

Spielberg's *Amistad*: The Black Viewer's Movie Guide

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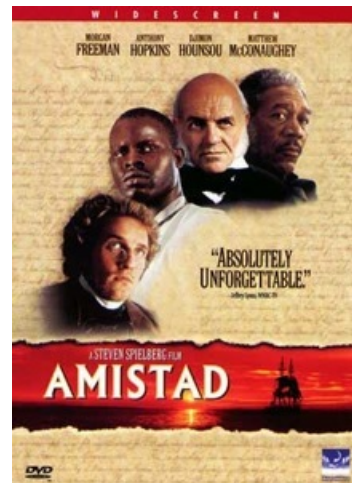
When one takes to heart the Dick Gregory adage-- that Hollywood has never spent a penny to entertain us-- one can more accurately view Steven Spielberg's *Amistad*. Bro. Gregory, of course, meant that every flickering image has a purpose and function to maintain the balance of power for White people. The *Amistad* is a textbook example of this well-established principle. The following is a guide for the conscious viewing of this pernicious production. Motown's Norman Whitfield provides the rule of thumb: "People, believe half of what you see, Oh, and none of what you hear."

The *Amistad* was a Spanish slaver which was forcibly taken over by its former cargo, 53 African Black people. The Connecticut coast guard apprehended the "mutineers" and imprisoned them on the charge of murder. The movie purports to describe the legal battle that ensued all the way to the Supreme Court -- spreading lies with every scene.

1) The purpose of *Amistad* is made clear even before the movie begins. Indeed, in the promotional movie poster, Spielberg exonerates the White man in the crime of Black slavery. Above the title is the movie's ambiguous operating premise: "Freedom cannot be given. It is our right at birth. But there are moments in time when it must be taken." If freedom MUST be taken, Spielberg reasons, then, of course, the takers are within their rights and even have a responsibility to participate in the slave trade.

2) When the *Amistad* crew is subdued and the ship taken over by the Africans, the first filmed act is a primitive battle between two African rivals who yell at one another while angrily vying for power. They do not appear to have the ability to strategize and communicate among themselves about their opportunity to refocus on the common need to escape. This theme of tribalism and savagery is one that is constantly reinforced throughout the film. In a scene where the White attorney first visits the captives in their dungeon, the Africans have staked-out "territory," presumably along tribal lines. The subtle message is that these Africans deserve to be slaves. This concept is central to the movie's true purpose. The "Americanized" Blacks (who are never explicitly identified as slaves) are starkly different in carriage and comportment than the "savage" Africans. The "Americans" are refined and even genteel, festooned in the British style with powdered wigs and ruffles. Though of the servant class, they are well-treated and content and pointedly "civilized." They are in training, one is

led to assume, to be like Morgan Freeman--a "free" negro of means. This image-juxtapositioning by Spielberg is central to a pro-slavery argument advanced by Whites in the mid-1800's. Are not Africans better off in slavery in America than as spear-chuckers in the jungle? Spielberg's answer is: "Clearly, Yes."



3) The *Amistad* Africans themselves are almost immediately turned into props by Spielberg's script. Once these Africans are deposited into the dungeon, the rest of the Black Holocaust is played out in courtrooms and parlors among White people. They alone have the power to determine the fate of the Africans regardless of the desires of the Africans themselves. This makes White viewers comfortable. Firmly in chains, the life and death matters of these simple Africans can now be litigated by White people. Ultimately, Spielberg's goal is to fortify and exonerate a system and a people that profitted from the despicable trade in Black humanity even at the expense of its Black victims. The point here is never to compromise, or even question, America's heritage and worldwide image as having been "founded on freedom, justice and equality." Slavery, in Spielberg's vision, is merely a bump in the road.



4) True to the "good Nazi" theme of Spielberg's Jewish Holocaust movie *Schindler's List*, the *Amistad* is offered up with a group of

historically bizarre creations of the Hollywood propagandists--a good White man and a 19th century "free" Black aristocrat. Contrary to Anthony Hopkins' portrayal of the cantankerous former president John Quincy Adams, who represented the *Amistad* rebels in the Supreme Court, he was no lover of the Black man. His home state of Massachusetts was making so much money on slavery that Adams absolutely favored it. The cotton mills of Lawrence and Lowell and the banks of downtown Boston all would have collapsed without slavery and the money it generated. He has other racist credentials:

·When Adams was a diplomat after the Revolutionary and the 1812 Wars, he went to the British on behalf of slaveholders to attempt to get their slaves back.

·He believed that Congress had no right to abolish slavery where it existed.

·He believed that the ultimate solution for the Black Man would be widespread interbreeding, which he said "would be the extirpation (extermination) of the African race upon the continent, by the gradual bleaching process of intermixture, where the white portion is already so predominant..."

·He believed that another possible solution would be a race war.

·Adams also believed that the American Indian was "an inferior race...and perhaps not worth preserving."

The fact is that there is no evidence that he ever even met the *Amistad* rebels though the film portrays them as becoming friends. But Spielberg is probably unaware that his White hero was a Jew-hater as well. According to Jewish author Nathaniel Weil, Adams "often spoke of Jews in such a way as to suggest a strong anti-Semitic prejudice."

5) Spielberg uses Morgan Freeman to perpetuate another destructive myth. The "fictional composite" Freeman plays is a free Black aristocrat in New England and is the character under dispute in the plagiarism lawsuit against Spielberg. The idea that the North was "free" and that the Northern Black population enjoyed equal relations is a bombastic falsehood. "Free" Blacks did not exist in the North or South in the 19th century. This unfortunate segment of Black society was often in worse condition than slaves whose White masters had an economic interest in their survival. There was a good reason why Harriet Tubman's Underground Railroad stayed underground in New York and New England, moving instead to British Canada. Abolitionists were viciously denounced, tarred and feathered, and generally terrorized for their opposition to slavery. They were, in fact, an insignificant minority among Whites until guilt-ridden historians gave them a prominence they could never have dreamed of in their lifetimes. One might read Lorman Ratner's *Powder Keg*, for an enlightening account of the Northern attitude against Blacks at the time of the *Amistad* affair. The Spielberg movie shows Freeman in a top hat, riding around in a carriage casually dining with his White friends. In fact, all of the "American" Black people/props calmly intermingle with White people. Spielberg covers up the fact that there was extraordinary White violence directed against Black people for simply being Black. The U.S. Congress actually had a "gag rule" against any debate against slavery at this time.

6) *Amistad* Film Note: Spielberg boldly filmed much of the movie in Newport, Rhode Island, the very center of the Jewish-run slave trade. Rum, of course, was central to the wicked trade in Black flesh and Newport was its center of production.

At one point, all 22 stills were owned by the Newport Jews. Aaron Lopez and Jacob Rivera were among the Jewish leaders of the trade and dominated Newport's business community. One Jewish historian wrote of the Newport Jews: "[They] traded extensively in Negroes." The pious Newport Jews prayed at a synagogue that was built by Black slaves "of some skill," and all the Newport Jews owned domestic slaves-Lopez, who the Jewish organization Anti-Defamation League calls "beloved and respected," had 27.

7) A British Navy officer who wants to see an end to the trans-Atlantic slave trade testifies on behalf of the Africans. In the end of the movie, he is seen bombing the slave fortress in Africa-- presumably ending the African slave trade. There are two falsehoods being proffered here:

a) The British wanted to end the slave trade, but not for the noble purpose implied by Spielberg. They wanted to stop the export of slave labor, because Black bodies were required in Africa to colonize and exploit Africa for the British! They also wanted to cripple their business competitors all of whom were dependent on slave labor. Twenty years later Britain was the biggest foreign supporter of the Southern Confederacy.

b) Long after the *Amistad* Africans were returned to Africa the slave trade continued in America. The profits of slave dealing were shocking. The slave ship *Espoir* made a profit of \$436,200 on one trip. Kidnapper C.A.L.Lamar wrote in 1860 (twenty years after the *Amistad* affair), "The trade cannot be checked while such great percentages are made in the business. The outlay of \$35,000 often brings \$500,000....No wonder Boston, New York and Philadelphia have so much interest in the business." Steel-hulled steamers were introduced into the trade, inflating profits even more, for these vessels were able to carry many more slaves than the sailing ships.

8) Spielberg doesn't tell us that one of the *Amistad* Africans was deemed the property of one of the Spaniards and NOT FREED, or that the U.S. Congress attempted to give the Spanish slave dealers \$70,000 to pay for their losses while the Africans were forced to sing and dance for years to raise money to pay for their trip back to Africa. Such details are inconsistent with Spielberg's Happy Slave Holocaust fantasy.

9) The John Williams score is designed to usher a viewer through the range of emotions that Spielberg cannot elicit with his visual images. It is especially overbearing during a pitifully trite Christian conversion scene where a once proud African is willing to accept a White Jesus and a new religion from a series of drawings in a Bible! Here, Spielberg again intends to show how simple-minded the Africans are. It is patently offensive and plainly malicious. As for the musical score, Williams is simply unqualified.

Steven Spielberg, who once said that he "could never forgive" entertainer Michael Jackson for introducing his Jewish children to anti-Semitic epithets, has no such reservations about introducing our Black children to all manner of falsehoods about their own history. Spielberg's open assault on Black

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history is inexcusable. He's wagered heavily that Black people are as ignorant as his Black characters.

Spielberg's Motive

Answer to Jewish Slave Dealing?

by J.F. Moses



A Jewish woman stopped me in a bookstore checkout line and seemed delighted to ask me something "because I was Black." It seems she saw one of the many television "reports" designed to usher me into a moviehouse to see Steven Spielberg's *Amistad*. I listened politely. "Oh, the movie is great," she said. "It's a true life movie about a slave ship." I know that "true life" and "Hollywood" are irreconcilable enemies, I thought to myself, besides, the movie was not due to open for another two weeks and this woman speaks as though she already saw it. But I could see that my new Yiddish friend felt it was a good enough vehicle to revive the brain dead Black/Jewish relationship with me. And then the kicker: "You know, I didn't know that it was Africans that put Black people in slavery." "Yeah," she continued excitedly, "It was Africans that sold the slaves." Perceiving my now furrowed brow, she added, "Of course the Europeans helped, but they bought the slaves from Africans!"

I'd known that Spielberg was up to something with this movie about slavery, and my new Jewish friend let the cat out of the bag. Spielberg, Hollywood's super Jew since *Schindler's List*, whose movies are the epitome of American whiteness, will now take on the enormity of the Black Holocaust in 153 minutes. I interrupted the woman's glee to offer a comparison that I thought she could identify with: "It's kind of like the 77 or more Nazi officers who were Jews, and kinda like the Jews in the concentration camps that informed on other Jews to the Nazi guards, huh?" I could have gone on but her face, once comely, had become twisted and distorted just as my brow relaxed to its original repose.

Jews have been in a dilemma for some years now. For years they duped the negroes into the belief that they alone were our friends among Whites and could therefore choose and approve our leaders and dictate the movement and direction of Black organizations. Furthermore, many Jews believed that we "owed" them a debt of gratitude in the form of unquestioned and unwavering support of the outlaw state of Israel. But history has now caught up with them. Jews were indeed central participants in the Black Holocaust, a point made most clearly by their own historians in journals, articles

and books. Even, Dr. Marc Lee Raphael, head historian at the American Jewish Historical Society at Brandeis, had to come clean:

"Jews also took an active part in the Dutch colonial slave trade; indeed....in all the American colonies, whether French (Martinique), British, or Dutch, Jewish merchants frequently dominated."

One commentator said of the Jews-in-the-slave-trade debate, about which rivers of expiatory ink have now been expended, "One could not mention the word 'slavery' without thinking 'Jew.'"

Enter Steven Spielberg who, in the tradition of D.W.Griffith's Jewish-funded racist epic *Birth of a Nation*, was called in to stamp out the "rumor circulatin' among the slaves"-that Jews were heavily involved in the Black Holocaust. Griffith's 1915 movie made the world to know that Blacks were responsible for the calamity of the Civil War and that the Ku Klux Klan reclaimed civilization from the bestial and ferocious negroes. It was a devastating false indictment that was intended to reestablish the racial order in the South (and the North for that matter) and was successfully used as a KKK recruitment film in their subsequent 1920's resurgence. Now, more than eighty years later, Spielberg, a la D.W.Griffith, will place the blame for the Black Holocaust on Blacks themselves!

But now there is an even more sinister ploy by Spielberg's gang. They have teamed up with an organization called Lifetime Learning, Inc., which has developed a "Film Study Guide" that is intended to "supplement and enrich their students' viewing experience." They have sent this "lesson material" to 20,000 schools in America and around the world so that teachers will make sure that Black students all over the world get THEIR twisted message about Black slavery. The material is suspiciously similar to that of the "A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE" program (AWOD) run by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL)! This is the program that has been used to push the Jewish Holocaust into the consciousness of Black children under the guise of teaching "tolerance." Many school systems have been bullied into accepting the AWOD program even though a recent study has deemed the program to be ineffective.

Because the AWOD program ignores the Black Holocaust, the program has met increasing resistance from many of the Black schools where the program is peddled. Spielberg's *Amistad* is the vehicle through which the message of the "WORLD OF DIFFERENCE" program will be delivered to Black children. They will show the movie to our youth and claim that they have taught the "Black Holocaust." If the Black Holocaust IS TRULY TAUGHT, Jews will be as responsible for slavery as all other groups, including Europeans and Africans, yet these "educational" materials have not a trace of information on the history of slavery. The "Study Guide" treats the Morgan Freeman character as though he really existed and puts words in the mouth of John Quincy Adams that he never said something permitted in movies but which should never be

allowed in an educational institution. It does not distinguish between Spielberg's dramatic adaptation of the Amistad incident and the actual historical record an unacceptable compromise of our Black children's minds. Many diverse commentators, including movie critic Michael Medved and historian Eric Foner, have decried Spielberg's deception.

The enemies of Black people are going after the minds of our Black children and they are using Hollywood to do it. The Jews and their negroes associated with the Amistad want this to be the definitive Hollywood movie on Black slavery. It is more likely to fuel another round of anti-Black recriminations. They underestimate the tolerance of the Black community. These fabrications and distortions, which would never be tolerated if they were applied to the Jewish Holocaust, are once again liberally heaped upon the Black community. When all is tallied around Amistad, Spielberg will get his few millions, but Farrakhan will get millions more.

Morgan Freeman: Mr. Dignity?

According to the Boston Globe, Morgan Freeman "is one of the few actors producers sign when they want to add dignity and gravity to a film." No, really, they wrote that. They said that he was the first actor to get the call from Spielberg once the plot was hatched. With "dignified" roles to his credit like his breakthrough stage role in *The Niggerlovers*, a "sleazy pimp" in *Street Smart*, a "pretty shady character" in *Chain Reaction*, a convict in *Shawshank Redemption*, and the affable Uncle Tom nigger to an aging Southern Jewess in *Driving Miss Daisy*, who could be more dignified than Morgan Freeman?

But Freeman has scant credibility with the African-American people to whose history he must be true: "I don't think we were dragged out of Africa [in the slave trade]," he reportedly told the *New Jersey Star Ledger* in 1993, "I think we fled." He went on to bitterly denounce his African heritage, and then the ironically named Freeman proclaimed that he "has a hard time" referring to himself as an "African-American," stating he prefers the term "mongrel."

Amistad? What about the Slaveship Creole?

Just 7 months after the Amistad Supreme Court decision was rendered, another remarkably similar incident sailed into the American consciousness. The slaveship *Creole* left Virginia in October of 1841, heading for Louisiana with 135 Black slaves and 19 White crew and other passengers. For eleven days it made its way down the coast. When it neared the Bahamas nineteen Black freedom-fighters emerged from the ship's hold and overtook the White crew, killing at least one of their captors. The ship was commandeered into the British port of Nassau, where it was seized by the British military, and the 19 Black "mutineers" were arrested. Black islanders, hearing of the incident, surrounded the ship with as many as 50 of their boats and freed the remaining Black captives.

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Those freedom-loving Americans who had just "freed" the Amistad Africans, were now outraged that the British had "freed" the Creole Blacks. Some actually tried to retake the ship and its Black cargo, but they were met by British muskets and hastily retreated. The United States demanded compensation. Politicians, newspapers and common citizens condemned the British action, saying that it encouraged mutiny and murder. Some even suggested that the British action might provoke yet another war. Secretary of State Daniel Webster demanded the return of the "mutineers." Britain, instead, "freed" the 19 Black freedom-fighters.

Though this story is eminently more dramatic, such history could never be twisted into a Hollywood script--the only heroes are Black. Britain subsequently ruled that their Bahamian officials had acted improperly and should have returned the slaves to America. In 1855, the American owners of the Black slaves were awarded \$110,330 by Britain to cover the cost of their lost "property." The Blacks of the Bahamas and the Blacks they rescued from slavery were the only heroes in the entire incident.

But there is a more compelling reason the much more dramatic case of the Creole could not fit the Spielberg/ADL agenda. In 1843, an outraged senator took a special interest in the Creole case. He stood in the Senate gallery and declared that the Creole Africans were:

"blood-stained murderers and pirates [who] were shielded from the punishment due to their crimes, under circumstances that would have richly justified a declaration of war."

The senator? David Levy Yulee -- the first Jew ever elected to the United States Senate.

For more information on the Creole Affair, see:

Howard Jones, "The Peculiar Institution and National Honor: The Case of the Creole Slave Revolt," *Civil War History*, vol. 21, #1 (March, 1975), pp. 28-50.

Also, see Senate Documents, 27 Cong. 2 sess., II, No. 51, 1-46.