

For immediate Release

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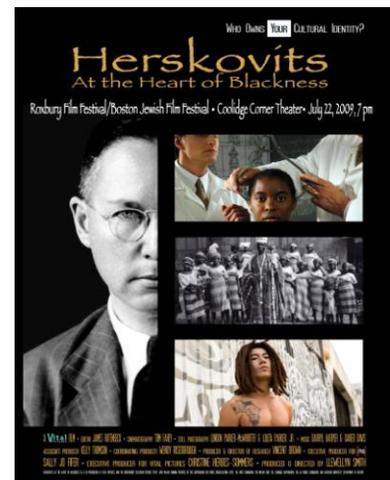
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**The Roxbury Film Festival and The Boston Jewish Film Festival
Come Together To Ask The Question:
Who Should Have The Power to Define A People?**

Boston, MA - Who should have the power to define a people and can that power determine a people's fate? These questions and others are addressed by **Herskovits At the Heart of Blackness**, the compelling documentary that will be screened on Wednesday, July 22nd at the Coolidge Corner Theatre. The documentary, produced by Boston-based Vital Pictures, examines the story of how Melville J. Herskovits, a white Jewish- American anthropologist, acquired the power to re-invent our historical understanding of black people in the mid-20th century.

Melville J. Herskovits re-defined black history and black people, making it possible for a people formerly despised as 'Negroes' to pride themselves as African-Americans. Yet along the way, he undercut the work of African American social scientists, dismissing their work as 'non-objective', laden with political agenda. The great irony is that in the end, Herskovits's own work would inspire Black Power activists of the late 1960s. Herskovits' life and work raises questions powerfully relevant today. What is 'objective study' and when does it become politicized? What happens when the scholar becomes the powerbroker? What are the consequences when we deny a people the right to define themselves?



Bringing rarely seen archival footage and animation together with interviews from leading scholars of race and culture, **Herskovits At the Heart of Blackness** depicts an ongoing struggle over who has the power to understand, describe and, ultimately, define the contours of human cultural history. How might being a powerful insider affect the depiction of the disenfranchised outsider? And to what effect?

Date: Wednesday, June 22nd 7pm - Coolidge Corner Theatre
Location: Coolidge Corner Theatre, 290 Harvard St, Brookline MA 02446
Tickets: \$9.75 general admission
\$6.75 Coolidge members, ACT members, TCOF members and BJFF members
Run Time: 100 min

(Continued)

To purchase tickets online, log on to <http://www.coolidge.org>. The film is being screen jointly by the Boston Jewish Festival and the Roxbury Film Festival, and is a sneak peak for at the 11th Annual Roxbury Film Festival.

About the Roxbury Film Festival

The Roxbury Film Festival (RFF) is the largest film festival in New England dedicated to films that celebrate people of color. The 11th Annual RFF takes place July 30th through August 2nd. Films for the Roxbury Film Festival will be screened at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, the Tower Auditorium at Massachusetts College of Art, Roxbury Center for Arts at Hibernian Hall, and Annex Auditorium at Wentworth Institute of Technology. Also, the ever popular Dinner and a Movie event will take place at The Haley House Café. Updated information on special guests, panels, awards and other festival events can be found over the coming weeks at www.roxburyfilmfestival.org.

RFF is co-produced by ACT Roxbury (www.actroxbury.org), a program of Madison Park Development Corporation, and The Color of Film Collaborative (www.coloroffilm.com).

About the Boston Jewish Film Festival

The Boston Jewish Film Festival presents the best contemporary films from around the world on Jewish themes at its annual Festival and throughout the year. Through features, shorts, documentaries, and conversations with visiting artists, the Festival explores Jewish identity, the current Jewish experience and the richness of Jewish culture in relation to a diverse modern world. For more information, visit www.bjff.org.

About Vital Pictures

Vital Pictures, Inc. (<http://www.vitalpix.com>) is a Boston based film production company headed by two veteran PBS producers – Llewellyn Smith and Christine Herbes-Sommers. Vital Pictures creates films that energize public discourse on social justice issues, with provocative storytelling, careful research and innovative production design. They are producers for the PBS series *Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality Making Us Sick?*, winner of the 2009 duPont Columbia Award for Excellence in Journalism.

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