



DIAMONDS ARE A GIRL'S BEST FRIEND, MADONNA SAYS

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American singer-songwriter Madonna's January 1985 song Material Girl rides on the concept of the world being a highly-materialistic place. Somehow, possessions make the man, so Madonna is heard asking for wealth and an affluent life in place of loving relationships and romance. Despite the song having been a phenomenal success in the commercial music industry, the concept it upholds on materialism being the yardstick for love must never in any way be held as gospel truth. Although it is often true that the mark of a successful man is the type and enormity of possessions he has, that is not what genuinely defines a man at all.

Looking through one's high school yearbook, an individual might come across photos of classmates and peers that appear untouched and unaffected by the world's cares. Going through one's Facebook friends' pages would prove exactly the opposite: many show friends having meals at expensive restaurants, enjoying vacations in well-appointed places, taking pictures in various places of the globe, or showing off their latest acquired vehicles, gadgets or accessories. My Facebook account is often bombarded with Friend Requests from sellers and advertisers whom I don't even personally know of. I ignore such requests totally, especially since I'm neither the buy-me-now-I'm-on-sale type of person nor the diehard fashionista that those advertisers probably have the mistaken notion that I am. Far from it in fact: give me a comfortable, loose shirt and a decent pair of pants and I can go anywhere with them, no sweat. I guess my days as a fashion victim have long been over.

I am deeply concerned with the way my own kids sometimes salivate over the latest cellular phone models or the fancy clothes they see on television and various other forms of media. Although I often gently (!) remind them that such things are absolutely unnecessary, I also have to acknowledge that our children have definitely been exposed to more media that encourages them to acquire, well, more expensive tastes. No matter how hard a parent tries to curb his kids' appetite for worldly goods, the world is not all that cooperative, unfortunately. I therefore just guarantee them that if they succeed sufficiently in their future careers, they will be able to afford getting those things for themselves. Count on motherly wisdom to put an end to all the pining and salivating.

I have seven kids, so the future world will have seven willing patrons in various industries to parade its goods by. Hopefully, though I plan on still being around when that particular time comes, I will be unable to fully focus on the eyesores that glitzy thingamajigs would have become. Enough said for now, just got a text from an old friend on my trusty Nokia.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Why do you think the whole world has become so generally materialistic?
2. Would you consider yourself a truly materialistic person? Why or why not?
3. Is there any particular person you think is entirely materialistic? How is this person so?
4. Is there a particular place in the world which you think has more materialistic people than anywhere else? Why do you believe so?
5. Is materialism entirely bad? Why or why not?