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SOAN 264 A

Film Paper

November 28, 2006

“This compelling urban thriller tracks the volatile intersection of a multiethnic cast of characters struggling to overcome their fears as they careen in and out of one another’s lives. In a gray area between black and white, victim and aggressor, during the next thirty-six hours, they will all collide” (Crash).

Several stories interweave during these thirty-six hours involving a collection of inter-related characters, a police detective named Graham Waters (Don Cheadle) with a drugged out mother and a thieving younger brother named Peter Waters (Larenz Tate), two car thieves, Peter Waters and Anthony (Ludacris) who are constantly theorizing on society and race, the white district attorney, Rick Cabot (Brendan Fraser) and his irritated and pampered wife, Jean Cabot (Sandra Bullock), a racist white veteran cop (caring for his sick father at home) John Ryan (Matt Dillon) who disgusts his more idealistic younger partner, Tom Hansen (Ryan Phillippe), Cameron Thayer (Terrence Howard) a successful Hollywood director and his wife Christine Thayer (Thandie Newton) who must deal with the racist cop Ryan, a Persian-immigrant father who buys a gun to protect his shop, Daniel (Michael Pena) a Hispanic locksmith and his young daughter who is afraid of bullets.

While watching “Crash” I picked up on plenty of stereotypes. Right at the beginning of the show the two car thieves Peter Waters and Anthony are talking about their service at the restaurant they were eating at, and how it took an hour or so to get

their food while other white customers got theirs right away and cups of coffee after another. There was also that stereotype that black people don't tip that Anthony says because their waitress was black and she knows they don't tip so she gave them "poor" service. Also when they were walking out of the restaurant they saw Rick and Jean Cabot, and he says that she all of sudden got colder when she seen them. I felt she did this because of the stereotypical images of black men and their attire. It reminded me of Collins idea of the new racism and how black people sometimes play into the gender roles and images.

It seemed that ever since they stole their car Jean seemed pretty angry at all people of color and trusted none of them. She demanded the locks be changed in their house again because the man doing it was Hispanic and she thought he would sell their key to his "homies," she immediately identified him as a gang banger because he had what she called "prison tattoos." Jean even turns cold toward her housekeeper who is also Hispanic I think.

Then there is the incident where Officer John Ryan is basically racially profiling when he seen Cameron and Christine Thayer in their black Lincoln Navigator, and pulls them over even though the Cadott's stolen Navigator license plates don't match. He makes Cameron do the sobriety test and assaults his wife Christine, and yet he doesn't do anything about it. He chose to act that way because he knew if he didn't things would only get worse. Officer Ryan is terrible, he is extremely rude, especially on the phone with his insurance people, Shaniqua Johnson because his father is sick and up all night. He felt his father was misdiagnosed but his insurance won't cover his surgery unless the main doctor who he thinks misdiagnosed his father approves it. However I think Officer

Ryan really comes to terms with himself when Christine Thayer is involved in an accident and he fights to pull her out of her car that is about to blow up from the leaking gas. I thought at that point he must have figured out how he was treating others and in a sense how he was acting because he fought to save her even after his new partner pulled him out, he went back in the car to get her.

A major point in the movie is when Daniel the locksmith is changing the Persian store owners lock and he told him he needed to replace the door, and that it wasn't the lock, he becomes angry and starts yelling at Daniel. So he becomes upset and just leaves the store. Well the next day when he returned to his store it got broken into and is in rough shape. The store owner becomes upset when the insurance won't cover the damages because he didn't get a new door like the locksmith recommended. So upset, the store owner finds where he lives, and holds the gun he bought to his head and wants money or the van, but the van is his company's. His daughter saw what was happening so she tells her mother that he don't have the impenetrable cloak, so she runs to her father to save him, luckily the gun was loaded with blanks.

When Jean Cabot falls down the stairs she realizes that her true friend is her housekeeper because she is the only one willing to take her to the hospital to get checked. Her own friend of ten years wouldn't take her because she was getting a massage or something more important. Another important aspect of the movie was when Officer Tom Hansen decides to give Peter Waters a ride he immediately suspects that he is getting his gun when he is digging in his pocket for his angel of safe travels like the one he had, so he just shoots him, and realizes after he shot him that he wasn't armed. It just shocked me that he covered it up. This film was filled with a lot of stereotypes and was

very educational in teaching people of other people's problems that they are faced with daily in this society. Crash was an amazing and moving film and it is an important instrument in portraying the lives of people trying to make a living and how they deal with stereotypes, racial profiling, gender images, etc.

“An inspirational true story of the team that changed college basketball-and the nation-forever! Josh Lucas stars as future Hall of Fame coach Don Haskins on tiny Texas Western University, who bucks convention by simply starting the best players he can find: history’s first all-African American lineup. In a turbulent time of social and political change, their unlikely success sends shock waves through the sport that follow the underdog Miners all the way to an epic showdown with all-white, #1-ranked Kentucky for the National Championship!” (Glory Road)

While Haskins was coaching a girl’s basketball team he is offered to move up in the coaching profession, he is granted coaching for college basketball for Texas Western University. He begins by asking some white players to play for his team but he gets rejected by all of them. Then while at a game, he observed a black player really showing his talent, and I felt that after that it just light up in his mind of recruiting African American players. He selects seven for his team and has five additional white players already. When he is trying to recruit them, the players themselves are more hesitant than their parents. Their parents are okay with the situation because they want their children to get a college education.

When the Texas Western Miners have their first game, the crowd only claps for the white players. It’s like dead silent when they announce the black player’s names, only the coach and his helpers clap. Even the Miners as a team have to get past their own racial boundaries in order to come together as a team. The white players ask stereotypical questions to their black teammates like “are you from Harlem?” and they respond by saying that “not all black people are from Harlem”. Some are from different parts of New York.

Both the team and Coach Haskins are catching heat in this controversial all African American lineup. Coach Haskins and his family are getting threatening letters and rude racial remarks from people. While the team is getting assaulted by white people while in a public restaurant restroom. Even while they're at a game their hotel rooms get broken in to and their rooms are trashed, and profanities are written all over the walls in blood. They really are all getting ridiculed. However this event splits up the team between white and black. The black players feel that the white players are part of it just because their white, when really their not. One white player argues that they are the minority now and that they have living in their shadows, but a black player pretty much shoots down that thought by saying "my whole life I have been the minority and you're going to complain because you've only been the minority for two months." There is real tension between the team in result of this event.

"Yet, in the face of seemingly insurmountable odds, Haskins and his Miners came together as a team united to reach the National Championship game against the powerhouse Kentucky". Haskins reunited his team to send a message to the rest of the people that anybody can play basketball, and in the championship game he starts all his black players, they are the only ones who play the entire game. I felt that Coach Haskins really didn't see color, he seen skill, and he went for it. He judges the game and recruited those with talent, even if that included people of color. He sparked the involvement of black players in basketball I think because today African Americans make up a huge part of the basketball leagues. Thank you Coach Haskins!

“There has been a series of mysterious homicides on a Sioux Indian reservation in the Badlands of South Dakota. The investigation of homicides on Native American territory is within Federal jurisdiction, but the FBI is finding it difficult to gather information from the native Sioux. Ray Levoi (Val Kilmer), a promising but inexperienced field agent who happens to be one-quarter Sioux, is called to assist in the investigation. As he probes deeper into the events on the reservation, he torn between his duty to the FBI and his awakening sense of duty to the Sioux Nation” (Thunderheart)

Based on actual Reservation occurrences in the 1970s, and the American Indian Movement (AIM), known in the film as ARM.

Ray Levoi is ashamed, embarrassed of his Indian ties, and is only assigned to help investigate because he is one-quarter Sioux, in an effort to bring friendly ties. However once he is on the reservation for a while he starts to creep out of denial, and looks toward accepting his heritage. He sheds his identity of a FBI agent by losing the tie, glasses, and jacket and starts wearing jeans and a t-shirt. He soon realizes that the government is involved in a murder and a plot to mine uranium on the reservation, he teams up with tribal policeman Walter Crow Horse (Graham Greene) and traditional elder Grandpa Sam Reaches (Ted Thin Elk) to stop the plot and preserve the reservation.

However once Ray and Walter team up, he becomes like a sidekick to Ray. When in the beginning he was depicted as an intelligent and capable investigator. Once they begin to play on the same team, Ray is somehow superior to Walter, which is a common theme/stereotype in films involving Native Americans.

Then we see the stereotypical image of how a white guy can fall in love with an Indian woman if and only if she is somehow higher. In the film Mary Eagle Bear is an

Ivy League graduate with a social science and she returned home to help her people. The only way that her and Ray are capable of being romantically involved is if she has a higher status, like an Indian princess for example, where you have to be higher up in order to be accepted by whites and she is because she went to college. In this way, she is not like the other women on the reservation and is worthy of a white man's affection.

When Richard Yellow Hawk (Julius Drum) is approached by what he calls three suits, he is offered early release if he kills a guy, and that plays on the stereotype that Native Americans are easily corruptible. Just like Cooch (Sam Shepard) says "I feel for them I really do, but they have to realize they are a conquered people" he is romantizing the image of Indian people, and gives off that sense of, we know what's best for you. He also says that "it's our responsibility because they (the Indians) are incapable of taking care of themselves"

There was also the appropriation of Native spirituality in the film, it is prominently seen when the FBI agents storm a sweat lodge in search of Jimmy Looks Twice (John Trudell) who is the main suspect for the murder. The FBI agents storm the sweat lodge with weapons and Jimmy says to them "this is a spiritual ceremony you're desecrating...this is our church. Would you drag people out of your church when they're praying?" This is fairly true, many of times our way of religion isn't accepted in mainstream America.

Thunderheart is filled with stereotypes of what Indians are like and how they act because most films are done by white Hollywood directors and not Indian people themselves. They are telling our story, "Since they have to take care of us".