

When Hollywood was first created, there was suddenly a huge shift in the film industry itself. America became the number one source of film exports, and it just kept getting bigger. The problem with Hollywood was that it was also a place where everything was conservative, in a way. It wasn't until much later that Hollywood became more accepting of diversity, in fact, we still have problems with that today. But, amidst all the racism in the new American film industry, the first African American directors pushed through, such as Spencer Williams, Oscar Micheaux, and William Foster. It is ironic that Hollywood is considered a place of fantasy, and was called "Hollywood" because it was the one place that holly won't grow--but in filmmaking, anything is possible ("The Birth of Cinema." *The Story of Film: An Odyssey*).

The first substantial film studios to be created with the birth of Hollywood was Universal, Twentieth Century Fox, Goldwyn, Paramount, and Warner Bros Pictures. Each of these brought new aspects to the film industry such as the first known film stars, including Charlie Chaplin, John Bunny, and Francis Bushman and Beverly Bane. Also the first movie theaters called Nickelodeons started popping up all over the place, which were meant for common folk and only costed a nickel ("The Birth of Cinema." *The Story of Film: An Odyssey*). Hollywood was placed in Los Angeles because of its constant sunshine, and a variety of geography. In addition, it was away from Thomas Edison's trust, where almost everything was copyrighted. In LA, filmmakers had a fresh start (Dixon and Foster 31-32).

In the thirties and forties, Hollywood was creating its own type of smooth-flowing studio system. The higher budget films were "A" films, lower budget films were "B" films, and then there were "C" films that were less common and usually low budget westerns. Major studios were known for specific genres, and new actors were put under a seven year contract (Dixon and

Foster 90-92). All throughout that time studios would put out films constantly, many of them were “B” films and occasionally “A” films. Censorship was also very strict, with no crime, drugs, excessive kissing, miscegenation, or pointed profanity (Dixon and Foster 130-133). Additionally, films during the thirties and forties included lots of escapism, because Hollywood is thought of producing films with stories that have “ideal” plots (Dixon and Foster 90).

Fifties filmmaking was a time of postwar crisis all over the world. Many of the films in Hollywood showed that, when an era of film noir and fatalism started, in which plots included betrayal, deception, and violence (Dixon and Foster 174-175 and 196-197). There was also some controversy between whether or not the main creator of a film is the director, called the Auteur Theory (Dixon and Foster 187-189). Some problems the Hollywood Industry faced during this time were television and the Hollywood Ten and Blacklist. TV was just becoming popular around the fifties, and theaters started going out of business. People stopped watching movies because they could just watch television instead, so studios had to try everything to get it popular again. To make things worse, a new government agency called the House of Un-American Activities Committee accused ten directors (the Hollywood Ten) of not testifying for having relations to communism, and each of them had to serve jail time. This led to the Hollywood blacklist, where the HUAC started accusing not just directors, but writers, actors, producers, and everyone else in the film industry. It finally stopped when a series of anti-Communist films started coming out, to please the agency’s worries (Dixon and Foster 179-183).

When most people think of film in the sixties, it is just normal for them to think “New Wave.” The New Wave was something that started in France, but spread all over the world including America and Hollywood. The mavericks of this time period in America were John

Cassavetes, Peter Bogdanovich, and Roger Corman. These filmmakers took the place of the others such as Samuel Fuller, John Ford, George Cukor, and Howard Hawks, who were just finishing up their career. Documentary film was very popular during the New Wave, as well as independent filmmaking with the New American Cinema movement. The documentary film of the sixties used a lot of “Direct Cinema” which gave it sort of a “rough, raw, look” (Dixon and Foster 279-281). The New American Cinema was an underground movement that took place in New York and San Francisco, that produced things like the surfing genre, experimental and structural film, but is mostly considered experimental (Dixon and Foster 283-287). Meanwhile, back in Hollywood, they were changing the original censorship to a rating system of G, PG, R, and X, because of the major breakthrough with explicit filmmaking.

The New Wave truly changed how people made film in the future, inspiring amazing independent filmmakers in the seventies and eighties such as Robert Altman, Woody Allen, John Waters, and John Carpenter. This era also gave rise to Blockbuster films, which are overwhelmingly successful movies that usually have even better sequels. The founders of these types of movies are said to be George Lucas and Steven Spielberg. Later on in the nineties and two-thousands, a new Hollywood style was being created that held exaggerated, multi-genre filmmaking with directors like Tim Burton, Ridley Scott and David Lynch. Studios in Hollywood were changing too. Universal Studios became known as NBC Universal, Rupert Murdoch’s News Co. bought Twentieth Century Fox, and Paramount split into two groups, one for CBS television and radio networks, and one for production and programming (Dixon and Foster 379-381). Another big advancement was digital photography, which totally changed how movies were made. They were no longer made on strips of celluloid, but entirely on computers.

It's breathtaking how much has happened in America's film industry, but film is and was being created everywhere, constantly changing how we understand the movies and world movements.