder, is turned into a story of HIS "rise, popularity, and fall".

This @sikhyaent podcast is an instance of how "perpetrators are sensationalised and celebrated" in True Crime stories - as @VeraGrayF observes in this piece https://t.co/pUXCiBjFVG

To put this in context: we don't need a book on the "Rise and Fall of Harvey Weinstein". We already have books on his victim-survivors and how THEY stood up for justice, and what it cost THEM.

Should a True Crime podcast see gender-based violence just as a "story" with all the "masala" elements? Should it set out to be "neutral", asking listeners to "decide" if they are in the victim blaming camp or not?

Saravana Bhavan outlets still have folders celebrating Rajagopals. Should a True Crime podcast on Rajagopal use a title - "Dosa King" - that glorifies him, and does not highlight his crimes? Why does the podcast never call Rajagopal's creepy pursuit of Jyothi, 'stalking'?

The story of a rich, powerful old man creepily fixating on and stalking an employee's daughter & getting her husband killed should not be a mere "sensational story" that we consume as entertainment. @vasanthihari https://t.co/IplZfcDyuZ

> https://t.co/MabYSa3U7r
> You may have relished dosa at a Saravana Bhavan restaurant in India or outside but do you know the sensational story of its founder P Rajagopal? Happy to debut as narrator for Dosa King, 8part podcast dramatized by@sikhyaent , @Spotify original. @guneetm
>
> — Vasanthi Hariprakash (@vasanthihari) December 12, 2020

Tell stories of gender-based crimes from the point of view of their victims, survivors - do not make these the story of how a woman led to the "fall" of a "great man". Woman victims do not set out to "bring great men down". It is their own crimes that bring such men down.

. @sikhyaent @vasanthihari Title, script's avoidance of the use of the term "stalking", lip-smacking tone of narration - it's difficult to escape the conclusion that the podcast wants us to "relish" the "sensational" backstory of Rajagopal as we "relish" Saravana Bhavan dosas.