

How Romantic Comedies Lie To Us

Men and women, bless us all. We shall never truly understand one another. I think we've all resigned ourselves by now to the fact that we're going to have our ins and outs. We'll all experience both the bitter pain of heartbreak and the blissful joy of love. It's a cliché to expect a rampant, torrid love affair in your life; the love at first sight, rip each other's clothes off, then get married and live happily into your autumn years, aging gracefully as you watch your grandchildren win the big sports game. No one can realistically expect that to happen, but not because love is a fantastical myth. Love is very real indeed, but the problem that we all have with finding it is that people like Mel Gibson and Jude Law have completely ruined the idea of romantic love.

It's not all flowers and happiness. Just as often, and even more importantly, it's anguish, torture and compromise. Our interactions are fueled by the awkward sadness and anger that drives us all to love in the first place, not by the insane Hollywood drivel that we see every time we enter a movie theater. So what are we, the common man, supposed to do in a landscape of garbage like this? The problem is that our expectations have been elevated so insanely by devils like Matthew McConaughey and Josh Hartnett. The simple truth is that real love, the kind that is in the grasp of everyone, isn't like that.

It would be nice, wouldn't it? You meet on a cruise and she spills a cocktail on you during a fancy dinner at the captain's table, then you go through a fumbling and innocent courtship in which one of you is constantly supplying some sort of comic relief. Maybe one of you is sexually inexperienced, that's always good for a laugh. However, despite what Ben Stiller would like you to believe, romance is much more complicated and beautiful than that. The connection that two humans can forge is so much harder to maintain than the quick, easy, breakup-then-get-back-together formula that we've all become accustomed to.

Scripted Romance

We should all be striving to break away from the impossible circumstances that we see in the movies, the unattainable goal that is the heated love affair. It may sound defeatist, but it's really not. It's not even a realist's view of the whole courtship ritual; I just refuse to believe that anything that is truly beautiful and holy can be captured on celluloid film. Whatever is going on in the chambers of the human heart is a strange and foreign beast, one that will not be slayed by romantic platitudes.

The happiest parts of my romantic life have been the pointless little interactions that weren't worthy of a big budget film, things that would get a screenwriter fired. And I wouldn't trade any of them for even a chance at a wacky sea-faring adventure. So my advice is this: stop waiting to be swept off of your feet by someone who will take you on a rollercoaster ride of romance and excitement, stop expecting to stumble onto a love that is pure as the driven snow and will last until time immemorial. Love is not going to be crammed into the spaces you've made for it. You cannot control what shape or form it will take. It will tell you what it wants to do, but you can enjoy the ride, go nuts. Fall madly in love at every opportunity and really throw yourself into something that is beautiful and innocent, but don't expect it to be bullied into the constraints that you have made for it, because real love is something that will not be changed or shaped. We're spectators in this enterprise, passengers at best, and that's the way it should be.

Infatuation fades, love lasts

Psychologists are now saying that humans can only stay in love, or what we recognize as love, for a period of 18 months. Just a year and a half and then it changes; it evolves into something else. That warm, fuzzy feeling that we all strive to retain indefinitely, its shelf life is just six short seasons, roughly the same longevity as your average sitcom, and we should stop trying to change that. We'll never be able to prolong our infatuations or our devotions past their natural and organic life. We can't make love last one second longer than it wants to, and that's the best part of it. Love is a challenge, it's never easy, it's always extremely rewarding, but it's nearly impossible to force. So don't try to, let these things happen, because what they can be is so much better than what you'll try to make them.

About the Author

Author is co-founder of GirlsAskGuys.com, a Q&A website where men and women can ask, answer questions and learn anything and everything about men and women. [GirlsAskGuys](http://GirlsAskGuys.com) offers hundreds of articles, thousands of questions and answers, all providing [Relationship Advice!](#) Article originally published at www.GirlsAskGuys.com.

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