

# The 40-year-old virgin a movie review movie review

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The basic premise behind Director Judd Apatow's comedy, *The 40-Year-Old Virgin*, is obvious from its title: its main character, Andy (Steve Carell), is still a virgin and his friends at work want to help him remedy that "problem" by attempting various schemes to help him lose his virginity. As with other comedies, Andy experiences many pitfalls, embarrassing moments, and humiliating situations before finally marrying an understanding woman, Trish (Catherine Keener), and having his first sexual encounter with her.

A good comedy is difficult to make, but because the directing and acting in the movie is superb, *The 40-Year-Old Virgin* succeeds as a very funny film. Apatow as Director was brilliant in allowing his actors to improvise many of their lines. In an interview, Apatow said he wanted to make "a movie where we speak the way people actually speak . . . [because] people would actually like it and it's a good style of conversation" (The MovieWeb Team). A natural way of speaking is the key making the characters believable, and balances out the more outrageous moments, like the scene where Andy's coworkers lock him into part of the video store and force him to watch porn or somehow manage to hide his entire action-figure collection before Trish stops by to pick him up for their first date.

Comedy expert Steve Kaplan says that in order to make a successful comedy, the writers need to "come up with an amazing premise, add some great characters and then the story will write itself . . . a common mistake is having too many premises in the same story" (Ward and Kaplan 2010). This movie does not deviate from its premise, the simple idea of how Andy will lose his virginity. Every moment focuses on Andy's goal, which is especially amusing when he tries to resist it and everything in his world appears to be

reminding him of sex, like the “ Eruption” ads on the bus and the dogs in the park.

Finally, the production design adds much to the comedy of the film. For instance, the audience sees Andy for the first time in his home, which is full of an extreme amount of science-fiction posters, models, and action-figures. When Andy makes his first debut at a club with his yellow shirt tucked into his pants, the contrast of him being in such a different environment is comical. However, many of the environments seem normal, which again helps balance the outrageousness of the situations.

The 40-Year-Old Virgin succeeds as a comedy because of its excellent direction, improvisational acting and speech style, the simple premise, and normal atmosphere. These qualities allow the audience to laugh about the improbable and crazy situations while also relating to the characters, who like most people, simply want to be normal.

## **Works Cited**

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