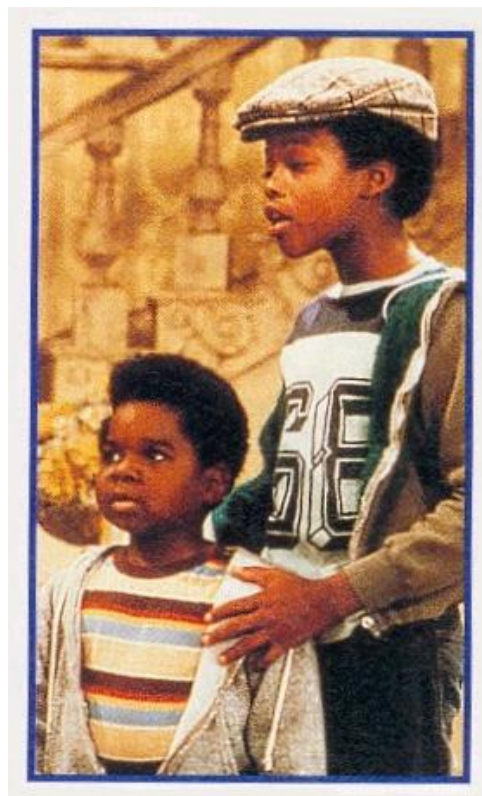
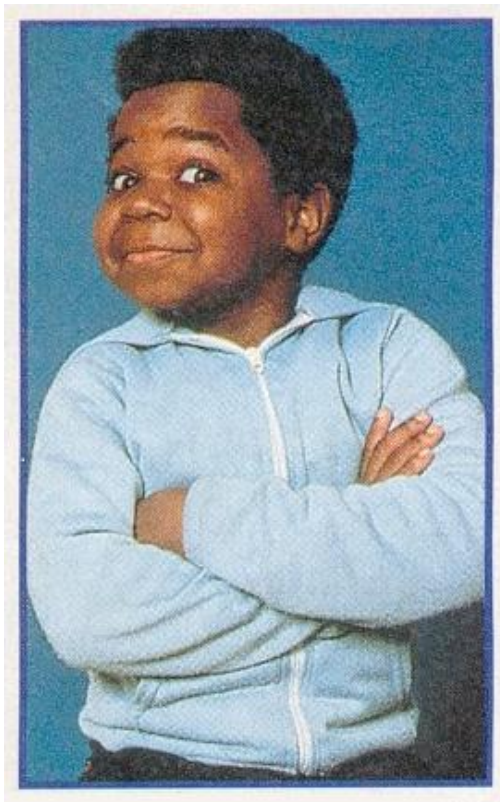


Gary Coleman

Titles: 8 Sources: 3 Stills: 6

Born: Zion, Illinois; 8th February 1968

The sitcom "**Diff'rent Strokes**" was never screened in the UK, and Coleman's TV movie vehicles have chiefly been confined to cable and satellite channels, so he remains largely an unknown quantity here. What has been seen of him tends only to reinforce Maltin's withering assessment of his acting talents (see below). Coleman, in the liberal climate of the early 80s, looked uncomfortably like a revival of the "comic nigger" of 1920s and 1930s American films, another "Buckwheat" escaped from the **Our Gang** shorts. His primary accomplishment then, but it is a significant one, came in early adulthood, when his lawsuit against grasping parents forced a long-overdue change in California law to protect the earnings of child performers.

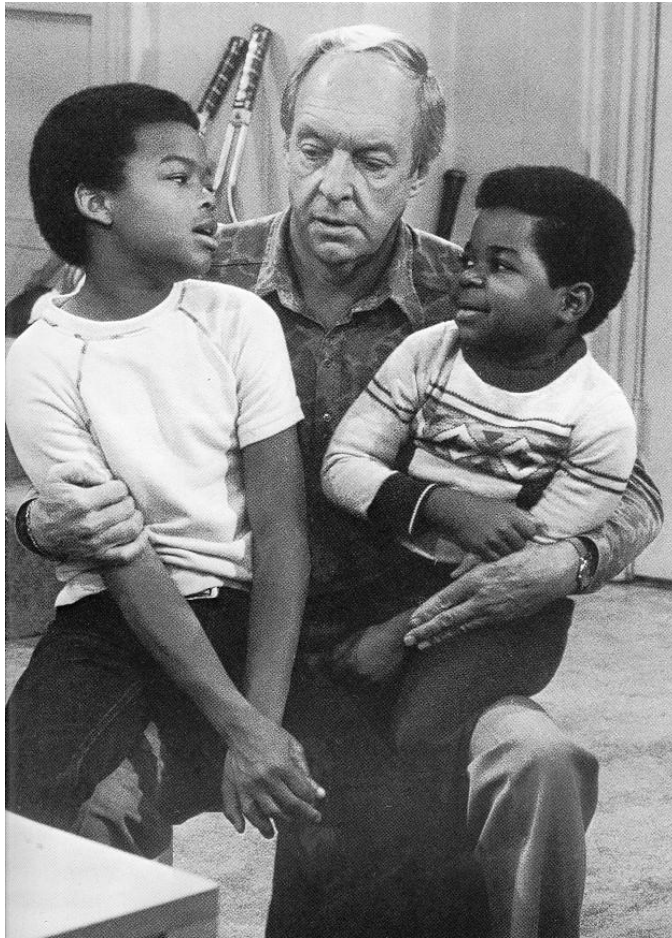


*A household name – as the cheeky (and would-be-lovable) Arnold, son of of the late housekeeper to a wealthy white bachelor, who adopts him and his brother, in the cosy sitcom "**Diff'rent Strokes**"*
Source for all stills – various TV guides

Times Magazine article 10/12/94:

"Gary Coleman is 26, but looks more like a 12-year old. Chronic kidney problems stopped

his growth at 4ft 9in soon after he joined the sitcom "**Diff'rent Strokes**" in 1978 as the cheeky, hyperactive 10-year old, Arnold. What was disastrous for his health was perfect for



A disingenuous parable of racial togetherness – washed down by lashings of belly laughs and lovable mischief. In real life, both boys wound up in court before they were 20 however, and the race riots of the Nixon years were not to be smoothed away by a wishful-thinking sitcom.

his career. With no outward signs of puberty to bother the show's producers, he was still on it when it folded eight years later, by which time his doctors were saying he had only two years to live.

Coleman had earned a grand total of \$24 million from acting. According to Paul Petersen [founder of a support group for former child stars] his parents and manager intended that he should receive none of it. They had paid his earnings into a fund that would revert to them at his death, he says – visibly enraged at the entertainment industry for conniving at the arrangements. "Not only did they take advantage of a kid with no kidneys, not only did they take advantage of a black kid, they took advantage of a kid who's a midget, and they did it all as if it was business as usual.. See, the only trouble with [the parents'] scheme is this young boy who has no kidneys, who was only expected to live to the age of 20, didn't die."

He nearly did die in December 1990 but recovered sufficiently to sue his parents and manager for the relatively modest sum of \$1 million, and win. It did not make him happy,

nor did it jump-start his stalled career. But it helped to force a law through the California State Assembly requiring at least 20 percent of child actors' earnings to be put in trust for them alone."

[later in the same article it notes Coleman's screen siblings in "**Diff'rent Strokes**" "having come to grief almost as spectacularly as Coleman himself."]

NAMBLA Bulletin media column notes:

"1983: A critic calls Gary Coleman "a bright, precocious kid who could go on "**The Johnny Carson Show**" and trade quips.. but I can't picture a young Jerry Mathers ("**Beaver**") ever doing that.. He'd simply say 'Gee, Mr Carson' " " - **NB 4/4**

"1984: Gary Coleman, now 16, is trying to shed his kiddie image. He'll portray a teenage arsonist in a TV movie, "**PLAYING WITH FIRE**"... " - **NB 5/4**

"1992. Gary Coleman is reportedly finding happiness with a tall woman of 19..."
- **NB 13/9**

What the Critics said:

In "JIMMY THE KID":

“Bored, brilliant son of wealthy husband-and-wife singing team is kidnapped by a gang of pathetically incompetent bunglers, who teach him how to enjoy being a kid. Coleman returns the favour by bringing a good cast down to his level of non-acting, consisting of endless mugging and exaggerated eyeball-rolling, in this lame comedy...” – Leonard Maltin



FILMOGRAPHY

Year	Age	Title	Role
78-86	10~	Diff'rent Strokes	US TV sitcom, in central role, Arnold
-	-	Buck Rogers in the 23rd Century	US TV comic strip hero series
79	11	THE KID FROM LEFT FIELD	US TV – in title role
80	12	SCOUT'S HONOR with Meeno Peluce	US TV
81	13	ON THE RIGHT TRACK	in central role
82	14	JIMMY THE KID	in title role, Jimmy Lovejoy
82		THE KID WITH THE BROKEN HALO	abortive TV series pilot, in title role
83	15	THE KID WITH THE 200 IQ	US TV – in title role, 13
85	17	PLAYING WITH FIRE	

