



## And the Oscar goes to ....

(unfortunately Hollywood gets divorce all wrong)

### Healthy divorces make for bad cinema ... most of the time.

Hollywood has a long history of dramatic and Oscar worthy divorce stories and performances. Just think about some of the award-winning films the Academy appears to swoon over: Kramer vs Kramer (1979), The War of the Roses (1989), The Squid and the Whale (2005) and, most recently, Marriage Story (2019). This last tale, in particular, is openly regarded as a love story, yet it is Laura Dern's portrayal of a ruthless divorce lawyer who is celebrated with Hollywood's top prize - her first-ever Oscar. Although the divorcing couple were amicable, loving and generally agreeable, they were still required to mortgage their home and manoeuvre through a highly antagonistic and confrontational process.

So why does Hollywood focus on the negative? Well ... who buys movie tickets to watch two emotionally secure people agree to part ways amiably, placing the best interests of their children first, and mindful of each other's relationship and financial futures? When has casting a good mediator and a well-intentioned couple made for a box office hit when compared to watching pit bull lawyers, family feuds and court room drama?

Don't get me wrong - everyone should consult legal counsel when ending a relationship - but it is too often that we let anger, vengeance and a desire to win-at-all-costs rule the day. Too often we lawyer up, display our worst self, and march into Court. We embrace a scorched earth WIN/LOSE approach to ending one of the most significant relationships of our lives. In doing so we expend much of our resources, and take our children down this unhappy path with us.

Perhaps your own experience with separation could never be described as amiable but, in most cases (not all), separating parents still care deeply about the wellbeing and future of their children. This extends to their short and long-term welfare, their emotional health, their future capacity to form attachments, and your own ability to support them through school and other significant life events.

Every parent wants to be there when their child graduates, or marries, or experiences loss. The unintended consequences of separation and divorce can place all these shared dreams out-of-reach. Even without children, we can fight our way to financial ruin. When we focus on winning, instead of placing our own future, and the future of our children first, we are well on the way to scoring a Hollywood blockbuster.

Perhaps, these memorable Hollywood performances can be recognized as just that - a performance, and we can adopt the healthier alternatives for our personal reality.

The ADR Institute of Alberta (ADRIA) is a non-profit organization that believes that separation and divorce are family relationship issues first and foremost, with legal implications (NOT the other way around). ADRIA believes that mediation and other less adversarial processes produce better outcomes for couples and families. Consider visiting the ADRIA website at [www.adralberta.com](http://www.adralberta.com) Well-trained, experienced mediators and other ADR professionals can assist you to find an out-of-court resolution process that will be more timely and less costly - both emotionally and financially.

## The Reviews:

"CONFLICT IS INEVITABLE, COMBAT IS OPTIONAL." - Max Lucado

"Divorce is a journey that the children involved do not ask to take. They are forced along for a ride where **THE RESULTS ARE DICTATED BY THE ROAD THEIR PARENTS DECIDE TO TRAVEL.**" - Diane Greene

"Probably one of the most difficult challenges any parent could face - learning to love the other parent enough to make the children first." - Iyanla Vanzant

"SPOUSES MAY DIVORCE, BUT PARENTS ARE PARENTS FOREVER." - KarenCory.com

"Your Ex is not your child's Ex." - DK Simoneau

"MEDIATION IS BETTER FOR YOUR CHILDREN, allowing them to see their parents cooperating." - a family Law Office

### Top 10 Reasons to Mediate Your Divorce (Huffpost)

1. It's **less costly**
2. You **control** the discussion and the outcome
3. You get more **personal** attention
4. There is **faster** resolution
5. There is greater **confidentiality**
6. There is greater **flexibility**
7. **It protects the children from conflict**
8. It's a **less adversarial** process
9. There are **more opportunities** for a creative, tailored family plan
10. It allows for greater post-divorce **stability**

### Acclaimed films on Marriage, Separation and Divorce

- Marriage Story 2019 (Academy Award winner)
- A Separation 2011 (Academy Award winner)
- The Squid and the Whale 2005 (Academy award nominee)
- The War of the Roses 1989 (Golden Globe nominee)
- Terms of Endearment 1983 (5 Academy Awards)
- Shoot the Moon 1982 (Golden Globe nominee)
- Kramer vs. Kramer 1979 (5 Academy Awards)
- An Unmarried Woman 1978 (Academy Award nominee)

The ADR Institute of Alberta is one of seven affiliates of the ADR Institute of ADRIAC. To learn more, contact one of our affiliates:



<http://adric.ca/about-us/affiliates/>