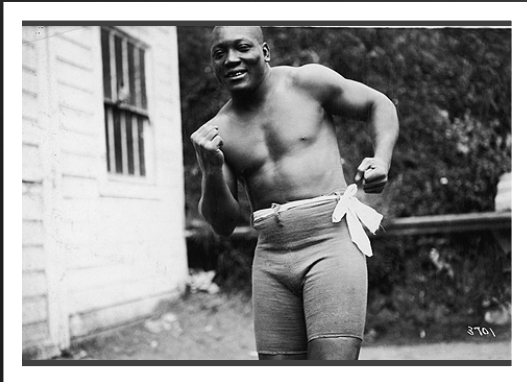
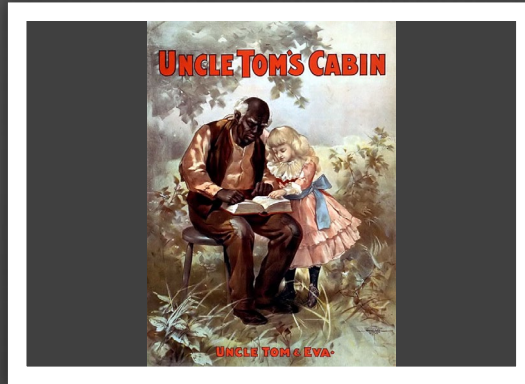




A Short History of Black Actors in Hollywood



Stereotyped Roles for Blacks

The Mammy, the Uncle Tom, the Coon, the Buck, and the Tragic Mulatta

1950s: Sidney Poitier



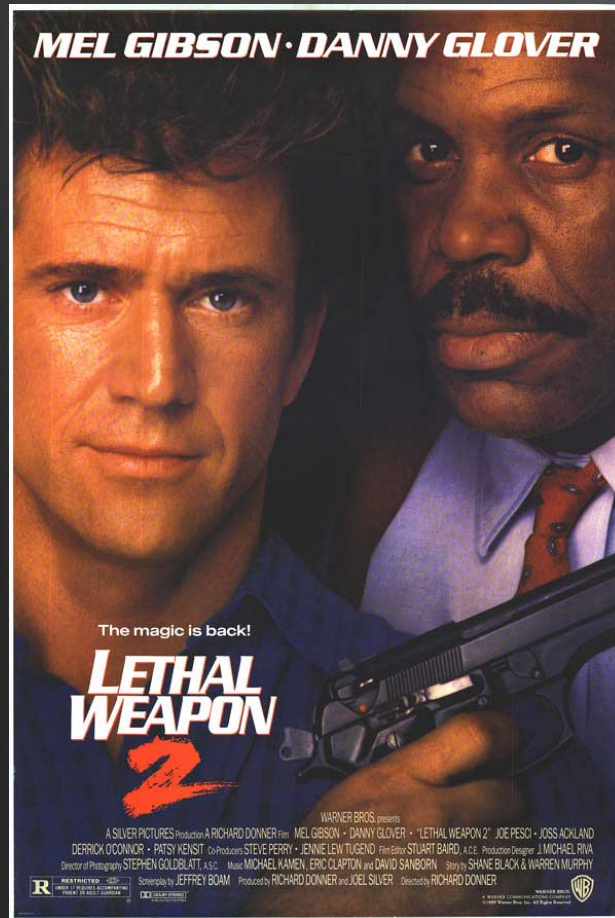
1960s: integrationist fantasies; black indie films



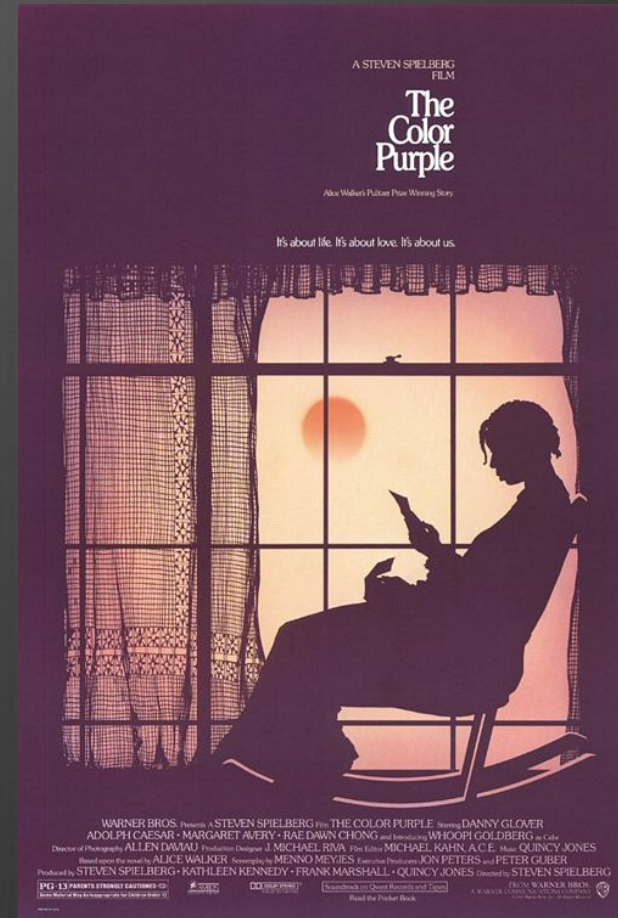
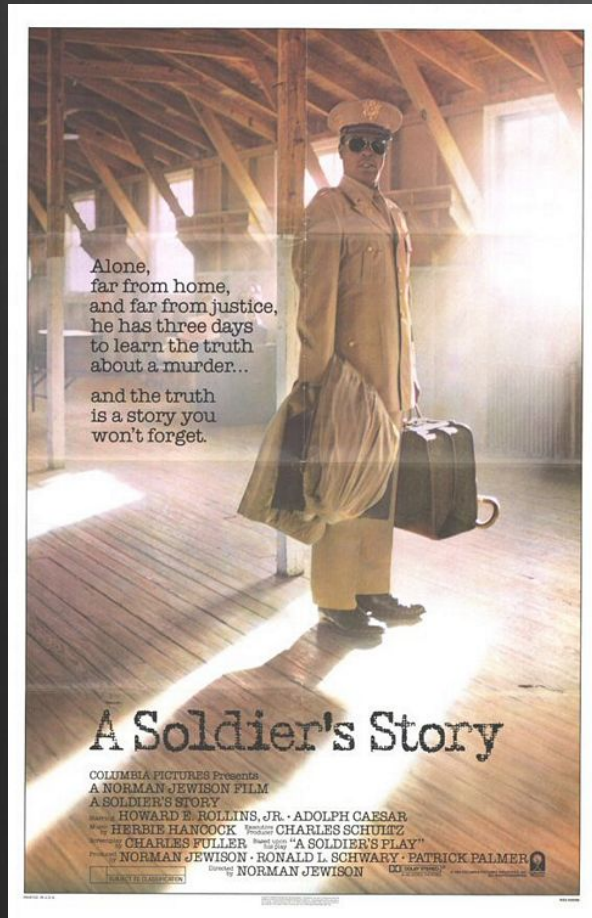
1970s: Blaxploitation; interracial buddy comedies



1980s: interracial buddy action films



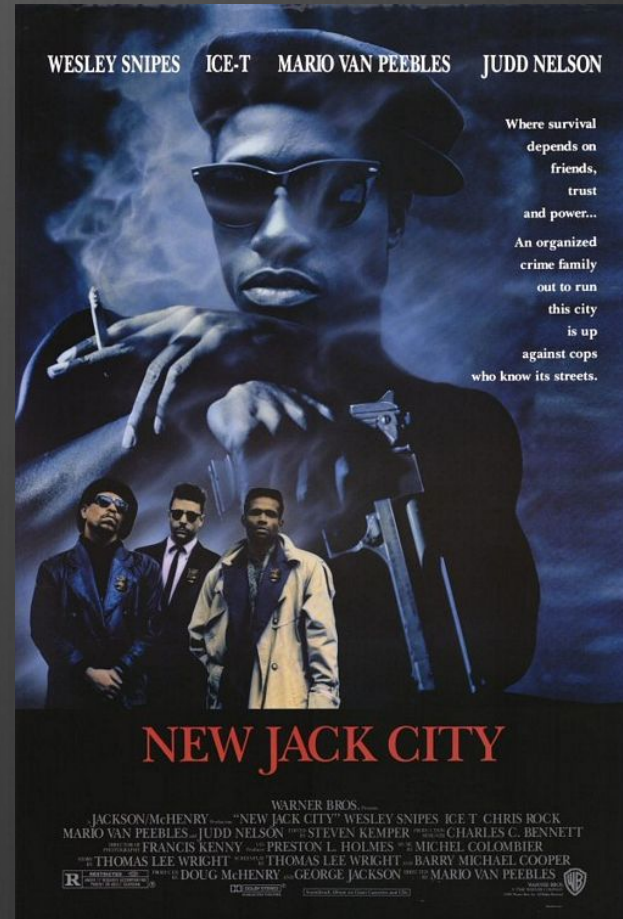
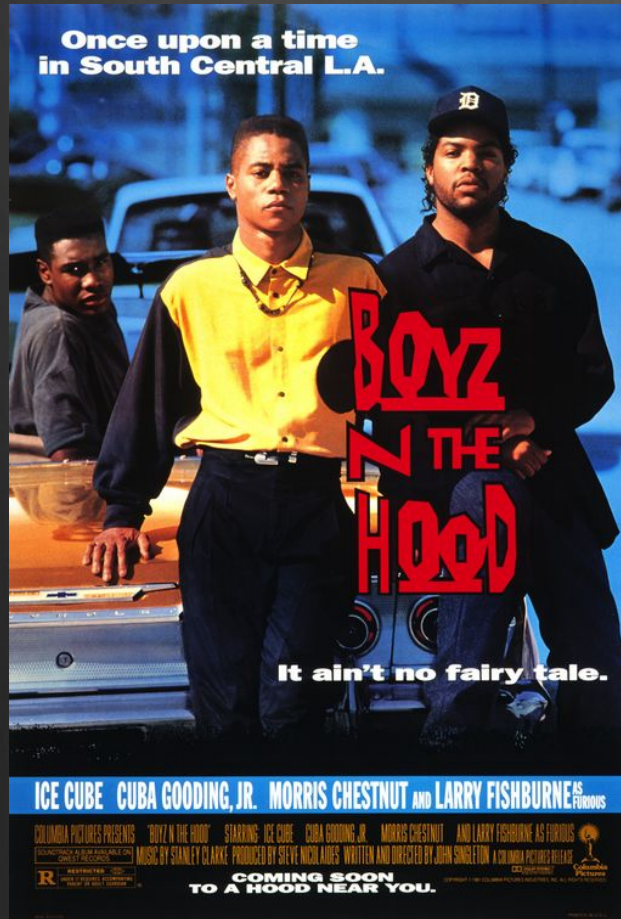
1980s: Black-themed films made by white directors



1989

- 🎬 *Glory*
- 🎬 *Lethal Weapon 2*
- 🎬 *Driving Miss Daisy*
- 🎬 *Do the Right Thing*

1990s: Films by Black Directors



Strategies of Containment

- ⊗ casting black men in comedies or comedic roles
- ⊗ casting a black actor in films with few other blacks or that don't directly address the black experience
- ⊗ not casting black men in sexual and romantic roles
- ⊗ representing the black male as inferior or dangerous
- ⊗ using **political positioning**: cinematic techniques that may reveal an unconscious racist perspective

Political Positioning

- ⊗ camera placement: who gets the most close-ups?
- ⊗ composition and framing: who is placed in the center or foreground of the frame?
- ⊗ editing: whose POV is used most? who most often gets the one-shot after a two-shot?
- ⊗ sound: whose voice is heard more offscreen?
- ⊗ screen time: who gets more?

Whiteness and Cinematography

- ⊗ white skin is privileged, due to the technical quality of film stock, cameras, and lighting
- ⊗ white skin as the norm
- ⊗ nonwhite skin is a problem for the cinematographer
- ⊗ white skin has 35 percent reflectance; black skin has less than 16 percent
- ⊗ light balance is the primary issue

Whiteness and Cinematography

- ⊗ Even when a film intends to treat black and white actors equally, to represent racial equality in the diegesis, the performance of stocks, cameras, and lighting makes it difficult or impossible to do so.
- ⊗ Since the digital revolution, this differential representation is somewhat solvable.