



# FRAMING THE FEMALE REPORTER: POWER, GENDER AND JOURNALISM IN HINDI CINEMA

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## ABSTRACT

The representation of women journalists in cinema offers a lens through which the intersections of gender and media can be examined in contemporary society. While journalism in Hindi films has often been used as a narrative device to critique corruption, expose hidden truths and dramatise societal tensions, the figure of the female journalist embodies a more complex negotiation of authority, morality and identity. This article analyses the portrayal of women reporters in *Page 3* (2005) and *No One Killed Jessica* (2011) to explore how cinematic narratives construct and contest women's roles in the newsroom and the wider public sphere. Through close textual analysis, the article studies how these films represent women journalists between depicting them as vulnerable truth-seekers and empowered crusaders, thereby reflecting broader cultural anxieties about female authority in India's patriarchal media landscape. By situating these representations within debates on women in media industries, the study argues that in Hindi cinema women journalists have agency in their professional's life, but they are circumscribed to the larger structure of patriarchy.

**Keywords:** Women Journalists, Hindi Cinema, Media Representation, Gender and Professional Identity

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Hindi cinema, often referred to as Bollywood, is a powerful cultural institution in India which reflects and shapes societal attitudes and aspirations through its narrative and visual language. As Hindi cinema remains as one of the most dominant media of popular culture, it provides a lens for examining the intersections of gender and media representation in India. Within this framework, the cinematic representation of women journalists is a site of inquiry seldom explored within the context of professional agency and gendered expectations in a patriarchal society. This article focuses on the representation of women journalists in two popular Hindi films, *Page 3* (2005) and *No One Killed Jessica* (2011), to interrogate how these cinematic representations reflect and challenge societal perceptions of women in Indian journalism.

In world cinema, journalists have frequently been depicted as archetypal figures embodying the cultural and political roles of the press within their specific contexts. Hollywood films such as *All the President's Men* (1976) portray

journalists as heroic truth-seekers dismantling systemic corruption, thus reinforcing ideals of integrity and public service (Ehrlich, 2004).

Such depiction is also seen in *Spotlight* (2015) where investigative journalists as collective agents of justice challenge the institutional silence and expose abuses within the Catholic Church, thereby reinforcing cinema's portrayal of journalism with democratic accountability (McNair, 2017). However, the portrayal of journalists in European cinema is ambivalent as seen in Federico Fellini's *La Dolce Vita* (1960), where the protagonist is framed in voyeurism and moral decay, offering a critique of media sensationalism (Perrotto, 2023). In African cinema, works of Ousmane Sembène's *Xala* (1975) employ journalists more sparingly, often as narrative instruments to interrogate postcolonial power structures.

In Hindi cinema, the profession of journalism is seldom explored for their professional practice but rather as a narrative device to underscore the social fault lines of Indian society. Film such as *Peepli Live* (2010) shows the spectacle of media sensationalism through satire and *Rann* (2010) examines the entanglement of media, politics and corporate interests. In these films, the journalist characters are male and the narrative often grants them authority and moral clarity.

However, the figure of the woman journalist in Hindi cinema are usually seen as a complex cultural trope that represents the tension between professional authority and women identity. Whereas male journalists are typically represented as truth-seekers and authoritative character, women are more often depicted as negotiating precarious conditions marked by societal expectation and usually questioned the competency to handle the serious of the profession (Watson et al., 2021). These contrasting portrayals underscore a politics of representation that reveals broader societal anxieties about women occupying public and occupying independent decision-making roles in Indian society. Situating these films within the socio-historical context of India's rapidly evolving media landscape enables a deeper understanding of how these films narrative construct and negotiate the identity of women journalists. Importantly, such depictions resonate with societal realities in the Indian media industry, where women continue to face systemic barriers to leadership and visibility. As of 2019, women held only 26 percent of newsroom leadership positions, reflecting persistent gendered asymmetries that the cinematic imagination both mirrors and refracts (Ross & Padovani, 2019).

## 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Bollywood cinema has long functioned as a lens through which the ethos and social identities of India are projected to both domestic and international audiences. The reality and fiction rendered by Bollywood films can be considered as a cultural text which reflect and reimagine the Indian society. Women's representation in Hindi cinema has historically been marked by stereotypes that conform to dominant social expectations. As Smith (2016) observes, women in media are primarily portrayed in terms of their physical beauty, often to the exclusion of other attributes, with such depictions bearing little resemblance to lived realities. Rather than serving as an objective reflection of the society, film representations construct selective and artificial images of women that reinforce prevailing norms of the society.

The rise of new communication technologies has amplified the power of mass media to shape perceptions of social reality. By presenting selective aspects of reality and repeating them through images and narratives, the media have played a decisive role in reinforcing gender stereotypes and patriarchal culture (Patel, 1995). While mass media forms and content have evolved dramatically, they continue to reproduce traditional gender hierarchies by setting agendas that privilege selective viewpoints and social values.

Exposure to media has historically been considered a marker of modernity. Yet, as Patel (1995) notes, the relationship between modernity, mass media and patriarchy is complex. While the media construct meanings that individuals use to make sense of their worlds, these meanings are derived from selective interpretations of reality rather than direct representations. This selective emphasis, magnified by repetition, significantly influences how reality itself is understood.

Gallagher (1992) highlights how mass media function within broader systems of patriarchy and capitalism, where women are often subordinated in both representation and structural participation. Although the proliferation of "women's genres" such as soap operas and melodramas has provided new spaces for women as audiences, these spaces often continue to reinforce patriarchal ideologies. The dialectical relationship between media and culture, however, allows room for contestation. As Williams (1977) notes, culture is not static but constantly evolving; thus, oppositional meanings and feminist discourses continue to resist hegemonic portrayals even as they are co-opted by dominant ideologies.

Nevertheless, feminist scholarship in developing countries remains uneven, with disproportionate attention to Hindi cinema in India compared to other regions. Research on Latin America and Africa, for instance, is relatively underrepresented, partly due to limitations in accessibility and partly due to the dominance of Indian scholarship in this area. Despite contextual differences, there are striking continuities across media systems in the way women are portrayed as subordinates within patriarchal frameworks.

The presence of women in professional media roles has grown significantly in recent decades. From once occupying marginal spaces, women have increasingly entered journalism, broadcasting, and other mass media sectors, reshaping both professional landscapes and representational practices. While Ceulemans and Guido (1979) documented the persistence of gender-based barriers such as recruitment biases, limited promotion, sexual harassment, and unequal opportunities, they also observed the resilience of women journalists who work harder to prove their competence in a male-dominated profession.

Ammu Joseph's *Women in Journalism: Making News* (2002) further illustrates how women journalists across India, working in English and vernacular media alike, continue to challenge entrenched gender hierarchies. Yet, structural challenges such as work-life balance, patriarchal workplace cultures, and the persistence of gendered divisions of labour remain significant obstacles.

Cinema, as one of the most influential media forms in India, has been central to shaping cultural imaginaries of femininity and masculinity. Popular Hindi films, through family dramas, romances, mythological tales, and vendetta sagas, construct and circulate myths that reinforce patriarchal ideologies (Patel, 1995). Feminist film theory has illuminated how women in cinema are often represented not in terms of their own identities but in relation to male desires and perspectives (Gallagher, 1992).

Over decades, representations of women in Indian cinema have shifted from divine archetypes to modern heroines, yet they continue to embody patriarchal values (Rao, 1989). While "traditional" women have been portrayed as submissive mothers, wives, or daughters, "modern" women were historically constructed as vamps, figures embodying westernisation and moral decline. Even as commercial films of the 1980s and 1990s adopted new technologies and themes, the heroine's role often remained secondary, decorative, or subsumed within the hero's narrative arc.

The male gaze, as evidenced in the objectification of women's bodies, has persisted in Indian cinema, with rape and sexual violence frequently exploited as voyeuristic spectacles rather than as opportunities for critique (Khan & Khan, 1987). Though "new wave" cinema of the late 1980s and beyond sought to place women at the centre of narratives, even here portrayals were often constrained by dominant ideological discourses (Mazumdar, 1991; Laxmi, 1986). The entry of women directors has opened limited spaces for feminist interventions, though these largely remain circumscribed within "acceptable" themes of romance, family, and maternal relations (Gupta, 1994).

Studies of women in Bollywood often focus on binary categories—idealised virtuous women versus vamps or deviants (Virdi, 2003). While such analyses have been foundational, they risk oversimplifying the diversity of female subjectivities. As Gopalan (2002) argues, portrayals of avenging women or journalists cannot be separated from larger discourses of gender, nationalism, and sexuality. Feminist scholars often use metaphors of containment, captivity, and immobility to describe the ways media reproduce gendered oppression within domestic and private spaces.

Yet, portrayals of professional women, particularly journalists, remain understudied. Vasudev and Philippe (1983) note that the "modern working woman" in cinema is frequently humiliated or forced into conformity with patriarchal values. Bagchi (1996) similarly critiques the reduction of women journalists to objects of sexism rather than professionals engaged in meaningful labour. The scarcity of scholarship specifically on female journalists in Indian cinema suggests a gap that requires further attention.

Films like *Page 3* (2005), which features Konkona Sen Sharma as an investigative journalist, offer new avenues for examining how Bollywood negotiates stereotypes while acknowledging women's expanding presence in media professions. Still, as Pattanayak (2010) observes, even when women journalists are central characters, the narratives often undermine or trivialise their professional labour by subsuming it within romantic or personal subplots.

Kracauer (1997) argued that films represent the "daydreams of society," reflecting not reality itself but collective aspirations and suppressed desires. This framework is particularly useful for understanding the cinematic portrayal of female journalists in Bollywood. Prior to India's economic liberalisation in 1991, journalists, especially women have occupied marginal positions both in society and in cinema. Post-liberalisation, however, the rapid expansion of television and print journalism elevated journalists' visibility, and Bollywood films began to foreground them more prominently.

Nandy (1998) contends that studying popular film is tantamount to studying Indian modernity “at its rawest,” where the tensions between tradition, modernity, and gender become most visible. Within this context, female journalists in Bollywood films embody competing cultural narratives: on the one hand, they symbolise modern professional women; on the other, their roles are often diminished by persistent stereotypes and patriarchal tropes.

### 3. ANALYSIS OF PAGE 3 (2005)

The film, *Page 3* (2005) offers an incisive critique of Mumbai's celebrity culture and the commodification of journalism in post-liberalization India, with the protagonist Madhavi Sharma serving as a lens to explore the intersections of gender and ethics in media. As a *Page 3* reporter for the newspaper *Nation Today*, Madhavi embodies the archetype of the dedicated yet disillusioned woman journalist, navigating a male-dominated industry while confronting societal stereotypes. Her portrayal aligns with broader patterns in Bollywood's depiction of journalists, often classified as “glamour chasers” who prioritize sensationalism over substance. However, *Page 3* distinguishes itself by foregrounding Madhavi's moral integrity and professional ambition, contrasting her with the superficiality of her beat and highlighting the gendered barriers she faces. This analysis examines Madhavi's character through her professionalism, gender dynamics, visual representation, emotional gestures, editorial pressures and transition to crime reporting, drawing on feminist film theory to unpack how the film both challenges and reinforces patriarchal norms in Indian cinema.

Madhavi is introduced as an earnest; humble and empathetic journalist committed to her profession. Her sincerity is conveyed not only through her demeanour but also through the visual cues of her characterization. She is consistently dressed in modest, sober attire, simple kurtas, jeans and unadorned hairstyles set her apart from the glamorous and ostentatious figures who populate the world of *Page 3*. This choice of costume also underscores her position as an outsider to the very culture she documents, reinforcing her ethical distance from the world of spectacle. The film uses these visual contrasts to establish Madhavi as a moral centre in an otherwise decadent and morally compromised environment.

As a *Page 3* reporter, Madhavi spends much of her time attending late-night parties, mingling with celebrities and gathering gossip that will feed the newspaper's demand for entertainment. While she performs this role with diligence, spending nearly three-quarters of her day cultivating contacts, building rapport and ensuring stories for the paper, her presence at these parties is always tinged with discomfort. Her conversations often reveal a subtle irony or detachment, as when she jokes with her roommate about not needing to watch television coverage of *Page 3* parties because she experiences them live every night. These moments highlight the paradox of her position, although immersed in celebrity culture, she is not comfortable by it.

The narrative further establishes Madhavi's character through her relationships. She is portrayed as supportive and compassionate towards her friends and colleagues, often extending help in moments of crisis. In one scene, when her friend Gayatri faces betrayal and despair, Madhavi intervenes with empathy and care. Similarly, her farewell to a roommate leaving for the United States demonstrates the depth of her personal bonds. These relationships humanise Madhavi beyond her professional identity, situating her as a figure of humanity within the cynicism of the media world. Such depictions align with feminist readings of women professionals in cinema, where female characters are often imbued with heightened emotional sensitivity as a means of legitimizing their professional presence (Niranjana, 1991).

Yet Madhavi's professional world is fraught with challenges that reflect the gendered hierarchies of journalism in India. Her editor frequently undermines her professional autonomy, steering her towards stories that prioritize celebrity over substance. When she attempts to highlight the work of social activists or uncover instances of child abuse and trafficking, her stories are rejected or suppressed. In the scene when her exposé on child abuse within an orphanage is censored by the newspaper due to political pressures, Madhavi's frustration and despair in this moment are seen through her emotional breakdown. This indicates not only her personal disappointment but also represents the structural silencing of women journalists who attempt to challenge dominant narratives.

Her interactions with male colleagues further establish the gendered dimensions of her struggles. In one scene, a male crime reporter disparages her *Page 3* beat, reducing it to superficial observations of what people eat, wear or whom they accompany. This belittling reflects the broader trivialization of “soft beats” such as lifestyle and entertainment journalism, which are often assigned to women, while “hard beats” like crime or politics remain dominated by men (Ross & Padovani, 2019). Madhavi's eventual transfer to crime reporting thus functions as both a narrative shift and a symbolic



crossing of boundaries. However, even in this more reporting “hard news”, she encounters censorship and editorial control. Thus implying that gendered marginalisation cannot be escaped simply by changing beats, but the patriarchal structure persists.

A crucial turning point in the film occurs during Madhavi’s confrontation with the Mumbai police commissioner at a party. In a moment of moral outrage, she publicly challenges him for attending a social gathering while a bomb blast devastates the city. This scene consolidates her role as the ethical conscience of the narrative, unafraid to speak truth to power even in spaces where she is marginalised. Yet the aftermath of this confrontation reveals the limitations of such moral courage. While colleagues admire her sincerity, the system remains unchanged, and Madhavi continues to struggle against institutional structure.

Visually, the film employs a naturalistic style to highlight Madhavi’s experiences. Her facial expressions range from curiosity and determination to despair and anger. This becomes central to the film’s emotional arc. Whether she is silently observing the vacuity of partygoers at a funeral or crying after her article on child trafficking is killed, her performance conveys the internal conflict of a woman caught between professional ideals and systemic corruption. These emotional arcs serve as counterpoints to the glamorous excesses of *Page 3*, reinforcing the film’s critique of media sensationalism.

The trajectory of Madhavi’s character ultimately embodies what feminist scholars describe as the burden of hyper-competence. She works harder, cares more and upholds higher ethical standards than many of her male colleagues, yet she remains disempowered by editorial policies and political influences. Her return to *Page 3* reporting at the end of the film is not framed as triumph but as resignation. It suggests that systemic corruption, patriarchal power structures and commercial imperatives overwhelm even the most committed individuals. This ending resists the trope of the heroic journalist often found in Western cinema, such as *All the President’s Men* (1976) or *Spotlight* (2015), where investigative reporting triumphs over corruption. Instead, *Page 3* presents a distinctly Indian narrative, where journalism is entangled with political and corporate power to such an extent that integrity is systematically undermined.

At the same time, the film’s construction of Madhavi as both a professional journalist and an ethical human being invites reflection on the cultural expectations placed on women in media. She is valued not only for her work but also for her humanity, empathy, and moral clarity. This dual emphasis reflects broader cultural anxieties about women in public life, where professional competence must often be supplemented by personal virtue to gain legitimacy. Thus, Madhavi becomes a cinematic trope through which gendered expectations of professionalism are negotiated, embodying both empowerment and victimization.

Thus, *Page 3* offers a complex representation of the woman journalist in Hindi cinema. Through Madhavi’s journey, the film critiques the superficiality of celebrity culture, exposes the systemic corruption of media institutions and highlights the gendered struggles of women professionals. Yet it also illustrates the limitations of individual integrity in the face of entrenched power structures. By portraying Madhavi as an ethical outsider who is ultimately forced to compromise, the film reflects the precariousness of women’s identities within Indian journalism. Her character operates simultaneously as a site of critique and as evidence of structural constraints, situating *Page 3* as an important text for understanding the cinematic construction of women journalists in Indian popular culture.

#### 4. ANALYSIS OF NO ONE KILLED JESSICA (2005)

The film, *No One Killed Jessica* (2011) is based on the infamous Jessica Lal murder case of 1999, a landmark moment in Indian media history as the case foregrounds the role of journalistic intervention in the pursuit of justice. At the centre of this narrative is Meera Gaity, a character, that embodies both the strengths and contradictions of the figure of the woman journalist in Hindi cinema. She is portrayed as bold, uncompromising and self-reliant but her portrayal is also mediated through discourses of gender, power and media ethics. The film thus offers fertile ground for interrogating how cinematic depictions of women journalists reflect larger cultural anxieties surrounding female professionalism and the capacity of media to act as the “fourth estate” in Indian democracy.

From her first appearance, Meera is depicted as a field reporter with courage, covering stories of national significance. Her introduction on the border, reporting the killing of a soldier, frames her as an authoritative journalist unafraid to confront dangerous spaces. Her body language, controlled tone and visible empathy for the grieving soldier position her as a journalist who balances human sensitivity with journalistic rigor. Unlike many female characters in

mainstream Hindi cinema who are relegated to supporting or decorative roles, Meera is seen in the narrative centrality and she drives the film's investigative plot.

In terms of costume and styling, Meera's semi-casual attire, jeans paired with formal shirts, blazers during live telecasts, or a kurta for candlelight vigils, frames her professional independence while resisting overt sexualization. Her sartorial choices signal a modern, urban professional who can navigate between newsroom authority and field reporting. Despite her professional confidence, Meera's trajectory is marked by negotiations with male editorial authority and gendered expectations. In an early newsroom exchange, she resists covering Jessica Lal's murder case, dismissing it as "not her beat" since she identifies as a war correspondent. This initial reluctance underscores both the hierarchies of beats in news organizations, where political or conflict reporting is valorised above crime reporting and Meera's desire to maintain authority within the masculinized sphere of hard news. Yet, as the narrative unfolds, her gradual immersion into the case illustrates how the film positions the female journalist as an agent of moral urgency.

Her confrontations with her editor further dramatize this tension. At one point, the editor admonishes her to "act as a journalist, not an activist," drawing attention to the porous boundaries between reporting and advocacy. Meera's insistence that "we are humans before we are journalists" highlights a discourse of empathy, suggesting that women journalists are more attuned to ethical and emotional dimensions of reporting. While this could be read as reinforcing essentialist notions of femininity, the film simultaneously valorises her persistence, suggesting that such qualities are vital in galvanizing public sentiment and effecting justice.

What distinguishes Meera's character from earlier cinematic depictions of women journalists is her unapologetic aggression. In one scene, when a male passenger patronisingly comments on her work, she responds with sharp invective, articulating both the gravity of her profession and her unwillingness to be trivialized. Her liberal use of expletives and confrontational demeanour subvert conventional gender stereotype assigned to women's character that are either polite and docile.

However, this aggression is also framed within the trope of hyper-competence, wherein women professionals in cinema must prove themselves exceptional to be taken seriously. By solving the case "in no time" and orchestrating the public outcry through live shows, Meera is depicted as almost superhuman in her efficiency. A important narrative shift occurs when Meera realizes the miscarriage of justice in the Jessica Lal trial. Her subsequent campaign, inviting viewers to send SMS messages, organizing candlelight vigils at India Gate and staging live telecasts, dramatizes the rise of media activism in the post-liberalization era. These sequences directly reference the actual public mobilizations that followed the 2006 acquittal of Manu Sharma, Jessica's killer, where television media played an instrumental role in reshaping public discourse and pressuring the judiciary.

Cinematically, these scenes highlight the power of the visual spectacle. The candlelight vigil, shot with sweeping camera movements and saturated lighting, transforms collective mourning into a symbol of democratic participation. Meera, positioned at the centre of this spectacle, becomes both facilitator and emblem of public anger. The film also gestures toward the challenges of balancing professional and personal identities for women journalists. In a conversation with her father, Meera explicitly prioritizes career over marriage, refusing to conform to traditional expectations of womanhood. This decision marks her as a modern, self-sufficient professional, yet the film does not explore the emotional costs of such choices in depth. Instead, Meera's personal life remains largely absent, suggesting that for women to achieve professional authority, personal dimensions must be erased from the narrative. Such omissions reflect broader cinematic tendencies to present women professionals as singularly defined by their work, unlike male counterparts who are often shown as balancing family and career.

Ultimately, Meera's arc represents the journalist as both professional truth-seeker and moral crusader. Her investigative strategies, including impersonating voices or pressuring reluctant witnesses, raise ethical questions about the boundaries of journalism. Yet the film justifies these transgressions as necessary in the face of systemic corruption and political power. From a feminist perspective, this justification is double-edged: while it affirms women journalists as agents of justice, it also risks reinforcing the expectation that they must compromise professionalism to achieve results.

Moreover, Meera's role in achieving justice for Jessica Lal shifts the narrative focus away from Sabrina Lal, Jessica's sister, who fought the case for years. This displacement reflects a cinematic tendency to foreground the professional woman as saviour, thereby obscuring the slow, everyday struggles of ordinary women seeking justice.

No One Killed Jessica thus constructs the woman journalist as an empowered yet ambivalent figure, simultaneously challenging and reinforcing gender norms. Meera Gaity is bold, aggressive and professional who defies stereotypes of

female passivity seen in films. She is central to the narrative, driving both the investigation and the mobilization of public opinion. Yet her characterization also reflects broader cinematic patterns of the hyper-competent woman professional burdened with representing justice but also character is devoid of personal life which reduces her personal identity for professional performance. This is also a stereotype seen in the film narratives where women are self-sacrificial characters.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The representation of women journalists in Hindi cinema, as exemplified by *Page 3* (2005) and *No One Killed Jessica* (2011), encapsulates a broader discourse on gender, professionalism and cultural anxieties within India's media landscape. Both films foreground female journalists as central protagonists, offering a significant departure from earlier cinematic traditions where women occupied peripheral and decorative roles. Yet, these depictions are far from unproblematic. They oscillate between empowerment and containment, reflecting the complex negotiations that women undertake within patriarchal structures both in media institutions and in society at large.

In *Page 3*, Madhavi's portrayal is shaped by her moral integrity, emotional sensitivity and professional diligence. These qualities that places her at odds with a corrupt and superficial media system. Her ultimate return to *Page 3* reporting, however, underscores the limits of individual agency against entrenched hierarchies of power, censorship and gendered marginalization. The film situates her as a figure of critique, but one whose struggle demonstrates how systemic corruption undermines even the most committed individuals. *Page 3* reveals how journalism in India is deeply enmeshed in political, corporate and patriarchal networks that resist disruption.

By contrast, *No One Killed Jessica* offers a more assertive and heroic representation of the woman journalist. Meera Gaity, with her boldness, aggression and narrative centrality, embodies the professional woman as crusader, mobilising media spectacle to galvanize public opinion and demand justice. Her character reflects the rise of television journalism in post-liberalization India, where media assumed a visible role in shaping public discourse and political accountability. Yet, her hyper-competence and near-superhuman efficiency reinforce another set of gendered burdens where women journalists must be extraordinary, uncompromising and self-sacrificing in order to command authority in male-dominated spaces. Furthermore, the erasure of Meera's personal life and the displacement of Sabrina Lal's struggle highlight the limitations of cinematic imagination, which privileges spectacular interventions over the quiet persistence of ordinary women.

Taken together, the two films represent women journalist as a main character who drives the plot forward. Madhavi embodies disillusionment, ethical struggle, and systemic silencing, while Meera personifies empowerment, visibility and public mobilization. Yet both the characters are circumscribed to the patriarchal notion of representation in cinema. Madhavi through the burden of moral virtue and Meera through the burden of hyper-competence. This reflect what feminist scholars have long argued that women in professional spaces are rarely represented on their own terms but instead through frameworks that simultaneously empower and constrain them.

More broadly, these portrayals mirror the structural realities of Indian journalism. Despite significant gains in visibility and participation, women remain underrepresented in leadership positions and continue to face systemic challenges, from editorial censorship to patriarchal workplace cultures. Most of the journalist who are above these two characters are male. Thus, *Page 3* and *No One Killed Jessica* provide valuable insights into the cinematic construction of the woman journalist in Hindi cinema. They demonstrate how popular films function not only as entertainment but also as cultural texts that both reflect and shape public understandings of gender, media and democracy.

## CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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