

**Cynthia J. Miller, ed. *Teaching History With... Series*.
Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017.**

Integrating video into the history classroom has been a common practice for decades. Indeed, there have been a good number of books dedicated to the topic. Cynthia J. Miller, editor of the *Teaching History With... Series*, brings together three able historians to explore specific genres and their potential for inclusion in the history classroom.

In this series of books, readers are provided with an engaging look at both commonly and rarely utilized types of videos for the history classroom. The three concise volumes in this series—*Teaching History with Musicals*, *Teaching History with Newsreels and Public Service Shorts*, and *Teaching History with Science Fiction Films*—are each structured in a logical, user-friendly manner and offer readers ample ideas to consider for their own instructional practice.

Each book is divided into three sections intended to provide the history educator with a brief historical survey for each discipline with an emphasis on concepts derived within them, a collection of approaches for integration of the videos, and a concise collection of sample documents such as syllabi. Although the overwhelming majority of materials are relevant primarily to the latter portion of the twentieth century (where the majority of such video footage exists, making the scope of courses that can benefit from these materials somewhat limited), the authors take this and other challenges on quite well.

Throughout the series, the most powerful opportunities for developing skills of historical inquiry are related to analyzing the films in terms of their relationship to their cultural and historical context. Another limitation is also contextual in that the vast majority of productions available for use are derived from American industry. However, the authors at times take this on and even highlight some potential ways of mitigating this constraint.

Overall, the series is successful in its aim of equipping readers with an expanded understanding of the potential and possibilities for integration of video in the classroom in each domain it tackles. While at times it leaves the reader yearning for extended discussion and perhaps a clearer articulation of the most appropriate scope of such integration, the series is engaging and worth reading.

Kathryn Edney. *Teaching History With Musicals*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017. Pp. 133. \$35.00.

Teaching History With Musicals is particularly strong in its discussion of potential musicals for United States History and Western Civilization. One of its most effective segments provides readers with a detailed collection of discussion starters invoking different methodologies one might employ in the classroom. These examples are well developed and provide a specific illustration for the real potential of including musicals as tools to help develop the skills of historiography. A slight distraction in the volume comes from a fairly consistent tendency to present topics through a more postmodern lens, which, while often providing unique insights, seems less appropriate for the more general domains of history the book focuses on. And although the documents portion of this volume include only a syllabus and an annotated collection of musicals for the teacher to consider, each is well constructed and useful for the reader. Overall, this volume provides history educators with enough tools to see a logical fit for musicals in the history survey course.

Aaron Gulyas. *Teaching History With Newsreels and Public Service Shorts*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017. Pp. 139. \$35.

Teaching History With Newsreels and Public Service Shorts is probably the most challenging volume in that the use of such

newsreels and public service short films is more prevalent than either musicals or science fiction in the history classroom. Aaron Gulyas, however, manages to achieve his two goals of illustrating different kinds of films from the eras explored as well as providing a nice collection of assessment samples that are well designed and helpful for the history educator. One notable idea shared that is both patently obvious but often overlooked for good historical instruction is the value in “juxtaposing very different arguments from the same era” (25). Through smart commentary such as that, Gulyas is able to move the reader to think beyond how he or she has utilized such video clips in the classroom before and enhance their pedagogical integration.

A. Bowdoin Van Riper. *Teaching History With Science Fiction Films*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017. Pp. 139. \$35.00.

In perhaps the most ambitious volume in the series, A. Bowdoin Van Riper examines the possibilities for *Teaching History With Science Fiction Films*. This volume presents what is stated as the first contribution arguing for the possibility and merit of incorporating science fiction films into the history classroom. The volume is thoroughly grounded in the historical works of science fiction, providing a survey of science fiction film and also a primer of the socio-cultural trends influencing the development of a vast array of films for general United States or World History courses with specific consideration as it relates to the Cold War and the history of science and technology. While acknowledging that those “courses that take a broader view” are particularly challenging as teachers and students try to adequately contextualize such films, an admirable attempt is made at laying out possibilities to consider. A final highlight for this particular contribution to the series is the collection of documents, which includes an annotated collection of potential science fiction films, several sample film guides, and a

collection of exemplary essay questions to help the history teacher consider how these might be woven into the curriculum.

A Summary of the Series

The history teacher has long been drawn to consider the perils and prospects for using video footage in the classroom. While there are many books available that provide general insight into the use of these sources, the authors in this series make a valuable contribution to placing video in its proper context. In each volume of the series, history educators are equipped with a knowledge-base to consider the genre of film more specifically and its implications for inclusion in the classroom. The series is limited in its unavoidable emphasis of twentieth century subject matter in a discipline that extends centuries. And it is also challenging in that the “how this works” aspect of integration, while still respecting students’ cognitive load, is not fully articulated. These limitations aside, the series provides a unique and engaging collection that makes for a good addition to any history educator’s library.

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Erika Gasser. *Vexed with Devils: Manhood and Witchcraft in Old and New England*. New York: New York University Press, 2017. Pp. 272. \$35.00.

Erika Gasser’s *Vexed with Devils* is part of an abundantly rich scholarship on possession and witchcraft in Western Europe and the colonial U.S. during the early modern period. This field, which flourished in the 1980s and produced such classic studies as Brian Levack’s *The Witchhunt in Early Modern Europe* (1987) and Carol Karlsen’s *The Devil in the Shape of a Woman* (1987), has experienced a recent resurgence. Estimates of the numbers of victims in the period between 1450 and 1750 vary widely, from