

## AGENTS OF CHANGE

Abby Ginzberg, Frank Dawson

Documentary

Jennifer Brathwaite



The Civil Rights Movement, the Black Power Movement, and university and college campuses are three elements that came together in the late 1960s with the admittance of Black students into traditionally White schools. The product of this mixture was the inevitable reaction when the status quo is challenged and that challenge is met with resistance: revolution.

Frank Dawson and Abby Ginzberg's documentary *AGENTS OF CHANGE* offers a look into this period, focusing specifically on the events that took place at San Francisco State University in 1968 and Cornell University in April of 1969. Through interviews with some of the men and women who were young people at that time and put themselves on the line in the fullest and most shocking sense of the phrase, the viewer is given insight into the wants and feelings of the students. You are offered a means of appreciating their fears and the fortitude it took to allow themselves not to be intimidated in the face of the level of resistance they encountered.

Frank Dawson, an Associate Dean, and former Chair of the Communication and Media Studies Department at Santa Monica College, as well as a founding partner in NuHouse Media Group, teamed with Abby Ginzberg, an award winning, independent documentary filmmaker of 30 years to make this important film. *AGENTS OF CHANGE* shines a spotlight on the untold side of this significant moment in the Civil Rights Movement. The documentary is important not just as a study of history but because of the burgeoning attitudes of the current times and the struggles of almost 50 years ago are which still being fought today with the elimination of fund for Black Studies programs in institutions of higher learning.

The film is as riveting as it is inspirational. It shows the strength of the Black students to fight for what was right, but also the strength of their allies in the form of students in other minority associations and some of the White students who stood beside them in the struggle. *AGENTS OF CHANGE* is a definite watch for anyone with even a passing interest in the history of the time or those moved by the current challenges.

## THE REAL THING

Brenda Jackson

Harlequin Desire

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Jennifer Brathwaite (B+)

Out of something bad, can come something magnificent.

**THE REAL THING** is the story of Trinity Matthews, a medical student trying to get through her residency at a Denver hospital with her sanity and emotions intact to eventually go back to her home in Florida, to practice. Unfortunately she has a problem and it comes in the person of a lecherous and entitled, yet powerful and respected senior surgeon who has his sights set on her. Her solution comes in the form of Adrian Westmoreland, one of her brother-in-law's handsome cousins. Her sister, Tara Westmoreland, devises a plan: get the doctor to back off by pretending to be in a



relationship with someone else; specifically Adrian. The plan is immediately put in motion. Adrian and Trinity go out on dates and simulate all of the aspects of having a passionate and caring relationship. Very quickly however, instead of art imitating life, life starts to imitate art due to their intense, mutual attraction. The pair decide to give into their feelings hoping to kill two birds with one stone. They will enjoy each other and their desire while the opportunity presents itself and get Trinity's lecher, i.e. Dr. Casey Belvedere to go away. As it happens, the stone misses both birds and neither plan works out as expected.

Each location in the book succeeds in helping to frame the emotional tides of the story. The hospital becomes synonymous with stress and tension; Trinity always on edge waiting for the appearance of Casey Belvedere. The locations of their dates become seductions, where the lines between the real and the pretend become blurred and certain wants are indulged but still serve a purpose. Adrian and Trinity's homes symbolize an escape from reality and give permission for them to indulge in feelings and thoughts they aren't willing to verbalize or accept out in the 'real world'.

Naturally all of the Mrs. Jackson's characters are well written and have the dialogue to assist the reader in drawing a clear image of that person in their mind; perhaps at times Dr. Caldwell's conversations might be a little exaggerated but it is forgivable. From five pages in the reader is given the foundation of both Adrian's - bold, blunt and charismatic - and Trinity's - gracious, level-headed and determined - personalities, and they bloom as the book progresses. Aside from the leads all of the characters serve their purpose well, helping the overall flow and feel of the text.

For me, the only prickle of annoyance lay in Adrian's attitude with regard to the

progression of the relationship between himself and Trinity. It is possible to be confident and assertive without being arrogant and condescending and at times Adrian teeters over the edge.

Nevertheless, the love-story between the characters is still wonderful. **THE REAL THING** is a very good novel and I would say a definite buy. It is a familiar story but has its own interesting twist and is bolstered by Brenda Jackson's great writing.