

# Spike Lee's new movie 'got no game'

By Valerie Miller  
Contributing A&E Writer

Spike Lee is at it again — making another film that is a not-so-thinly-veiled statement on race relations disguised as a story about basketball in *He Got Game*.

While Lee might have *Got Game*, after watching the film I simply "got" bored and offended by the blatant racism and sexism it promotes.

The film starts out promising enough, proving that Lee is well-schooled in the idea that you have to capture your audience's attention in the first ten minutes of any film.

The plot revolves around the strained relationship between an African-American prison inmate Jake Shuttlesworth (Denzel Washington) and his estranged son Jesus (played convincingly by NBA star Ray Allen of the Milwaukee Bucks).

Jesus is the No. 1 high school basketball player in the country, with the deadline for him to decide between a lucrative deal with the NBA or going to college fast approaching.

Washington's character is made an offer he finds very hard to refuse: convince his son to sign with the governor's alma mater, Big Sky State, and possibly get his sentence commuted.

To accomplish this feat, Jake gets a temporary parole to work with his son. The only problem is that his son Jesus wants nothing to do with him, since his father killed his mother years before.

The movie starts out strong and the cinematography is so rich in colors and drab, when the story calls for it, that you could almost turn the sound down and watch this film. Actually, that might not have been a bad idea.

Lee does a great job in capturing the essence of Coney Island in New York, where the film is shot.

We get to see the poverty of the ghetto that represents Jesus' current existence, while witnessing juxtaposed shots of the Boardwalk and its carnival rides that perhaps symbolize his dreams for the future.

One of the major failings of the movie is that it lacks characters we can identify with or care about. The character of Jesus is likable enough when we are introduced to him. After all, here's this guy who's practically orphaned and has had to raise himself as well as his younger sister.

But he also is the future savior of the game of basketball (hence his name). Everybody wants to use him, his girlfriend, his coach, his friends, his uncle, recruiters, agents and even his own father.

Jesus sees his athletic talents as a ticket out of poverty for himself and his sister, but



photo courtesy of Touchstone Pictures

On the set of "He Got Game," Spike Lee (right) directs his cast.

he is never swayed by temptations of cash, cars and expensive gifts, so what's not to like about him?

The problem arises about half way through the movie when a college eager to recruit Jesus hires a couple of white prostitutes (or white college

girls; I never did get that straight, but they are basically the same to Lee in this film anyway) to show Jesus a good time.

Suddenly, he has forgotten all about his fiance and is basically having an orgy with the girls. The audience is left wondering where is this tower of

principles that we were introduced to? At this point, I found myself no longer caring what became of him.

One of the most disturbing things about this film is the way women are portrayed here, and white women in particular. Every white woman is either

shown as a prostitute or a promiscuous college student, whose only purpose is to serve the sexual needs of the male athletes.

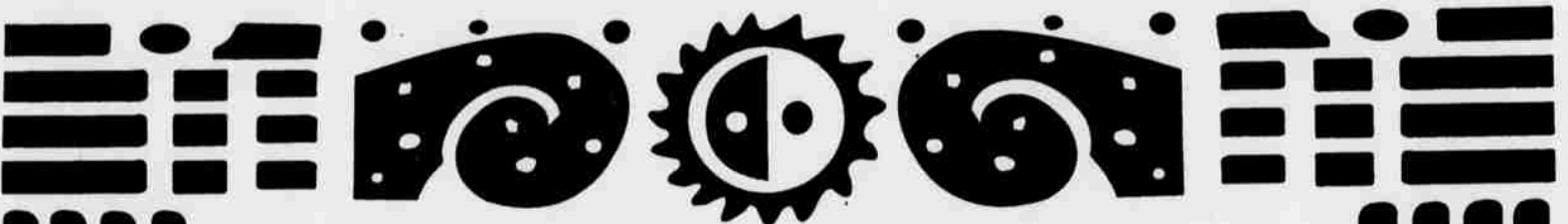
The character of the father, Jake, develops a relationship with a white prostitute (Milla Jovovich), who is shown being abused by her African-American pimp, but at least Jake has some genuine feelings for her.

His son simply talks about his fling with the girls by denying it, telling his girlfriend that he wouldn't be caught dead with some "white bitches."

I have a hard time imagining this going unnoticed if the races were reversed and a white male filmmaker showed African-American women in this degrading way, and it SHOULD'T go unnoticed.

This is a film that IS racist in nature, and something that should bother EVERYONE, no matter what their race or gender.

Spike Lee may *Got Game*, but too bad he hasn't ever "got" over his own prejudices.



## ROMANCE? ADVENTURE? SUMMER TRAVEL?

**Are you a smart woman who'd enjoy joining a nice, bright man to:**

- \* Cruise the Greek Isles?
- \* Flirt with luck in Monte Carlo?
- \* Skinny-dip on the French Riviera?
- \* See how fast they REALLY drive on the German Autobahn?
- \* Learn & grow by experiencing emotions at the Berlin Wall?

Allow me to introduce myself, my name is Marty. I'm an incredibly nice, nonsmoking, single white male attorney licensed in Nevada and New Jersey (gaming centers) & in my 30s. I love cats, including my Tiggy! I've traveled to every continent (except Antarctica!). My other interests are: Swimming, Aqua Aerobics, Comedy, Humor, Relationship Psychology, Communication, Swedish Massage, Blackjack, Watching Newsworthy Boxing Matches, Star Trek, & Lots of Concerts soft, soul & dance music.

The qualities I offer are: exceptional intellect, emotionally open & warm communication, being lovingly sensual & adventurous. I'm on the cute side with a "cuddly" build. I seek the special woman described below to join me on this summer trip, possibly leading to other travel & even a more permanent "journey?"

**I seek a woman who shares all these qualities (they also describe me):**

- A nonsmoker, 20-40s, single or divorced, childless, as well as:
- Incredibly nice - enjoys caring, pleasing, reciprocating to who cares for & pleases her.
- Highly intelligent - to be able to enjoy a top 1% guy.
- Career - uses her intellect, or, if a student, has goals for grad school or career.
- Emotionally warm - like me, with a truly loving sweet side.
- Lovingly sensual - loves lots of loving.
- Adventurous - would enjoy ALL of these adventures. No scaredy cats please!
- Communicative - saying it nicely to each other -no raised volumes. No mind reading!
- Looks - what's deep inside the package is FAR more important to me than the "wrapping." For practical purposes though, she should weigh under 199.

If all of these apply to you, then please tell me why they describe you, and what you seek in a man. Please include your phone. Photo appreciated - not required. MAIL or DROP: Marty, c/o Kinko's Mail, 4440 S. Maryland #208A, Box 175, LV 89119 (Near UNLV). EMAIL: VegasLawyr@aol.com. VOICEMAIL : 702-369-9764, (If you voicemail, please tell me the same things you'd say in a letter. Thanks.)

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