Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Real Love Is Great, and It Isn't Like the Movies

Jane Atkinson · Thursday, September 15th, 2011

Most TV shows and movies really don't prepare us for the realities of love.

They're entertaining, which is, of course, the point that leads to the almighty cha-ching, and they offer the standard romance formula:

Boy meets girl.

Boy falls for girl.

Challenge occurs.

Boy loses girl.

Challenge overcome.

Boy and girl live happily ever after.

Barf.

They rarely show the reality of how difficult it is to find true love, the silly little issues that can tear us apart and to how to keep it. That wouldn't be entertaining, now would it?

For years, I wasn't the bride, or the *Bachelorette;* my *Bridesmaids* experiences weren't extreme, and I never back-stabbed other women for a *Bachelor*… although, yes, I wanted to fall into *Crazy, Stupid Love.*
It took me years and years to find the man of my dreams.

The discomfort came in many forms.

First there were the internet coffee dates….

Walking nervously in to a Starbucks and asking the wrong guy, "Are you Richard?"

Finally connecting with Richard only to find out that he's still married. "Oh, you have an arrangement? That's awesome. Bye-bye, Dick."

Then there's the punch in the gut from the guy that you date for four years before you realize *He's*

Just Not That Into You. Ouch!

Reality shows like *The Bachelor,* whose producers just announced a Sonoma winemaker as the McGuffin for the January, 2012, season, show us nothing of actual reality. How many dates have you been on in a private jet? Put me down for zero. And it's no surprise that those relationships fail when the cameras stop rolling, since they are born under such ridiculous circumstances.

I had to stop counting on pop culture to help me break my winless streak. I figured out my own formula and set about doing my own extreme life makeover.

It paid off but there was a tremendous amount of discomfort pushing past some of my old beliefs. I had to clean out my emotional closet and ditch the baggage that I didn't want to keep schlepping from relationship to relationship.

I worked super hard on staying open to love and got myself into a place of happiness and peace. And then, he just showed up.

Rarely in TV or movies do you see the real work that goes into finding love and the struggle it is to keep it. Heck, even the boring parts are glossed over.

I think that might be why I find *Crazy, Stupid Love* is so delightful. It's much closer to reality.

Man has girl.

Man loses mojo.

Man loses girl.

Steve Carell plays discomfort so well. The $50 million film will gross about $80 million in North America, and will be out on DVD in time for the holidays.

Bridesmaids (pictured above), which comes out on DVD next week, is full of raunch and discomfort. It's damn funny (and the filmmakers laughed all the way to the bank – the $33 million movie that has grossed over $280 million worldwide), but the only real relationship in the movie (with the cop) is one of self-sabotage which I can relate to in my early dating years. Although I'm not sure how often you'd attract someone great when you're at rock bottom in your life.

The reality is that finding love and keeping it is hard work. When it comes to TV and movies, be entertained but don't expect them to prepare you for anything real.

This entry was posted on Thursday, September 15th, 2011 at 10:29 am and is filed under Film
You can follow any responses to this entry through the Comments (RSS) feed. You can leave a response, or trackback from your own site.