

BUSINESS

Hollywood avoids downside of drug use

WASHINGTON (AP)—Musicians sing about guzzling liquor and movie stars puff cigarettes and take drugs on the big screen. But federal officials ask: Where is the unglamorous side of substance use - like hangovers, slurred speech or getting in trouble with the law?

A government study released Wednesday says that people were depicted doing drugs, drinking or smoking in 98 percent of the top movie rentals and 27 percent of the most popular songs in 1996 and 1997. Fewer than half these movie scenes and song lyrics mentioned any downside to these activities.

The \$400,000 study of 200 movies - rated from "G" for all ages to "NC-17," no one under 17 admitted - and 1,000 songs was commissioned by the Office of National Drug Control Policy and the Department of Health and Human Services.

The study stopped short of saying that music and films cause young people to use drugs, alcohol and tobacco. But researchers said that determining the frequency and nature of substance use in entertainment media is the

first step toward understanding how much influence films and music have on young people's decisions to smoke, drink and take illicit drugs.

"We do not suggest that we want to dictate the message. Drugs, alcohol and tobacco are a reality of American life. They should be part of the art form of the entertainment world," said Barry McCaffrey, drug control policy director for the Clinton administration. "But we are suggesting they need to be tied to the consequences that are realistic, given our experiences in American life."

A Motion Picture Association of America spokesman declined to comment, saying there hadn't been enough time to review the two-year study.

The Recording Industry Association of America issued a one-paragraph statement, saying efforts already were under way in the music industry to help control teen substance abuse.

Since 1985, for example, the music industry has put labels on recordings that contain strong language or descriptions of violence, sex

or substance abuse. In an average record store with 110,000 titles, about 500 recordings would have the "parental advisory" sticker, the association said.

Nelba Chavez, administrator of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, said the entertainment media are a powerful influence on young people, but parents have more of an impact.

"There's a lot of room for improvement in the entertainment world," she said, "but there's just as much room for improvement in homes and communities."

On a positive note, Ms. Chavez said only 3 percent of the song lyrics mentioned tobacco. And 15 percent of the movies that portrayed illicit drug use also contained an "anti-use" message, such as limiting how much and how often substances are used.

Only five of the movies, however, were substance-free. And in at least two of the five, there was a scene about using substances, according to Don Roberts, a Stanford University communications professor who helped

research the study.

"In one scene, a set of characters sit around a tea table, drink out of little toy tea cups and go through an entire drunk shtick," Roberts said.

Among the study's other findings:

-Of the movies, 93 percent showed alcohol use, 89 percent tobacco use and 22 percent drug use.

-Of the songs, 17 percent included lyrics about people drinking alcohol, 18 percent using drugs and 3 percent smoking.

-More than half the movies and more than 80 percent of the songs that mentioned drugs and alcohol indicated no consequence to users.

-Of the 669 major adult characters in the movies, 5 percent used illicit drugs, 25 smoked and 65 percent drank alcohol.

Reflecting concern about media violence, four members of Congress asked President Clinton to convene an emergency summit meeting at the White House with the leaders of the entertainment industry.

In a letter to Clinton, Sens. Joseph Lieberman, D-Conn.,

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New Jersey cops deny motel race profiling

TRENTON, N.J. (AP)—New Jersey State Police deny that race plays a part in a crime-fighting operation in which motel employees are recruited to be on the lookout for suspicious guests.

The nine-year-old effort to stop drug shipments is under review by the state Attorney General's office to determine whether it unfairly targets minorities. *The Star-Ledger* of Newark reported last week.

The newspaper, citing law enforcement sources, said police investigators told hotel desk clerks to pay particular attention to Hispanics from Florida who carry lots of cash. Clo Smith, a clerk at the Holiday Inn near Newark International Airport, said a detective suggested Spanish-speaking guests should be treated with more suspicion than those who speak English.

"Let's just say I found it somewhat insensitive," she said in last Thursday's *New York Times*.

But police spokesman John Hagerty denied that racial profiling was an element of the program. He said the effort, run by the

Narcotics Enforcement Bureau, has been a successful method of arresting drug traffickers along the New Jersey Turnpike.

"Race and ethnicity are not part of any training used by the detectives assigned to this unit," Hagerty said. "Nor is race or ethnicity part of any criminal factor indicator used in conducting investigations into illegal narcotics trafficking in the state of New Jersey."

The review by investigators working under Attorney General Peter Verniero is part of a wide-ranging examination of police training, procedures and practices in dealing with minority suspects.

Verniero last week issued a preliminary report confirming there was evidence of racial profiling—the practice of stopping motorists solely on the basis of their ethnicity—within Turnpike patrol units. Except to confirm a general review of state police training in various drug interdiction activities, Assistant Attorney General Paul Zoubek refused to discuss the motel program.

The U.S. Justice Department also has been investigating racial profiling allegations against New Jersey's state police. Similar

accusations have been made in Florida, Maryland, Connecticut and elsewhere along the Interstate 95 corridor.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

BLACK MEDIA NEED SUPPORT IN CONSUMER-ORIENTED ADVERTISING

The nation's black buying power in 1999 is \$533 billion, but little in the way of advertising and promotions comes back to black broadcasters and newspapers. The Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies reports that data for 3,745 broadcast stations across the nation shows that stations that program for minority audiences earn about 29 percent less revenue per listener than those that air general-market programming. Also, minority-owned radio stations take in less advertising revenue per listener than comparable majority-owned stations. It seems that advertising agencies are "colorblind" and rarely send any "green" to black media in their promotion of products.

NATION'S BLACK BROADCAST STATION OWNERS MEET

The National Association of Black-Owned Broadcasters (NABOB) recently held their 1999 Communications Awards. Among the awardees were: Tom Joyner of the popular Tom Joyner Morning Show; comic Cedric the Entertainer and Mariah Carey. NABOB is a trade association representing the interests of 165 black-owned commercial radio and 20 television stations around the country. The group gave Tom Joyner its "Pioneer in Broadcasting" award for his decades in the industry. Joyner recently signed a \$3 million-a-year contract with Capital Cities/ABC Networks for his nationally syndicated morning show. The "Tom Joyner Morning Show" is aired to over 90 stations across the country, most of which are not NABOB stations. The show has a broad audience and advertising but rarely using black media in their reports and commentaries on their news reports of interest to the mostly black audience. Ironically, Pierre Sutton, NABOB president and head of New York City's Inner City Broadcasting does not carry the Joyner show.

SBA JOINS NAACP TO BOOST BLACK BUSINESS

The NAACP and the Small Business Administration (SBA) have joined to deliver \$1.4 billion in loan assistance to African-American entrepreneurs by the year 2000. NAACP staff will be trained to provide technical assistance and direct loans through eight Community Development Resource Centers located in Atlanta, Austin, Baltimore, Charlotte, Columbia (SC), Fort Lauderdale, Gary (IN) and Richmond (VA).

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