

## Editorials 3: Obama's Administration

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By M. Corece

During the primary elections I can honestly say I wasn't initially on the Obama Band Wagon. My hesitation had little to do with the man, and more to do with the fact I am an epistemological skeptic. I pretty much rethink, test, and analyze any bit of information I'm given and in 2006—when it was proposed we would have our first suitable Black candidate—things were not adding up for this potential commander in chief. He was a grassroots organizer, Bi-racial-Black man (meaning he's often perceived as just Black and therefore his experiences with others has been that), a Kenyan father—yet he lived in Hawaii and Indonesia—and he graduated from Harvard Law; too good to be true.

As someone who studies Black film history, I could not help but think about parallels like, in the 1950s, when Sidney Poitier was the ideal black man: he spoke well and was not only educated but intelligent, he was agreeable, virtually sex-less—on screen—and post, and he made Black people look good by igniting their middle-class identities. A covert assimilationist with pro-Black tendencies.

Poitier was portrayed as the antithesis of a “Tom” caricature because of his uncanny ability to refute any racist candor with his heady, yet poignant, backlashes.

Although the similarities are endless and Obama does have some new-age differences, the fact of the matter is his character and the outcome of his presidency had been decided for him long before he ran.

Today, Obama's approval ratings are low. He was elected purely based on his message urging citizens to help enact “change” in a bi-partisan, polarizing Washington political climate—even though Republicans did not want to meet to compromise or give suggestions. We had eight years of a conservative reign that did not seem to care much about the marginalized groups in this country. Because of Obama's laundry list of things to clean, mixed with the infectious “yes we can” tune, for the first time in a long time we all felt like we actually could.

Fast-forward two years later and the GOP and the Democrats could not be in more turmoil. Like Poitier's characters, Obama has had to endure being weighed down by racial conundrums in a country filled with myriad needs and problems: a recession,

religious tensions, lack of health care, joblessness, a flailing education system, not to mention inequality for new immigrants and LGBT individuals. The Conservative right hates his plans—and openly—and too often are they indoctrinated in their own ideologies—and political strategies—they miss the point of a fair and balanced society.

On the other side of the token, democrats can be the same way and are not fighting hard enough. The overbearing media coverage isn't providing the truth about the matters just opinions. Therefore concerned US citizens are reacting in an equally partisan manner or so jaded and confused they make uninformed choices or none at all.

Sidney Poitier went on to have a successful career and has received numerous accolades despite his typecasts roles; he was appreciated eventually.

With the historical healthcare reform, end to combat in Iraq, new student loan plans, consumer protection, and an impressive list of other accomplishments I would say it is time to not believe the hype anymore. Just because one doesn't feel change instantly or directly doesn't mean it hasn't happened. Simply search: "Obama's accomplishments" and you'll be surprised your future is far more intact than it's made out to be—but "stay woke" because we need to push for more of that change and look far beyond ourselves and the things we were socialized to believe in if America does, in fact, want to persist. We should arm ourselves and vote or we will have a whole lot more to clean up.