



PHOTOILLUSTRATION: SAM BROOKS

TEAR-JERKING FALSEHOODS Men are more willing to sit through a “chick flick” if they know it’s a work of fiction.

Males handle fictional ‘chick flicks’ better than true stories—study

RACHEL HENDRICKS
News Writer

Women dragging their spouses to the latest chick flick might do well to tell them it’s based on fiction.

The University of Alberta’s Dr Jennifer Argo, who teaches marketing in the School of Business, found that while women prefer emotional melodramas that are based on true stories, men prefer the fictitious variety.

“If you were to ask [a man] if he would like to go to Blockbuster and pick out a movie, chances are he’s not going to be picking melodramatic entertainment, even though it’s based on fiction,” Argo explained. “But if they have to endure it, have to suffer through with their girlfriend or spouse, they’ll like it more if it’s based on fiction.”

The study, which Argo authored with Drs Rui Zhu and Darren Dahl of the University of British Columbia for the February issue of the *Journal of Consumer Research*, asked research participants to read the transcript of a TV pilot idea. The narratives were actu-

ally short stories which Argo described as featuring protagonists who work to overcome obstacles with perseverance and endurance, and which also contain an element of sadness.

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DR JENNIFER ARGO
U OF A SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

The result was that male participants who were told that the tear-jerker narrative was a “make-believe story” beforehand rated the story to be much more enjoyable than those who were told it was a “real-life story.”

But the team has an idea as to why men might find make-believe melodramas more appealing.

“Men use the info that it is fictional as an excuse to let down their tough-

guy facades in a safe setting. When a story is make-believe they can leave the story and the way it made them feel behind when they shut their book or leave the theatre, as it doesn’t impinge on their real life,” Argo said.

“When the story is real they can’t as easily leave the story behind, and so as a result they maintain their ‘big boys don’t cry’ stereotypes.”

The team, therefore, has some innovative suggestions for the movie industry.

“They often tell you at the beginning of a movie if it’s based on fact,” Argo said. “That is bad if you want the males to enjoy the movie. So if you want to appeal to males, don’t say that. And if it’s based on fiction and you want to appeal to men, make sure you put the line in.”

Argo said that the research will also be of interest to advertisers, who aim to reach members of their target audience in good moods, since TV viewers are known to rate products more favourably when advertised during programs they enjoy.

Frat controversy not new to the Garneau area

FRAT HOUSE • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

“This house is closer to campus, which is better for students, and it’s close to other fraternity houses and rental properties, so we’ll be of little impact to the community,” Upright explained. “This house also had a more reasonable asking price than a lot of other houses that are close to campus.”

“Through our older members, we provide some of the best internship and networking opportunities for a lot of guys.”

JAMES UPRIGHT
ZETA PSI PRESIDENT

Upright said he believes that Zeta Psi is the victim of negative stereotypes against fraternities. But Nancy Hunt, a resident of the house two doors down from the proposed fraternity house, said the needs of her family need to be considered.

“There are already fraternities in the area. I would say we’re living in harmony right now, but I’ve been living here for twelve years and I know what they are. They do have parties. They’re social,” Hunt said.

“Another fraternity in the area would just be too much,” she added.



CYRIL BALITBIT

DON’T TAKE MY HOUSE, BRO Upright stands in front of the would-be frat house.

“We’ve actually already called in noise complaints about [the proposed Zeta Psi house because] there are fraternity people living there.”

There are currently three fraternity

houses and one sorority house on 87th avenue, as well as two sorority houses and one fraternity house just west of 110th street. City Council is scheduled to hear the case in the spring.

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