

Birth of a Nation

- “The Birth of a Nation” played for 804 consecutive performances at the Liberty theater in New York.
 - Pioneering from a technical point of view
 - large outdoor scenes, the tracking shot, cat’s eye lenses, fade ins, color, or more like tinting, but still color, night photography, panning, close ups, high angle shots
 - It was also the first feature length film in American motion picture history.
 - Story of two families divided by the war
 - Klan are the protagonists and Reconstruction was a failure
 - Silas **Lynch** - antagonist mixed race played by white person in black face.
 - Gus - formerly obedient house slave turned into a rapacious animal after gaining freedom, pursues Flora to her death as her brother tries in vain to find her.
 - Castration scenes in the film were actually cut in the final print
 - First movie to be shown in the White House. Note that Wilson refers to it as **history**
 - NAACP tried to have it outlaw in New York, calling it: “A glorification and exaltation of the Ku Klux Klan, an organization avowedly for the purpose of creating racial and religious prejudice against various elements of American citizens.... It is a malicious misrepresentation of colored people, depicting them as moral perverts. It arouses sharp antagonisms that embitter American citizens against each other.”
 - NAACP, which lauded—which issued a forty-seven page pamphlet titled [Fighting a Vicious Film: Protest Against The Birth of the Nation](#). They would hold rallies at the theater, wherever the film was being shown, protesting its screening. And it famously referred to the film as “three miles of filth.”
 - African-American audiences openly wept at the film's malicious portrayal of blacks, while Northern white audiences cheered.
 - Riots broke out in major cities (Boston and Philadelphia, among others), and it was denied release in many other places (Chicago, Ohio, Denver, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, and Minneapolis). Gangs of whites roamed city streets attacking blacks.
 - Released on Blu-Ray, November 11, 2011
 - 1:46:50/1:53 -
Black Voting
 - 1:59:49-2:00:00ish –
Scenes of incompetent black Congressmen, lascivious blacks
 - 2:04:11 -
the inspiration from the Klan
 - 2:13:30 –
Gus attacks the Flora
 - 2:28:40
Gus is captured by the KKK
 - 2:56:30
KKK gaining full strength getting ready to
- Black filmmaker Oscar Micheaux - *Within Our Gates*, produced in 1920 sometimes considered his response to the film Birth of a Nation.
 - Some themes are switched - the white man attempting to rape Sylvia the black female protagonist and finds out it’s his daughter
- Spike Lee called it the most important film.
- It is still used today by white supremacist groups.

<https://www.facebook.com/235852889908002/posts/1272368642923083?sfns=mo>

- Started by Nathan Bedford Forrest, who, as a general, had executed a group of black union soldiers after they'd surrendered
- Most of the leaders of the Klan were very respectable members of their communities, business leaders, farmers, ministers. Judges that might be Klan themselves would be in charge of punishing KKK members.
- Poor whites have to face the fact that now that black people are free means that they have to compete with this new element for livelihood, for social position, and political power ultimately.
- Waves of immigration, anti-communism, and anti-catholicism helped boost the second Klan
 - KKK believed that catholics were puppets of the Pope and were getting ready to stage a 5th column rebellion in the US.
 - Klan was successful at constructing *emotion* as opposed to knowledge
 - Towns with tiny percentages of catholics learned to fear and hate them
 - People who had never known or seen a Jews learned to fear and hate them
 - The Klan grew across the country. It was so big in Anaheim, CA (Disneyland), that the city acquired the nickname "Klanahiem"
- 1925, Second Ku Klux Klan 30,000 men participated in that parade.
 - What the photo leaves out are the throngs lining the avenue: The Klan didn't just march in the nation's capital; it received a warm welcome. Unlike the first and third Klans (the third appeared during the civil rights era), the 1920s Klan was well integrated into American life. "The K.K.K. may actually have enunciated values with which a majority of 1920s Americans agreed,"
- Influence in politics:
 - Klan-endorsed politicians held the governor's office in Oregon, Texas and Colorado
 - The Klan endorsed and 11 governors, 45 members of congress and thousands of state and local officers - these people openly embraced these endorsements.
 - Education was what whites feared the most (KKK, and other white organizations) and hundreds of schools were burned.
 - Klan also targeted private schools - OR was the only state where the Klan successfully passed legislation (a constitutional amendment no less, tho it was overturned by the court) banned private schools. At the time, fewer than 1% of the OR population were Catholic and Jewish
 - The Klan and Klan-endorsed politicians we behind the passage of the restrictive 1924 Immigration act (which stayed on the books until 1965).
- Presidents then (and know) failed to condemn the KKK.

Great Migration

- Before 90% blacks lived in the South, after = less than 50%
- Migration / Refugee crisis
- Different regions wound up in different areas (eg. Texas and Louisiana = West Coast, Tennessee, Mississippi = Chicago and Midwest.
- Jim Crow
 - The absurdity = laws prohibiting people from playing checkers
 - Different bibles. One story where the court had to stop proceedings because they couldn't find the black bible.
 - Some states had laws so that blacks couldn't pass whites in cars. What would you do? Honk? Tailgate? (responses show that progress has occurred.
- Really started with WWI
 - Decrease in labor force as people went to fight and increase in demand for manufacturing for the war effort.
 - The south didn't like their cheap labor force leaving. Story about people being arrested on the train platform, minutes from leaving. After the police had arrested all the could transport, the train was told to leave without all it's passengers.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/retropolis/wp/2017/06/07/when-portland-banned-blacks-oregons-shameful-history-as-an-all-white-state/?utm_term=.bcf3f12c2319
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