I feel like I have the same conversation with different people around Hollywood every other week:

Is it better to support a black film even if you don’t want to see it because you don’t think it will be good.

Well, after extensive conversations with folks, I’ve been able to argue both sides. A certain filmmaker who has become popular for expressing his opinions on the current state of black filmmaking, Spike Lee, offers that we “vote” for films when we purchase tickets to go see them. This idea suggests that if we don’t bother going to see films when we think they’re going to be bad, we will eventually put them out of business. It suggests that if we continue to support films that aren’t what we really want to see, they will continue to be made because the demand for them is present. Sure. Point taken.

The other side of this argument is that we should go see every black film, whether we like it or not, simply because if we do not support the films that we do have, we may not get any more of the ones we want. We (the consumer) want to see a film that will be entertaining and speak to the truth of our community, whatever that may be at the time. However, studios are reluctant to put money into black films under the impression that we will not support them. After all, this is a business. Would you put YOUR money into something *knowing* you would not make a return?

Remember what happened to the short-lived NBC series *Undercovers* with Boris Kodjoe? They didn’t even bother airing all 13 episodes that had been filmed before cancelling the show. How much work and petitioning did it take for us to get *The Game* back on air? Black shows and films will continue to struggle if we don’t watch, whether we like the show or not.

The most recently theatrical releases in black film were Tyler Perry’s Madea Big Happy Family and Jumping the Broom. Both films performed well. Jumping the Broom surpassed its projected numbers. Sure these films have received quite a bit of scrutiny but their numbers have inevitably green lit other films for the black community.

All in all, if we want to see more black films, we have to tell the film industry that we will support the films we already have. Think of it as a vote for black cinema not a vote for one specific show. We have to show the studios that black films are in demand and are highly lucrative. We can’t get more if we don’t appreciate what we got.

Support black films.