



Alternative Film Histories

The movement of black cinema

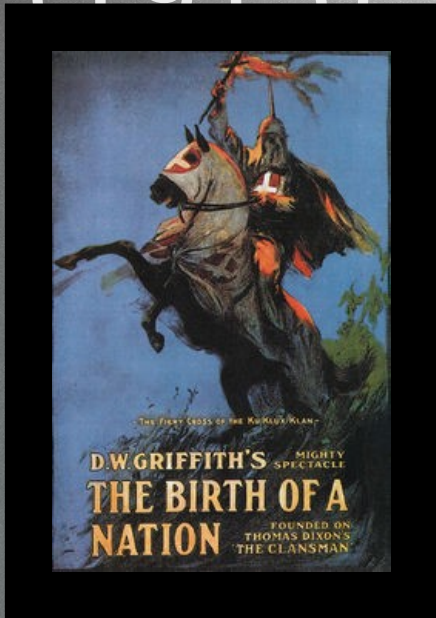
Emancipation Proclamation 1983



President Lincoln

In 1863, President Lincoln's emancipation proclamation freed the slaves. However, the emancipation proclamation and its following agreements did not alter the attitude of many citizens.

The Birth of a Nation (1915)



D.W. Griffith

The Birth of Nation (1915), directed by D. W Griffith, is a very famous film. Birth is known for the editing and a lot of filmmakers study or show this particular film because of editing. *Birth* is the only film that prominently featured all of the black misrepresentations in black face, but had actual blacks on screen as slaves. Birth is the beginning of blackface on screen.

Misrepresentation

- ▶ Misrepresentations of blacks is what Hollywood actually showed viewers.
- ▶ Black were seen as the toms, coons, mulattos, mammies, and bucks.
- ▶ Blacks really struggled trying to be a part of American cinema.

Civil Rights

- ▶ Civil Rights are rights that is granted to all citizens by the 13th, 14th, 15th, and 19th amendment to the U. S constitution as the right to vote and have equal treatment under the law.

Incorporating “Movement”



Movement is defined as the organized action by people working toward a goal. The civil rights movement was a time dedicated to activism for equivalent rights and treatment of African Americans in the United States.

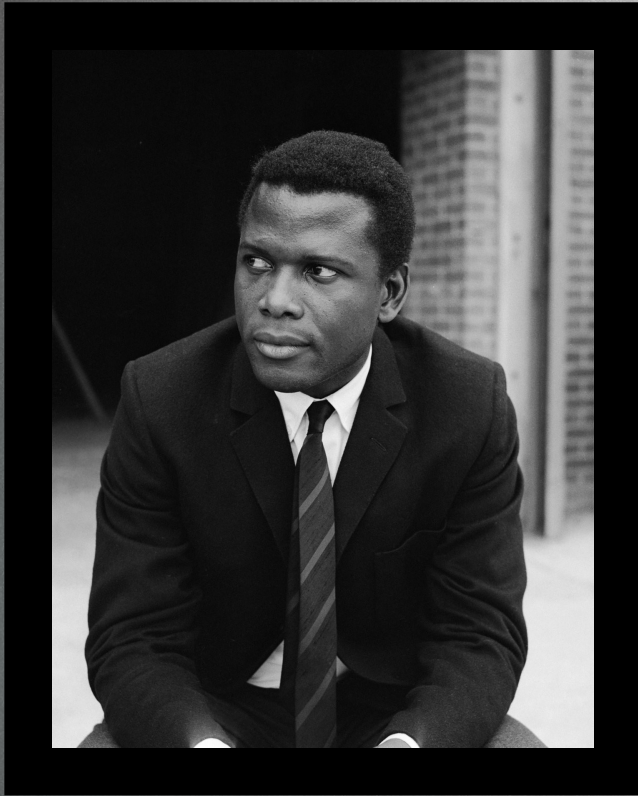
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There was rallies for social issues, political decisions, and cultural changes to forbid discrimination.

Sidney Poitier

Solving the issue of racism



Trying to solve this issue of racism, Hollywood was able to find Sidney Poitier, who was recognized by both a black and white audience. His professional and polite roles is what Hollywood wanted to focus on.

During Racism and Controversy

- ▶ Hollywood was still making more and more films.
- ▶ Viewers was now use to seeing diversity on their big screen.

Production Code

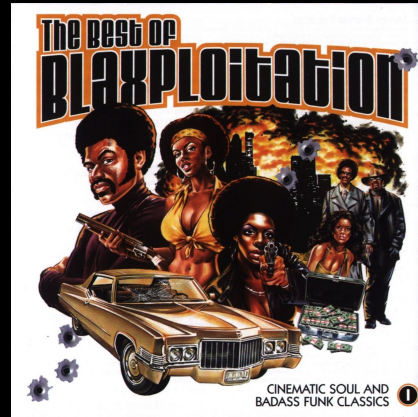
- ▶ As Hollywood moved on, film began to gain a lot of restriction, also known as the Production Code.
- ▶ Although, sex was still able to sell in the 1960s, but illegal drugs, excessive violence, social controversy, profanity, and more was highly inappropriate for American cinema.



The Movement

Introducing Blaxploitation

Blaxploitation



Between 1970 and 1973, the movement of Blaxploitation was able to take over the screen big. It was beyond time for a black audience and for Hollywood to start noticing the financial change.

Cotton Comes to Harlem (1970)



Cotton Comes to Harlem (1971), directed by Ossie Davis. Cotton is a film that introduces the movement of the Blaxploitation period. The bale of cotton that is searched for throughout the film represents the cotton that was picked back in slavery days. Cotton also feature a crooked character name Rev. Deke O' Malley who stole the community money.

Sweet Sweetback Baddasssss Song(1971)



Sweet Sweetback Baadasssss Song is a film made in 1971, directed by Melvin Van Peebles. *Sweetback* is an independently made film, with the budget of 500,000 dollars and earned \$10 million dollars. *Sweetback* was like an anthem for black organizations and more. *Sweetback* included a lot excessive violence and sex. *Sweetback* is one of the Blaxploitation films that was rated X-rated because of all the sexual images that was shown. *Sweetback* is a film that black cinema should never forget.

Shaft (1971)



released by M-G-M, the well-known (*Shaft, 1971*), directed by Gordon Parks. Blaxploitation film was created particularly for the black community and urban areas. Blaxploitation goes beyond 1973, the movement really did not run its course until 1975/6.

The Movement of Black Cinema

- ▶ Early, American cinema did not portray blacks well, and blacks are not concerned the norms in this society.
- ▶ The black cinema history is something that needs to be brought to the forefront of cinema discussions.