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# Sidney Poitier

Today, students at Texas Southern University all came together to watch the apple tv documentary “Sidney.” An amazing documentary about the life of famous actor/director Sidney Poitier. Sidney is a man who helped pave the way for all black entertainers and filmmakers.

Sidney was born in Miami but grew up in the Bahamas, when he was a teenager he moved to Harlem with aspirations to be an actor. On his way to Harlem he had to have a rude awakening with America’s Jim Crow. From being yelled at for not entering through the back door to almost getting shot if he didn’t “go back to where he came from.” Sidney had it rough in the United States. It wasn’t until he finally got to Harlem where Sidney started to realize his dream. After failing his first audition and being denied a role in black theater, Sidney vowed to prove the director wrong and rise to be one of the best actors of his time.

In this time of United States’ entertainment history, black actors were forced to play demeaning roles. They would be portrayed as uneducated, lazy, thugs, and servants. Sidney’s roles changed that with his first breakout role in “a Raisin in the sun,” a role in which he played a black doctor treating white patients and having to deal with racism. Sidney would go on to have many roles just like this, even playing in a role where he slapped a white man. Arguably his biggest role came in 1967, guess who’s coming to dinner, Sidney plays the boyfriend of a white woman who brings him to meet her parents. Interracial marriage was a very controversial topic in that day, so to see it on the big screen was huge in entertainment history. Before all was said

and done Sidney became the first black man to win an Oscar in a leading role and paved the way for many black people going into film.

Sidney Poitier serves as an inspiration to the student body at Texas Southern University. I was able to get a hold of one student, when asked about Sidney's impact he said "Sidney showed the path for African Americans in film to follow, his bravery is nothing short of exceptional. Sidney Poitier passed away on January 6, 2022, his legacy continues in black filmmakers at HBCUs such as Texas Southern University.