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*[THE COMPLETE LIST OF RECIPIENTS OF THE 26 AWARDS
WITH CITATIONS [REASON EACH RECIPIENT GOT AN AWARD]
BEGINS ON PAGE 6 OF THIS MEDIA RELEASE*

-- AND IS ALSO ONLINE WITH STREAMING VIDEO AT www.RealisticRomance.com.]

**Media literacy advocate Dr. Mary-Lou Galician confers her 9th annual
Dr. FUN's Stupid Cupid & Realistic Romance[®] Awards[™]
for worst and best 2010 mass media portrayals
of sex, love, and romance**

***“Love & Other Drugs” gets the 2011 overall Stupidest Cupid Award[™]
for perpetuating numerous unhealthy myths and stereotypes;***

***“Going the Distance” is honored with the 2011 Realistic Romance[®] Grand Prize[™]
for presenting healthy relationship strategies;***

popular films, TV shows, songs, and magazines receive 24 other awards

February 14, 2011—The Jake Gyllenhaal-Anne Hathaway film “Love & Other Drugs” was named the worst and “Going the Distance” starring Drew Barrymore and real-life boyfriend Justin Long was named the best in the 9th annual *Dr. FUN's Stupid Cupid & Realistic Romance*[®] Awards[™] for the past year's mass media portrayals of sex, love & romance, announced each year on Valentine's Day.

“Love & Other Drugs” got the *Stupidest Cupid Award*[™] for perpetuating numerous unhealthy myths and stereotypes of sex, love, and romance that abound in the mass media, while “Going the Distance” was honored with the *Realistic Romance*[®] Grand Prize[™] for presenting healthy relationship strategies, which entertainment media rarely demonstrate.

Recipients of all 26 awards—which include 2010 blockbuster films, top-rated TV shows, popular songs, and major magazines—are detailed at www.RealisticRomance.com.

The awards are an educational public service established 9 years ago by media literacy advocate Dr. Mary-Lou Galician, creator of *REALISTIC ROMANCE*[®]: *The Thinking Person's Relationship Remedy*[™] and founding 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 focus public attention on unhealthy, dangerous media myths and stereotypes and to honor the rarer portrayals that provide healthy models of coupleship and help media consumers “get real about romance.”

Galician, who is affectionately known as “Dr. FUN” because of her musical motivation program *FUN-dynamics!*[®]—*The FUN-damentals of DYNAMIC Living*, is an expert on the influence of mass media portrayals on real-life relationships. She is the author of the textbooks *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). She is working on a new book for the general public—*DR. GALICIAN'S PRESCRIPTIONS*[®] FOR REALISTIC ROMANCE[®]: *The 7-Step Reality Check-Up*[®] to Bust Media Myths that Ruin Real-life Relationships.

—MORE—

How the award recipients are chosen

The 12 Stupid Cupid Awards™—one for each of the 12 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)—focus attention on mythic and stereotypic media portrayals that Galician says people should never use as models for their own lives. A 13th overall award—the Stupidest Cupid Award™—goes to the portrayal with the most myths and stereotypes.

The 12 Realistic Romance® Awards™—one for each of *Dr. Galician's Prescriptions® (Rxs) 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™ is awarded to the overall best example.

More than 1,000 nominations for 2010 media portrayals came from the public and students in Galician's university media literacy classes as well as other classes and groups around the country and around the world that use her books and website, www.RealisticRomance.com.

Assisting Galician to narrow the field of nominations was a panel of judges that included Galician's own husband, Dr. David Natharius, a gender communication expert. The final decision about each award was then made by Galician alone, who also personally writes each citation that explains the reason for each recipient's award. (*Recipients of all 26 awards are listed with their citations [reasons for their awards] beginning on Page 6, below.*)

In “Love & Other Drugs,” a serial seducer/manipulative Viagra salesman is himself seduced by a young woman's perfection despite her early-onset Parkinson's—but no genuine commitment or redemption is actually demonstrated.

Despite the abundance of contenders for this year's overall *Stupidest Cupid Award™* for perpetuating multiple unhealthy myths and stereotypes, Galician explained that “the film ‘Love & Other Drugs’ emerged as the clear choice. Jake Gyllenhaal's character is a manipulative Viagra salesman and serial seducer and Anne Hathaway's is perfectly gorgeous babe despite Stage I Parkinson's.

They share only a devotion to hook-up sex, yet at the 12th hour they suddenly decide to commit to each other no matter how devastating her illness becomes. However, the film conveniently ends before this commitment has to be demonstrated.

“Let me clarify that I'm all for redemptive behavior and sticking with your partner despite illnesses, both in reel life and real life,” Galician added, “but here that's as gratuitous as the nudity. The film promotes nearly all of *Dr. FUN's Mass Media Love Quiz®* myths and stereotypes, not merely the film's limp primary theme—the right mate fills your needs and makes your dreams come true (Myth #10).”

The complete citation is in the full listing of recipients, beginning on Page 6.

In addition to “Love & Other Drugs,” 2011 *Stupid Cupid* awardees for each of the 12 individual myths and stereotypes of *Dr. FUN's Mass Media Love Quiz®* include the following portrayals, several of which were finalists for the overall award:

- (films) “Letters to Juliet,” “When in Rome,” “She’s Out of My League,” “The Twilight Saga: Eclipse,” “Dear John,” “The Last Song,” “Tangled,” “Remember Me,” “The Bounty Hunter,” and “Eat Pray Love”;
- (television) “The Bachelor,” “Gossip Girl,” and “House”;
- (magazines) *Cosmo* and *Maxim*;
- (songs) “Not Like the Movies,” “Mystery of the Night,” “Farmer’s Daughter,” “California Gurls,” “Today Was a Fairy Tale,” “I Love the Way You Lie” (Part I & II), “I Can’t Live with You,” “Otha Half,” and “Teenage Dream”;
- the conflation of TV’s “Glee” actors and their roles;
- 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.”

Charming but not cloying—and refreshingly original (for a rom-com), “Going the Distance” goes a long way toward presenting genuinely healthy messages that rarely form the core of popular media.

This year’s *Realistic Romance® Grand Prize™* was awarded to “Going the Distance,” a film in which Drew Barrymore and real-life boyfriend Justin Long play a couple that endures a lengthy long-distance relationship so each can pursue a budding career on opposite coasts of the country.

Galician explained: “From beginning to end, this charming but not cloying film treats us to rarely offered healthy and upbeat media messages featuring many of *Dr. Galician’s Prescriptions®*, including courageous communication (#3) and courtesy (#8), shared values (#9), commitment to working on a long-term monogamous relationship (#2 and #4) in which both sexes share power in a 21st Century coupleship (#6) and cultivate their own completeness (#10). And it’s still funny and fun—and real.”

The complete citation is in the full listing of recipients, beginning on Page 6.

Galician cautions that even healthier portrayals usually include at least one myth or stereotype (such as the R-rated bong-use and intercourse the night the couple in “Going the Distance” first meet), because media narrative is traditionally based in these techniques. However, the key themes of portrayals that win her *Realistic Romance® Awards™* “strongly reflect healthy prescriptions for good coupleship (and the *Grand Prize* winner reflects several), which are demonstrated throughout the portrayal, not just slapped on in the final moments.”

In addition to the overall *Realistic Romance® Grand Prize™* winner (“Going the Distance”), Galician found worthy portrayals from 2010 to honor with her 12 individual *Realistic Romance® Awards™* for healthier portrayals that exemplify one of *Dr. Galician’s Prescriptions®*:

- (films) “The Back-up Plan,” “Easy A,” “How Do You Know,” “Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows,” “Date Night,” “Just Wright,” “Another Year,” “The King’s Speech,” and “Vampires Suck”;
- (television) “30 Rock: Future Husband episode,” “The Office,” “Numb3rs,” “Mike & Molly,” “How I Met Your Mother,” “Parisian Love” (Google’s Super Bowl XLV commercial), “Undercovers,” “Friday Night Lights,” “South Park: It’s a Jersey Thing episode,” and “30 Rock: Don Geiss, America and Hope episode”;
- (songs) “One in a Million,” “Just the Way You Are,” and “Ridin’ Solo”;
- and media literacy resources that foster critical thinking.

How media consumers can better understand important media literacy tenets that underlie the awards

“The many examples from various media help you more easily and fully discover how to identify dysfunctional *Stupid Cupid* portrayals that could affect you, as well as to appreciate the far better role models in the *Realistic Romance*® portrayals,” Galician explained.

“It’s also best to consider the 12 media myths in terms of their corresponding prescriptions— and vice versa. Accordingly, it’s also best to consider the portrayals that exemplify them by comparing the awardees on ‘both sides’,” she added. “That’s why I list the corresponding awards side-by-side.”

***Reminders for really great sex, love, and romance:
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 has been called 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 (because you’re worth it) 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.

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 one of this year's *Stupid Cupid* winners, "Tangled"), which are seemingly harmless but actually perpetuate counterproductive 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

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

www.RealisticRomance.com.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

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

<p>The 9th Annual Dr. FUN's Stupid Cupid Awards™</p> <p>conferred on 2010 mass media portrayals that perpetuate one or more of the 12 Myths & Stereotypes of Dr. FUN's Mass Media Love Quiz®</p>	<p>The 9th Annual Dr. FUN's Realistic Romance® Awards™</p> <p>honoring 2010 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>These mass media portrayals that appeared in 2010 illustrate and perpetuate the 12 unhealthy and harmful media myths and stereotypes of Dr. FUN's Mass Media Quiz®.</p> <p>There's a separate award for each of the 12 myths. Dr. FUN's Stupidest Cupid Award™—the overall award—goes to a 2010 portrayal with the most myths. It's OK to enjoy these portrayals (well some of them!), but make sure you're aware of the unhealthy beliefs and models they promote.</p> <p>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).</p>	<p>These mass media portrayals that appeared in 2010 illustrate and offer good models for successful, healthy relationships—the 12 Dr. Galician's Prescriptions (Rxs)</p> <p>There's a separate award for each of the 12 Prescriptions.</p> <p>The Realistic Romance® Grand Prize™—the overall award—is awarded to a 2010 portrayal with the most Rxs. The Rxs are harder to find in the mass media, which are loaded with myths and stereotypes of sex, love, and romance.</p> <p>Each Rx is the "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).</p>

RECIPIENTS OF ALL 26 AWARDS

The recipients of the overall awards—the Stupidest Cupid Award™ & the Realistic Romance® Grand Prize™—and their citations (the reason for their awards) are presented first.

Awards for the individual 12 Myths and 12 Prescriptions are listed below these overall award recipients.

<p style="text-align: center;">OVERALL AWARD</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Dr. FUN's Stupidest Cupid Award™</p> <p>AWARDEE: "Love & Other Drugs" (film)</p> <p>If love is merely one of many "drugs" for this film's couple, they need to head to re-hab.</p> <p>A manipulative Viagra salesman and serial seducer (played by Jake Gyllenhaal) is himself instantly seduced (Myth #2: "Love at first sight") by the sight of the perfect bare breasts of an apparently non-commercial artist and part-time coffee-shop waitress played by Anne Hathaway.</p> <p>Her increasingly debilitating Parkinson's disease is not so debilitating that it has the slightest impact on her perfect chest ... or perfect face ... or perfect figure (Myth #5: To attract and keep a man, a woman must be perfectly gorgeous).</p> <p>Also hewing to out-dated hegemony (Myth #6: The man must be the strong, successful, and superior provider), he makes loads of money—while she apparently has very little, despite living alone in a huge loft apartment right in the city, where non-committed perfect sex ensues—a signal these two are meant for</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">OVERALL AWARD</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Dr. FUN's Realistic Romance® Grand Prize™</p> <p>AWARDEE: "Going the Distance" (film)</p> <p>It's always hard to find a worthy popular media example for this overall award, because there are so few truly healthy media portrayals of sex, love, and romance.</p> <p>That's why I was very impressed with "Going the Distance"—a charming but not cloying film in which Drew Barrymore and real-life boyfriend Justin Long portray a healthy, well-matched couple who model many of Dr. Galician's Prescriptions®.</p> <p>They meet while she is completing a brief summer internship at a New York City newspaper, and when it's time for her to return to graduate school at Stanford, they decide to endure a lengthy long-distance romance so each can pursue a budding career on opposite coasts of the country.</p> <p>They commit to (and demonstrate) working on a complete, long-term, monogamous relationship—not just easy sex (Prescriptions #2 and #4). In fact, though they have passionate chemistry when they do get together, they can laugh when their attempted phone sex is futile.</p>
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<p>each other (Myth #4)—together with instances of many of last year's portrayals' increasingly prevalent nasty bickering and fighting, which we're supposed to believe means they love each other passionately (Myth #8).</p> <p>At the end, this couple who have no shared values (except hook-up sex) realize they "love" each other (Myth #9) and that their love fills their needs and makes them complete (Myth #10): He convinces her he'll stick by her side and happily take care of her—even when her disease becomes tragically worse. I'm all for redemptive behavior, but here it's as gratuitous as the nudity because this movie conveniently ends before this commitment has to be actually demonstrated.</p> <p>But that's not all! As the credits are about to roll, he voices-over his decision to quit his lucrative job and go to medical school—where he seems to imagine he'll have the time and the funds to fulfill his promise to take care of her when she becomes totally dependent on him.</p>	<p>During their long separations, they daily communicate courageously (#3), and—unlike too many disheartening rom-coms—they treat each other courteously and respectfully, with appreciation of each other's talents and successes (#8).</p> <p>They don't try to change each other (#7) because they share values (#9), and both sexes share power in their 21st Century peer coupleship (#6) in which they cultivate their own completeness rather than expecting their partner to fill all their needs and make their dreams come true (#10).</p> <p>CAUTION: Even <i>Realistic Romance</i>® Award™-winning portrayals usually include at least one unhealthy myth or stereotype (such as this couple's bong-use and intercourse the night they first meet), because media narrative traditionally relies on these techniques. However, the key themes strongly reflect prescriptions for good coupleship that are demonstrated throughout, not just slapped on in the final moments.</p>
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RECIPIENTS OF THE AWARDS FOR THE INDIVIDUAL 12 MYTHS & 12 Rxs

STUPID CUPID AWARDS™ (Myths)

REALISTIC ROMANCE® AWARDS™ (Rxs)

<p>Myth #1: Your perfect partner is cosmically predestined, so nothing/nobody can ultimately separate you.</p> <p>STUPID CUPID™ AWARDEE: "Letters to Juliet" (film)</p> <p>In Verona, an aspiring writer (Amanda Seyfried) joins the "Secretaries of Juliet" and finds and answers a long-lost appeal for advice from this fictional Italian tourist attraction that was penned 50 year ago by a young Englishwoman confused about the suitability of her poor Latin lover. One week after receiving the response urging her to return to seek her long-lost love, the now elderly and conveniently widowed woman (Vanessa Redgrave) returns with her doubting grandson (Christopher Egan), and the three of them find Lorenzo, who is now a wealthy vineyard owner (also conveniently widowed)—and their wedding a week later shows that it's never too late when "Destino" is in charge. Ditto for the young couple, who argue non-stop (see #8, below).</p> <p>DIS-HONORABLE MENTION: "Mystery of the Night" (song); "Not Like the Movies" (song)</p>	<p>Rx #1: Consider countless candidates.</p> <p>REALISTIC ROMANCE® AWARDEE: "One in a Million" (song)</p> <p>Ne-Yo sings that of all the countless girls he's been with—"top model chick to your every day hood"—he's "never met anyone one like you ... you're so one in a million." And it's a plus that "that independent thing, I'm with it" (#10).</p> <p>HONORABLE MENTION: "The Back-up Plan" (film); "30 Rock: Future Husband episode" (television)</p>
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<p>Myth #2: There's such a thing as "love at first sight."</p> <p>STUPID CUPID™ AWARDEE: "When in Rome" (film)</p> <p>This myth is doubled in this travelogue starring Kristen Bell as a New Yorker who attends the Rome wedding of her younger sister to an Italian she met only two weeks prior (Don't they post banners in their churches?)—and who likewise finds true love instantly with a handsome American usher at the ceremony.</p> <p>DIS-HONORABLE MENTION: "Dear John" (film); "The Bachelor" (television); "Today Was a Fairy Tale" (song)</p>	<p>Rx #2: Consult your calendar and count carefully.</p> <p>REALISTIC ROMANCE® AWARDEE: (tie): "Numb3rs" (television); "The Office" (television)</p> <p>"Numb3rs"—The mutual attraction of Charlie and Amita grew into love over the years, culminating in their wedding (ironically, the series sudden finale).</p> <p>"The Office"—Similarly, the love of Pam and Jim took time to develop, and now they are happily married with a child.</p> <p>HONORABLE MENTION: "Parisian Love" (Google's Super Bowl XLV television commercial)</p>
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<p>Myth #3: Your true soul mate should know what you're thinking or feeling (without your having to tell).</p> <p>STUPID CUPID™ AWARDEE: "Mystery of the Night" (song)</p> <p>Because "it's Destiny" (#1) and "you can hear the angels sing," Ringo Starr claims, "We don't even have to say the words." (Doesn't this mean you don't need to sing them either, Ringo?)</p> <p>DIS-HONORABLE MENTION: "Not Like the Movies" (song)</p>	<p>Rx #3: Communicate courageously.</p> <p>REALISTIC ROMANCE® AWARDEE: "Mike & Molly" (television)</p> <p>It's lovely to observe this sweet couple—a policeman and an elementary school teacher—whose courageous communication at an Overeaters Anonymous Meeting extends to their own developing romance. (See also #8.)</p> <p>HONORABLE MENTION: "Going the Distance" (film); "How I Met Your Mother" (television)</p>
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<p>Myth #4: If your partner is truly meant for you, sex is easy and wonderful.</p> <p>STUPID CUPID™ AWARDEE: "Love & Other Drugs" (film)</p> <p>Their passionate hook-up sex—occasioning the film's gratuitous nudity that is artistic but curiously uninvolved—is supposed to make us (and them) believe they're meant for each other, as does their make-up sex after the nearly constant bickering and fighting (#8).</p> <p>DIS-HONORABLE MENTION: "Farmer's Daughter" (song); "Gossip Girl" (television)</p>	<p>Rx #4: Concentrate on commitment and constancy.</p> <p>REALISTIC ROMANCE® AWARDEE: (tie): "Easy A" (film); "How Do You Know" (film)</p> <p>"Easy A"—With a literate, witty, bright script and acting to match (led by star —unusual in teen films—this clever and warm-hearted satire pokes fun at foolishly sexualized attempts at popularity and romance (as well as overly pious campaigners), thereby demonstrating the Prescription.</p> <p>"How Do You Know"—After discovering the emptiness of a relationship based in merely in sex (with Owen Wilson), Reese Witherspoon's character decides to work on more well rounded relationship with a partner (Paul Rudd) more likely to be monogamous.</p> <p>HONORABLE MENTION: "Date Night" (film); "Harry Potter & the Deathly Hallows" (film); "Parisian Love" (Google's Super Bowl XLV television commercial)</p>
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<p>Myth #5: To attract and keep a man, a woman should look like a model or a centerfold.</p> <p>STUPID CUPID™ AWARDEE: "She's Out of My League" (film)</p> <p>In this weak re-hash of "There's Something About Mary," a gorgeous, gracious, and successful young woman (the first shot of whom is of only her boobs) pursues a sweet but geeky, spineless "loser" with whom she has nothing in common (#9)—not because she's attracted to him but because she wants to avoid being hurt by men who aren't "so nerdy." Do you think a nerdy female would ever win a gorgeous, gracious, and successful man in a Hollywood film?</p> <p>DIS-HONORABLE MENTION: "The Bachelor" (television); "California Gurls" (song); "Cosmo" (magazine); "Love & Other Drugs" (film); "Maxim" (magazine)</p>	<p>Rx #5: Cherish completeness in companions (not just the cover).</p> <p>REALISTIC ROMANCE® AWARDEE: "Just Wright" (film)</p> <p>In more stereotypic portrayals, women who are less than model-esque must settle for unattractive or less successful romantic partners (if they get any at all)—but in this inspiring story that concentrates on the importance of inner beauty, Queen Latifah—as a truly nice, accomplished, attractive (but not pencil-slim) woman—not only gets the man but a successful, dreamy hunk who values her as a total person: a professional basketball star played by Common, with whom she share values (#9).</p> <p>HONORABLE MENTION: "Just the Way You Are" (song)</p>
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<p>Myth #6: The man should not be shorter, weaker, younger, poorer, or less successful than the woman.</p> <p>STUPID CUPID™ AWARDEE: “The Twilight Saga: Eclipse” (film)</p> <p>Vampire Edward want to protect vapid Bella from werewolf Jacob. Werewolf Jacob wants to protect her from Edward. Even though these two males are foes, they unite (along with all the Cullen family good vampires and all the good werewolves) to protect her from the newborn vampires who are coming to kill her. “Vampires Suck” (see Rx #12) offers a campy, better-acted spoof.</p> <p>DIS-HONORABLE MENTION: “”Not Like the Movies” (song); “Sex & the City 2” (film); “Today Was a Fairy Tale” (song)</p>	<p>Rx #6: Create coequality; cooperate.</p> <p>REALISTIC ROMANCE® AWARDEE: “Undercovers” (television)</p> <p>This J.J. Abrams series—starring Boris Kodjoe and Gugu Mbatha-Raw as African American husband-and-wife catering team who are recalled in each episode to their former CIA spy capers—showed a peer couple on every level: equally highly attractive, intellectually and physically superior, and charmingly gracious to each other and their cohorts. What a shame this bright spot of needed diversity and diversion got cancelled so quickly!</p> <p>HONORABLE MENTION: “The Back-up Plan” (film)</p>
<p>Myth #7: The love of a good and faithful true woman can change a man from a “beast” into a “prince.”</p> <p>STUPID CUPID™ AWARDEE: (tie): “Dear John” (film); “The Last Song” (film)</p> <p>“Dear John”— Army Sgt. John Tyree (Channing Tatum) —a dour tough guy with a bad reputation who still bears up anyone who gets in his way—falls in love (#2) the minute he sees Savannah (Amanda Seyfried), an upbeat, genteel young woman who does volunteer work and doesn’t smoke or drink. Her goodness ultimately succeeds in making John a kinder, gentler man.</p> <p>“The Last Song”—Although it’s usually a good woman who changes a bad man, in this film it’s a nice guy whose grounded goodness magically transforms the moody, misanthropic Miley Cyrus character. (<i>Note: This Myth is better understood as a metaphor about your own good side overcoming your own bad side!</i>)</p> <p>DIS-HONORABLE MENTION: “House” (television); “Remember Me” (film); “Tangled” (animated film)</p>	<p>Rx #7: Cease correcting and controlling; you can’t change others (only yourself!).</p> <p>REALISTIC ROMANCE® AWARDEE: “The Back-up Plan” (film)</p> <p>Jennifer Lopez plays a woman in her 30s who wants to have a child. She’s dated lots of men but hasn’t found an appropriate partner—so she has an artificial insemination, immediately after which she meets a nice guy who is attracted to her (Alex O’Loughlin). They both own small businesses, and they finally connect. Although they have some ups and downs occasioned by her pregnancy, they don’t try to change each other. In fact, at one point when she realizes he doesn’t seem to be able to cope with her condition, she just goes back to being on her own. But he re-thinks the situation (working on changing his own views) and returns with renewed commitment to her and the twins she’s about to bear— one he’s engendered but to both he’s a good dad.</p> <p>HONORABLE MENTION: “Going the Distance” (film)</p>
<p>Myth #8: Bickering and fighting a lot mean that a man and a woman really love each other passionately.</p> <p>STUPID CUPID™ AWARDEE: (tie): “The Bounty Hunter” (film); “I Love the Way You Lie—Parts I & II” (song)</p> <p>“The Bounty Hunter”—We’re never shown any basis for genuine love between these two ill-matched, divorced, non-stop brutal battlers (Jennifer Aniston and Gerard Butler) who mistake heat for passion. They don’t know that love is about peace, not war—or perhaps they’re just addicted to chaos and drama.</p> <p>“I Love the Way You Lie” (Parts I & II)—The lyrics of this Eminem recording “with an unexpected feature of Rihanna” are beyond unexpected: They “hate” each other, physically brutalize each other, need to go their separate but are too drunk on the drama to do so—and in Part II, Rihanna (a domestic violence victim) inexplicably sings that she’s “refused counselin” and she’d be lost without her abuser, whom she “loves.” Let’s hope their intention is cautionary.</p> <p>DIS-HONORABLE MENTION: “I Can’t Live with You” (song); “Leap Year” (film); “Letters to Juliet” (film); “Love & Other Drugs” (film)</p>	<p>Rx #8: Courtesy counts; constant conflicts create chaos.</p> <p>REALISTIC ROMANCE® AWARDEE: (tie): “Friday Night Lights (television); “Mike & Molly” (television); “Undercovers” (television)</p> <p>Refreshingly, all three television series consistently demonstrate courteous, respectful coupleship without becoming syrupy or unreal.</p> <p>HONORABLE MENTION: “Another Year” (film); “Going the Distance” (film); “The Office” (television)</p>

<p>Myth #9: All you really need is love, so it doesn't matter if you and your lover have very different values.</p> <p>STUPID CUPID™ AWARDEE: "Leap Year" (film)</p> <p>After bickering and fighting (#8) on a disastrous road trip with an in-debt Irish pub owner (Matthew Goode) she's just met, a kiss is all high-brow New Yorker Amy Adams needs to suddenly decide he's the man for her—even though their values are 180 degrees apart. And he's suddenly ready with an engagement ring for her.</p> <p>DIS-HONORABLE MENTION: "The Bounty Hunter" (film); "Dear John" (film); "She's Out of My League" (film)</p>	<p>Rx #9: Crave common core-values.</p> <p>REALISTIC ROMANCE® AWARDEE: "Another Year" (film)</p> <p>The relationship of the delightful long-married couple (Jim Broadbent and Ruth Sheen) in this low-key but riveting British film demonstrates the benefits of shared values—and as parents, they clearly provide great role models for their adult son, who likewise chooses a woman with whom he can share laughter and love.</p> <p>HONORABLE MENTION: "How Do You Know" (film); "Just Wright" (film); "The King's Speech" (film)</p>
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<p>Myth #10: The right mate "completes you"—filling your needs and making your dreams come true.</p> <p>STUPID CUPID™ AWARDEE: (tie): "Eat Pray Love" (film); "Tangled" (animated film)</p> <p>"Eat Pray Love"—The vapid, self-indulgent egoist (Julia Roberts, portraying real-life memoirist Liz Gilbert) spends a post-divorce year trying to "find herself" but only succeeds in finding another husband, with whom she shares nothing but "two sad divorces" and who tells her she needs "a champion"—illustrating her unhealed unhealthy dependency rather than the inter-dependent love of healthy couples.</p> <p>"Tangled"—Disney's Rapunzel re-write purports to give us a modernized independent young heroine, but the kidnapped princess who sweetly sings of so many goals she wants to achieve quickly forgets and changes her tune to settle for being a princess and marrying a common thief her goodness has reformed (#7). The answer to one of her other songs—"When Will My Life Begin?"—is clearly: when a man appears to rescue her (#6).</p> <p>DIS-HONORABLE MENTION: "The Bachelor" (television); "Love & Other Drugs" (film); "Otha Half" (song); "Teenage Dream" (song)</p>	<p>Rx #10: Cultivate your own completeness.</p> <p>REALISTIC ROMANCE® AWARDEE: "Going the Distance" (film)</p> <p>Though they've worked hard at their long-distance relationship while they work on improving their budding careers, the 30-something couple portrayed by Drew Barrymore and real-life boyfriend Justin Long finally have to take a coupleship break because they can't find jobs on the same coast. Courteous (#8) and candid (#3) throughout their love affair, they part as friends. (It's a refreshingly unusual rom-com in which the female doesn't have to give up everything for the male, nor is the male a lap dog to the female.) Ultimately, their focus on their professional passions pay off, and they wind up merely on opposite ends of the same state (California)—renewing their friendship and resuming their romance.</p> <p>HONORABLE MENTION: "The Back-up Plan" (film); "Ridin' Solo" (song)</p>
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<p>Myth #11: In real life, actors and actresses are often very much like the romantic characters they portray.</p> <p>STUPID CUPID™ AWARDEE: Fan Who Forget that "Glee" Actors Are Not Their Roles (television)</p> <p>Although it's a long overdue but welcome step when young gay performers can be themselves off-stage, fans of this hit musical drama sometimes confuse the reel life and real life of the cast's gay (or straight) actors with their gay (or straight) characters. Fan claim to know the difference between fiction and reality, but their behaviors frequently belie that fact.</p>	<p>Rx #11: De-construct celebrities.</p> <p>REALISTIC ROMANCE® AWARDEE: (tie): "30 Rock: Don Geiss, America and Hope episode (television); "South Park: It's a Jersey Thing episode" (television)</p> <p>Both of these satires cleverly skewer and satirize our conflation of media celebrities' reel-lives and real-lives, as well as the related fanatical feelings and behavior of fans ("30 Rock" exposes Tracy's bad-boy image as merely catering to fans' expectations; "South Park" brilliantly spooks "Jersey Shore")—reminding us to apply this Prescription.</p>
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<p>Myth #12: Since mass media portrayals of romance aren't "real," they don't really affect you.</p> <p>STUPID CUPID™ AWARDEE: (tie): Media critics who describe mythic and stereotypic portrayals as "completely harmless"; Schools that don't provide media literacy education.</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 "<i>dis-illusion</i>" 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>DIS-HONORABLE MENTION: "Not Like the Movies" (song)</p>	<p>Rx #12: Calculate the very real consequences of unreal media.</p> <p>REALISTIC ROMANCE® AWARDEE: Media Literacy Resources</p> <p>Remember: We can and should still enjoy the media, but it's important to learn how to "<i>dis-illusion</i>" 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 [CML]), amlainfo.org (National Association for Media Literacy Education [NAMLE])—formerly the Alliance for a Media Literate America [AMLA]), and—of course—RealisticRomance.com.</p> <p>HONORABLE MENTION: "Vampires Suck" (film)</p>
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