

African American Images in the Media

Presented by Larry Leach

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Question

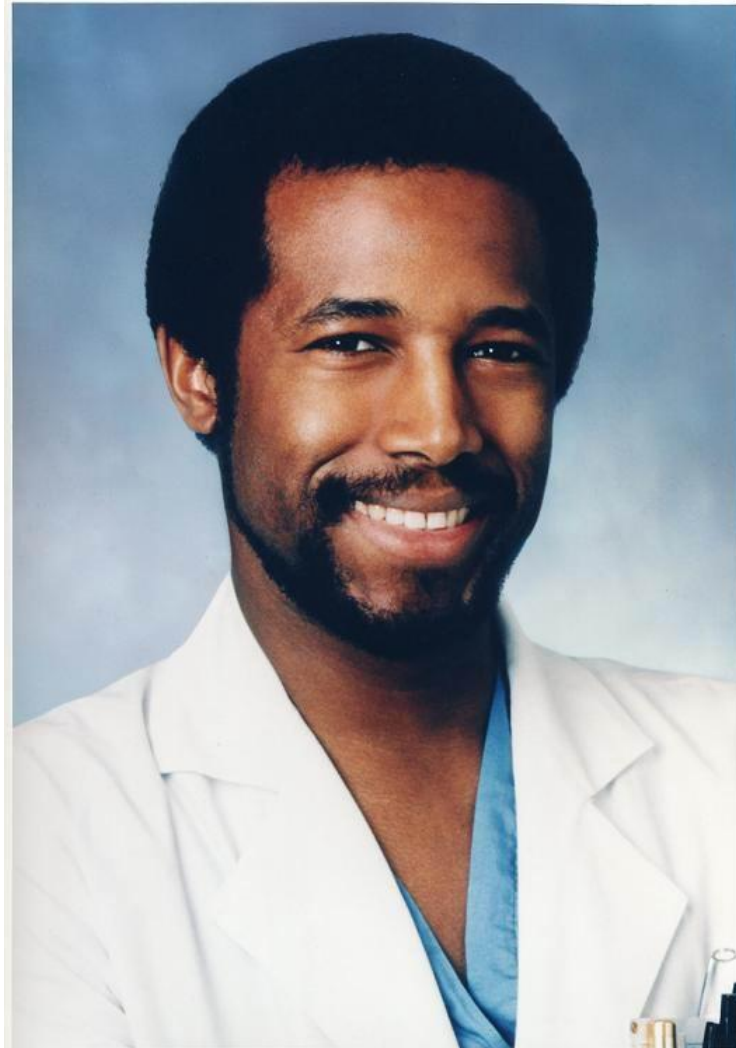
- Does the media reflect the reality of society, or does society try to imitate the reality shown by the media?



African American Stereotypes

- What are some of the stereotypes associated with African Americans in our society?
- Men
 - Athletes, Musicians, Criminals, Deviant, Streetwise, Uneducated, Unemployed, etc
 - Can you give an example of current media portrayals of men that match these stereotypes?

Who is this?



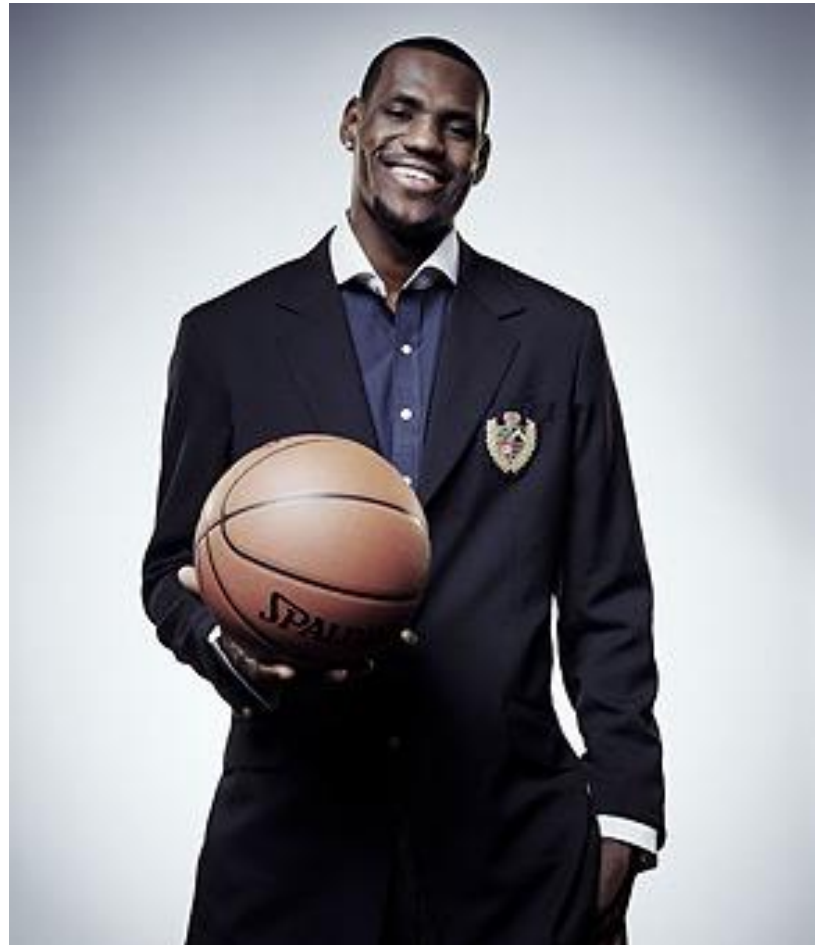
Who is this?



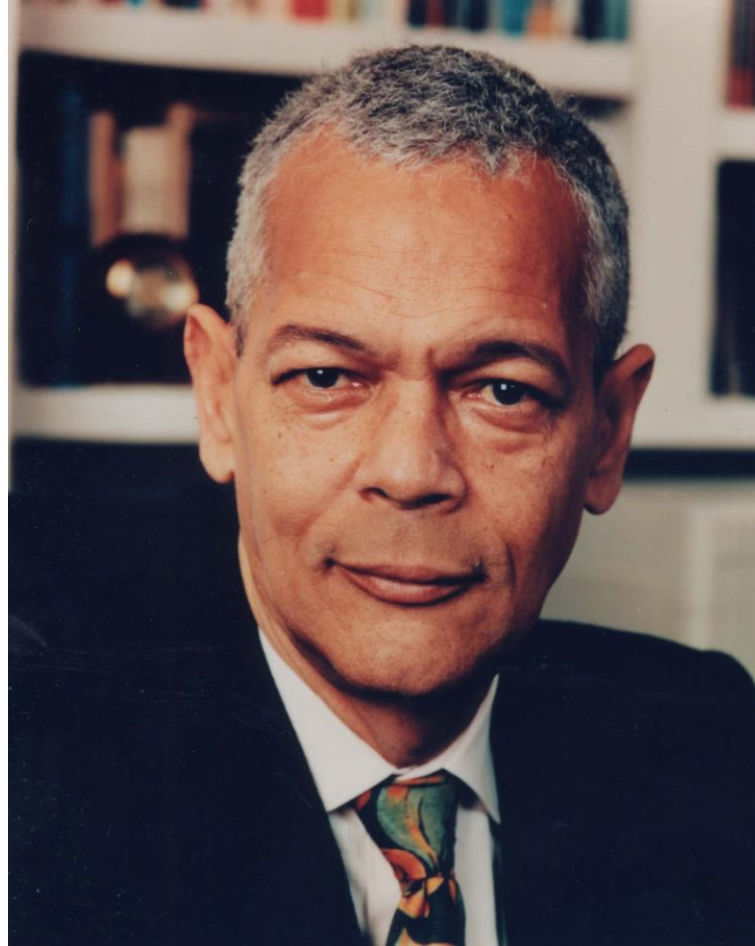
Who is this?



Who is this?



Who is this?





African Americans in the Media

- Television
 - Often concentrated in stereotype filled sitcoms
- Television News
 - Often shown in negative or crime based stories
- Music & Music Videos
 - Profanity, misogyny, hard, thugged out
- Movies & Film



Television

- ❑ How do you see African Americans when you turn on the TV?
- ❑ Sitcoms?
- ❑ News Broadcasts?
- ❑ Music Videos?
- ❑ Sports?

Television

- Rev. Jesse Jackson said in 1985 that the news media portray blacks as "less intelligent than we are."
- Film director Spike Lee explains that these images have negative impacts "In my neighborhood, we looked up to athletes, guys who got the ladies, and intelligent people," said Lee. "If you're intelligent, you're called a white guy or girl."



Impact on Blacks in Higher Education

- ❑ Media portrayals often impact self perceptions as well as perceptions of others
- ❑ If we don't see images of ourselves achieving academic success, educational priority may not be as high as it should/could be
- ❑ Often groups allow media to tell them how they should act or what their role is in society

Television



Television



HOT GHETTO MESS

We Got To Do Better

Television



Television



Television News



Travis Dixon, Illinois professor of speech communication,

Completed a study that is part of a series that seeks to *"understand whether exposure to racially biased news coverage leads to stereotypical perceptions of African Americans."*

News Broadcasts

- CHAMPAIGN, Ill. — A new double study of TV viewers' perceptions of race and crime following exposure to “racialized crime news” provides more evidence of the negative long-term effects of news viewing that over-represents black lawbreakers.



News Broadcasts

- Priming Effect
 - Heavy TV news crime viewers exposed to black criminals or unidentified-race criminals in crime news stories are “primed” to connect blacks with criminals and criminals with blacks
- Impact of the Overrepresentation of Blacks as Lawbreakers on Television News?
 - How does it effect blacks and non-blacks



News Broadcasts

- Many viewers of black crime stories activated stereotypes of black laziness, leading to an increased perception that blacks do not face structural limitations to success.
- For example, they perceived that blacks could make it in life if they just tried harder



Impact on Blacks in Higher Education

- Causes perception that blacks are
 - Less ambitious
 - Educationally unmotivated
 - Disinterested in progress
- Possible Effects
 - Helpful resources may be limited
 - Individuals may feel that they are not suitable for higher education



News Broadcasts

- What contributes to negative coverage of African Americans in the News?
 - Practices of News media in various communities
 - Preexisting perceptions of African Americans that influence the decision makers in the media industry

News Broadcasts



AP Associated Press AP - Tue Aug 30, 11:31 AM ET

A young man walks through chest deep flood water after looting a grocery store in New Orleans on Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2005. Flood waters continue to rise in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina did extensive damage when it

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AP 3:47 AM ET

Two residents wade through chest-deep water after finding bread and soda from a local grocery store after Hurricane Katrina came through the area in New Orleans, Louisiana. (AFP/Getty Images/Chris Graythen)

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• Katrina's Effects, at a Glance AP - Tue Aug 30, 1:26 PM ET

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NPR (National Public Radio)

- **Finding Strong Black Men in the Media**
by John Ridley (Commentary)
- There are millions of positive black men out there, but they are hard to find in the news.
- "The media tends to focus on black men when they're acting like, or actually being, thugs,"



News Broadcasts

- ❑ What can be done to change the perception of Black men in society?
- ❑ What can be done to change the ambitions of young Black men in society?
- ❑ Will the media presence of more Black male heroes/positive roles improve black male self perception

News Broadcasts (USA Today)



- ❑ **Philly's top cop wants 10K Black men to patrol streets**
- ❑ More Black officers may effect the “bad guy” stigma associated with Black males
- ❑ **Sylvester Johnson**



Impact on Blacks in Higher Education

- Negative depictions of black males in news broadcasts
 - Also affect self perception of black men
 - Working class
 - Deviant
 - **Uneducated**
 - Associated with crime
- Causes many to accept absence from higher education
 - As though it is expected based on societies views



Music & Music Video

- ❑ The portrayal of blacks in music and music videos has come under much criticism for negative messages and depictions of African American men and women.
- ❑ Men as misogynistic, money hungry, tough, hard, etc
- ❑ Women are objectified and portrayed as sexual objects, vixens, loose, etc



Impact on Blacks in Higher Education

- These portrayals often impact the goals and priorities of black men
 - Getting paid
 - Sports, Entertainment, Illegitimate means
 - Being hard or macho
 - Getting women
 - Treatment of women



Television/News

- What are some ways that the African American community can contribute to the improvement of our image in television and news?
- More representation in the creative and decision making roles of the media.



Television/News

- Decision making roles in news
 - News Directors, News Editors, News Producers, Assignment Editors
- Roles in Television
 - Writers, producers, directors,
- Current power structure of the media doesn't favor improvement.
- Media career interests by African Americans can help improve image



Image Improvement

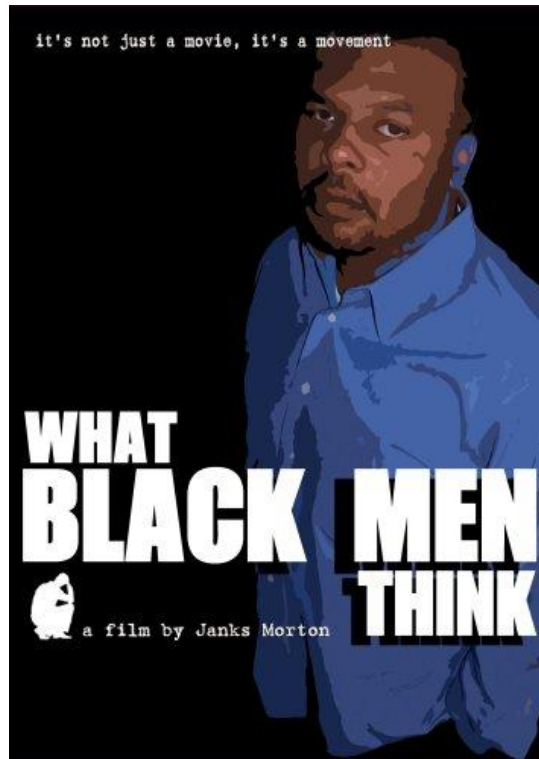
- If the images of African Americans in the media is improved
- Our outlook within our community will improve
- We will believe that positive goals and achievements are more realistic
 - Career
 - Education

Image Improvement

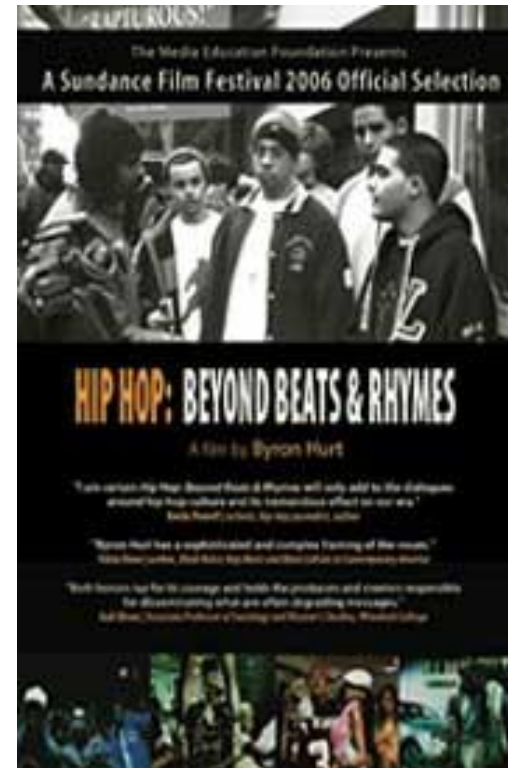
- Showing black males on MTV Cribs with huge homes, cars & lavish lifestyles is unprogressive when:
 - There is no true portrayal of the amount of time and work that went into getting those luxuries
- Young blacks today from urban areas who see rags to riches portrayals, sitting waiting for fame to hit them.

Recommended Media

- What Black Men Think
 - By Janks Morton

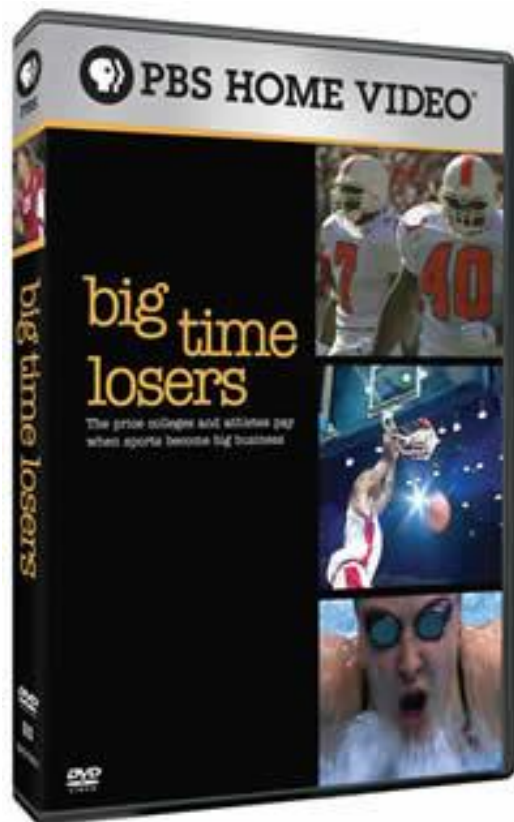


- Hip Hop:
Beyond the Beats and Rhymes
 - By Byron Hurt



Recommended Media

- Big Time Losers
 - PBS
- Enough: The Phony Leaders, Dead-End Movements, and Culture of Failure That Are Undermining Black America—



- Juan Williams

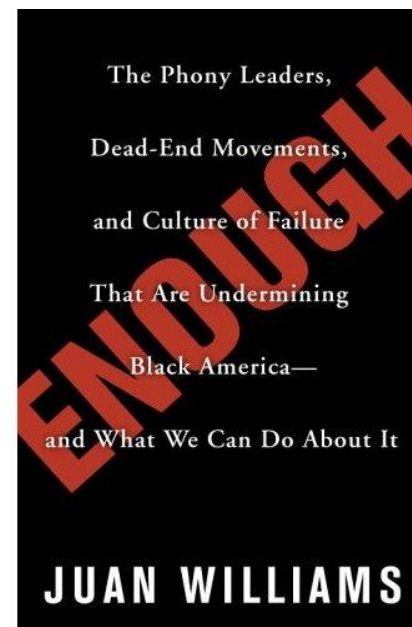
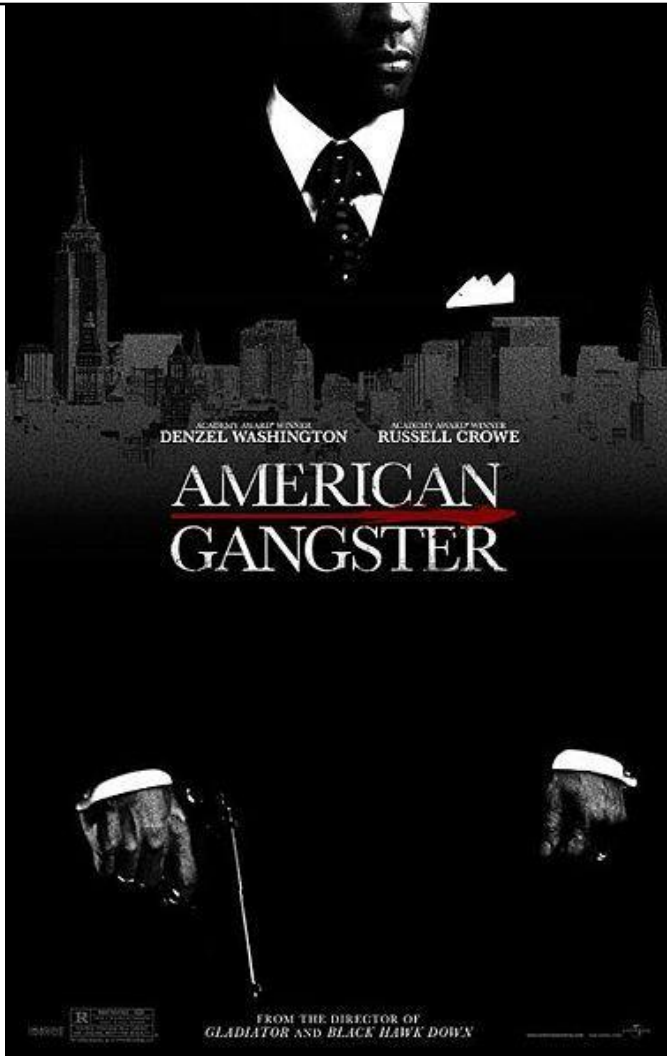


Image Improvement



After all Seeing
is Believing!!!