

Award Winning "Roots" Returning To TV

By Cynthia Bell
Post Staff Writer

The Emmy Award winning drama, "Roots," will be rebroadcast over WSOC-TV on September 5 through 10. This "ABC Novel For Television" was viewed by over 130 million people when it first aired in January of 1977. Since then it has gone on to win nine Emmy awards and a Peabody Award.

The story is based on Alex Haley's best seller, "Roots." It traces the Haley family from its origin in Africa during 1750 through 100 years of slavery to freedom in the United States.

On the first night of "Roots" Kunta Kinte is born to a loving Gambia, West African family. He grows up free and happy and is taught good manners as he is guided into his manhood. During his late teens, he is captured by slave thieves and is shipped off to America. Levar Burton, Cicely Tyson, Thalmus Rasulala, Maya Angelou, Harry Rhodes, Moses Gunn, Ji-Tu Cumbuka, O.J. Simpson, Edward Asner, and Ralph Waite all star in the first episode.

Night two shows Kunta Kinte's involvement in the revolt attempt during the voyage to America. Upon reaching the world, he is immediately sold to his first owner where he meets his friend Fiddler. Naturally his stay with the new owner is unpleasant and Kunta makes several attempts to escape. Lorne Greene, Louis Gossett Jr. and Vic Morrow are the stars added to night two. The year 1776 finds Kunta Kinte in the same rebellious state that he was in when he first reached America. His final escape

attempt cost him his right foot. This along with the birth of his daughter, Kizzy, cools him out considerably. Fiddler convinces him to marry a slave woman, Bell who gives birth to his only daughter, Kizzy. Years later, Kizzy helps a young slave run away. As punishment, she is immediately sold and is raped by her new owner. John Amos, Madge Sinclair, Robert Reed, Lynda Day George, Leslie Uggans Lawrence-Hilton Jacobs, Sandy Duncan, and Chuck Connors all star in night three's presentation.

On Friday, September 8, Ben Vereen, George Hamilton, Richard Roundtree, Carolyn Jones, and Olivia Cole star as Kizzy's son, Chicken George trains his way to freedom. His master and father raises chickens. Mr. Bennett who is a man in the same profession, wants to buy Chicken George, but he is sent with him to pay his owners debt instead and is promised to be a free man when he returns. At the same time, Kizzy is asked for her hand in marriage by an Uncle Tom

type slave. Reflecting on the memory of father's struggle against slavery, she refused. News of Nat Turner's rebellion reaches the plantation and the owner's wife is terrified of all the slaves and is protected only by her husband's gun.

The final episode of "Roots" captures Chicken George's return as a free man. He finds his son married and is acting head of the family. George's freedom is deeply resented especially with the talk of slave abolition in the air.

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