

THE NAMESAKE (M)

Discussion starters

1. How does the film approach the differences between Indian and American culture? Does it favour one over the other? If so, how? Which does it see positive things in? Which is it critical of? What are some specific examples?

2. Gogol's parents' heritage and background is broadly Hindu, while Gogol embraces a culture that is historically more influenced by Christianity than any other faith. Do historic religious differences at all come into play in the film, indirectly or otherwise? If so, how?

3. How do Gogol's parents feel about his first girlfriend Max? To what extent are their concerns or misgivings founded? To what extent are they not? Do the cultural differences between Gogol and Max matter? If so, how?

4. Compare Gogol's parents' understanding of love and marriage with those of Gogol and the women in his life. What if anything is missing in the older generation's understanding? What is missing in the younger generation's?



Director's Notes: Mira Nair

Nair was also attracted to a unique chance to combine cinematic portraits of her two favourite cities on opposite sides of the globe: New York and Calcutta. "I saw an opportunity to unite these two equally exciting worlds that I know and love and have lived in all my life," she says. "I also wanted to capture visually the dizzying feeling of being an immigrant where you might physically be in one particular space yet you feel like you are someplace else in your soul."