

Hollywood's irrational allergy to 'black' films

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Rhetorical Analysis of “ Hollywood's irrational allergy to 'black' films” The article en d “ Hollywood's irrational allergy to 'black' films” written by Roland Martin and published in the CNN International Edition on January 14, 2012 proffered pertinent issues relative to Hollywood’s alleged barring of selecting and showing films with predominantly black casts. Through the use of examples of famous celebrities and films, presentation of comparative details, and providing crucial narrative information, the author effectively used logical, emotional appeals in conjunction with the credibility of citing George Lucas, the producer of the film “ Red Tails” as the focal point of discussion. The author initially described the prevailing racial prejudice that continue to pervade Hollywood by disclosing that even George Lucas, the world renowned producer of blockbuster films, had faced outright rejection when “ Red Tails” was proposed. Using logical structure and presentation, Martin eventually presented an enumeration of facts to dispute the allegation that supposed “ black films” could not be possibly effectively marketed. By intending to use persuasion to emotionally appeal to the audience that more African-Americans have made legendary marks and accomplishments in contemporary American society, Martin used appeal to pathos as a convincing element. Eventual discourse focused on the culture of Hollywood through narrating and disclosing that it is a “ close-minded society where it's hard to find African-Americans in positions of true power” (Martin par. 18). As such, through analysis, readers would deduce that without sufficient backing, representation and support from any significant leader or senior management with approving power, films with predominantly black actors were deemed a complete debacle. Further, Martin contended that

there is an eminent dilemma in Hollywood that typecasts films with predominantly black casts as “black” films and therefore render them unmarketable with significantly low global audience appeal. By providing vivid examples through citing famous personalities, the author ensured that increased understanding is rendered to the readers, as intended. Through the experience of Dennis Cooper, Caucasian writer, director and producer of a proposed film, "The Heart Specialist", for example, Martin effectively proved that the film, which was initially favorably sold to the studios when the descriptions of the characters were still unknown, was eventually dumped. Further, another film, "The Hurricane Season", produced by The Weinstein Co., was reportedly packaged and marketed through DVD, rationalizing insufficient knowledge to market the film as the culprit. The author likewise presented a balanced discourse through disclosing counter-arguments revealed by Hollywood defenders. As averred, celebrities such as Will Smith, Denzel Washington, and even Halle Berry were the examples used to indicate that films made by these actors have been proven to generate mass appeal. Martin, likewise, rationalized that “in Hollywood... if you're Will Smith, Denzel Washington or a handful of others, you really aren't seen as "black." For them, they have crossed the post-racial threshold, and in Hollywood's eyes, white America will watch them” (Martin par. 33). However, the clinching validation that Martin was able to reveal regarding Hollywood's apprehension and decision to select and approve showcasing films with predominantly black casts is the supposed inability of these films to provide a productive return. Again, through the rhetorical strategies of providing examples through comparisons, the author was effective in

proving his point. Martin disclosed that “ Tyler Perry's " Madea Goes to Jail," another movie featuring a black guy dressed as a grandmother, did \$90 million in the U. S., and they didn't even bother to show it overseas” (Martin par. 38). The author interjected his own analysis by indicating that “ I believe the problem is how the movies are categorized” (Martin par. 36). The author concluded the discourse by affirming that the results of “ Red Tail’s” gross sales in the industry would finally confirm that if it “ opens huge... it will send a message to Hollywood that a big-budget action film with lots of black folks can be successful...If it fails, it will be seen as a failure of ALL black action films” (Martin par. 40). Martin’s argument, therefore, that Hollywood continues to bar selecting and showing films with predominantly black casts have been duly supported and validated using effective strategies and rhetorical appeals. As aptly concluded, Martin emphasized that “ today, it's clear that such a racial divide is no longer in place in the seats, but now on the screen, and that's a damn shame” (par. 45). Works Cited Martin, Roland. Hollywood's irrational allergy to 'black' films. 14 January 2012. Web. 5 February 2012 .