

Everyday stories show subtle racism in all of us

Crash

Starring Sandra Bullock, Don Cheadle, Matt Dillon and Brendan Fraser.

Now playing

Crash is an anthology of heart-breaking stories of everyday people in Los Angeles and how some outrages fizzle, turn into calm or escalate into horror.

London, Ont. native Paul Haggis' directorial debut (he's best known in Canada for TV's *Due South*), which he also wrote, is a meditation on everyone, not just the handful in this film.

Some say only an outsider could create such a painfully acute view of American gun culture. But the universal themes of intolerance, xen-



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On Movies

phobia, self-interest and greed are crystal clear.

As two young African American men, played by Mr. Ludacris (he doesn't use a first name) and Larenz Tate, stroll down a brightly lit boulevard in a predominantly white neighbourhood, they wonder why theirs are the only black faces.

But they are educated and philosophical enough to know why. Young black men are social pariahs, thanks to the media skew of people like them.

Racism is right there on the street, subtle, but there. They notice a woman cling tighter to her husband as they approach.

A split second later, the two young men pull out their guns and mug the couple.

Ms Bullock plays the female victim. Her husband, played by Mr. Fraser, has their home locks changed that night.

However, the locksmith is Hispanic, and she demands, loudly enough for the locksmith to hear, that the locks be changed again in the morning because "he'll prob-

ably keep a copy of their key and sell it to his homeys".

That locksmith goes to an emergency call placed by a Persian man whose convenience store has been looted and destroyed.

The Persian had just had a furious argument with a gun store owner who shouted anti-Arab remarks at him.

A misunderstanding escalates and the Hispanic man stands down, as he always does. He has a wife and baby at home and needs the job.

There are more stories in this fascinating mix.

Crash is a huge emotional experience daring viewers to look inside their hearts and see who they are. The news isn't always good, no matter how great and pure people think they may be.

In fact, that's the movie's tagline "You think you know who you are. You have no idea."

It is about karmic debt and our slippery connection to our own hearts and minds, as well as our stupid-

ity. *Crash* is a scorcher of a film experience containing enough contrasting moments of beauty and understanding to be transforming. A truly powerful and remarkable piece of art.

Avoid repetitive work with specific muscles

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adding gardeners should pace themselves, take regular breaks and avoid repetitive work with a specific muscle group.

Conventional wisdom dictates gardening, like other outdoor activities, should be approached with common sense.

Wear a hat and use sunscreen to protect against sunburn or heatstroke.

Drink plenty of water and try to work in the shade as much as possible to prevent dehydration.

As most gardens are a haven for insects, be courteous and cautious. Endeavour to avoid and protect insect life and habitats. An angry swarm of anything with wings usually means trouble.

Overdoing it is the bane of most gardeners, said Mr. Leonard.

"Know your limits, especially when lifting," he said. "Gardening requires

moving heavy objects such as plants, bags and balled tree roots. If it's too much weight, get help or at least use a wagon or wheelbarrow.

"It's one thing to have a beautiful garden. It's another if you're only able to enjoy it from a sick bed, recovering from a debilitating injury."

A complimentary gardener's exercise brochure is available from *Fit 4 Real Fitness* by calling 905-201-6804. See additional tips at www.physiotherapy.ca and www.fit4realfitness.com

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