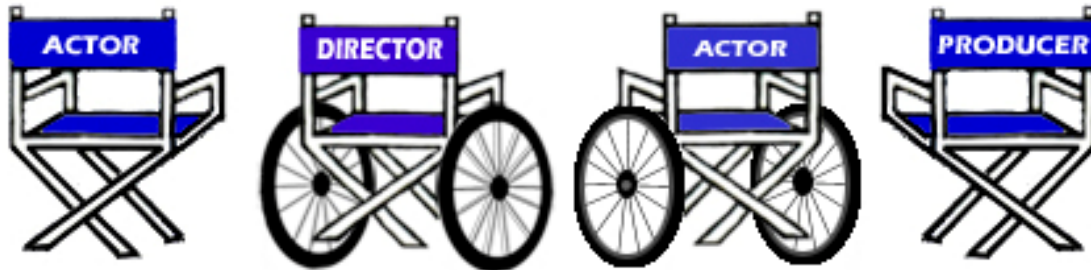


Abilities United Productions



The Obvious and Accepted Hollywood Blacklist

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Does the motion picture and television industry provide Equal Opportunity or is it Selective Abilities? Are authentic voices and representation an important element in today's entertainment?

It is very interesting that an industry that prides itself as a whole and as individuals, companies, organizations and associations as being so inclusive that many go out of their way to make sure everyone is heard and has rights to express their causes to have an opportunity to live life free and to the fullest, and spend their money, time and personal effort to help the less fortunate, those who cannot speak for themselves, the repressed or for any of the causes that effect our society, world community, health and environment for today and for future generations, all are great contributions to humanity and should be applauded yet one continues to be discriminated against and it comes toward one of their own, those striving to work in the same industry.

All of these great causes, too many to be listed, makes it extremely difficult to understand why the exception and there are always exceptions, but why are those with a disability, Hollywood's largest and most blatant exception? It is like the huge pink polka dotted white elephant in the living room everyone is pretending doesn't exist. Hollywood is the most discriminatory industry in America against those with a disability. Not based on their corporate offices but as nearly every minority will shout about their equal representation in the products of the motion picture and television industry will show, yet those with a disability are rarely represented. This is without pointing fingers an industry wide general fact of discrimination. Facts which were revealed in the first published report on the discrimination of those with a disability in Hollywood and published in 2005. We'll take a closer look at those later but for now let's just look at a couple of easily recognizable facts:

- How many films feature a character in the starring or supporting role that have a disability?
- Now how many were physical disabilities?
- How many of those are not stereotypically either all about the disability, surrounded by a political agenda, or predictably inspirational?
- Including all films, stereotypical or not, that feature a character with a disability, how many of them were portrayed by an actor with the same or similar disability?
- How many were providing an authentic voice by being written and/or directed by a person with a disability?

Most just do not want to admit it and that could be because they have no idea how to remove it or even deal with it being there. But when a very comprehensive and yet easy to implement solution is presented surely Hollywood will jump on board and make it happen since they are leaders in humanitarian causes? Hollywood cannot be accused of being discriminatory against anyone? Well maybe Republicans!

When we think of equal opportunity most of us will refer to the Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Laws and are based on equal opportunities regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, or age. In addition some States would include sexual orientation or alternative lifestyle. Looking at the minorities of the largest to be recognized as being discriminated against, the approximate number of Americans in each of these minority sub-groups look like this:

40 million Hispanics
40 million African-Americans
15 million gay, lesbian and trans-genders

And

54+ million Americans with a disability

How many films, television programs, even entire television/cable networks are devoted to the voices and culture of each of these groups? A quick look up and down the guide of your satellite or cable television service will immediately be found channels like Telemundo, HBO Latino, BET, BET Jazz, Starz in Black, Logo, and programs for each of those first three can be seen in both primetime and syndication on all channels. And with the largest satellite, and best by far in my opinion, you can get voices in their own language from all over the world. Packages that include several channels from foreign countries are available to American audiences.

Three out of four of those American minorities listed above can't be bad. But why is the largest and fastest growing minority sub-group in America being ignored and treated as the pink polka dotted elephant in the Hollywood living room? And the disabled consumer group will continue as the largest and fastest growing minority sub-group as the Baby-Boomer generation reaches and enters into retirement age when people are most likely to acquire a disability. In addition they will be the most wealthy generation to retire and have planned longer for their retirement and therefore will have more to spend than any previous generation.

The disabled consumer market has an aggregate income that exceeds \$1 trillion and boasts \$220 billion in discretionary spending power annually. Nearly every industry has made changes to their product, services and marketing to attract the disabled consumer market except the entertainment industry. Among the top products and services that those with a disability spend a good portion of their discretionary income is for travel and entertainment (Packaged Facts, Diversity, Inc. and The NY Times).

Where is the representation and authentic voices of those with a disability in today's film and television? And why is the motion picture and television industry so reluctant to be inclusive to all?

Well maybe if they just keep the status quo and pretend there is no problem then there is no guilt or remorse or responsibility and those with a disability will remain somewhat silent or better yet just go away. Sort of reminds one of that one family member that annoys so much that during the holidays and other family gatherings you politely greet them and hope some other family members keep their attention so that you won't feel too guilty for avoiding them the rest of the visit. But for those in the entertainment industry everyone avoids and ignores those with a disability leaving them alone in their challenges and solitude without representation or authentic expression of their very unique life and contributions to society.

This is how it has nearly always been in the industry and another review of the films that featured those with a disability and the ignored talents and skills of the writers, directors and actors with a disability is proof enough. Minor exceptions in some films like Marlon Brando's 1950 debut film, "The Men" had some of the background people (they were not actors) who actually were paraplegics from the war. And the movie, "The Waterdance" was written and directed by Neil Jimenez who is a paraplegic who provided an authentic voice and the film was brilliantly acted by Eric Stoltz, Wesley Snipes and William Forsythe as paraplegics, but still were Al Jolson's in a wheelchair and the story was stereotypically all about dealing with first becoming disabled. Maybe the number of actors with a disability would not allow the casting for a more credible and authentic representation at the time they shot it, but there are plenty actors with a disability today.

The Numbers

In the past nearly all industries and society in general avoided those with a disability or at best greeted them politely and then ignored them. The only time those with a disability were acknowledged it was to capitalize on their deformity and put them in "The Freak Show." There have been many changes, even if Hollywood has refused to acknowledge or accept them as the case when the only comprehensive demographic study was compiled in the "Marketing to Americans with Disabilities" report by "Packaged Facts" and published in 1997. Suddenly most industries took note of the findings that pronounced those with a disability "have banded together with sufficient strength to be recognized as a market in their own right." And they really paid attention when the subject of money showed the incredible pockets that have been ignored and completely underserved was declared that the "aggregate spending power of the nation's [then] 51.6 million people with disabilities at \$796 billion annually." They went on to "predict that the spending power of people with disabilities will grow at a steady rate of 5% over the next five years. Which will put the market at \$1,029 billion by the year 2001. This estimate is based on a 2% growth rate in the disabled population (conservative, considering the aging of the baby boom generation and the medical advances that are enabling more people to survive previously life-threatening conditions)." That was six years ago and you can be assured that with the conservative estimates the disabled consumer market now in 2007 exceeds at least \$1.3 trillion.

The research went on to say that people with disabilities are highly motivated to spend money in areas that significantly improve their quality of life. Those include travel, *entertainment*, education, clothing, computers, exercise equipment, sports gear, transportation and house cleaning services.

According to The National Organization on Disability, "The disability community, comprising nearly one-fifth of the American population is an untapped market worth over \$220 billion in discretionary spending power. Further enlarging this potential market are families, friends, communities, employers, and service providers of people with disabilities. Like other niche markets, the disability community responds positively to companies whose marketing approaches are sensitive to their needs and interests."

All other Industries

Several companies and organizations have begun to recognize the profitability of reaching consumers with disabilities and now include disabled models in their advertising, contribute to events or funds that promote disability rights, or otherwise recognizing America's 54+ million people with a disability as part of the fabric of today's society. Many of these industries, companies and organizations have made strides to welcome the disabled consumer as valued customers. All but the entertainment industry, companies and organizations!

Some examples of other companies in other industries such as the travel industry which along with entertainment was clearly listed as one of the places the disabled consumers made significant purchases.

Car rental companies have long recognized that travelers with disabilities need specially-equipped cars and in the larger airport lots and rental facilities a way of reaching those cars. The Hertz Corporation made a \$60 million dollar commitment to making it easier for disabled travelers to get to their rental cars. To streamline the process of taking travelers from airport terminals to car rental locations, Hertz completed the deployment of "Easy-Access" shuttle buses at 20 airports across the country. These low-floor vans also sport an extra-wide (56 inches) doorway and lower floor to ease boarding. The bus can "kneel" to a four-inch height to further ease entry. A simple electronic ramp facilitates wheelchair or scooter entry and exit. Once on board, travelers in wheelchairs have available ADA-compliant safety belts and waist-high luggage racks that eliminate the need for passengers to lift baggage overhead.

Other companies in the car rental industry also made significant changes. Avis Rent A Car System claims to be the nation's first comprehensive accessibility program for travelers with disabilities. The program called "Avis Access" targets the more than 54 million Americans with disabilities, their families, and the many international travelers with disabilities. "Avis Access" provides a dedicated 24-hour toll-free number, 1-888 TRY-HARDER (879-4273) for customers with special travel needs, along with TTY/TDD access for those with a hearing impairment. In addition "Avis Access" provides specific complimentary services for drivers and passengers with disabilities which include a Transfer Board, Swivel Seats, Spinner Knobs on the steering wheel, Panoramic Mirrors, Hand Controls designed for drivers with limited leg function to accelerate or brake, and their own Accessible Bus Service that offers, an electrically operated ramp or lift, two ADA compliant wheelchair positions, special aisles and low luggage racks.

Even after the Americans with Disabilities Act mandated certain hotel adaptations, travelers with disabilities often found that basic accessibility was still the exception. Recognizing that accommodating travelers with disabilities made business sense, Microtel Inns set out to change all that and goes beyond the letter of the law in many ways. Reception counters are situated lower than in other hotels to accommodate wheelchair users, and all public areas have accessible restrooms. The number of adapted rooms at each property is based on the total number of rooms in that hotel, but all Microtel's, regardless of size, have at least one room available with a roll-in shower. To ensure availability for travelers with disabilities, they avoid booking ADA rooms to non-disabled guests unless no other rooms are available.

Without a mandate or threatening law suits, Delta Air Lines went out of their way, using their own money they researched, designed, developed and had constructed a revolutionary new type of aisle chair to assist those with a disability to fit down the very narrow aisles of an airplane called, the "Delta Air Chair." Considering passengers with mobility disabilities and those requiring assistance to and from their airplane seat, the "Delta Air Chair" features a patented hydraulic lift system that elevates the passenger to the height of the handrail so the airline employee can easily pass the passenger over the armrest and be lowered into their seat. Prior to the "Air Chair's" development, gate agents had to help lift passengers from their wheelchairs to a carry-on aisle chair, transport them to their designated seat, pass them over the armrest, and then lower them down into their seat. This movement was often awkward and placed strain on both the passenger and the employees. The new hydraulic technology of the "Delta Air Chair" helps protect both passengers and airline employees from injury and makes the travel experience more comfortable and dignified for passengers with disabilities requiring assistance to their seat. By June 2002, there were 250 chairs in use by Delta in 125 domestic and international locations and Delta committed to share the design with other carriers to use providing they change the name of the chair! Obviously their concerns for those with a disability go beyond the market segments underserved pockets!

There are other examples of companies and industries making considerable changes and some that go well beyond the requirements of the Equal Employment Opportunity and Americans with a Disability Act like those stated above. But can anyone count how many examples are found in the motion picture and television industry that are not only designed to attract the money of the underserved and powerful supply of the disabled consumer market but like Delta Air Lines just to

make the experience of those with a disability slightly more dignified? To the point of sharing this with their competitors?

Story and Character Stereotypes

Previous movies that featured a character with a disability include the two spoken of above, Marlon Brando's first film, "The Men" and "The Waterdance" had common themes such as the stereotypical ones that were surrounded by a political agenda, "Coming Home" and "Born on the Fourth of July", those that are centered on the disability, "Whose Life is it Anyway?" and "Passion Fish", and the predictably inspirational "Other Side of the Mountain" and "My Left Foot." I mention only those with a mobility disability for a couple of reasons. The first is that your author, yours truly, is a paraplegic from a spinal cord injury I survived in 1995. I have complete upper body control and live a very independent life. Divorced and no children I have a sometimes boring life but it is independent! This is what I know about and I provide the authentic voice of those who have similar challenges of dragging half of their body around day in and day out with a smile and as positive as can be!

Another reason I only mention those with a mobility disability is that those who use a wheelchair are often thought of as the general representation, or the "poster child" for the disability community. This can be seen in the international symbol for those with a disability as the profile of a stickman in a wheelchair typically on a blue background. Even those who do not use a wheelchair often can relate in some ways and many times feel that if a person in a wheelchair can do that, then they with their disability can surely do the same. Those with a mobility disability such as paraplegics are also often the most active despite or in spite of their lack of mobility.

This is significant for the entertainment industry purposes of both the grueling schedule of the production of movies which is an industry concern and misconception often cited as a reason they will not even consider those with a disability and secondly that those which feature paraplegics will be able to attract a wide range of audiences and significantly from the disabled consumer market segment of movie ticket buyers. As laid out above they are a market with spending power that is underserved by the entertainment industry which means if they are provided with an authentic voice and representation through a writers, directors and actors with a disability, they will flock and become loyal to buying not only future movie tickets but also DVD/Videos, pay-per-views/on demand, and other non-theatrical distribution avenues including supporting merchandise.

Statistics Ignore the Discriminated

Most of the previous movies mentioned were produced some time ago. If we look closer at the timeline and begin with the Americans with Disabilities Act signed in 1990 – and then the Packaged Facts demographic study published in 1997 – and finally a report, "The Employment of PERFORMERS WITH DISABILITIES in the Entertainment Industry" that the Screen Actors Guild commissioned in 2003 by two professors, Olivia Raynor, Ph.D. and Katherine Hayward, Ph.D. from the National Arts and Disability Center at UCLA. It was completed and then published by SAG in May 2005.

This was the first study ever done on performers, specifically SAG members, with a disability. The SAG's annual Casting Data Report that provides the industry with hiring practices and employment trends in film and television only made statistical findings on those related to ethnicity, age and gender. Nothing about disability even though the Federal Equal Employment Opportunity laws specifically includes those with a disability. Maybe the industry wide thought is that if there are no numbers then that must mean it doesn't exist! The report concludes that despite the 54 million Americans with a disability, "they remain virtually invisible in the media."

For the purpose of this study they held "4 focus groups in New York and Los Angeles and sent a mail survey to 1,237 SAG members who had self-identified on SAG's Diversity, Special Skills and

Talent Survey as having a disability or using adaptive equipment. And is seen in the findings many do not want to admit and if they can they will hide their disability because of the discrimination, so this number is most likely less than the actual number of SAG performers with a disability. Thirty members with disabilities participated in the focus groups and 496 (40.1%) responded to the survey.”

Here are the key findings taken exactly from the executive summary of the report:

- Only one-third of SAG members with disabilities reported working in a theatrical or television production in 2003.
- Performers with disabilities worked an average of 4.1 days **a year**. Males worked an average of 5 days, compared to 2 days work for females.
- Performers with disabilities under 40 years of age had a higher average number of days worked than those over 40, 6.2 days versus 3.5 days.
- SAG members with disabilities have extensive training and education, with 28% having a college degree in theater and 50% involved in a variety of professional experiences through other entertainment industry unions.
- Despite measures such as the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Producers/Screen Actors Guild’s Policy of Non-Discrimination and Diversity (2001), 36% of the performers with disabilities felt they had encountered some form of discrimination in the workplace, including **not being cast or being refused an audition because of their disability**.
- While a little over a third of the performers with disabilities stated that a reasonable accommodation would help them in their work, 60% never asked for an accommodation because they believed employers would be reluctant to hire them. Many of the performers were unwilling to be candid about their disability in fear of being viewed as an object of pity and incapable of doing the job.
- Overall, the respondents believed that their prospects for employment were very limited and identified the three greatest barriers as: (1) only being considered for disability-specific roles; (2) a lack of acting jobs in general; and (3) difficulty getting an audition.
- Not surprisingly, the performers with disabilities that had more frequent auditions were also more likely to have worked. The most frequently encountered obstacles to getting an audition were stereotypical attitudes about disability and only being considered for limited roles. Also, the performers reported that the more ‘obvious’ or ‘visible’ the disability, the less likely the actor was to be hired or taken seriously by the creative team.
- Commercial work (51%) accounted for the largest share of auditions in SAG productions, followed by television (25%) and film work (18%).
- Performers with disabilities secured the majority of their acting jobs in television (32%), followed by film (28%) and commercials (22%).
- 103 performers with disabilities (20%) were cast in 426 lead roles and 357 supporting roles. 16 performers with disabilities had a total of 316 voiceover roles.
- 101 background actors with disabilities worked an average of 6.57 days. Most (56%) earned between \$1- \$1,000 a year.

- Nearly 30% of the study respondents acquired their disability after the age of 40. Some of the performers reported experiencing two forms of employment discrimination, for 'being old' and because they are 'disabled.'

There were some recommendations made at the conclusion of the report and if implemented would certainly change the way Hollywood in general discriminates against those with a disability, but that was over 2 years ago and can we see much change?

A very interesting point of the report was the number one barrier of performers with a disability getting work was that they were only being considered for disability-specific roles, yet when we think of the disability-specific roles in previous movies they are nearly ALL cast using able bodied actors. Catch-22 or just plain **double discrimination?**

Recent and Current Representation

That was the past but what about today or since the 2005 report was published? Not much! I can say that in 2004-05 there was the U.S. release of two international films that featured characters with a disability. The Irish film titled in the America as "Rory O'Shea Was Here" and the Spanish film, "The Sea Inside" that went on to win the Oscar for best Foreign Language Film. Both were good stories and both were portrayed by able bodied actors. The global internet chat rooms of those with a disability were outraged. Many would not support either one and some even went on to protest to stop others from attending. It was more of a slap in the face and it not only kept them from buying movie tickets it also alienated many, including their family, friends, colleagues and others that are directly related to those with a disability.

The two movies that come to mind that had supporting characters with a disability are, "Dodgeball: A True Underdog Story" was not true to those with a disability! Rip Torn was fantastic and extremely funny but not an authentic representation. And 2007's "The Ex" that most critics tore up except for the non-stereotypical character of a paraplegic portrayed by Jason Bateman. Again I think he is a brilliant actor and I love that the role brought a new look for audiences to see at least the non-stereotypical character with a disability. But still it lacks the honest and authentic element and is another example of the blatant discrimination, ignoring and dismissal of performers and those in general with a disability. The message is if we think a disabled character is worthy in a movie then we will produce it and never even audition a performer with a disability – they are not important – we are the decision makers and what we say goes!

Acting as a Minority

Although it is the talent and skill and craft of an actor to provide a realistic portrayal to their roles and become the character, having a disability is more than having a dialect coach for a Southern or Irish accent! A disability, especially one as severe as being paralyzed is as dramatic as any other minority sub-group portraying the other. Remember the gender, race and disability?

A man portraying a woman, a white actor portraying a black character or visa versa is not authentic. If it is for a comedic role where the audience is in on it, such as "Tootsie," "Mrs. Doubtfire," "Soul Man," "White Chicks", etc. then it is part of the story and the authentic element is not challenged. When in a serious role where the character isn't pretending in the story then it is like Al Jolson's in a wheelchair. Mind you some were great Al Jolson's in a wheelchair, Marlon Brando, Jon Voight, Richard Dreyfuss, Eric Stoltz, Wesley Snipes, William Forsythe, Mary McDonnell, Tom Cruise, Denzel Washington, Daniel Day Lewis, and not taking away from the fabulous acting but there is still missing the authenticity to the film. With the only exception that I can think of off the top of my head is the actress who is well known but still only gets a few parts, Marlee Matlin and her disability is hearing as she is deaf. One person out of 54+ million with a disability is hardly a fair representation and it is also showing that those real live persons with real disabilities – do not count – are not worthy enough to be considered for these roles. How long will this go on?

But the argument that audiences do not seem to mind is very one-sided because they have never been exposed to a Hollywood motion picture with an actor that has the same or similar disability as the character. So it cannot fairly be calculated on how they respond when they have no reference or anything to compare it with. If you have only seen Al Jolson's in a wheelchair in those roles then what can you expect? Maybe that is how Hollywood wants to keep it and why they continue to discriminate against actors, filmmakers, and others with a disability.

Today's Blacklist & Unchecked Future

It is like the new Hollywood Blacklist, only this one is the one that Hollywood is writing and perpetuating against those with a disability and not just actors but writers and directors too. And it isn't all that new either.

How can I be so sure? Let's look at what's up for the future. First go and do a keyword search at imdb.com using wheelchair, disabled, disability, paralyzed, paraplegic and you come back with very little and that is inclusive of the entire database and history of the motion picture industry. In February 2007 it was finally announced after a year of secret auditions and preparations of writer, director, producer, Hollywood god, James Cameron first film since "Titanic" that one of the main characters of "Avatar" which is being produced with a revolutionary technology of digital 3-D, is an ex-Marine and paraplegic. My limited understanding of this role is he is the hero of the sci-fi, action adventure story. This is actually a great thing to have a non-stereotypical role for a character with a disability but it is being portrayed by an able bodied actor. Now if it were a name recognized actor, like those of the past it at least makes sense from a business side and is usually the Hollywood excuse for casting able bodied actors in disability-specific roles. But that is not the case here as Cameron hired a relatively unknown actor. Did he even audition any actors with a disability during those highly top secret meetings last year? Does Cameron himself have a disability we do not know of and he is hiding it like many who can hide their disability do so they may get work and not be discriminated against? So how does he as the writer and director know what it is like to be paralyzed? How does this young actor with little experience portray such a character? Roll around his apartment using his studio provided plain steel hospital wheelchair? Method acting always works?

I admire and respect James Cameron immensely and although this is at least a step in the right direction is he just perpetuating the discrimination by ignoring and repressing the authentic voices and representation of those with a disability that Hollywood is so good at? Maybe because of my admiration of Cameron that I do not want to think that and would rather say that he is just ignorant to the facts that impact those with a disability. I sent a letter to him shortly after the announcement of "Avatar" but haven't heard back.

No Responsibility to Answer, if Never Allowed to Ask

So what about the authentic voice from a writer and director with a disability? I have been at this for the past 12 years, actually before then as I was moving my career from writing and directing music videos to feature films and working on my first short film at the time of my paralyzing accident in 1995. Without going into a step-by-step and lengthy description let me just say that it is going to take more than one movie to change all of this and I started with just writing screenplays and short stories to be adapted into screenplays, combined them to form a dedicated production company to break the stereotypes and end the discrimination of those with a disability while providing the authentic voice and representation of those with a disability. Then I wrote a business plan and put all the pieces together to make a clear, simple yet detailed formula and process that will answer all questions and objections to featuring and using those with a disability in commercially viable films – which as mentioned I also wrote the screenplays for.

So now armed with everything I need and have spent the last 18 months aggressively and creatively attempting to get the attention of Hollywood. Everyone from the top executives of the

studios, their assigned heads of productions, their publicists, talent agents, legal representation, celebrities from those who have their own production companies and/or are producers to those whom I know would have a personal interest in breaking the stereotypes and ending the discrimination of those with a disability, to the Motion Picture Association of America, certain acting governors of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, and the Producers Guild of America - and I have not heard back from anyone and cannot get past a receptionist or voice mail to get a confirmation that anyone has gotten any of my communications or what they think of what I propose as a solution to the blatant problems that all of Hollywood seems content on ignoring.

One exception and it was not a direct contact looking for help but still, Jennifer Garner has made me feel as she said "proud of my accomplishments" even though they are all only for the work that sits on my computer and website because I cannot get Hollywood to think or even look and listen outside of the box!.

Niche Product with Wide Appeal

Providing a social answer to the motion picture and television industry is great but as I learned money is what will get attention and is why the saying that show business is a business is first and foremost in the minds of Hollywood. This is more than fine with me as my previous 12 years have given me the time and ability to address this essential process of making movies. Even though I have had to set my creative side on the back burner for several months now, in order to prepare and create the company and my website and as I said before, so I can answer all objections as I have worked hard on this as a business. Nearly every company wants a niche product that has a strong appeal to the niche market it will serve. Even better is what I have created in a niche product with wide appeal. This is more than words as I have detailed in my business plan. Having a proven market segment that has a very respectable spending power, that has research showing that entertainment is one of the main discretionary purchases by the largest and fastest growing minority sub-group in America, is more than underserved, is ignored through examples of previous as well as current Hollywood movies that have alienated the market segment. Through the market research I have identified and answered the psychological factors that motivate the disabled consumer market to spend. And through all of this can show where if marketed properly, making the entire market of moviegoers aware of the uniqueness of my film projects with emphasis on the authentic element which is especially important to the market segment of disabled consumers that will become immediate and loyal, returning customers that will be excited not only for the theatrical release of the films but also the non-theatrical distribution of Pay-Per-View/Video-On-Demand, DVD/Video, Pay and basic Cable and any supporting merchandise.

It is also of note that none of this will distract the regular movie going audiences and in fact will bring them out by looking at new and fresh perspective storytelling in their movie experiences. My film projects have been written and designed to be first entertaining that just happen to feature a character with a disability. For example "London Time" screenplay is a police drama and in the tradition of Hollywood could be pitched as "Ironside" meets "Lethal Weapon" meets "CSI: Crime Scene Investigators." So as a company if I can tell you that my product will not only keep current customers happy but also attract a brand new market segment that through the industry's dismissal in nearly all previous movies, is hungry, near rabid for authentic products and the only reason they have not been specifically attracted to previous themed movies before was the lack of this authentic element, and that this segment is 54+ million strong with a verifiable spending for products with the features my product delivers, I think this description would be welcomed by every industry in the world. So why not Hollywood?

Along the business side of my film products that will attract loyal member of this underserved market will bring brand new companies interested in product placement within these films. Everything from wheelchair manufacturers, medical equipment suppliers, clothing for the disabled, pharmaceutical companies, to even major companies that serve and attract the

disabled consumer such as those I mentioned in the travel industry to the major car manufacturers that all have an adaptive equipment rebate program, to many other companies which unlike Hollywood, I have made contacts that are more than happy to respond to the letters, voicemails, emails, faxes and phone calls, from a motion picture producer who happens to have a disability and is the president of a production company serving the needs of the very market they are desperate to advertise to attract their business. Oh, there goes that word, business again. See I have not forgotten, ignored or dismissed the main element in show business!

Star Element

Motion picture and television industry specific elements like attaching name recognizable talent is one of the most important in deciding to greenlight and support a particular film project. With the proper production and distribution support I can and will attract Hollywood star power to co-star in good roles that with their participation will help those in their own field of acting in ending the incredible discrimination and stereotypes of those with a disability. I am confident that the mere fact of assisting those who on top of struggling to find work as they did before making it to the A List – but add the discrimination on top of that, will at least have them take a look at my screenplays and from there I am sure I can attract them to the story and the characters that will give my film projects a slight advantage over other independent films they are considering.

Specific Marketing

With the ability to capitalize on a major motion picture, being released in May 2009 by a major, proven Hollywood writer, director, producer as James Cameron's "Avatar" by marketing my first film project to be theatrically released around the same time (either just before or after) and having the featured actor with a disability, the writer and director with a disability rolling out on talk show stages to explain the similarities and differences that my movie is providing compared to previous and current movies that have attempted to feature characters with a disability, and with the A-List co-star explaining on these talk shows how she was first attracted to the project by helping to break the stereotypes and end the discrimination of those with a disability will provide some great marketing and attract a lot of moviegoers attention.

General Summary

So to recap and summarize the film projects that I have prepared to go into production are from a business sense that address most of the risks Hollywood considers. My films provide:

1. Niche Product with wide universal appeal.
2. Provide an authentic voice and representation of the largest and fastest growing minority sub group in America.
3. Attract an immediate and create a loyal consumer segment that is underserved and with large enough spending power to pay particular attention to as all other industries have.
4. Entertaining screenplays that include interesting stories and characters while providing a new and fresh perspective for all movie ticket buyers.
5. Advantage in attracting Hollywood Star power in co-starring roles with actors with a disability.
6. Unique marketing to attract media that will in turn grab moviegoers' attention and desire to purchase tickets and non-theatrical supporting merchandise.
7. If the product is as successful as predicted, I have several – an entire slate ready for production and to provide the market with for future successes.

And finally to have the satisfaction of being socially responsible and assist in reversing the incredible history of injustices that the entire industry is guilty of, even admittedly through the SAG report of 2005. Ending the largest discrimination that keeps the industry completely inclusive as they so proudly and then honestly proclaim and burning the Hollywood Blacklist of those with a disability once and for all.

Ignoring both the Problem & Solution

So as I, Larry N. Sapp II, a paraplegic filmmaker that through my company, Abilities United Productions can provide a solution to all of this yet, why am I unable to get any Hollywood attention to even consider what I am doing? I prefer to talk about the solution but if we have to focus on the problem just to get the attention, then I am prepared to play it the way Hollywood wants. Instead I will bring the attention to Hollywood. I have been giving them the option for the past 18 months but no one will give me 5 minutes to show what I have pointed out here as a solution to a problem that is about to get a lot of attention.

One way or the other, I am going to be a participant in **“Breaking the Hollywood Stereotypes of Characters and People with a Disability”** while also helping to end the incredible Hollywood Discrimination against performers and people on both sides of the camera with a disability. The choice of working on the solution that I have dedicated my life for the past 12 years on or by bringing a lot of attention to the problem is up to Hollywood and those I have been trying and will continue to try and contact for a moment of their time. Otherwise the media will be made aware and along with the disability activists, organizations and individuals will make the noise if Hollywood continues to ignore us with a disability. In fact the noise will become deafening. One stop on my personal MySpace page will show any visitor how those of us with a disability who are working, want to be working and creating work in the entertainment industry are banding together and preparing to be heard one way or another. With 54+ million and growing can make a lot of noise if the discrimination and stereotypes continue and maybe a documentary film about this journey I have been on and the lack of reaction or even recognition from Hollywood would be interesting at the film festivals. That one about the ratings “This Film Is Not Yet Been Rated” is a good example of what it will be like when I turn the cameras on Hollywood’s Blacklist and when names are listed as I try to contact. Premiering a doc film like that at Sundance I have the feeling might finally garner some Hollywood attention.

Future of American Cinema

I am ready and just as passionate about these projects that go beyond just being an entertainment product and are a worthy cause that is being ignored by most in the industry. Now I am prepared to partner with any studio, their independent divisions or other independent production companies that can help provide the part that I lack – production funding and distribution deals. Through Abilities United Productions I am ready to take this to the next level and be a part of what American Cinema history will soon record as a “turning point” for those with a disability on both sides of the camera in Hollywood.

So who AMONG THE Hollywood players and makers want to talk about the Hollywood Blacklist that is as obvious as a pink polka dotted elephant in the center of the scene that the cameras are directed to keep out of the frame **or** to work on films providing the solution and through my research and work has an increased chance of success then most independent films and therefore make money within the show business of motion pictures? I am ready and I know a lot of actors with a disability that are ready. Are you?

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