

American abolitionist,
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One film that I've seen recently, which I think deserves merit is the movie Harriet. According to IMDb, this film is based on the thrilling and inspirational life of an iconic African American freedom fighter. Harriet tells the extraordinary tale of Harriet Tubman's escape from slavery and her transformation into one of America's greatest heroes. This film was released on November 1, 2019 and has a 6.5/10 rating on IMDb. Harriet Tubman was born into slavery in Dorchester, Maryland, and she escaped enslavement and made her way, alone and on foot, over 100 miles to freedom in Pennsylvania. Her original name was Araminta Ross but she was called "Minty." When she escaped slavery, she changed her name to Harriet Tubman. Over the years, Harriet risked her life often by making a total of thirteen trips back in Maryland and the southern United States to rescue dozens of other slaves. One of the strengths of this film is that it tells Tubman's story in a straightforward, unembellished way, without sermonizing or pity, condescension or scolding. This film was written by director Kasi Lemmons in collaboration with Gregory Allen Howard, who's also the screenwriter behind the fact-based inspirational drama "Remember the Titans" in 2000, "Harriet" draws its enormous emotional power by depicting the harsh and often difficult historical facts in a serio-documentary style.

This film is important to history because it's based on a real person and events and teaches our younger generation about the struggle our ancestors went through. However, this movie has gotten a lot of mixed reviews and at first, I was skeptical about watching this film, but I must say, after reading up on Harriet Tubman thoroughly before going to see this movie, I'm glad that I

didn't pass on this. This movie has a lot of passion in it and really shows who Harriet was as a person, it details her accomplishments, and does a great job of being an entertaining film. Some people may say that this movie glorified one race more than another, but, in my opinion, it showed that Harriet was fighting for humanity with both black and white allies. There are white slave owners that are depicted realistically and I found myself disgusted at the horrific mindset they had and how they abused their slaves, but also there are black slave catchers who help the slaveowners retrieve their slaves with brutality that was hard to watch at times, but it goes to show again that this movie is trying to show that the Underground Railroad and the anti-slavery movement was supported wholeheartedly by both races. During hard times in my life, I would always compare my life to that of my ancestors as slaves and found gratitude because I cannot imagine how my ancestors did not become extinct with the horrific conditions they endured. Harriet Tubman was an amazing woman and every time I hear of her it's unbelievable how much she accomplished to be from such meager means. I really enjoyed this movie because it highlighted her strong faith in God. It changed the common narrative that Christianity was only valuable to white slave owners to subdue slaves, but actually despite what intentions slave-owners had when introducing Christianity to slaves, it backfired because faith in Christ and his suffering provided the narrative that gave the slaves hope. I believe Harriet had spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit, because she did things that were humanly impossible, but with God all things are possible. It is believed that she started seeing these visions after an angry overseer threw a two-pound iron weight at a slave trying to run away, striking Harriet in the head by

accident. I hate that many blacks don't know our history very well and the pieces they know are used to keep them enslaved versus using these stories to empower them and give hope.

The overall appearance of this film is extraordinary. The antebellum backdrop is detailed and authentic, perfectly capturing the scenery and tussling moods of a nation locked in the unyielding struggle between freedom and bondage. According to an article written by Collen Curran of the Richmond Times-Dispatch, this movie was filmed in Virginia last year from late July through November, during some of the most challenging weather conditions. In my opinion, this movie was a natural fit for Virginia because of its historic settings. Everything in this film felt so real, especially the scene where Harriet is seen crossing the river. Being in an environment that had the tragic history and presence of slavery made this film immeasurably authentic because the cast did such a good job portraying those characters. Also, there were so many night scenes and I was astonished by how the director came up with the proper lighting. Much of the film takes place in heavily wooded areas, portraying the routes that escaped slaves probably took to avoid capture.

Although this film is an exceptional piece of work, I do feel that the name of the film should be different. The reason being is because this film focuses more on Harriet Tubman's escape and doesn't go into debt with her life story. This film portrays Harriet as a real-life action hero rescuing dozens of slaves. After seeing the movie I decided that I needed a lot more information, in order to find out if some parts of the film were real or

fabricated. Based on what I've learnt from documentaries and history books, I can agree that some parts of the film were fiction. In my opinion, this film should have been named the underground railroad because much of the film is taken up with Harriet's attempts to rescue her family members. Movies like Harriet, Lincoln and Hidden figures deserve merit because they educate the viewers. There may be a few downfalls with the film, but the message is still being delivered. According to an article written by Scott Mendelson, "Harriet is a good story, well-told and handsomely staged in traditional Hollywood biopic splendor with an attention to different details that makes it more than just a Mad Libs "based on a true story" drama."

The cast of this film deserves a stand in ovation for a job well done. In my opinion, this movie deserves an Oscar for best picture and Cynthia Erivo deserves an Oscar for best actress. Cynthia Erivo wrapped and intertwined her very essence into this role to present a convincing portrait of one of America's greatest heroes. According to an article written by Anne Thompson of IndieWire, she states that "Casting directors have long considered Broadway's Erivo as a rising star and she has already taken home a Tony, an Emmy, and a Grammy for performing "The Color Purple." She is now eligible to receive an Oscar for her role as Harriet Tubman. There are many other slave movies out there that are excellent and have received merit, but none I've seen so far compares to Harriet. I like how they incorporated a fictional character by the name of Bigger Longer who has never been mentioned in history before. Maybe the director, wanted to

depict that archetypal black traitor in history that always aligned with white interests to prevent black progress.