

Analysis of the most classic movie gone with the wind

[Entertainment](#), [Movie](#)



The Great Depression was one of the most desperate times during U. S history. The unemployment rate increased from 3. 2% in 1929 to 24. 9% in 1932. The sudden crash of the market in 1929 increased the suicide rate from 12. 1 per 100, 000 people to 18. 1 per 100, 000 people. Especially during the 1930s, people seemed to want to find some mental comforts, so cinemas became the most popular place. Average weekly movie attendance increased from 57 million in 1927 to 80 million in 1931 ("Great Depression Statistics").

Gone with the Wind, the movie which stood as one of the most classic movie of all time, was produced during this period. Though the story Gone with the Wind was set in the 1860s, the movie spoke directly to Americans in the 1930s when it was released. The movie Gone with the Wind succeeded for three reasons: the strength Scarlett O'Hara had was needed for women during the Great Depression, the movie showed people the race relations between African Americans and white people, and the movie provided hope for the people during the 1930s. This historic movie was greatly influenced by the 1930s.

Following World War I and entering the Great Depression, women needed the strong characteristics of Scarlett O'Hara. During the Depression, men were losing their jobs; therefore, women needed to work to support their family. Just as Eleanor Roosevelt said: " The women know that life must go on and that the needs of life must be met and it is their courage and determination which, time and again, have pulled us through worse crises than the present

one" (Ware). During the mid-depression, the middle class family income was very low.

Women has to be really economical; for example, " they had buy day-old bread or warm dishes in the oven to save gas" (Ware). Because of this kind of tough and unstable living, women had no choice; they had to forget their safe, comfortable housewives' lives, and become tools for supporting families (Ware). Gone with the Wind is also about how Scarlet O'Hara loses everything and has no other way to survive but to become strong. The end of part one of the movie shows this, when she holds the soil and swears that she will be strong and never be hungry again.

Another reason for why people were attracted by this movie is the cursive love Journey Scarlet experienced. A lot of women who lived in the period of the Great Depression had lost their husbands during World War One; in the beginning of the movie, Scarlet is also waiting for Ashley Wilkes, whom she loves, to come back from the war. Every time she reads through the list of the dead, it is clear how worried she is. This feeling was what a lot of women during that time experienced, so they felt sympathy for Scarlet O'Hara.

During the asses, white people's opinion toward African Americans was ambivalent. They still had the mindset from slavery times, when they could order the African Americans to do anything, and didn't want to accept the truth that black people were equal to them now. In Gone with the Wind, there is a scene in which Scarlet is almost raped by a black; her husband,

Frank and Ashley act like ASK (UK Klux Klan) to murder that African American. In the movie, white people feel threatened by blacks.

During the time of the Great Depression, Roosevelt "New Deal" created a program called the Work Progress Administration (WAP). This program helped solve the high unemployment rate. Under this program, there were some small parts like the Federal Writers' Project and Federal Art Project. These projects provided some talented African American artist jobs, and some great African American artists emerged ("The Great Depression: African-American") Art was an important part for the people who lived in the Depression, therefore, white people might view African Americans differently.

However, at the same time, they felt threatened, too, because some African Americans were taking their job opportunities. Also, the movie created the feeling that black people needed white people's wisdom to survive, because "they often seemed more like pets than people" (Left 7). We can see this from how happy Big Sam is when he and Scarlet reunite; he thinks that he will be safe and will not be hungry again when he finds his former owner. Neither Big Sam nor a strong character like Mamma could take care of Tara without her white master during the war, either (Left).

During the Depression, most African Americans lived in rural areas were still working in the farms of the white people. Even African Americans who lived in cities "worked as domestic servants for white folks" ("The Great Depression: African-American"). These connections seemed to indicate to

white people during the Depression that African Americans were still dependent on them. Therefore, white people's attitude toward African Americans was ambivalent.

Another important reason for the success of *Gone with the Wind* was that people who lived in the Depression wanted to recall the memory of the glory before the Civil War, they could see themselves in the movie, and they needed strength to move on. "Escapism" is the most discussed term when it comes to the Great Depression. "During the Depression, when the spirit of the people is lower than at any other time, it is a splendid thing that for just 15 cents an American can go to a movie and look at the smiling face of a baby and forget his troubles" (Cravens 216).

Movies and music were popular because people wanted to escape from the cruel reality, even just for a few hours. The beginning of *Gone with the Wind* was a perfect time for them to go back to the good old life when everything was more organized and peaceful. However, they could also see the decline of themselves in the movie, just like Ashley, the old noble landowner. The War suddenly takes everything that Ashley had away. Because of this, Ashley becomes passive, and he loses all hope.

The same thing happened to people during the Depression: "Their world having been turned upside down, they saw a parallel between their plight and the story of the disappearance of the antebellum south" (Will). However, at the same time, they also wanted strength, power and hope for the future, just like Scarlett's attitude toward life. The most classic scene in the movie is

when Reheat Butler leaves Scarlet, though in great sorrow, she said: " after all, tomorrow is another day' (Gone with the Wind) Thousands of Americans might be inspired by this sentence.

Obviously, the experience of the Depression couldn't have been worse than what Scarlet had. In her life, the war forced her to change from a noble girl into a strong woman who needed to plant the food herself; she lost all her dignity as a business woman for trading with the Yankees; she married three times but all failed; she finally realized the man she loved for many years was a coward; ere husband left her just as she realized that she actually loved him. All these miserable things happen to her, but she never loses hope.

This strength was what people needed during the Depression. Although they wanted to escape from reality, there was no way but to face it. The spirit of Scarlet inspired them to be hopeful, to accept the life, and fight with it.

Echoing Scarlet Aurora's words, " tomorrow is another day," (Gone with the Wind) American citizens gained strength from Gone with the Wind. Clearly, this movie reflected the period of asses, including the race relations between white people and African Americans. The movie also provided people during the asses much needed hope.