



THE PALEY CENTER FOR MEDIA

PALEY EDUCATION @Home
presented by **citi**

What We're Watching



Teen Transmitters Takeover!

For six weeks, *What We're Watching* is being taken over by the Paley Center's teen internship cohort! Each week a different pair will bring you their thoughts on the 2020 media landscape along with personalized recommendations. We hope you enjoy this unique opportunity to hear directly from young voices about the impact this year has had. This week we hear from **Kadija Diaby**, Junior, at Urban Assembly School for Global Commerce, and **Menelik Lee**, Junior, at Institute for Collaborative Education.



Covid-19, Social Unrest, and Hollywood

2020 feels like the worst year in US history, and certainly the worst year of our lives. In January, we were greeted by rumors of Coronavirus, and by March, NYC started to shut down everything including schools, restaurants, gyms, and movie theaters. When Coronavirus came around, our country barely had any cases, and now according to a CNN article the US currently has over six million cases and it's growing. Alongside the deadly virus, American people have been protesting every day against the current government and police corruption. In this newsletter we will be focusing specifically on how Covid-19 has affected the film industry, and what we can learn from film about police brutality.





Covid-19 feels like it has been around for quite some time now, but it only started to surface in late December 2019, and it struck all the countries around the world really hard as we moved into the New Year. It has been affecting small businesses, large companies, and Hollywood. Many movies that are in production have had to do their rehearsals over Zoom calls, film festivals were either canceled or rescheduled, and movies that have been released have shifted to at-home streaming.

Our new situation brings up the question: has Covid-19 brought down the expected income of the 2020 movies that were supposed to be released in theaters? Highly anticipated movies like *Mulan* (2020) and *Tenet* (2020) that originally had release dates in July have been held off due to the closing of the theaters. Although it may be true that [Netflix has been gaining lots of money from the movies and series](#) they have been dropping. This is due to the fact that most people are quarantined inside of their homes, and a large percentage of them rely on Netflix to stay entertained. Alongside this, due to Covid-19, thousands of crew members have been laid off and most movie productions have been pushed back for months. The box office could potentially face a sixty-percent loss of revenue compared to last year. *Variety* magazine states that Disney+ and Netflix are what people have been relying on because they have access to a variety of movies and shows that they are able to watch safely in their homes.

Deadly Virus Film Recommendations:

- ***World War Z*** (2013) shows the effect of a virus on the human society, turning them all into zombies (fun!), and it stars Brad Pitt.
- ***Contagion*** (2011), the events in this film are very similar to what is

happening now with Coronavirus, and it's extremely powerful. We highly recommend it (realistic!)

- A great [list of films predicting a deadly virus](#) and what it's capable of.



Movies have been around for over a century and the film industry has changed drastically since it started. Newer equipment, new stories, and especially the depiction of black people are different. All of the black characters in the early days of film were played by white people in blackface. Over time this changed but there are definitely still major problems in the film industry when it comes to race.

One thing that movies can do that has had a positive impact is make people aware of things that they didn't know about before watching a film. Movies can inform people about what's going on in the world and be an inspiration to people. Movies such as *Selma* (2014), *The Hate U Give* (2018), and *American Son* (2019) give you an inside look at police brutality. Police brutality has had a big impact on society during these past few years. Many young people of color have lost their lives because of it and movies like *American Son* inform viewers about the kind of society we're living in, and the suffering people of color go through.

In late May, the murder of an unarmed man named George Floyd by a white police officer led to chaos across the country. It gave a resurgence to the Black Lives Matter movement and mass protesting. Through it all there was a positive outcome: people of color were heard. A scene from *The Hate U Give* shows people protesting and nothing changing, and that was similar to the real

life rage people felt when protesting recently. The scene is akin to what is occurring around the world now, and it shows how people of color feel when they are not heard.

Three positive things have happened recently: people started talking about "defund the police," police officers have been arrested for their crimes, and a police reform bill in New York (which repeals 50-A) has been signed into law by Governor Andrew Cuomo, after being stalled for many years. This has given people hope as it is a huge step forward for police accountability.

Police Brutality Film Recommendations:

- ***Selma*** (2014)
- ***The Hate U Give*** (2018)
- ***American Son*** (2019)

As always, if you have any questions, thoughts, or ideas, don't hesitate to reach out to us at eduny@paleycenter.org!

Happy watching,

Kadija Diaby

Junior, Urban Assembly School for Global Commerce

Menelik Lee

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Photos—*Contagion*: Warner Bros.; *World War Z*: Paramount Pictures; *The Hate U Give*: 20th Century Fox

Weekly Zoom Meet-ups

Thursdays, 3:00 to 3:30 pm ET—Resuming Sept. 24

Students Grades 3+ can join us for a weekly Zoom Meet-up, Thursdays from 3:00 to 3:30 pm ET, to chat about the week's theme and engage in some hands-on learning led by a Paley Educator. Parents and teachers are welcome to join as well!

Please Note: our Zoom meet-ups are still on summer break. But don't worry, we'll start back up again on Thursday, September 24.

For connection details, please RSVP to eduny@paleycenter.org.



Calling All Young Filmmakers!

[Ghetto Film School Film Credits](#) is a short film challenge for youth, ages 14-21. The purpose of this challenge is to build and shine the light on your skills as a storyteller because storytelling is

a powerful tool to RAISE YOUR VOICE, DEFINE A MOMENT and CONNECT COMMUNITIES!

MORE INFO

Support The Paley Center for Media

We hope this inspires you to watch and learn together in a new way at home! The Paley Center is here for you and, now more than ever before, we would deeply appreciate your support. Please consider making a donation:

\$25

\$50

\$100

\$250



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