

The they had a  
specific dress code



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The Black Panther is a party that was started in the 1960s by Huey Newton and Bobby seal who were activists with deep roots from the south in Oakland, California.

Both had been involved in movements for civil rights for some time. Their political affiliation was more aligned to Malcolm X because of his violent way as compared to the softer Martin Luther King (Bloom and Martin, 2016). Their ideologies supported use of physical violent means in order to get freedom in America. The two ideologies were written down in ten points that were clearly outlined as a program.

To them it was necessary for the community to find courage to defend themselves against the various injustices especially brutality and harassment from the white police. Other group started just for the local community of the area, soon it spread and more branches were opened nationwide all against the political undermining, colonialism and most importantly racial segregation. The group Black Panther provided the youths from African American communities with a sense of purpose and belonging during the harsh times. One individual commemorated that if anyone needed to join the group, then the opportunity was open to help in the fight against the white cops and the government. They had a specific dress code of cool leather jackets, donned afro hair and most importantly they had a program of free breakfast for children (Seale, 1991). The program was later closed down by the white administration. Sooner than later, Newton was put behind bars for supposedly killing a white policeman in the year 1967.

He was jailed before being acquitted later. The following year Seale, was CRITICAL ANALYSIS<sup>3</sup>also arrested and jailed in the state of Chicago. Famously, the then FBI director Mr Edgar publicly referred to the movement group as one of the greatest threats to the country's security. The following campaigns were highly monitored under the banner of Cointelpro. Furthermore, in the same year Seal was arrested, another recruit was shot down in a gun fight with the Oakland police officers. In a late night raid another high ranking deputy chairperson of the party in Illinois was cold bloodedly murdered by the police while in his apartment.

In the subsequent times, the party became filled with informants who were regularly harassed by the FBI Director and the new president of the country Richard Nixon. Eventually, they became overwhelmed by pressure and strife (Seale, 1991). Some people argue that the fall of the party was mainly caused by the fact that the struggle involved many races. Just like the rest of the freedom fighters before who had been assassinated while fighting against the American capitalism the group did not survive. By the year 1980, only about 27 members had been left in the group Black Panther. The Black Panthers influence has been underestimated in films considering the fact that it was a very complex group and liked to be on camera or rather attention. However, memorable scenes still exist. For instance, French film maker Valda Agnes was still residing in California the first time that Newton was arrested.

The court trial for the activists was still continuing when she decided to make two documentary films with regard to the demonstrations that were going on in Newton's support. Huey had some atmosphere of a celebrity and CRITICAL <https://assignbuster.com/the-they-had-a-specific-dress-code/>

ANALYSIS4militancy within him as people shouted for his freedom. In the meantime, the Black Panthers were carrying on with their investigations of the party's dynamics in the city of Oakland (Haskins, 1997). During a cultural festival of Pan Africa in Algiers 1969, a renowned artist William Klein made a record entitled Black Panther for the Minister of information of the party who had already been exiled. The minister later started another religious group known as the Guardians of the Temple. Another documentary was made by a Chicago film maker Howard Alk known as American Revolution 2 with regard to Democratic National Convention and possible alliances of the group with Young Patriots Organization. It also talks about the murder of Fred Hampton, the film follows the young man's life until the time of his death in the hands of the police.

What follows is the uncovering of corruption in the police department. In 2011, the Black power mix tape was released by Hugo Olson. The release offered footage obtained from the Swedish archives and shows the modern day activists like Seal and the renowned poet Sanchez Sonia. Panther is the only fiction film that seems to address Black Panther issues. The film is entertaining although it is very much underrated, produced by Mario Peebles and written by the father in a novel which bears the same name. Previously, the producer had directed a song known as Sweetbacks which was highly supported by Huey Newton.

He even went on to comment that it was the true revolutionary film that has ever been made for the blacks. The movie basically evokes the various aspects of self-reliance for black people. CRITICAL

ANALYSIS5Regardless of the Panthers influence, their appearance in terms of <https://assignbuster.com/the-they-had-a-specific-dress-code/>

dress code and controversies, they are rather used as a punctuation mark in black civil movements as portrayed in most historical documentary films. They do not hold a strong position in the world of film making. For example, the film by Lee Daniels known as the 'Butler'. The character of the panther does not seem to have violent tendencies as expected of the group. Black Panther: Vanguard of the Revolution film mainly strives to give the viewers a better account of how the party rose and how it eventually came to its downfall. It was directed by the celebrated Stanley Nelson over a period of almost seven years and funded in part by a campaign.

The director was then only 15 years old when the group was formed. He goes on to remember how Nelson Huey told him about how the group were discussing matters that concerned him; they also donned a different look compared to what had been seen before. To him it was a good story of a youthful revolution from a film maker's perspective. The members of the party were very young such that the average age of the group was somewhere around twenty years. The director of the movie uses a very conventional way to bring out the story using a well ordered narrative based on good research obtained from various archives and even face to face interviews. Conversely, the film takes a pro black panther point of view as the director involves former white police officers, journalists of the time and even historians to provide the viewer with rich content with clear objective. However, CRITICAL ANALYSIS<sup>6</sup>one can note that Bobby Seale was not involved even though he is still a political activist despite his age.

The director tried to schedule a meeting with him but it was impossible. The other person not featured in the documentary is Angela Davis who

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maintained a close relationship with the panthers in spite of her not being member. The movie tries to downplay some of the Black Panthers some of the notable aspects of Panthers like the famous torture in 1969 and murder of suspected police informant known as Alex Rackley by some of the members of the group. The organizer of the party Kathleen Cleaver avoids talking about the group's way of recruiting and the lack of any measure of control (Murch, 2010). She simply tells off that they did not even know who some of the group members were. The former member of the Black Panthers, Ronald Freeman, deeply talks about the celebrity status that the party attained. They were like stars because they had a very huge following.

The chauvinistic nature of the party is also well illustrated in the movie even though most of the rank and followers were women. Former leader of the group Elaine Brown sarcastically suggests that they did not get the men from a revolutionary paradise. Later on Brown has come to criticize the movie. She manages to portray Newton as a drug addict and crazy person. She goes on further to even call his agenda provocative just like the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Finally, she concluded that history would not even be able to remember the director Nelson Stanley. Such highly controversial matters always result in heated debates. CRITICAL ANALYSIS7However, everyone can come to an agreement that the movie is well brought out at a perfect time.

The director perfectly understand the various events witnessed in both Baltimore and Ferguson not forgetting the increase in cases involving white police and the African American Community. These events have resulted in a

total shift of perspectives on the movie. Just a few years back critics would have been able to argue that the Black Panthers were just a group of crazy people and dismiss the seriousness of the issue (Newton et al, 2006). Now people are able to understand how the issue of police brutality against the black community has been going on for such a very long time. The film has a strong theme of what is going on today in our society in connection with racist cops against African Americans. The director went on to confess about how he was surprised by timing of the movie release just as the Black Messiah was being released by Vanguard. The people interviewed in the documentary continued to insist that the FBI had been trying very hard to prevent the rise of saviour among the black community.

This is the main cause of death of the young Black Panther leader Fred Hampton. The movie also shows a close relationship to Straight Outta Compton NWA despite the fact that it does not adequately defend itself. It shows the reality racism that has manifested itself in police departments against African American communities. Straight out of Compton seems to be more vocal than the film. Black civil movement groups today much depends on the legacy left behind by the Black Panther.

Only CRITICAL ANALYSIS8the slogan has changed to a more sensible Black Lives Matter. They are all formed on the basis of social injustice and equity in the society while taking great care no to end up like the Black Panther. In some sense, the group may have been dealing with a lot more dominating systems of patriarchy and even violence which most of the groups today try to resist. It is safe to conclude that even in peaceful demonstrations people still end up getting killed by the white police men.

It is important to note that the panthers operated in a very different and controlled environment. The panthers represented a very large set of ideologies and were not focused on one program. What was started by the panthers is increasingly being witnessed in campuses across the world as students demand for just. The film is able to succeed in being both informative to the audience while maintain the entertainment atmosphere. Some choose to argue that the group somehow provides way for other younger activists in the contemporary world.

The film by Nelson reminds activist that civil rights movement require some form of organizational culture in order to be effective in the process of negotiating for reforms. The same trends that were witnessed during the Black Panther reigning days are being witnessed in today's movements. Similarly, they are using free programs to attract people into the groups. As a film maker Nelson knew that the movie was going to have positive impact because he clearly brings out the various ways of ensuring a movement survives and does not die out like Black Panther. Generally, the movie provides the audience CRITICAL ANALYSIS9with all the Dos and Don'ts.