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I've spotted a major flaw in every conversation about Good Luck to You, Leo Grande

What we're shown suggests it's an oddity for a sexy older woman to exist, and ludicrous to imagine one with a younger man



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Including a sexy woman over a particular age in a film still appears to be daring – why?



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“Dress your age.” “She’s someone’s mother.” “Why is she trying to compete with people half her age?”

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These are just some of the statements made when a woman over a particular age – **most recently Emma Thompson** in *Good Luck to You, Leo Grande* – expresses her sex appeal. But why?

More and more female celebrities are getting cosmetic surgery done to look younger or create the covetable body shape they’ve always wanted. They’re revered, hailed and lusted after – so why does that suddenly change when it comes to TV and film?

According to **a study carried out in March**, 14.8 per cent of women are married to or in committed relationships with men between two and 20 years younger than them. It’s becoming more commonplace in real life, but it’s still a rarity to see an older woman shown to be in her sexual prime on the silver screen.

What we’re shown suggests to us that it’s an oddity for a sexy older woman to exist, and ludicrous to imagine one with a younger man... but it’s OK for older men to be attractive and to have partners half their age.

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while **Richard Gere** was 42 – 20 years her senior.

The issue I have is that including a sexy woman over a particular age in a film still appears to be daring, despite the fact that a woman's sexiness doesn't suddenly end when she becomes a mother or hits 40. We deserve more than to be portrayed as dried-up, sexless grannies who need a hand across the road – *or* as large-bosomed comfort givers. After all, a **study in November last year** found that women tend to reach their sexual peak between ages 27 and 45, and yet in TV and film, women are more frequently shown to be sexual beings no older than 35.



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her husband she's reflected on her life and decided there are some things she's never experienced (and would like to). Enter, gigolo Leo.

I won't give away any spoilers, but I will say that to me, this story is about a life unlived. But here's the real challenge, as I see it: we should be very careful not to repeat the major flaw that film producers have been making for decades. Because while age is intrinsic to the movie (Nancy chooses Leo because he's younger), the film isn't *just* about an older woman with a younger man. It's about so much more than that: regret and taking life by the hands and making it yours.

However, when [reading reviews](#), they are all focused on [Thompson's](#) age and the fact that she "bares all" on screen with someone almost half her age. One review even [read](#): "The 62-year-old actress has firmly refused to deny the [ageing](#) process, and gives us her all. And of course, Thompson is actually super-sexy."

Thompson's beauty is undeniable, but the use of the word "actually" suggests that it is somehow surprising. Why? Because she's a 62-year-old who's chosen not to artificially age backwards?

A woman seeking pleasure at an older age or after she's had children is something that we should be celebrating, not just normalising.

More conversations about a woman's pleasure in the bedroom (or wherever suits her) are finally being had. A recent [Netflix](#) limited series, *The Principle of Pleasure*, talks in abundance about the importance of sex, pleasure and reducing the orgasm gap.

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Women know, and have learned to accept, that we lose out sexually. It may be because [we don't know our bodies well enough](#) or because we don't have the courage to ask for what we want. Either way, women with male sexual partners are rarely the winners.



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Rather than fetishising the allure of an older woman, there needs to be more balance in TV and film to represent what's happening in real life. Let's normalise, educate and celebrate the health and appeal of women at *all* ages, rather than objectifying and stereotyping them.

After all, if there's one thing we know for certain, we are more than **what men want** us to be.

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