

Chick Flicks

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The primary author is the individual who drafted the first version of this section; a section that could have been modified since it was originally published.

Chick Flicks are commonly known as the films women love and men dread. The love, heartbreak, tragedy and rekindling of romance leaves most women in tears of sadness or jealousy and most men laughing at the ridiculous expectations of women. Chick Flicks are also known as "Guy Cries," "Girly Films," or "Romance Films." Not to say that no man enjoys a well written film with drama and tragedy, but most men will yawn at the thought of a woman turning on *The Notebook* (2014) by Nicholas Sparks or other similar films.

Many of these films have similar plots. Man and woman meet, start to fall in love, a tragic incident occurs, and then—by some magical happening—the two meet again to fall in love and live happily ever after. Chick Flicks are created to make you feel a certain way; to make the viewer get emotionally attached to a certain character and relate to them in as many ways as possible so that any and everything that happens to them in the film seems like a personal connection. This connection is what makes a viewer upset when watching the film which is why many women will cry while watching this genre of film.

Nick Cassavetes, born May 21, 1959, is one director that produces many romance films in the chick flick genre. Some of his most popular films are *The Notebook*, *My Sisters Keeper* (2004), and *The Other Woman* (2014). The son of Gena Rowlands, an actress, and John Cassavetes, an actor/film director, Cassavetes was almost destined to end up in the film business. He originally went to Syracuse University on a basketball scholarship, but was injured. After realizing his athletic career was over, he decided to get back into the film industry. Cassavetes started as a film and television actor and eventually went on to writing and directing.

Cassavetes is not the only person in the film industry known for making Chick Flicks. Adam Shankman was another famous director who directed and produced many romance films. Shankman was the director of *A Walk to Remember* (2002) and the producer of *The Last Song* (2010). Unlike Cassavetes, Shankman was raised in a "traditional Jewish upbringing" and went on to Juilliard to be a dancer. After dancing in music videos with Paula Abdul and Janet Jackson, he started doing choreography for movies which in turn led to him helping his sister write the script for *The Wedding Planner* (2001) which was his first feature film as a director.



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Last updated on 20 December 2014

Photo Credit: *Save Haven* (2013) poster

These men do not have too many characteristics in common but they have each directed a film based on a book written by Nicholas Sparks. Sparks is one of the most popular romance novelists. His novels allow readers to create a picture in their heads of the love story between the main characters and become attached just as they would in a film. Sparks' books are frequently turned into films because most of them have all the basic traits of a romance film and are best-selling novels.

Chick Flicks have a connection to the psychology of romance. Sigmund Freud for example proposed the question of what women want in the early 1930s and came up with his own theory of "penis envy." Penis Envy postulates that women loathe their mothers during the Phallic Stage (ages 3-5) because they do not have a penis. Girls, according to Freud, hold their mothers responsible for "their lack of penis and do not forgive her for their being put at a disadvantage." Karen Horney has since argued against Freud's hypothesis by coming to the conclusion that it is actually men who have "womb-envy" because "Men are jealous of their in-ability to have children."

Today, psychologists have come up with a list of different things they think women want and need from a man.

- **Respect:** A woman wants a man to respect her opinions, interests and career.
- **Sex.** Yes women want sex; it is not just a want that men have. Men will get an erection from images, thoughts and touch. Women will respond with sexual desires to anything; even when shown a film of monkeys having intercourse women displayed sexual interest. This is explained by Canadian researchers Kelly Suschinsky and Martin Lalumiere, who say that "the vagina immediately becomes moist at any hint of sexual activity...to protect the women from injury in the event of rape or sexual violence."
- **Time, Dinner and Romance:** Psychologists believe women want a man to think of them every once in a while. Treat them like a top priority by giving them their time, make them feel thought about by surprising them with a homemade dinner and keeping the romance alive by going on dates and kissing in public as if it is the first date all over again.
- **Communication:** Women want to be told that they are loved. Something as simple as telling a woman that she's beautiful and taking time to communicate that the dinner she made is appreciated.
- **Consistency and Engagement:** Not with a ring and a promise to wed, but "interaction such as remembering her best friend's husband's name" to prove that you care and are paying attention.
- **Humor and Humility:** Women love a man who can laugh at himself and doesn't take life too seriously; someone they can laugh and have fun with.
- **Challenge:** Psychologists believe women love a challenge; not a constant fight or battle but someone to motivate them and push them farther in life. A woman wants a man that will not support her lazy habits and pushes her to better herself.



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Many Chick Flicks have most of the elements psychologists believe women want which explains why women like to watch Chick Flicks and Romance Films. A woman may be portraying her desires through the movie to the man she's watching it with. Simply watching a romantic movie with one's significant other may open up a whole new realm of ideas on how to improve a relationship.

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