[intro music]

Cinema has undoubtedly taken over the world. Aside from a few remote tribes most people all over the world have seen or heard about a movie in some way. I realized how influential cinema can be as a cultural agent and decided to focus on the MCU and Black panther for its role as a cultural agent.

[Samples of various MCU movies]

Even if you’ve never read a comic chances are you’ve heard or seen a movie from Marvel Cinematic Unvierse or MCU. The MCU is an American media series featuring a vast shared universe full of superheroes, villians, and a ton of action. It is produced by Marvel Studios and is roughly based around the storylines and characters present in the comics.

[Comic sound effects]

At this point the MCU lineup of around 20 plus movies and 11 tv shows, there is no question as to how much of a powerhouse the MCU has become in this era of cinema. With many things this large, people are influenced by them and they act as cultural agents.

[Black Panther sound bite]

By far the most culturally significant MCU movie was Black Panther [Wakanda forever]. According to [Typing sounds] twitter, it was the most tweeted about film in 2017 despite not releasing until 2018. One of the reasons for the buzz was the predominately black cast and purposeful “blackness” of the themes within it. It was relatively for a movie of this magnitude to be this rooted in black american and black African cultures. The representation of these different aspects of blackness was revolutionary even in this modern and socially conscious era.

[Data searching sounds]

What was so special about black panther was its duality and how it portrayed what it was like to be black in America as well as Africa. It created a model for representation that huge blockbuster movies can follow.

A quick google trends search revealed that searches for Africa spiked the highest its been in years two days after Black Panther was released. Social media users can attest to the prolific use of the catchprase “Wakanda forever” and the huge number of memes spawned around the actors having to do the signature arms crossed at the chest salute at many public events.

[Black panther movie sounds]

Black panther showed that non-majority white cast movies can make money, be successful, bust most importantly, they are needed and wanted.