

The 1990's saw an increase in various social issues: economic recession, the AIDS crisis, and rising racial tensions due to police brutality and social norms from the previous decade being questioned. The turn the 90's took from ignoring issues such as racial and class disparity in the 80's, to paying attention to them was echoed in the media – such instances include the Rodney King Riots and the Anita Hill v Clarence Thomas hearings. As these issues were tougher and “realer,” movies followed suit in echoing the tone of the decade.

One thing that struck me was not a quote from the Bogle reading, but from the Rose handout. Black movies were seen in the 90's as a hot new commodity – a new pop culture trend, and I noticed that those who became popular had a similar thing in common; the experiences that were a hit were highly personal and sometimes morbid in nature. Artists would use traumas as inspiration for rap, pop songs, and movies, and the public would welcome those stories warmly. On the one hand, it was and still is important to let those stories be heard; however, the idea of voyeuristic tendencies our society has to Black trauma came to mind as I read. At what point does trauma in art stop being inspirational and therapeutic, and instead as something as a curiosity for those interested in a macabre story?

It was also interesting to see that many stories that were TV shows weren't as dark as the music or films; they were explorations of Blackness without being too “Black”. Much like the movie we just watched in class, the Blackness was in the details: *Moesha* could air, and a character would have on an HBCU sweatshirt, or there could be an episode of *Sister*, *Sister* could revolve around hair styling or preferences. On the surface, the episodes would be Black, but not in a way that could offend non-Black eyes, with the culture of the Black community being different details that one could pick up on if they were in the culture and familiar with it.