

THE 4TH ANNUAL REALISTIC ROMANCE® AWARDS

(February 2006)

honor 2005 mass media portrayals

that model 1 or more of the 12 Prescriptions (Rxs) of

Dr. Galician's Prescriptions® for Getting Real About Romance.

These mass media portrayals that appeared in 2005 illustrate the 12 prescriptions for healthy relationships. Each one 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*. The portrayal that illustrates the most prescriptions (Rxs) wins the *Realistic Romance® Grand Prize*.

Dr. FUN's Realistic Romance® Grand Prize

Awardee: The 40-Year-Old Virgin (Universal Pictures)

This surprising audience-pleaser delivers a healthy but rarely presented media message that embodies many of *Dr. Galician's Prescriptions*, including the wise advice to take time to get to really know your partner before falling in love and jumping in bed (and to wait for marriage!), see your loved one as a total human being and equal partner, seek shared values -- and it brilliantly teaches its lessons through delicious comedy rather than a pedantic sermon.

Rx No. 1: Consider countless candidates.

Awardee: "How Kind of You" (Paul McCartney)

Through this upbeat apparently autobiographical ballad, widowed and now remarried Sir Paul suggests that there can be more than one great love in your life if we're open to the possibility.

Honorable mention: "Diary of a Mad Black Woman" (BET Pictures)

Rx No. 2: Consult your calendar and count carefully.

Awardee: "The 40-Year-Old Virgin" (Universal Pictures)

The virgin (lovingly portrayed by Steve Carell and his girlfriend (intelligently depicted by Catherine Keener) literally consult a calendar, on which they agree to count and check off the days they've known each other under a variety of circumstances before making a more serious emotional or physical commitment.

Honorable mention: "Gilmore Girls" (The WB)

Rx No. 3: Communicate courageously.

Awardee: "Commander-in-Chief" (ABC-TV)

Despite their most difficult public position (She's the President of the United States; he's a top politician who is now the country's first "First Gentleman"!), series star and producer Geena Davis and Kyle Secor demonstrate important business and personal conversations that are honest and to-the-point communications -- courteous, sincere, and productive. (And the President's mother -- played by Polly Bergen -- is also a clear and cordial communicator who is refreshingly respected and loved by her daughter and by her son-in-law.)

Rx No. 4: Concentrate on commitment and constancy.

Awardee: "The 40-Year-Old Virgin" (Universal Pictures)

Again, this *Realistic Romance* Grand Prize winner uses hilarious humor to pleasantly present this prescription -- and to show the consequences of the usual pop culture approach to juvenile sexual intimacy without mature emotional intimacy. In one of the rarest portrayals, this couple actually waits for marriage to consummate their love -- and the audience actually appreciates that.

Rx No. 5: Cherish completeness in companions (not just the cover).

Awardees (tie): "Beautiful Soul" (Jesse McCartney) and "Fast Cars and Freedom" (Rascal Flatts)

"Beautiful Soul" -- The young former soap star is anything but stereotypic in his lyrics: "I don't want another pretty face; I don't want just anyone to hold; I don't want my love to go to waste; I want you and your beautiful soul."

"Fast Cars and Freedom" -- Likewise, these lyrics honor the whole woman, not just her outward appearance: "Staring at you taking off your makeup; Wondering why you even put it on; I know you think you do, but baby, you don't need it; Wish that you could see what I see when it's gone."

Honorable mention: *Essence* magazine's fashion spreads with diverse and normal-figured women

Rx No. 6: Create coequality; cooperate.

Awardee: "The Cosby Show" (now airing on Nick at Night/TVLand)

For 20 years, the husband and wife in this still running and still popular television classic (which shattered many stereotypes) have been a rarity: an evenly matched peer couple who model loving respect and cooperation. Cliff Huxtable (Bill Cosby) is a respected gynecologist; Clair (Phylicia Rashad) is a successful attorney. They share the duties and responsibilities of child-rearing, income-producing, and housekeeping -- and they still find time to keep their own romantic fires lit. May it air for another 20 year!

Honorable mention: "The Constant Gardener" (Focus Features)

Rx No. 7: Cease correcting and controlling; you can't change others (only yourself!).

Awardee: "House" (FOX Broadcasting)

Instead of trying to change the gruff and often rude Dr. House, Dr. Cameron realizes that she will not be able to change him simply by showering him with her kindness. Though disappointed, she wisely realizes that only he can change himself.

Honorable mention: "Gilmore Girls" (The WB)

Rx No. 8: Courtesy counts; constant conflicts create chaos.

Awardee: "Go, Goodbye" (Brie Larson)

Sick of the "big, big fight" and its "confusing state," the singer wisely acknowledges what "we've got to accept": "U can't stay cuz u bring me down; It's probably the hardest thing to do; Go, goodbye to u."

Rx No. 9: Crave common core-values.

Awardees (tie): "'Cinderella Man" (Universal Studios) and "Their Eyes Were Watching God" (ABC-TV)

"Cinderella Man" -- In this story "inspired" by the life of boxing legend Jim Braddock, Russell Crowe and Renee Zellweger play a married couple whose shared core values are so strong that not even the financial poverty of the Great Depression can impoverish their love.

"Their Eyes Were Watching God" -- Halle Barry portrays the Zora Neale Hurston classic heroine Janie, who comes to realize that her earlier first mythic loves are no match for the true partnership of a love based on shared values.

Rx No. 10: Cultivate your own completeness.

Awardee: "Since U Been Gone" (Kelly Clarkson)

The Grammy-winning performance of Kelly Clarkson even warns against believing media myths and stereotypes: "I even fell for that stupid love song" -- and offers a healthy alternative: "But since you been gone I can breathe for the first time; I'm so movin' on."

Honorable mention: "Gilmore Girls" (The WB)

Rx No. 11: Deconstruct celebrities.

Awardees (tie): "Entourage" (HBO) and "Extras" (HBO)

These humorous spoofs of movie stars attempt to show the differences between the on-screen roles and real lives of actors and actresses -- and why it's important for fawning fans to appreciate their idols' acting talents but to stop conflating reel life with real life (and, perhaps, get a life of their own).

Rx No. 12: Calculate the very real consequences of unreal media.

Awardee: Media literacy books and materials

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. These annual awards are a small but salient step in that direction.

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The 4th Annual *Dr. FUN's Stupid Cupid Awards*

are detailed in the companion document on this site.