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Indie filmmakers like Dir. John Sayles offer an inspiration for future films not consisting with the stereotypical oversimplified heroic individuals. He depicts flawed communities and individuals going through struggles that really show a sense of reality. “Expansive in their scrutiny, several significant motifs recur, in various guises, with more emphatic treatment in one or another of the works: for example, political disenchantment dominates *Return of the Secaucus Seven* (1980) and *City of Hope* (1991); the nature of racial prejudice undergirds *The Brother from Another Planet* (1984); the impact of class weighs heavily in *Baby, It’s You* (1983); and gender issues and sexual preference drive *Lianna* (1983).” (Carson, p.126). Sayles brings up issues which unlike mainstream films, brings up ambiguous problems and complications with no clear cut answer. His films leave open an inviting discussion about the ideas and problems that many would feel frustrated over.

The film *The Brother from Another Planet* (1984) directed by John Sayles, offers a silent protagonist that isn’t common in a lot of films. To make the hero even more of a freak, he is a three-toed alien running from two white bounty hunters while experiencing the hardships of being an immigrant in New York City. He is also very passive because of his inability to communicate vocally to other characters which is another non-mainstream idea. Protagonists usually are very active and interact with all their surroundings or characters so that we may understand that character. The film does depict racial prejudice my creating parallels of races looking like "illegal aliens" or immigrants because they do not fit the social norms due to their lack of proper communication. The main character is an analogy for a black slave running from his white master. With regards to camera techniques and lighting, they really got creative to show the paranormal such as body regeneration, supernatural feats, removal of body parts without actually showing how but implies it.

The restrictions of certain heated topics limit independent film, and favor the mainstream because of the adherence of censorship. “Gerima had faced local and international rebuffs when seeking financing and distribution for *Sankofa*. Recalling these instances, which he calls censorship at the pre- and post-production phases, he explained.” (Reid, p.148). Slavery is a topic many Americans really prefer not to talk about. Deciding to create a film about a sensitive topic can ruin your reputation long term effecting future productions. The funding becomes extremely limited, and people avoid mentioning the topic with innuendos. Censorship is very powerful because it can make anything turn non-existent.

In indie film, *avant-garde pornography* came to the rise in labeling certain filmmakers with their style of filmmaking as an art. “If breaking the taboo on sexuality was, as Parker Tyler (1970) suggested, a prevalent feature of underground cinema, Poole’s work seems to register an extreme manifestation of experimental cinema’s predilection for sexually explicit representations. (Capino, p.163). The film *Ken Park* directed by Larry Clark may be considered *avant-garde pornography* for some. This film breaks taboos from adultery between a wife and her daughter's boyfriend, incest between father and son or daughter, polygamy between three characters, and murder fetishes. The film is about the dysfunctional lives of teenagers revolving around guilty pleasures. The film is a very underground film that many people may not be ready for. Word Count: 549

Works Cited

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