

Perspectives in Contrast

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Female Perspective

The movie "Waiting to Exhale" gets two thumbs up for humor, its phat soundtrack, and its "message. I laughed aloud several times during the movie and so did my companions.

I felt empowered by songs such as "Let it Flow" by my girl Toni Braxton. However, I do not totally agree that the characters in the movie portrayed positive images of black women. If it did, it would run the risk of being completely male bashing and there may have not been a story line because the women would not have stayed in such destructive relationships.

The most important thing was sisters were able to identify with these women, and we all know plenty who can. There are plenty of sisters in dead end relationships who need to "Exhale," take responsibility for their own lives, choices and happiness, and let go of unhealthy relationships.

The women in the movie seem to have a problem with mistaking sexual relationships for real intimacy, love or companionship. Gloria, played by Lorretta Divine, was so hard up to feel close to man that she intentionally plotted to sleep with her son's father although the father comes to see his son only once in many blue moons. Yes, she was dissed by her son's homosexual father when he refused to sleep with her.

The women in the movie were so caught up with chasing after and keeping "mister right" that they forgot about themselves, their values, and their desires to have their own needs fulfilled. This behavior is obvious in the movie; all of the women are in some way dogged out by men they are involved with.

Savannah (Whitney Houston) is told repeatedly by her lover that he will leave his wife for her, but something always seems to get in the way of his goal. Bernadine (my girl, Angela Bassette) sacrificed her career goals in order to help her husband achieve his dream. He completely disrespects her by attempting to divorce her and leave her virtually penniless.

Three of the women are sleeping around with someone else's husband knowing how disrespectful it is to other women. Knowing they could play a role in destroying a relationship in the process. Bernadine, Savannah, and Robin are guilty of this one.

Robin is among the many women, we all

know, who needs to take a special education class on how to choose men, she definitely has a learning disability when it comes to dealing with this part of her life. Robin admits her weakness for men with big "sticks," even though her main man with the biggest stick has a wife and kids, can't afford decent car insurance and repeatedly disses her.

One of the reasons Michael fails to please her in the bedroom is because he is too busy trying to be the Mac and get his freak on that he doesn't take into account that she wants to be pleased by him as much as he wants to be pleased by her.

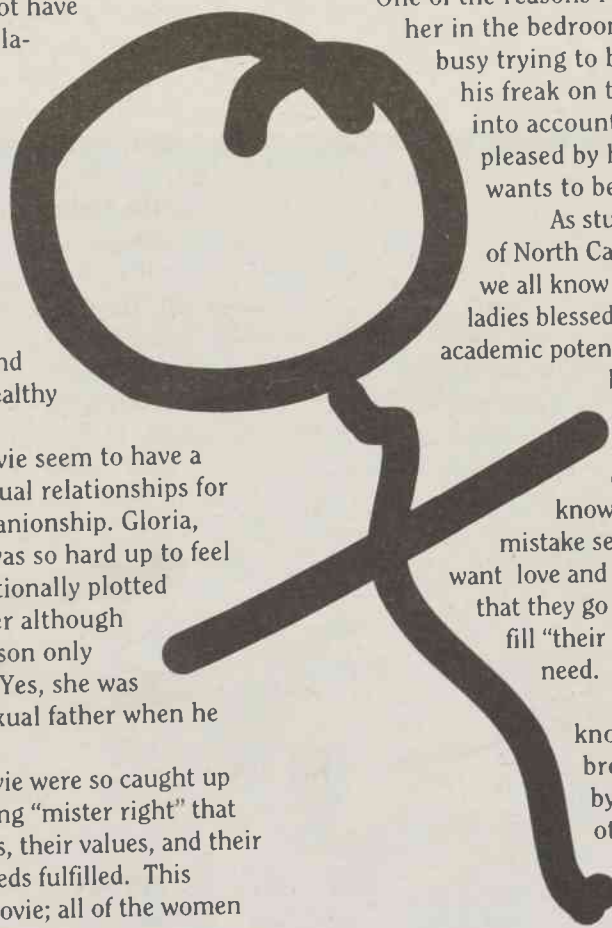
As students of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, we all know many bright young ladies blessed with extraordinary academic potential and intelligence, but they still need to sign up for a special education course for choosing men. We know those who tend to mistake sex for intimacy. And want love and commitment so much that they go out of their way to fulfill "their man's" every want and need. Getting little in return.

And we definitely know about those who break up relationships by messing around with other women's boyfriends. No, these women are not all to blame. It takes

two to tango. Fellas don't have to spread themselves around north, south, middle as well as off-campus (I'm not asserting that all of them do).

No one has to be triflin', no one has to be a door mat or a human mattress, but sometimes we choose these things for ourselves and become victims of our choices. However, the ladies portrayed in the film learn from their bad choices by the end of the movie and choose to "Exhale" which the most positive and empowering aspect of the movie. The women reclaim and rediscover themselves through their own needs and desires and let go of unhealthy relationships.

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