

00:00:00	Music	Transition	Gentle, trilling music with a steady drumbeat plays under the dialogue.
00:00:01	Promo	Promo	<b>Speaker:</b> <i>Bullseye with Jesse Thorn</i> is a production of <a href="https://www.maximumfun.org">MaximumFun.org</a> and is distributed by NPR.
			<i>[Music fades out.]</i>
00:00:12	Jesse Thorn	Host	From <a href="https://www.maximumfun.org">MaximumFun.org</a> and NPR, it's <i>Bullseye</i> .
00:00:16	Music	Transition	"Huddle Formation" from the album <i>Thunder, Lightning, Strike</i> by The Go! Team. A fast, upbeat, peppy song. Music plays as Jesse speaks, then fades out.
00:00:30	Jesse	Host	John David Washington made his acting debut in 1992, in Spike Lee's <i>Malcolm X</i> . John's father, Denzel—yes, that Denzel Washington—was the star of the movie. And when Spike needed a boy about eight years old for a quick cutaway scene, well, it wasn't hard for John to get the part.
00:00:50	Sound Effect	Transition	Music swells and fades.
00:00:51	Clip	Clip	<b>Teacher (<i>Malcolm X</i>):</b> May 19 <sup>th</sup> , we celebrate Malcolm X's birthday, because he was a great, great Afro American. Malcolm X is you. All of you. And you are Malcolm X.
			<b>Student:</b> <i>[Excitedly.]</i> I'm Malcolm X!
00:01:05	Sound Effect	Transition	Music swells and fades.
00:01:07	Jesse	Host	But for the next couple decades, that was pretty much it for his acting career. Washington played football in high school. He was good at it. He played in college. He even entered the NFL draft and played pro for a few years in other leagues. Washington made acting his career in 2015. He starred as Ricky Jarret in the HBO drama, <i>Ballers</i> . Ricky was a football player, which was familiar territory for Washington. But he also was great in it.
00:01:35	Sound Effect	Transition	Music swells and fades.
00:01:36	Clip	Clip	<b>Ricky (<i>Ballers</i>):</b> This number. This number represents the man I am on and off the field. My dad wore 81. So, I took the number 18 to flip the script. I swore a long time ago I'd never take the field wearing a jersey that didn't say anything but <i>[censored]</i> you, Dad, on the front and back.
00:01:54	Sound Effect	Transition	Music swells and fades.
00:01:56	Jesse	Host	Washington has since taken on a bunch of other big parts. He was the lead in Christopher Nolan's <i>Tenet</i> . He was in the romantic drama, <i>Malcolm &amp; Marie</i> . He's also in the brand-new mystery comedy, <i>Amsterdam</i> , which just hit theaters. When I talked with John David Washington in 2019, he'd just been reunited with Spike Lee, the first director he ever worked with. He starred in Lee's Academy Award winning <i>BlacKkKlansman</i> . Washington played Ron Stallworth, the first Black detective to join the ranks of the Colorado Springs police department. In the film, Stallworth infiltrates a local chapter of the KKK over the phone with the help of a White police officer who stands in for him in person.

It's harrowing, hilarious, and at times hard to believe. But it's based on a true story. Before we get into my interview with John, let's hear a little bit from *BlacKkKlansman*. In this scene, Ron has a job

interview for the gig at Colorado Springs PD. He's sitting across from two men who are in charge of hiring. One of the interviewers is a White police officer. The other is a Black city employee, played by the great Isiah Whitlock.

Uh, quick note by the way, Whitlock is an accomplished actor who happens to have a signature catch phrase. He developed it on *The Wire*. It is one word, a word that you cannot say on the radio. And part of the signature is that he extends that word you can't say on the radio. Let's listen.

00:03:23 Sound Effect Transition

Music swells and fades.

00:03:24 Clip Clip

**Officer (*BlackKlansman*):** How do you get along with people, generally?

**Ron:** Sir, they treat me right, I treat them right. Like I said before, I was raised up the right way. So, I—

**Officer:** I mean, have you ever had any negative—

**Mr. Turrentine:** What would you do if another cop called you a *[censored]*? Or worse?

*[A pause as the clock ticks in the background.]*

**Ron:** Will that happen, sir?

**Mr. Turrentine:** *[Censored.]* There's never been a Black cop in this city. Now, if we make you an officer, you will—in effect—be the Jackie Robinson of the Colorado Springs police force. And if you know anything about Jackie Robinson, you know he had to take a lot of guff from his fellow teammates, the fans, other teams, and the press.

**Ron:** I know the Jackie Roosevelt Robinson story, sir.

**Mr. Turrentine:** Good. So, knowing that, if somebody calls you a *[censored]*, would you be able to turn the other cheek?

00:04:18 Sound Effect Transition

**Ron:** *[Beat.]* If I had to, sir. Yes. Yes, I would.  
Music swells and fades.

00:04:19 Jesse Host

John David Washington, welcome to *Bullseye*. It's nice to have you on the show.

00:04:22 John David Washington Guest

*[Chuckling.]* Thanks for having me.

00:04:23 Jesse Host

Listening to that in audio form made me think that like there's two—basically, two great reasons to aspire to be Spike Lee. One is, one of the great filmmakers of his generation—great teacher. You know, all those things. The other is if you put Isiah Whitlock in your movie, you can be like, "Hey, Isiah Whitlock, would you mind going *[extended censor bleep]*."

00:04:52 John Guest

*[They laugh.]*  
Consistently, too. He never—I mean, he's always delivering that. Every time. *[Laughs.]* It's even funnier when you bleep it out, but

00:05:09 Jesse Host you know what he's saying and you know who's saying it, too. It just gives more context to it. That was funny.  
[Still giggling.] But in all sincerity, welcome to the show. Thank you for coming on.

00:05:11 John Guest Thanks for having me.

00:05:12 Jesse Host You were a professional football player for a pretty long time. I mean, professional football careers tend to be short.

[John agrees.]

00:05:24 John Guest Did you always aspire to be a professional athlete?  
I kind of—I did it out of necessity, in a way. I wanted to be an actor, because of seeing my father and seeing my mother play the piano. I wanted to be a performer. But I started playing football, though, because my dad started getting pretty popular in Hollywood. And we started moving and moving to different places. And you know, started getting treated a little differently. So, of course I wanted to protect my feelings. And I wanted to start making my own name. So, I chose football.

Now, I love the game. I always loved football. Randall Cunningham is the reason I played—seeing a person that looked like me at that position, at the quarterback position. I had never seen it before. You know what I mean? So, I aspired to play in the NFL, but it was more of a rebellious sort of quest of independence than it was to actually live out my dream, which was—which I was burying, which was acting.

00:06:21 Jesse Host I had Terry Cruise on the show a couple of years ago—folks probably know as an actor—he was also a professional football player.

00:06:29 John Guest The Redskins, right? Was it Washington?

00:06:31 Jesse Host Yeah, he played for a few different teams. I mean, he was—he bounced around. He played in NFL Europe. His career was actually—

00:06:38 John Guest So did I!

00:06:39 Jesse Host —a lot like yours, yeah!

[John agrees.]

And one of the things that Terry Cruise said to me was he kind of locked eyes with me—I mean, locked eyes with me. He was locked eyes with me the entire time; Terry Cruise is very Terry Cruise-y.

[John laughs.]

00:07:03 John Guest It's a very powerful experience to talk to that man. But he kind of locked eyes with me and he said, "You know, with the exception of a few quarterbacks, everyone in the NFL is broken." And—

00:07:08 Jesse Host Mmm. Like physically? Or just mental—  
Emotionally.

[John echoes the word and agrees.]

His point being that it's such a painful, brutal way to make a living that it takes a lot to drive someone to the level of success that gets

00:07:29	John	Guest	<p>you to the NFL. And I wonder if that was reflected in your experience.</p> <p>Hey, I would concur with that. It's—watching football now, I can't believe what these young men put their bodies through, what they endure physically. Thinking about the human will—you know?—and to provide for their families, to change their circumstances. You gotta credit them. And I'm no different; I did—I endured several concussions, a torn meniscus, torn Achilles, sports hernia, broken ribs, clavicle, all in the name of that independence. You know? I was willing to sacrifice it all to know—to show more to myself, but I didn't know that at the time—for others, though, to show that I can earn my own keep. I am my own man. There's so many cases in the NFL that they're just trying to provide for their family, trying to do better for themselves. You know. And that sort of motivation—I mean, you see it on draft day.</p> <p>NFL draft weekend is such an interesting social study, 'cause you see these kids—these young men, I should say—of all nationalities, from all different kinds of backgrounds, have the same sort of reaction. Especially draft picks one through ten. But really, all of them. They get this dream of getting their name called. You know? And they're ready to run through a brick wall. You know. They're almost programmed in that way, based off of the nature of the sport and what you think is promised for you at that rainbow, which is the NFL. You know what I mean? And once you get there, it totally changes, the whole perspective changes. And unfortunately, NFL really stands for “not for long”. And there's not a—you get a sort of a crash course in how to be a professional, but it's not really instituted early on in these young men's life.</p> <p>And more often than not, they learn the hard way. I think there's a documentary that's called <i>Broke</i>, and you know—what is it, the average life expectancy is three years. You know, after three years, they become—you know—bankrupt. So, it is an interesting—NFL specifically is such interesting case studies for these young men in this country and how they have to sort of turn it off—you know—after they're done playing. And the learning curve, you know, is narrow.</p>
00:09:50	Jesse	Host	<p>We've got so much more still to get into with John David Washington. Stay with us. It's <i>Bullseye</i>, from <a href="http://MaximumFun.org">MaximumFun.org</a> and NPR.</p>
00:09:58	Music	Transition	<p>Thumpy rock music.</p>
00:10:03	Jesse	Host	<p>It's <i>Bullseye</i>. I'm Jesse Thorn. My guest is John David Washington. He stars in the movies <i>BlacKkKlansman</i>, <i>Tenet</i>, and the new comedy, <i>Amsterdam</i>.</p> <p>When you auditioned for <i>Ballers</i>, you were still in a boot from the injury that ended your football career. Was it just a, well, what's the worst that could happen situation, when you took that meeting or whatever it's called? Went out to that audition?</p>
00:10:31	John	Guest	<p><i>[Laughing.]</i> Took the meeting, yeah. Yeah, I was in a boot and crutches, on a strong dose of painkillers. Now, I had prepared for the audition. I had been working the scenes with my mom, actually. She's the one that dropped me off, too. So, shoutout to Pauletta. So, I got up there with Sheila Jaffe, who I'll call my other mother in the industry, and I thought that—yeah, I mean, I'd been turned</p>

down so many times in the NFL, I'm sort of—you know, I'm sort of used to it. I'm sort of impervious to this pain of rejection. So, what's the worst that can happen? I guess I had nothing to lose and I'm feeling pretty good on the medication. So, uh.

[They chuckle.]

I went why not? You know what I mean? But like I knew how much I wanted it. It wasn't "why not" like sure, I'll try acting. It wasn't like that, 'cause in fact, when my agent—Andrew Finkelstein, who told me about the audition—I was resistant at first, 'cause I wanted to come here to New York and study for a year at least and then start going on auditions. And he says—he told me that, you know, "You're not gonna get the job. You're not gonna get a lot of jobs. You're gonna get turned down a lot, but you need to get used to auditioning. Getting in the room and getting comfortable. Studied or not studied."

And I was like oh. That's a good point. And I'm used to getting rejected anyway, so alright, I can do that. So, the plan was go in there, go into this audition and sort of—you know—get torn up. Tell me what to work on and sort of apply those things when I got to New York and started studying. And the craziest things started happening. They just kept inviting me back, kept inviting me back, and ten auditions later, I got it.

00:12:07	Jesse	Host
00:12:09	John	Guest
00:12:10	Jesse	Host
00:12:12	John	Guest

Did you say ten?!

Ten. Ten auditions, yeah.

That's a lot of auditions, dude! [Laughs.]

Yeah! Well, they—'cause they were like—they had to be sure. [Chuckles.] I mean, you know, it's just guys basically coming off the street. They couldn't believe—I mean, it was a huge—I had to fight. I had to fight. There was a lot of people trying to get that job, and they had to be sure. Sheila Jaffe, I gotta shout her out. Peter Berg. HBO. They supported me first. There was still some resistance, but those—Peter Berg, Sheila Jaffe, and Papa Dave Levinson, they really backed me. They were in my corner. And Sheila Jaffe actually, after the third audition, shot me a text telling me, "You should retire from football. Like, you were meant to do this."

00:12:56	Jesse	Host
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And they were—I think, you know, they couldn't believe that—you know, I'd never done it before. So, I love her to death for that. Let's hear a little bit from the first season of *Ballers*, from a few years ago. So, in this scene, Ricky arranged to meet with his ex-girlfriend, Annabelle—played by Annabelle Acosta. And Annabelle, called Belle, left Ricky because she was fed up with his cheating. And they're standing in front of a public fountain, and Ricky is holding a bouquet of roses and lilies.

00:13:17	Sound Effect	Transition
00:13:18	Clip	Clip

Music swells and fades.

**Ricky:** Well, I'm sorry I lost my head. Okay? I'm sorry for everything. I keep repeating my mistakes, but I'm trying to change. I'm trying to do things different.

**Belle:** [Chuckles.] Wow. Ricky, you can't be serious.

**Ricky:** Seven karat series. You like it? Look at that. What you think?

**Belle:** You really believe you're ready for marriage? 'Cause after all, I mean, you know this is an engagement ring, right?

**Ricky:** Well—

**Belle:** 'Cause I know you don't think I'm so stupid to where I would just accept the *[censored]* apology.

**Ricky:** No, baby, 'cause this is—

**Belle:** No, you listen to me. There is no ring, no house, no car. Not even the Hope *[censored]* diamond can buy my forgiveness.

*[A splash.]*

**Ricky:** Baby, that's a \$400,000 dollar ring!

**Belle:** *[Shouting.]* Colby spent \$4,000,000, you delusional *[censored]*!

**Ricky:** *[Shouting.]* He makes more than me! Babe, come back! Baby! Baby! Come back! Baby, come back! I got it. I got it. I got it. Baby! Baby! Baby! You—we can get married if you want to! We can get married if you want to!  
Music swells and fades.

00:14:25 Sound Effect Transition

00:14:26 John Guest *[They chuckle.]*

00:14:36 Jesse Host Oh my god, that dude. Ricky Jerret, man. He's crazy. What did you realize you—I mean, you had spent your whole life with a dad who was in movies from when you were little. He was—you know, he was a new actor. By the time you were an adult, he was a movie star. You know. You had been in—you're in *Malcolm X*.

*[John chuckles.]*

00:15:11 John Guest You'd done this to some—this had been a huge part of your life your entire life. But when you showed up for set as basically a greenhorn, what did you realize you did not know? What did I realize—? Everything. You know. How to even read a call sheet. You know, just what blocking meant. *[Chuckles.]* I had to act like I did, but I was like, "What does this—what—what—wh—what does call time mean?" *[Laughing.]* You know, I was just—I was like—I was ignorant to a lot of that stuff. And you know, rehearsal, when we would rehearse, you know I'm like going full tilt. Like, I'm not like reserving anything for the scene, and I was just ready to go at all times. Every take, yes, yes, I'm ready. I'm ready, I'm ready.

I mean, I'm always ready, but just—I was just so, I had still a very much a football—very much a football mentality and was wearing myself out. You know? *[Chuckles.]* I slept well that first day. And

also, the first day also was a club scene. So, like it was like a whole bunch of extras, and here comes The Rock and Pete Berg is like, “You ready?” ‘Cause I know that they—you know, they’re still taking a chance on me. ‘Cause Sheila also said some people are great auditioners and they can’t—you know, they don’t step up to the plate when it’s gametime. Others aren’t very good auditioners, are great when they get the job. So, I knew I had a lot of pressure on me, and I wanted to make them right, ‘cause they fought for me. ‘Cause there were some people that didn’t necessarily believe. So, they did.

So, I had a lot on the line. And I just—I just went for it. I just went for it, but I’m definitely looking around like at Pete and at The Rock and at Omar and all these extras and I’m like, man, this is crazy. What have I done? *[Laughs.]* What—wait, I think—wait, let’s—time out, guys. Time out. *[Chuckling.]* I need another month. You know? But, no, I went for it. I went for it.

00:16:49 Jesse

Host

How did you get *BlacKkKlansman*?

00:16:52 John

Guest

Got a text message from Spike Lee, saying—

*[They laugh.]*

00:16:56 Jesse

Host

Saying, quote—

00:16:58 John

Guest

*[Playfully.]* We all have this story!

Yeah, I mean, right? You know, everybody get texted from him right? I mean, get it saying, “Yo, this Spike. Call me,” in those exact words. “Yo, this Spike. Call me.” You know, I’m thinking this is a prank. I definitely didn’t think he had my number. So, I didn’t know what was going on.

*[Jesse laughs.]*

But I called him, because I need—this would be great. I need the job. You know? I’m out here, you know, trying to get jobs. So, I called him, and he sort of soft-pitched me this story about the first African American detective in Colorado Springs that infiltrates the Ku Klux Klan. Now, I’m thinking, you know, was it Carlos Bigsby? The Bigsby skit by Dave Chappelle? I’m like, “Is this some sort of play on that?” But I’m in! Because Jordan Peele and Spike are in, so I’m in. But he says, no, there’s a book and he’s gonna send it to me. He sends me the book, Ron Stallworth’s *BlacKkKlansman*. I read it and I call him back and I’m blown away. I tell him how much I loved it.

And he said, “Alright, I’ll see you this summer.”

*[They laugh.]*

That’s how I got it! Now, I had done a movie for his wife, who produced this movie called *Monster*. It premiered in Sundance last year. So, he was familiar with that and some stuff on *Ballers*. So, you know, he knew. I mean, he knew of my work. But yeah, that was basically the audition process.

00:18:15 Jesse

Host

Let’s hear another scene from *BlacKkKlansman*. John David’s character and his partner, Flip—who’s played by Adam Driver—are at the police station. And they’ve just come back from—this is

relatively early in the film—an undercover operation at a meeting, at a Klan meeting. And Flip, who is White and is the in-person Ron, is upset because his cover was almost blown by one of the Klansmen who's very suspicious of him. And that guy basically just tried to get him to take a lie detector test at gunpoint and also drop his trousers to prove that he was not Jewish. And he only very narrowly escaped the situation.

00:19:02 Sound Effect Transition

Music swells and fades.

00:19:03 Clip Clip

**Flip:** I didn't wanna say it with Trapp, but then *[inaudible]* would've had a gun in my face. And he was a *[censored]* hair away from pulling the trigger.

**Ron:** And he didn't.

**Flip:** But he could have! And then I would've been dead. For what? Stopping some jerkoffs from playing dress up?

**Ron:** Flip, it's intel.

**Flip:** I'm not risking my life to prevent some rednecks from lighting a couple sticks on fire.

**Ron:** This is the job. What's your problem?

**Flip:** That's my problem. For you, it's a crusade. For me, it's a job. It's not personal, nor should it be.

**Ron:** Why haven't you bought into this?

**Flip:** Why should I?

**Ron:** Because you're Jewish, brother. The so-called chosen people. You've been passing for a wasp. White Anglo-Saxon Protestant, cherry pie, hotdog White boy. It's what some light skinned Black folks do. They pass for White. Doesn't that hatred you've been hearing the Klan say—doesn't that piss you off?!

**Flip:** Of course, it does.

**Ron:** Then why are you acting like you ain't got skin in the game, brother?

**Flip:** Rookie, that's my *[censored]* business.

00:19:59 Sound Effect Transition

**Ron:** It's our business.  
Music swells and fades.

00:20:01 Jesse Host  
00:20:03 John Guest

Your voice is so important in this film.

Yeah. *[Chuckles.]* I mean, he had to convince the—he had David Duke convinced and the Klansmembers convinced that he was a racist, White man.

00:20:15 Jesse Host

You're making choices both when he is on and off the phone. Like, I feel like this would be a different story if the premise was that he was doing, you know—

00:20:29 John Guest

A White voice.



00:20:30 Jesse Host Direct, one-to-one codeswitching. If he was doing a White people voice on the phone and a Black people voice off the phone in the ways that people think of them, it would be a less complex story for this character than the way that you chose to do it.

00:20:47 John Guest That was another—what was so compelling about the book, even. Just how Ron Stallworth talked about this. He didn't change his voice at all. You know what I mean? And I loved that. As we understand, codeswitching and all that, he saw it as he got into character as an undercover detective does. He talked about that being like acting and getting into character. He had to speak these words of hatred and the vernacular of racism and hate, but he didn't change his voice at all. So, I couldn't have either. I shouldn't have either. I would have done a disservice to the man and to the film if I'd have done that.

I just wanted to keep it as authentic as possible and to be able to also understand, as I did reading it and doing research, how complicated it is to be an African American detective police officer in this country. Not blue enough for the department. Not Black enough for your own community. You know? And to be able to display that cinematically was a great opportunity for me to explore. It was something I was very curious about and wanted to—it meant a lot to me to be able to put on display how thankless of a job it is. And how we, as a community, need to be—especially in the African American community, need to be more specific with our contentions, with our—with, you know—with, you know, how we feel about law enforcement. You know?

Because there are great—there are some cases out there—I think Ron Stallworth is an American hero. During his investigation, there were no cross burnings. There were no terrorist acts, violent acts in the community during that time. That's a big deal to me. That's a big deal, because he wasn't trying to change the world. And it was also a big deal that he had gotten great support from White officers. You know, that helped him in his case. It wasn't just one man on a mission. You know. You know, movie-wise, it'd have been convenient, but it wasn't. And Spike held that truth to be true in the film, as well. So, that was a big deal to me. That's heroic. That is a man that did a job. And I'm just glad, because it's such a unique case and story that I'm just so happy and proud to be a part of telling that story in a movie.

00:23:13 Jesse Host We'll wrap up with John David Washington after a quick break. When we return, we will talk about some of the criticisms *BlacKkKlansman* received for its portrayal of policing and how Washington felt about them. It's *Bullseye*, from [MaximumFun.org](https://MaximumFun.org) and NPR.

00:23:29 Promo Clip **Music:** "Money Won't Pay," by bo en (feat. Augustus). Upbeat, cheerful music.

**Griffin McElroy:** And now, a live reading from Rachel's Poetry Corner.

**Rachel McElroy:** Elephants, theremins, Clifton. Neopets, pore strips, Jepsen. Heinz smell, jellybeans, goalie goals. Skittles, squirrels, and mole. Celery, chopsticks, pumpernickel. *A Case of*

*You*, by Joni Mitchell. Lullabies, tie-dye, the more you know. All of these things on our *Wonderful* show.

**Griffin:** All these things and more wait for you on *Wonderful*. Every Wednesday, on [MaximumFun.org](https://MaximumFun.org) or wherever you download podcasts.

00:24:04	Music	Transition	[ <i>Music fades out.</i> ]
00:24:08	Jesse	Host	Thumpy rock music. Welcome back to <i>Bullseye</i> . I'm Jesse Thorn. If you're just joining us, my guest is actor John David Washington. He starred in the movies <i>Tenet</i> , <i>Of Monsters and Men</i> , and the brand-new comedy, <i>Amsterdam</i> , which is in theaters now. When he and I talked in 2019, he'd just starred in <i>BlacKkKlansman</i> —Spike Lee's Academy Award winner. In it, he played a Black police officer who infiltrated the KKK over the phone. Let's get back into our conversation.
00:24:54	John	Guest	Your character's girlfriend in the film is an activist who is opposed to the police in the United States, pretty directly. And there were criticisms of the film—including from Boots Riley, who has been a guest on this show and is a guy I've known for a long time.
00:24:57	Jesse	Host	That's right. Bay Area, right? Yeah, exactly. Exactly. Total teenage hero of mine. And who are critical of the idea that in a story about race in America, a police officer should be a hero. How did you feel about that? Was that something that you thought about before that came up after the movie came out?
00:25:18	John	Guest	Um, no, I know. And shoutout to Boots Riley. I saw his film, and that was—it was crazy! And we ain't never seen anything like that. You know? That was—we ain't seen anything like it. And I think it's important that we're in a great time right now in film and cinema and this business that we're getting opportunities to tell our stories in certain parts of the—certain communities are getting our stories out there. And they're putting money—they're funding these ideas and these great writers and directors out there. So, that's—it's all positive. But, uh—
00:25:50	Jesse	Host	And so, forgive me, but I don't wanna like—I don't wanna give the impression that it's like a binary between this movie and that movie, because I know that—I know how much Boots admires Spike Lee and his work and how much about the film he also admired. And he made—he worked very hard to make that clear when he was being critical.
00:26:10	John	Guest	Gotcha. Gotcha. Well, I—again, I kind of alluded to it earlier. I—before the research, before I got—and I did another film, called <i>Monsters and Men</i> , and I got to do ride-alongs for about a month and a half and be with a lot of police officers of color. I didn't realize what they went through. You know? So, like Laura Harrier's character, I probably would've been more on that side until I got the full perspective—a fuller, more clear perspective on what they do. There's a lot of, you know, men and women in the minority that have protected and served that don't get thank you'd. That get nothing but criticism, getting lumped into a lot of police officers that abuse their power, that are incompetent, and how they—you know, how they handle things.

So, that was very important for me. That's a man—Ron Stallworth was a man of great integrity. You know? He didn't—he was unapologetically Black. You know, he'll tell you that. He was a man of his community. You know. I think he says it to the love interest, to Laura's character towards the end. Like, "Just because I don't wear a black beret, black gloves, or a leather jacket that I'm not for the liberation of my people." He feels like there's a way to do it from the inside. There's a way to do it—and the law was on his side when confronting David Duke. You know? And you know, you could've made a movie about how he even came into being a police—how he got to become a detective, a police—Colorado Springs detective in the '70s.

So, to me, what I listed earlier about why he's a hero is because he was successful in his mission makes—is what I would have—how I would respond. You know, again, this is one case. This is a man that was successful in this case, and he did it—to me, he did it the right way.

			<i>[Music fades in.]</i>
00:28:07	Jesse	Host	John David Washington, I'm so grateful you came on <i>Bullseye</i> . It was so great to get to talk to you. And thanks for your wonderful work in this movie and elsewhere.
00:28:14	John	Guest	I appreciate that so much. Thanks for having me. This was great.
00:28:16	Music	Transition	Playful, upbeat synth with light vocalizations.
00:28:19	Jesse	Host	John David Washington from 2019. His latest movie is <i>Amsterdam</i> . It's directed by David O. Russell and features dozens of other movie stars: Chris Rock, Margo Robbie, Robert De Niro, others. <i>BlackKkKlansman</i> , in which Washington starred, is available to rent and buy digitally pretty much everywhere.
			<i>[Music fades out.]</i>
00:28:41	Music	Transition	Relaxed, brassy music.
00:28:43	Jesse	Host	That's the end of another episode of <i>Bullseye</i> . <i>Bullseye</i> is created from the homes of me and the staff of Maximum Fun, in and around greater Los Angeles, California. Here at my house, I finally retired the set of drinking glasses that I bought 10 or 15 years ago at a thrift store. I had broken one too many. Two of them got stuck together; when I <i>[chuckles]</i> tried to separate them using heat and cold to expand and contract them, one of them exploded. Uh, the new ones—the new ones are tempered glass.

Our show is produced by speaking into microphones. Our senior producer is Kevin Ferguson. Our producers are Jesus Ambrosio and Richard Robey. Our production fellow at Max Fun is Tabatha Myers. We get booking help from Mara Davis. Our interstitial music is by DJW, also known as Dan Wally. Our theme song is called "Huddle Formation", recorded by The Go! Team. Thanks to The Go! Team. Thanks to their label, Memphis Industries. They let us use that. We appreciate it.

*Bullseye* is on Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube. @Bullseye on Twitter. Facebook.com/Bullseyewithjessethorn and search for *Bullseye with Jesse Thorn* on YouTube. You will find our interviews and stuff we're up to there. Great places to go if you wanna share

00:30:08 Promo Promo

something that you liked on this week's show. I think that's about it.  
Just remember: all great radio hosts have a signature signoff.  
**Speaker:** *Bullseye with Jesse Thorn* is a production of  
[MaximumFun.org](http://MaximumFun.org) and is distributed by NPR.

*[Music fades out.]*