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*[THE COMPLETE LIST OF 26 AWARDEES WITH CITATIONS*

*BEGINS ON PAGE 5 OF THIS RELEASE*

*-- AND IS ALSO ONLINE WITH STREAMING VIDEO AT [www.RealisticRomance.com](http://www.RealisticRomance.com).]*

**Media literacy advocate Dr. Mary-Lou Galician confers her 7<sup>th</sup> annual  
*Dr. FUN's Stupid Cupid & Realistic Romance*<sup>®</sup> Awards<sup>™</sup>  
for worst and best 2008 mass media portrayals of sex, love, and romance**

*“Sex and the City: The Movie” gets the Stupidest Cupid Award<sup>™</sup>;*

*“Definitely, Maybe” wins the Realistic Romance<sup>®</sup> Grand Prize<sup>™</sup>;*

*24 other awards go to popular films, TV shows, songs, and major magazines*

February 14, 2009—*Sex and the City: The Movie* was named the worst and *Definitely, Maybe* was named the best in the 7<sup>th</sup> annual *Dr. FUN's Stupid Cupid & Realistic Romance*<sup>®</sup> Awards<sup>™</sup> for 2008 Mass Media Portrayals of Sex, Love & Romance, announced each year on Valentine's Day as a public service by awards creator and media literacy advocate Dr. Mary-Lou Galician (affectionately known as “Dr. FUN” because of her popular *FUN-dynamics!*<sup>®</sup>—*The FUN-damentals of DYNAMIC Living*).

*Sex and the City: The Movie* got the overall Stupidest Cupid Award<sup>™</sup> for perpetuating numerous unhealthy myths and stereotypes, while *Definitely, Maybe* won the Realistic Romance<sup>®</sup> Grand Prize<sup>™</sup> for presenting a number of healthy relationship strategies.

**All 26 award recipients—which include blockbuster films, top-rated TV shows, popular songs, and major magazines—are detailed online at [www.RealisticRomance.com](http://www.RealisticRomance.com).**

The Awards were established 7 years ago by Galician, creator of *Realistic Romance*<sup>®</sup> (The Thinking Person's Relationship Remedy<sup>™</sup>) and head of media analysis and criticism in the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism & Mass Communication at Arizona State University, as part of her media literacy mission to direct public attention to unhealthy, dangerous media myths and to help men and women “get real about romance.”

Galician is an expert on the influence of mass media portrayals on real-life relationships. She is the author of *Sex, Love, and Romance in the Mass Media: Analysis and Criticism of Unrealistic Portrayals and Their Influence* (2004) and *Critical Thinking About Sex, Love, and Romance in the Mass Media: Media Literacy Applications* (2007). Her new book for the general public (available soon) is *REALISTIC ROMANCE<sup>®</sup>: Dr. Galician's 12 Prescriptions<sup>©</sup> and 7-Step Reality Check-Up<sup>©</sup> to Bust Media Myths that Ruin Real-life Relationships*.

—MORE—

**The 12 Stupid Cupid Awards™**—one for each of the dozen major myths that Galician's research has identified as affecting perceptions of romance and that comprise her *Dr. FUN's Mass Media Love Quiz®* (online at [www.RealisticRomance.com](http://www.RealisticRomance.com))—focus attention on mythic and stereotypic media portrayals that Galician says people should never use as models for their own lives. A 13<sup>th</sup> overall award—the Stupidest Cupid Award™ —is given to portrayal with the most myths and stereotypes.

**The 12 Realistic Romance® Awards™**—one for each of *Dr. Galician's Prescriptions® (Rx's) for Getting Real About Romance* (“antidotes” to the 12 myths and stereotypes)—honor the rarer media portrayals of healthy coupleship. The Realistic Romance® Grand Prize™ goes to the overall best example.

More than 1,000 nominations came from the public and Galician's media literacy students. Award recipients were then selected by a panel of judges headed by Galician and including Dr. David Natharius, who is Galician's husband and a gender communication expert.

***The four vacuous material girls of Sex and the City solve their problems with two L-words: labels and liquor, but the real L-word—love—is rarely demonstrated.***

*Sex and the City: The Movie* starring Sarah Jessica Parker got this year's overall Stupidest Cupid Award™ because of the film's “four vacuous material girls who continuously show suggestible audiences that all relationship problems can be solved with two “L-words”: labels and liquor.... Sadly, the real L-word—love—is rarely demonstrated (and never by the Carrie and Mr. Big).

“Instead,” Galician explained, “it promotes a majority of *Dr. FUN's Mass Media Love Quiz®* myths and stereotypes: not only the film's limiting primary theme -- your perfect partner is pre-destined (Myth #—but also the objectified model-like beauty attracts the man (#5) with easy and wonderful sex (#4), and you're incomplete (and, in this film, unable to function) without a romantic partner (#10), particularly if he's richer and more successful (#6).”

In addition to *Sex and the City*, 2009 Stupid Cupid Awardees for the 12 individual myths include popular movies *WALL-E*, *Twilight*, *Fool's Gold*, *Nick and Nora's Infinite Playlist*, *The Hottie and the Nottie*, *Quantum of Solace*, *21*, *Smart People*, *My Best Friend's Girl*, *What Happens in Vegas*, *Indiana Jones and Kingdom of the Crystal Skull*, *Leatherheads*, *Made of Honor*, and *27 Dresses*; television soap operas; magazines *Maxim* and *Cosmo*; and popular songs *Love Story* (Taylor Swift), *See You Again* (Miley Cyrus), *Picture Perfect* (Chris Brown with will.i.am), *No Air* (Jordin Sparks with Chris Brown), and *Johnny and June* (Heidi Newfield); and “media critics who describe mythic and stereotypic portrayals as ‘completely harmless’” along with “schools that don't provide media literacy education.”

***Media portrayals of healthy sex, love, and romance are hard to find.***

“Unfortunately, Stupid Cupid nominees abound in the media,” Galician explains, “but it's much more difficult to find examples of healthy models of sex, love, and romance that are entertaining and appealing.”

—MORE—

***Sweet but not sugary,  
Definitely, Maybe treats us to rarely offered healthy and upbeat media messages  
featuring many of Dr. Galician's Prescriptions©.***

This year's Realistic Romance® Grand Prize™ was awarded to the film *Definitely, Maybe*, whose citation reads in part: "From beginning to end, this sweet but not sugary film treats us to rarely offered healthy and upbeat media messages featuring many of Dr. Galician's Prescriptions©.... And it's still funny and fun, as well as tender and touching. (Bonus: A sensitive and sensible presentation of discussing divorce with a child.)"

Included among the media portrayals honored with the 12 individual Realistic Romance® Awards™ for rare healthier portrayals include the movies *Hancock*, *Jumper*, *Penelope*, *Houser Bunny*, *X-Files: I Want to Believe*, *The Dark Knight*, *The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emporer*, *Forgetting Sarah Marshall*; TV's *How I Met Your Mother*, *Friday Night Lights*, *Pushing Daisies*, *The Office*, *The Simpsons*, and *Britney: For the Record*; popular songs *See My Side* (Jordin Sparks), *Take a Bow* (Rihanna), *Stronger Woman* (Jewel), *So What?* (Pink), and *Better in Time* (Leona Lewis); and media literacy resources that foster critical thinking.

***Media portrayals of sex, love, and romance affect nearly all of us  
— even though we might not realize it.***

Galician's research examines how mass media portrayals of sex, love, and romance affect nearly all of us — men and women, young children and seniors, singles and couples — even though we might not realize it.

"People in my studies with unrealistic expectations are less satisfied in their own romantic relationships," says Galician, who is known as the nation's Realistic Romance® Guru, "and many of these unrealistic expectations come from media we enjoy without fully considering how they influence us at a subconscious level.

"It's also important to remember that when I say 'realistic' I don't mean 'naturalistic' or 'normal,'" she adds, "I mean 'healthy'. I don't want you to lower your standards: I actually want you to raise your standards but lower your mythic and stereotypic expectations, which are unhealthy."

Galician insists that her work "is *not* about censorship or avoiding media. It's all about being a wise media consumer, about using the media instead of the letting media use you, and about 'getting real about romance' to be more successful and happier."

She notes, "It's important to take time to consider how mass media portrayals at the least reinforce — if not create — unrealistic expectations that most of us can't dismiss completely. First we have to understand where they come from. Then we must learn how to analyze and critique them and, most important, how to reframe them more constructively.

—MORE—

Galician's books and programs offer her *7-Step Reality Check-Up®* for analyzing and criticizing unrealistic portrayals. She even includes suggestions about how parents should debrief their children after they view cartoon classics like "Beauty and the Beast" and "Lady and the Tramp" (and this year's Stupid Cupid winner, "WALL-E"), which are seemingly harmless but filled with myths and stereotypes.

***Galician's ultimate advice:  
"Get real about romance!"***

"We can still enjoy the 'escape' that unrealistic romantic media portrayals offer us," Galician says, "but it's not wise to use them -- or media celebrities -- as models in our real lives.

"It's much healthier and smarter to make yourself the hero or heroine of your own true love story."

Her ultimate advice for Valentine's Day -- and every day: "Get real about romance!"

For more information about Galician's *Dr. FUN's Stupid Cupid & Realistic Romance® Awards*  
or to arrange a print or broadcast interview with "Dr. FUN"  
(who IS indeed a very FUN interview!),

**please contact Dr. Mary-Lou Galician directly:**

**DrFUN@RealisticRomance.com**

**480-838-0003 or 602-717-3607.**

***A complete listing of this year's 26 awards  
-- with the citations that explain why the award was made  
appears on the following pages as well as on Dr. Galician's web site  
(where streaming video of Dr. Galician's announcing of the award also appears):***

**www.RealisticRomance.com.**

**NOTE TO EDITORS:**

Do NOT edit the wording of the 12 numbered one-sentence copyrighted Quiz Myths or 12 numbered one-sentence copyrighted Prescriptions (Rxs).

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The 7th Annual Dr. FUN's Stupid Cupid Awards™</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">conferred on 2008 mass media portrayals that exemplify one or more of the 12 Myths &amp; Stereotypes of Dr. FUN's Mass Media Love Quiz©</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The 7th Annual Dr. FUN's Realistic Romance® Awards™</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">honoring 2008 mass media portrayals that model one or more of the 12 Prescriptions© [Rxs] of Dr. Galician's Prescriptions© for Getting Real About Romance</p>
<p><i>These mass media portrayals that appeared in 2008 illustrate and perpetuate the 12 unhealthy and harmful media myths and stereotypes of Dr. FUN's Mass Media Quiz©.</i></p> <p><i>There's a separate award for each of the 12 myths. Dr. FUN's Stupidest Cupid Award™ goes to a 2008 portrayal with the most myths.</i></p> <p><i>It's OK to enjoy the portrayals (well some of them!), but make sure you're aware of the unhealthy models they promote.</i></p> <p><i>For each of the 12 myths, see its "antidote" — the corresponding Dr. Galician Prescription© (Rx) in the listing of the 12 Realistic Romance® Awards™ (column at right).</i></p>	<p><i>These mass media portrayals that appeared in 2008 illustrate and offer good models for successful, healthy relationships — the 12 Dr. Galician's Prescriptions© (Rxs)</i></p> <p><i>There's a separate award for each of the 12 Prescriptions.</i></p> <p><i>The Realistic Romance® Grand Prize™ is awarded to a 2008 portrayal with the most Rxs.</i></p> <p><i>The Rxs are harder to find in the mass media, which are loaded with myths and stereotypes of sex, love, and romance.</i></p> <p><i>Each Rx is an "antidote" to the comparable Dr. FUN's Mass Media Love Quiz© myth or stereotype in the listing of the 12 Stupid Cupid Awards™ (column at left).</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Dr. FUN's Stupidest Cupid Award™</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>AWARDEE: <i>Sex and the City: The Movie</i> (film)</b></p> <p>The cancelled wedding isn't the only disaster in this product-placement-populated popular film sequel of the HBO series about four vacuous material girls who continuously show suggestible audiences that all relationship problems can be solved with two "L-words": labels and liquor.</p> <p>To pretend to know who they are, they have to be designer-labeled (even Carrie's gift to a valued assistant—who quits her job to return to a boyfriend who mistreated her—is received with the film's convoluted conspicuous-consumer formula: "Love = Louis Vuitton"), and they gratuitously gulp down designer cocktails to forget who they actually are.</p> <p>Sadly, the real L-word—love—is rarely demonstrated (and never by the Carrie and Mr. Big). At 4 x 40+ years old, you'd think they'd grow up, but they continue as always and yet expect different results.</p> <p>For example, Carrie complains that Mr. Big is a very bad man who has hurt her for 10 years, but when he suddenly says, "You're the One" (Myth #1), the audience is supposed to be as thrilled as his foolish fiancé.</p> <p>There's more teen-like jumping and screaming by this over-the-hill gang of four than at a Miley Cyrus concert, and these self-centered conspicuous consumers never look beyond their own tightly bonded foursome to do anything for anyone else: "To us" is their hallmark toast.</p> <p>But fickle Carrie takes only a second to show</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Dr. FUN's Realistic Romance® Grand Prize</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>AWARDEE: <i>Definitely, Maybe</i> (film)</b></p> <p>In a year of stale cookie-cutter "romantic comedies" filled with garbage-ready characters and plots, this original, witty, and warm Valentine's Day 2008 release was a sweetheart of a surprise, as was its fresh ending—proof that love story characters and plot can be engaging and entertaining without stooping to the gutter or affecting intellectual banality alarmingly contaminating this genre.</p> <p>From beginning to end, this sweet but not sugary film treats us to rarely offered healthy and upbeat media messages featuring many of Dr. Galician's Prescriptions©.</p> <p>In fact, it's so genuine, it even avoids the fake "555" phone exchange and, more important, avoids unhealthy myths and stereotypes. It's not preachy, but it manages to slip in a caution about smoking.</p> <p>And it's still funny and fun, as well as tender and touching. (Bonus: A sensitive and sensible presentation of discussing divorce with a child.)</p> <p>Over the decades spanned in this "mystery romance," a dedicated dad tells his 11-year-old daughter who asks about the three women he's loved (including her mother, whom he's divorcing), all four adults genuinely evolve and act like adults</p> <p>Although set in the same city as this year's recipient of <i>Dr. FUN's Stupidest Cupid Award™</i> for promoting numerous unhealthy myths and stereotypes (<i>Sex and the City: The Movie</i>), this "Love and the City" film presents a different universe—where women are</p>

<p>that their supposed bond of friendship/sisterhood is as fake as their on/off hair extensions: When Miranda utters just one off-hand sentence that jeopardizes Carrie's already fragile ability to "win" the man of her dreams (he may be mean and hurtful—but he does own the keys to the multi-million-dollar condo of her dreams), Carrie instantly drops Miranda.</p> <p>And MOH Samantha—Carrie's mirror in so many dysfunctional way—demonstrates once again that whenever a truly decent, kind, attractive, committed man appears, these women will be sure to shun him.</p> <p>A majority of <i>Dr. FUN's Mass Media Love Quiz</i>® myths and stereotypes are promoted, including: your perfect partner is pre-destined (#1), the objectified model-like beauty attracts the man (#5) with easy and wonderful sex (#4), and you're incomplete (and, in this film, unable to function) without a romantic partner (#10), particularly if he's richer and more successful (#6).</p>	<p>smart, successful, sexy, strong, sensitive, AND concerned about social issues that empower others (and, thereby, themselves), and men are not all slackers or sluts who abuse women who "love" and can't leave them.</p> <p>In fact, this leading man is a charming idealist whose his feet are on the ground. He's not perfect—even at the end. But he been learning and growing. And he's a great and gracious dad who actually respects his soon-to-be former wife and girlfriends, who literally are long-term friends. As he tells Maya, he fell in love with her mom "because she's smart and beautiful and fun."</p> <p>Like Maya, we not only learn which of these worthy women her dad married (and which he'll begin a new relationship on a new level) but also a number of healthy relational strategies, including consider countless candidates (#1), take time to get to really know your partner before falling in love (#2), and men and women can enjoy respectful, 21<sup>st</sup> century peer coupleship (#6).</p>
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**RECIPIENTS OF THE AWARDS FOR THE 12 INDIVIDUAL MYTHS OR RxS**

<p><b>Myth No. 1: Your perfect partner is cosmically predestined, so nothing/nobody can ultimately separate you.</b></p> <p><b>AWARDEE: <i>Sex and the City: The Movie</i> (film)</b></p> <p>Given that Carrie (rightly) describes Mr. Big as a bad man who has abused her for 10 years, would someone please explain why we're supposed to be overjoyed by this dysfunctional duo's marriage—starting with his "Carrie: You're the One" (even before the opening credits roll) to their "I Dos" at the type of wedding <i>he</i> demands (just before the final credits roll)?</p> <p><b>DIS-HONORABLE MENTION: <i>Love Story</i> (song—recorded by Taylor Swift)</b></p>	<p><b>Rx No. 1: Consider countless candidates.</b></p> <p><b>AWARDEE: <i>Definitely, Maybe</i> (film)</b></p> <p>Raising the tone of the debased romantic comedy genre, this refreshing film demonstrates that we don't have to be slaves of fate and also portrays each of the three women in the romantic past of realistic/idealistic Will Hayes as multi-dimensional worthy women, with each of whom he retains a friendship and with one of whom he's ready to begin a new relationship, based on how they've evolved over years (not the sudden change of heart and mind typical of this too often trite genre).</p> <p><b>HONORABLE MENTION: <i>Hancock</i> (film)</b></p>
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<p><b>Myth No. 2: There's such a thing as "love at first sight."</b></p> <p><b>AWARDEE: <i>WALL-E</i> (animated film)</b></p> <p>Although parents think they can always trust Disney [Pixar], they should "debrief" this appealing and sweet sci-fi blockbuster's multiple unhealthy and dangerous relational strategies with their children: Contrary to the musical sub-text ("It Only Takes a Moment" from the <i>Hello, Dolly!</i> video the lonely robot watches), real love takes time (see <i>Rx No. 2</i>)—and infatuated faithfulness (actually, stalking a stranger that might result in a real-world restraining order) can't melt the metal of a creature with no emotions. Note: Is it true love or true loneliness that motivates WALL-E?</p> <p><b>DIS-HONORABLE MENTION: <i>See You Again</i> (song recorded by Miley Cyrus)</b></p>	<p><b>Rx No. 2: Consult your calendar and count carefully.</b></p> <p><b>AWARDEE: <i>How I Met Your Met Your Mother</i> (television)</b></p> <p>Before proposing Marshall Eriksen (Jason Segel) dated Lily Aldrin (Alyson Hannigan) for almost nine years (<i>without</i> the usual sit-com constant break-up/make-up cycle) and—using their heads as well as their hearts—they took time to carefully plan their wedding and then seriously and thoughtfully consider whether or not to have children and how to prepare properly for them.</p> <p><b>HONORABLE MENTION: <i>Definitely, Maybe</i> (film)</b></p>
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<p><b>Myth No. 3: Your true soul mate should know what you're thinking or feeling (without your having to tell).</b></p> <p><b>AWARDEE: <i>Twilight</i> (film)</b></p> <p>The short-on-communication connection of vampire Edward who sees into the soul of his human love Bella is apparently based solely on pheromones, because whenever she's in trouble he just "nose" he must rescue her—but the only viewers who should match their own expectations and model their own behaviors on this pop culture couple are those whose dating partners are also vampiric (see also <i>Myth No. 11</i>). Everyone else should try courageous communication (see <i>Rx No. 3</i>).</p>	<p><b>Rx No. 3: Communicate courageously.</b></p> <p><b>AWARDEE: <i>Friday Night Lights</i> (television)</b></p> <p>You can learn about a lot more than high school football from this thoughtful TV series: The relational strategies coach Eric Taylor and his guidance counselor/principal wife Tami put into practice constitute a winning playbook of how to engage in respectful and heartfelt discussions rarely demonstrated by media couples. And there's no trite Hail-Mary magic here, as their conflicts are not always immediately resolved, but these happily married and well matched mates continue to work on managing them through dedicated courteous and courageous communication (see also <i>Rx No. 8 and 9</i>).</p> <p><b>HONORABLE MENTION: See <i>My Side</i> (song—recorded by Jordin Sparks); <i>Jumper</i> (film)</b></p>
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<p><b>Myth No. 4: If your partner is truly meant for you, sex is easy and wonderful.</b></p> <p><b>AWARDEE: <i>Fool's Gold</i> (film)</b></p> <p>Instead of genuine love, this on-again/off-again couple (Kate Hudson and Matthew McConaughey in yet another dim-witted rom-CON) settle for emotional fool's gold—simple sexual attraction resulting from the sexual tension of their ludicrous liaisons in inappropriate venues and their bickering and fighting (see <i>Myth No. 8</i>)—which they mistakenly believe proves that their relationship has a basis other than a business partnership.</p> <p><b>DIS-HONORABLE MENTIONS: <i>Nick and Nora's Infinite Playlist</i> (film); soap operas (television)</b></p>	<p><b>Rx No. 4: Concentrate on commitment and constancy.</b></p> <p><b>AWARDEE: <i>Pushing Daisies</i> (television)</b></p> <p>In this clever and colorful detective/fantasy series, a fulltime pie-maker and part-time criminal investigator who can resurrect the dead by touching them once is able to bring his childhood crush back to life but who must be careful around her as his second touch will kill her permanently—so their romantic relationship is focused on their non-sexual but endearingly pristine but passionate and loving devotion to each other, enhanced by the ingenious devices they create to be able to hold hands, the depiction of which is more thrilling than gratuitous casual sex.</p>
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<p><b>Myth No. 5: To attract and keep a man, a woman should look like a model or a centerfold.</b></p> <p><b>AWARDEE: <i>Picture Perfect</i> by Chris Brown with will.i.am (song)</b></p> <p>The men sing a troubling reinforcement of this demeaning and dangerous unrealistic expectation—held by both sexes—that nothing less than “top model chicks from my favorite” will do as men's romantic accessories, a goal toward countless women willingly objectify themselves (“She gotta be a goddess”).</p> <p><b>DIS-HONORABLE MENTIONS: <i>Maxim</i> and <i>Cosmo</i> (magazines); <i>The Hottie and the Nottie</i> (film)</b></p>	<p><b>Rx No. 5: Cherish completeness in companions (not just the cover).</b></p> <p><b>AWARDEE: <i>Penelope</i> (film)</b></p> <p>Although it's difficult for the lovely Christina Ricci to look unattractive just by sporting a rather cute pig snout, in this fairy tale of a modern poor little rich girl cursed until someone learns to love her (and who wards off suitors like her namesake in Homer's <i>Odyssey</i>) handsome and kind James McAvoy touchingly loves her for her charm and wit. Extra-special lesson: It's Penelope herself who breaks the curse by finally coming to love herself.</p> <p><b>HONORABLE MENTION: <i>House Bunny</i> (film)</b></p>
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<p><b>Myth No. 6: The man should not be shorter, weaker, younger, poorer, or less successful than the woman.</b></p> <p><b>AWARDEE:</b> <i>Quantum of Solace</i> (film)</p> <p>It's the 22<sup>n</sup> release of this franchise and it's the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, but Bond still can't bond with a romantic partner who's more than a sidekick shaken and then stirred by Her Majesty's finest example of media male hegemony.</p> <p><b>DIS-HONORABLE MENTION:</b> <i>Sex and the City: The Movie</i> (film)</p>	<p><b>Rx No. 6: Create coequality; cooperate.</b></p> <p><b>AWARDEE:</b> <i>X-Files: I Want to Believe</i> (film)</p> <p>Always a complementary couple as FBI partners, Scully and Mulder take their peer relationship to the next level as they develop a romance based in gender equality that you can believe (though the plot strains the imagination).</p> <p><b>HONORABLE MENTION:</b> <i>Definitely, Maybe</i></p>
<p><b>Myth No. 7: The love of a good and faithful true woman can change a man from a "beast" into a "prince."</b></p> <p><b>AWARDEES (TIE):</b> <i>21</i> (film); <i>Smart People</i> (film); <i>My Best Friend's Girl</i> (film)</p> <p>Ironically, in all three films, the "good" woman whom we're supposed to believe is responsible for reforming a beastly man into a socially acceptable individual headed up a redemptive high road as her own true love actually is <i>NOT</i> so good herself: <i>21</i>'s "heroine" is a card-counting scam artist; <i>Smart People</i>'s emergency room doc should first seek treatment for her own not-so-smart self-destructive behaviors, and <i>My BF's Girl</i> merely sinks to the sewer level of her foul-mouthed slacker bad-boy rather than raising him to a higher level.</p>	<p><b>Rx No. 7: Cease correcting and controlling; you can't change others (only yourself!).</b></p> <p><b>AWARDEE:</b> <i>Dark Knight</i> (film)</p> <p>Batman's longtime love and all-around good woman Rachel Dawes comes to realize that—though she loves the caped crusader whose alter ego is philanthropist Bruce Wayne—she can never be the savior who brings this Dark Knight out of his bat-cave and into the light where he himself can stop playing Gotham's conflicted savior and begin a real romantic relationship with her, so she chooses to remain Bruce Wayne's friend but become D.A. Harvey Dent's fiancée (<i>see also Rx No. 1</i>).</p> <p><b>HONORABLE MENTION:</b> <i>Take a Bow</i> (song—recorded by Rihanna)</p>
<p><b>Myth No. 8: Bickering and fighting a lot mean that a man and a woman really love each other passionately.</b></p> <p><b>AWARDEE:</b> <i>What Happens in Vegas</i> (film)</p> <p>After these two Vegas losers in love and life (Cameron Diaz and Ashton Kutcher) get drunk and married, they sober up and prepare to make their one smart move by immediately divorcing, but then they win a casino jackpot that keeps them together and over which they bicker and fight in the meanest manner throughout this movie whose theme is that their passion for destructive and lack of respect equate to love and a real marriage. (NOTE: The audience has been punk'd.)</p> <p><b>DIS-HONORABLE MENTIONS:</b> <i>Indiana Jones and Kingdom of the Crystal Skull</i> (film); <i>Leatherheads</i> (film)</p>	<p><b>Rx No. 8: Courtesy counts; constant conflicts create chaos.</b></p> <p><b>AWARDEE:</b> <i>The Office</i> (television)</p> <p>Pam and Jim continue to poignantly prove that a courteous couple can win our hearts and hold our attention without resorting to the gratuitous and mean-spirited bickering and fighting of lazy, less talented script-writers.</p> <p><b>HONORABLE MENTION:</b> <i>Pushing Daisies</i> (television)</p>

<p><b>Myth No. 9: All you really need is love, so it doesn't matter if you and your lover have very different values.</b></p> <p><b>AWARDEE: <i>Made of Honor</i> (film)</b>          Why would a supposedly very nice woman (Michelle Monaghan—the new Sandra Bullock) leave a very nice man at the altar and run off to marry her “MOH” and “best friend” since their college days (Patrick Dempsey, who is actually 10 years her senior; see <i>Myth No. 6</i>), the ultimate narcissistic player who treats women, including her best female friend, like dogs (but tells canines, “I love you”—a cheap ploy to persuade us that he’s not <i>all</i> bad)—and why should we applaud their union? Maybe she’s not really so nice (or very bright). See also <i>Myth No. 1</i>.</p> <p><b>DIS-HONORABLE MENTIONS: <i>Fool's Gold</i> (film); <i>What Happens in Vegas</i> (film)</b></p>	<p><b>Rx No. 9: Crave common core-values.</b></p> <p><b>AWARDEE: <i>The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor</i> (film)</b>          Despite the non-sensical (but enjoyable) plot, the relationship of long-married Rick and Evelyn O’Connell demonstrates the benefits of shared values—whether they’re in a mutually agreed retirement to spend time enjoying each other’s company or coming out of retirement to return to their shared love of archeological adventure.</p>
<p><b>Myth No. 10: The right mate “completes you” -- filling your needs and making your dreams come true.</b></p> <p><b>AWARDEE: <i>No Air</i> (song—recorded by Jordin Sparks with Chris Brown)</b>          “My heart won’t move, it’s incomplete,” sings one of these two needy lovers who are so dependent on each other (“How do you expect me to live alone with just me? ‘Cause my world revolves around you.”) that they are enmeshed in a literally unhealthy fashion: “If you ain’t here, I just can’t breathe.”</p> <p><b>DIS-HONORABLE MENTIONS: <i>27 Dresses</i> (film); <i>Sex and the City: The Movie</i> (film)</b></p>	<p><b>Rx No. 10: Cultivate your own completeness.</b></p> <p><b>AWARDEES (TIE): <i>Stronger Woman</i> (song—recorded by Jewel); <i>Forgetting Sarah Marshall</i> (film)</b>  <i>Stronger Woman</i>—Reflecting on an unhealthy romance, Jewel’s self-liberating lyrics proclaim, “...I’m going to be my own best friend/Stick with me till the end/Wont’ lose myself again, never, no/’Cause there’s a stronger woman, a stronger woman in me”—and she adds a precept that many woman (and men) could benefit by adopting: “I’m going to be the kind of woman I’d want my daughter to be.”  <i>Forgetting Sarah Marshall</i>—After his famous TV star girlfriend drops him because he’s a slacker, Peter alternately becomes inactively depressed, sexually promiscuous, and then a Sarah-stalker until he realizes he must grow up and get his life in order, which he operationalizes by getting over the idea that he’s incomplete without Sarah (or even without a new love interest—Rachel—he’s met in Hawaii) and by completing and staging the puppet rock opera he’s long been composing. BONUS: Rachel comes to his show’s premiere, and she, too, has been cultivating her own completeness, so perhaps now they have the foundation to begin a healthy coupleship.</p> <p><b>HONORABLE MENTIONS: <i>So What?</i> (song—recorded by Pink); <i>Better in Time</i> (song—recorded by Leona Lewis)</b></p>

<p><b>Myth No. 11: In real life, actors and actresses are often very much like the romantic characters they portray.</b></p> <p><b>AWARDEE: “Bite-Me, Edward” Fantasy-frenzied Fans of Twilight (film)</b></p> <p>The media and fan frenzy surrounding the release of this first vampire film based on Stephanie Meyer’s best-selling book series, both of which are targeted at adolescent and teen girls (who have established more than 350 related websites), included thousands of young girls lined up overnight at promotional venues to catch a glimpse of Robert Pattinson, the British actor who plays vampire heartthrob Edward Cullen.</p> <p>As the <i>New York Times</i> reported, “The crowd didn’t see an actor. They saw Edward Cullen, the perfect boyfriend who just happens to live on blood.... [And] one young fan ask him to bite her”—which the bewildered 22-year-old actor astutely analyzed: “The connection that I am an actor playing this character is sort of skipped. They are in denial. They think I am Edward Cullen. It is bizarre.... I feel that I am at a disadvantage here because I can’t provide this mystical thing that they came for in the two seconds we have.”</p> <p><b>DIS-HONORABLE MENTION: Johnny and June (song—recorded by Heidi Newfield)</b></p>	<p><b>Rx No. 11: De-construct celebrities.</b></p> <p><b>AWARDEE: Britney: For the Record (MTV documentary)</b></p> <p>The sexy pop-tart “Slave 4 U” is revealed as quite the opposite in a real life that is not to be envied or modeled.</p> <p><b>HONORABLE MENTION: The Simpsons (television)</b></p>
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<p><b>Myth No. 12: Since mass media portrayals of romance aren’t “real,” they don’t really affect you.</b></p> <p><b>AWARDEES (tie): Media critics who describe mythic and stereotypic portrayals as “completely harmless”; schools that don’t provide media literacy education.</b></p> <p>Critics—Although we can still enjoy mythic portrayals of sex, love, and romance in the mass media, research shows they can lead to harmful unrealistic expectations and behaviors; therefore, it’s irresponsible to label all these portrayals as completely harmless simply because they’re fluffy and vacuous.</p> <p>Schools—Media literacy offers foundational concepts and applicable strategies for helping media consumers of all ages to stay in control of the media they use and enjoy—rather than allowing the media to control them. We can and should still enjoy the media, but it’s important to learn how to “dis-illusion” ourselves and our media! Media literacy education in other English-speaking nations is far ahead of the United States. It’s high time for us to catch up.</p>	<p><b>Rx No. 12: Calculate the very real consequences of unreal media.</b></p> <p><b>AWARDEE: Media Literacy Resources</b></p> <p>Again, we can and should still enjoy the media, but it’s important to learn how to “dis-illusion” ourselves and mythic/stereotypic media portrayals of sex, love, and romance. The core of media literacy is critical thinking, and its strategies and skills can be learned and adopted by utilizing a variety of excellent media resources, such as MediaLit.org (Center for Media Literacy), amlainfo.org (National Association for Media Literacy Education), and—of course—RealisticRomance.com.</p>
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