

# Call for Close-Up Submissions

## *The Harder They Come*: The Legacy Continues

**B**lack Camera invites submissions for a Close-Up on the Jamaican film *The Harder They Come* (1972), directed by Perry Henzell. Released ten years after Jamaica's independence, the story by Henzell and Jamaican playwright Trevor Rhone is a fictionalized account of the real life of Ivanhoe "Rhygin" Martin. International reggae star, Jimmy Cliff, played the lead role and several of his songs on the soundtrack later became hits.

The upcoming half-century milestone since its release in 1972 invites a reconsideration of *The Harder They Come*, its enduring legacy and contentions as a Jamaican-made blaxploitation and gangster film. Can we interrogate the challenges of the film through a twenty-first century lens, including its representations of race, class, and gender, and its adaptations from the Michael Thelwell (1980) novel to film? Intertextual references to the film, including from the recent Netflix film *The Harder They Fall* (dir. Jeymes Samuel, 2021), provide fertile sites for analysis and comparison.

Before *The Harder They Come* made the rounds at international film festivals and gained a cult following, it opened to large crowds at the Carib Cinema in Kingston, Jamaica where it ran for twelve weeks. Since then, the film's exhibition history invites new analysis on the role of such theaters as social and cultural spaces having multiple utility as platforms for media flows to and between Global South countries. The rapid decline of movie theaters and the concurrent rise of digital exhibition platforms which favor in-home viewing of films and streaming raise questions about how these emerging modes of transmission transform the consumption of films and the structure of national cinemas.

We invite scholarly submissions that can serve to revisit and enrich academic discussions about the exhibition, thematic address, and intertextuality of *The Harder They Come*, including comparative and industry analyses. How are the narrative and themes of *The Harder They Come* relevant to contemporary conversations in film and media studies in Jamaica and the Caribbean? What can new and emerging perspectives on race, gender, class, and post-coloniality contribute to a critical reassessment of *The Harder They Come*? And how have contemporary audiences received the film over the decades since its release in 1972?

Suggested topics include:

- Genre/sub-genre studies
- Intertextual studies (literary/cinematic)
- Sound and music
- Postcolonial film studies
- Race, identity, and class
- Gender, sexuality, and masculinity
- Reception studies
- Distribution and exhibition histories
- Media coverage and film critic reviews

We welcome for publication consideration essays, commentary, and interviews exploring *The Harder They Come* from disciplinary/interdisciplinary and analytical perspectives. Essays should not exceed 9,000 words; commentary and interviews 4,000 words. Please submit completed essays, a 150 word abstract as well as a 50–100 word author biography by November 15, 2022. Submissions should conform to the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 16th Edition. Please see journal guidelines for submission policy.

Direct all questions, correspondence, and submissions to guest editor Allison Brown at [brown532@iu.edu](mailto:brown532@iu.edu).