

Movie Review: 'Hidden Figures'

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In a time when many people of color feel as if their role in this country will go unnoticed, when many women feel as if their voices will go unheard, when Americans feel as if all hope is gone, a movie such as "Hidden Figures" couldn't have been more appropriate.

"Hidden Figures" is a truly inspirational film about women overcoming not only gender divides but also racial divides. Mary Jackson, Katherine Johnson and Dorothy Vaughan did not work because they believed that children would learn about them almost 50 years later. These women likely did not know how great of an impact their work would have. This is why their story is such a pivotal part in history. These women made revolutionary strides commonplace.

With a cinematic style that pulls the viewer into the 60s, you're barely aware of the hard, cushioned seat beneath you when you watch "Hidden Figures." You feel Dorothy's frustration with her superiors, Mary's determination as she faces segregation within the schooling system, Katherine's ambition as she computes the landing of Friendship 7. These revolutionary women began as nothing more than a troop of human computers. This title alone is dehumanizing.

Despite the name, however, Dorothy, Mary and Katherine persevered to continue their work within NASA. The director gently highlights how segregation touched every aspect of life from home to work. One of the cleverest instances of this is the difficult trek Katherine was forced to make because she could not use the restrooms within her building; she could only use the colored restrooms half a mile away. The seemingly trivial walk turned into quite the political stance when Katherine's boss destroyed the "Colored" sign and declared all restrooms on campus equal for use despite color. This, however, is simply scraping the surface of racism. There was no real risk taken to show the true grit that would have occurred in the workplace, in a library or in the streets.

Overall, "Hidden Figures" is a heartwarming, uplifting film. Despite the very low expectations for women and even lower expectations for black women, the women featured in "Hidden Figures" overcame great obstacles and serve as a face of resilience and determination to women everywhere.