

Black Picture Shows Are In Question Again

BY WILLIAM REED

When was the last time that you, or somebody you know, said that "Movies they make about us don't represent black life?" For the past decade the movies made by Hollywood for public consumption had little or no black involvement whatsoever. Then along came Spike Lee, Mario Van Peebles and John Singleton, boys from our own cultural neighborhood who were able to unlock white producers' pocketbooks long enough to get their cameras rolling. Now we say that these boys only depict our communities as drug havens and our people as "wanna be's." So, if nobody has given us a good imitation of our lives, what is it we want, or better yet, wanna be?

Even though we complain about the way we are mocked in movies, we did, and continue, to buy 25 percent of all theater tickets sold in the nation. If we really don't like the way we were portrayed in the flicks of the '80s, or today, why do we continue to pack the picture shows for things we still don't like, or agree with? While we keep putting mo' money and responsibility for us in white hands, isn't it time we decide to do what it is we say we want?

Isn't it true that blacks who don't like the way we're shown in movies, nor the weather, sing the same ole song time after time? Don't we always say, "Why aren't things better for us? Why can't we see ourselves shown in a better light? Why can't we find a good job, and make more money?" Isn't the answer still very plain and simple, we can't have what we want because we won't do the "right thing" to get it?

The entertainment industry has proven to be a lucrative and productive sector where we could prove our capitalistic sophistication. If we wanted wealth from collective investments in ourselves, we only have to look at the bottom line on the

screen scene. "Boyz N the Hood" grossed \$9.5 million in its first weekend in only 850 theaters across the country. "New Jack City," which Peebles got financed by white people, has passed the \$60 million mark in revenues. "Jungle Fever," which could get into only about 900 movie houses with its backing from Universal and MCA, is still getting about \$50 million for its sponsors. And even "A Rage in Harlem," which was in the smallest number of theaters, grossed more than \$15 million.

In the early part of this century black people financed, produced and distributed their own films. Oscar Micheaux made films for, and about, blacks from 1910 to about 1920. The Johnson soul brothers formed the Lincoln Theatre Company and used white folks' studios and their own ingenuity to make dozens of films which were shown in segregated picture shows. But today if Warner Brothers or Twentieth Century don't do it for us, it evidently can't be done. Unlike Micheaux, and the Johnsons, we don't do things for ourselves today. We won't make our own picture shows, but we will bemoan what the white man does, or does not do, for us in this industry.

Tony Brown had a movie called "The White Girl" that suffered miserably at its targeted box offices. And Danny Glover's "To Sleep with Anger" suffered from similar lack of promotional capital to have everybody talkin' about the film. But in the long run, we may find that Glover and Brown were on to something. If the black fraternities, sororities, local black newspapers and radio stations joined with branch chapters of the Urban League, SCLC and NAACP in the financing, renting of movie houses and internal promotion of our own films we could tell our story, see ourselves in a better light, take care of our own needs, and make mo' money at the same time.



JOINING THE FAMILY — Mr. and Mrs. Charles Powell of Biltmore Hills recently joined the Garner Road Family YMCA during their annual membership recruitment drive. The couple are retired and they are looking forward to a relaxing future. If you are interested in joining the YMCA family, please call 833-1256 for more information.

NEWS OF EDUCATION

Stay In School Says The NFL

Most people would not want to go face to face with 49er safety Ronnie Lott. Even tougher than that, however, he points out in a new poster, is facing life without an education.

It's all part of the National Football League's education programs. They were expanded in 1990 as the NFL strengthened its commitment to honor and encourage excellence in students and teachers. Commissioner Paul Tagliabue has been a leading force behind the expansion of the education programs using the popularity of the league to promote positive community values.

"Education is the backbone of American society," Tagliabue says, "I believe our players, coaches and teams can be real leaders in this area."

The NFL Education Programs include:
• NFL Teacher of the Month. It offers thousands of dollars in grants

and scholarships to teachers and schools that have affected players' lives.

• The NFL Pro Set Super Bowl XXV Tele-clinic. It focuses on education and drug awareness and is broadcast on a non-profit educational cable station.

• Posters and brochures available to schools promote the value of a college degree.

• An NFL Education Video available to community groups and schools. Called "Think About It/Stay In School," it discusses the importance of recognizing priorities and getting a good education.

• A 30-second public service announcement on the importance of staying in school shown during Monday Night Football games.

For a free copy of the Ronnie Lott poster, send a dollar for postage and handling to NFL Poster, P.O. Box 91, Trenton, NJ 08650.

IF WE FIND THE MONEY, THEY'LL FIND A CURE

Cures may someday be found for:
• young adults disabled by multiple sclerosis;
• people with cystic fibrosis, a fatal genetic disorder;
• thousands of kids with muscular dystrophy;
• elderly Americans with Alzheimer's disease;
• children crippled by cerebral palsy;
• millions of Americans with mental illnesses.

Great advances are possible if we support our scientists by providing the equipment they need, and give them enough funding to continue their work in promising areas of research.

That's the message from Research! America, an alliance for discoveries in health that feels we don't back our belief in the promise of medical research with the money it takes to do it.

We should. Thanks to medical research, people are alive today who would not have survived only a few years ago. Sadly, many others died just before cures were discovered, pharmaceutical treatments found, or surgical procedures developed that could have saved them.

We have at our service, the organization says, the world's foremost medical research apparatus, the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Unfortunately, we are neglecting this superb national resource and letting it run down just when important biomedical breakthroughs are in



Thanks to medical research, people are alive today who surely would not have survived only a few years ago.

sight and discoveries imminent that could lead to cures and treatments for cancer, heart disease, juvenile diabetes, arthritis and other of humankind's major maladies.

We are turning down and turning away worthy scientific research projects at the highest rate in history. The result is only one out of four meritorious grant applications to NIH and the Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Administration are currently being funded.

If you believe we should invest more to make America a healthier place, you can write the President and your legislators at the U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510 and the House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20515. You can also call Research! America at 1-800-FON-CURE to find out what else you can do to help make a difference.

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Rx FOR HEALTHY LIVING

Water: Health Insurance for Travelers

By James M. Rippe, M.D.

(NU) - Traveling can be exciting and exhilarating, but it can also take its toll on you, both physically and mentally. Smart travelers know that exercising, plus watching what they eat, can help them feel fresh and sharp while on the road. But there's one more easy thing you can do to combat the fatigue and other side effects of travel. Drink water, and plenty of it.

Traveling can be dehydrating, so drinking water can help you avoid migraines, sinus congestion, nausea and other travel-related illnesses frequently caused by dehydration. The body has a substantial and constant need for water, so staying hydrated — or meeting this need for water — is critical to feeling and performing at your best. Some of the most common causes of dehydration for travelers are:

— Sitting in an air-conditioned or pressurized environment for long periods, which can have a drying effect on skin, eyes and hair.

— Drinking alcoholic or caffeinated beverages, both of which are diuretics and can accelerate the dehydration process.

— Experiencing rapid climate changes, which can play games with your body temperature and increase your chances of becoming dehydrated.

— Planning, packing and rushing for a trip, which can cause stress, making your body work harder and perspire more than usual.

How can you make sure you stay

well hydrated on your next trip? First, a few days before your trip, "pre-hydrate." Shore up your body's water supply by drinking at least eight 8-ounce glasses of water a day — even more if you exercise or live in a warm, humid climate. Then, begin your travel day by drinking at least one 8-ounce glass of water, and continue to do so throughout the day.

If you're not sure you'll have access to water while traveling, buy some — Evian natural spring water, for example — to carry along. You won't be alone: most airline personnel, bus drivers and others who travel for a living carry their favorite bottled water with them.

The Verdict Is In!

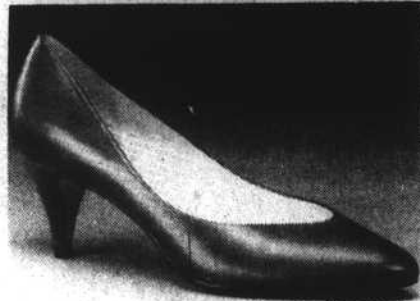
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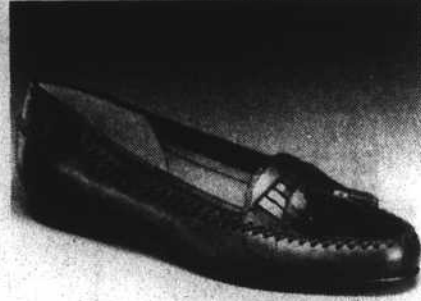
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