



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute  
2015 Volume II: American Culture in the Long 20th Century

---

## **Film as Representations of American Democracy and Oppression in the Long 20th Century**

Curriculum Unit 15.02.09  
by Matthew S. Monahan

“I believe that the motion picture is destined to revolutionize our educational system and that in a few years it will supplant largely, if not entirely, the use of textbooks” (Thomas Edison, 1922).

### **Section One: Introduction**

---

#### **1.1 Statement of Context**

Metropolitan Business Academy, an interdistrict magnet high school, has a history with the Regional Educational Support Center, the Center for 21st Century Skills. Although I do not teach courses that culminate with the Student Innovation Expo, I have developed and teach an introductory film course. Introduction to Film is an elective that is open only to juniors and seniors. I also teach senior level English. It is my aim that students who complete this unit through either of my courses, although my primary purpose and method of delivery will be Introduction to Film, will have a deeper understanding of American democracy and the struggles that different groups have endured in their attempts to attain power and voice in the face of oppression throughout the “long 20<sup>th</sup> century,” a term I shall attribute to Yale Professor Matthew Frye Jacobson to mean the late 1800s to present. Students will critically assess three major movements in which “Americans” have both struggled against and acted as forces of oppression: the early labor movement beginning roughly in the 1920s, the Civil Rights era of the 1960s, and present day post-9/11 post-Katrina America.

It has been suggested that student engagement is flagging at alarming rates and that more traditional teaching methods and delivery systems are largely to blame. I began teaching film in the 2011-2012 academic year. At that time I had one section of approximately twenty-seven students, few of whom came to the class with any academic interest in the subject. I soon discovered that introducing too many technical film terms and too much industry jargon was counterproductive. Compelling storytelling and a surfeit of text-dependent questions proved to be more fruitful. Students began to produce more and better quality writing. By the end the course most students grasped that Introduction to Film was neither VOD (Video on Demand)

nor a crisp course in which they just sat around and watched movies.

In the final months of the school year I began booking time in a computer lab and started a class blog; although the blog didn't really takeoff this first year, I received student feedback that it should be incorporated in the future. I am glad I listened, two years later both the quality of the posts and the traffic on the site have improved. At the time of this writing the site has exceeded 7,000 page views.

Building on research and curriculum writing I have completed through my involvement in past Yale New Haven Teacher Institute seminars led by the likes of Annabel Patterson, Pericles Lewis, Mary Liu, and Kathy Dudley et al, my aim is to give my students insight into America's recent past and present and to have them think critically about such concepts as democracy and oppression.

## 1.2 Descriptive Overview

When I began preparing this unit my initial research questions revolved around surveillance culture (SC); is SC a byproduct of the post-9/11 era or a carryover from the Cold War or does it go as far back as the Pinkerton and Baldwin-Felts agencies? Where can I find out more about COINTELPRO, and how do I make the material relevant to my students? Although I experienced a measure of success by reading through released FBI files in the age of FOIA, I eventually came to the conclusion that SC was too narrow a frame and that students would benefit more from a unit that parallels, at least in part, the structure of the seminar itself.

I was looking to incorporate texts from the "long 20<sup>th</sup> century," particularly those reflecting American culture post 9/11 and Katrina; however, I began to call into question my choices. Upon further reflection I have decided that my "long 20<sup>th</sup> century" will not only be the dovetail of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries but will look to include film art that represents the early 1900s to present. In effect, rather than starting with oppression in the post 9/11 era, I have determined to start students exploration of "democracy" through a critical viewing of John Sayles' film *Matewan*, a story of early labor organizing efforts in the coal fields of Appalachia. Next, students will study the Civil Rights era through the lens of Spike Lee's biopic, *Malcolm X*.

Stephen Apkon in his book *The Age of the Image* makes the claim that before being able to graduate from our public high schools students should have mastered the following: script writing for a short video segment; the shooting of a coherent narrative film that correctly incorporates literate elements of expression; the editing of raw footage into a persuasive argument; the accessing of audience appropriate channels of distribution including the Internet; the critical deconstruction and demonstration of understanding of visual media. Not only do I agree with Apkon's assertions, but I also find it interesting how they relate to the ideas of John Howard Lawson that found their way into print half of a century ago. Lawson stated, "The problems of film today are problems of world communication. Human survival is a global question- it relates to the nature of man, his creative will, his ability to face the future." Lawson goes on to question the relation between the film image and reality. He questions whether or not the documentary film is closer to the truth than the narrative film, the connection between film and other arts, especially theatre and literature, and how the moving image is able to express psychological truths and states of feeling.

Professor Matthew Jacobson's analogy, which he made at the Institute's annual Open House, between cultural history and geology really struck a chord with me and my pedagogical aims, especially with relation to my film studies courses. Over the past three years as a teacher of film, I have tried to impress upon students how contemporary films are in conversation with the great works of the medium that precede them. It also occurs to me, that both I and my students need to think more deeply about how films reflect not only the times that they depict but also the prevailing cultural values of the times in which are created.

According to Cullen, “Sometimes forms and formats get conflated- people refer to ‘films’ when they really mean movies they watched on videotape [this is dated; no really does this anymore. It is all blu-ray, DVDs, and streaming] but the distinction is real and can be helpful when you’re trying to map popular culture and get a sense of the big picture” (6). Although Cullen may have a valid point, I personally use the term “film” in class to denote scale of production and to possibly disambiguate popcorn movies from “high art”, examples of the media that potentially deal with weightier topics.

“For another, popular culture, like other institutions in society, is afflicted with evils like racism, which belie the fondest principles of those who profess to believe in representative democracy” (7). Examples of this cropping up in my film courses and the after school film society I run are as follows: during a brief study of film noir students critically view director Orson Welles 1958 genre classic *Touch of Evil* that ironically deals with themes of anti-Mexican attitudes and police corruption on the border while starring Charlton Heston as Miguel Vargas, a Mexican law enforcement officer (something akin to a district attorney); although it has been years since I have screened *West Side Story* with students, while studying Nicholas Ray’s *Rebel without a Cause* we discuss how actor Natalie Wood and not the uber-talented Rita Moreno landed the leading role of Maria; MetroCinematek, my after school film society, screened its first-ever martial arts film this year, *Enter the Dragon*, pre-viewing discussion included how Bruce Lee had been relegated to sidekick in American prime-time television before losing out on a starring role in a series he himself had developed when producers chose to put David Carradine in the part of Cain, a shaolin monk wandering through the American West. More recently the misogyny (this may be too strong a term to describe the anti-woman sentiments) of the 1933 version of *King Kong* led to a lengthy discussion.

Interestingly enough, when I google “Fascism in Macbeth,” what pops up but Michael Denning’s *The Cultural Front* . Although I was thinking of the semi-recent (2010) Rupert Goold directed version featuring Patrick Stewart, reminiscent of and paradoxically the antithesis of Eisenstein’s *Ivan the Terrible* (1945) [Eisenstein’s film uses historical events from 16th century to reflect the goings-on in then contemporary Stalinist Soviet Union, whereas the Goold *Macbeth* transposes Shakespeare’s original text, which is a 16th century representation of 11th century Scotland, to a mid-20th century fascist state a la Stalin’s Soviet Union] the chapter presented is all about Orson Wells.

These are all examples of how films act both as narratives, hopefully compelling storytelling, and as documents of the prevailing cultural values of the time periods in which they are created.

It is for this very reason that I have selected the non print texts that my students will examine. Director John Sayles *Matewan* , the story of early labor organizing efforts and the beginning of the “coal wars” of the 1920s was made in the same time period that President Ronald Reagan was pushing a top-down economic agenda, it was also right around this time that Michael Moore gained recognition with his documentary *Roger and Me* that chronicles the devastating effects of General Motors’ decision to move manufacturing operations from Flint, Michigan to Mexico.

Similarly, director Spike Lee’s watershed biopic of *Malcolm X* dating from 1992, not only looks to shed light upon the oft misunderstood Civil Rights leader’s life and times, but also points out that 1990s America has a long row to hoe before truly becoming a “post-racial” society. As will be discussed in greater detail in later sections, Lee chooses to comment on present-day societal ills by opening with a montage <sup>1</sup> that includes actual footage of the Rodney King beating which precipitates the LA riots.

Rodney King is the subject of Roger Guenveur Smith’s most recent one man show that saw its world premiere

at New Haven's historic Long Wharf Theatre as part as this year's annual Arts and Ideas Festival, a New Haven non-profit staple. As reported by *The New Haven Independent*'s Aliyya Swaby, he closes out the King performance with the lines, "I can't breathe, I can't breathe." This is not only significant because King was a second-generation drowning victim, but also because they echo the last words of Eric Garner. Guenveur Smith is a longtime Lee collaborator; in addition to appearing in many of Lee's films, including *Malcolm X*, he had Lee direct the film version of his Obie Award-winning one man show *A Huey P. Newton Story*.

Before one shares *A Huey P. Newton Story* with students in whole or in part, it may be advisable to screen a clip or clips from the *Firing Line* episode "How Does It Go with the Black Movement?" Recorded in January of 1973 and currently available on Amazon Prime, it features Newton verbally sparring with the show's host conservative ideologue William F. Buckley. This is suggested so that students may appreciate Gueveur Smith's nuanced embodiment of the founding father of the Black Panther Party. *A Huey P. Newton Story* not only receives high marks on the Tomatometer from critics and audiences alike but also does an excellent job connecting the past and present. As Newton, Gueveur Smith references both Abner Louima and Amadou Diallo (1997 and 1999 respectively). The Diallo shooting is also the subject of the Bruce Springsteen song "American Skin (41 Shots)."

## Section Two: General Guide

---

### 2.1 Special Issues

Although many of the texts incorporated in my unit include scenes that may be deemed intense and or explicit, especially in their graphic depictions of violence, one should bear in mind that this unit is designed for use with high school seniors. And how else might one explore such concepts as democracy and oppression in America, especially in light of H Rap Brown's oft cited remark, "Violence is as American as cherry pie"?

*Matewan* received a PG-13 rating from the MPAA (Motion Picture Association of America). According to IMDB's (Internet Movie Data Base) Parent's Guide, in terms of "Violence and Gore: Overall there's nothing explicit or gross, just talk." I am unsure if the author of this post and I viewed the same cut of the film; however, the version which I have seen and own contains the following: a young unionist has his throat cut with a straight razor, depicted in some detail; there are multiple shootouts, the final one begins with the sheriff (who is reported to be a Hatfield of Hatfield and McCoy notoriety) shooting two Felts agents in the head at close range; the mother of the young man whose throat was cut empties a revolver into the corpse of her son's murderer; Chris Cooper's character the pacifist Woobly union organizer Joe Kenehan (not quite JC; ever since Jim Conklin in Crane's *Red Badge of Courage* I am forever on the lookout for Christ symbols) is shot and killed in the crossfire.

*Malcolm X* also received a PG-13 rating for "a scene of violence, and for drugs and some language." Additionally, IMDB's Parents Guide makes the claim that "the entirety of the film's subject matter is potentially upsetting to some viewers." One may call into question which "scene of violence" the MPAA cites in its rationale as the film opens with footage of the Rodney King beating and also includes an extremely graphic recreation of X's assassination. Lee also establishes a recurring motif of violence and terror perpetrated against blacks through a series of flashbacks that include attacks on Malcolm's family and childhood home by the Ku Klux Klan, as well as his father's eventual murder. Of note, Lee appears to reference DW Griffiths'

troubling cinematic ‘masterwork’ *The Birth of a Nation* with the shot of Klansmen riding against the backdrop of the full moon. It has been reported that Lee was nearly cast out of NYU’s film school for questioning Griffiths’ importance and canonical status with student film “The Answer,” the story of a black screenwriter who is hired to work on a remake of *The Birth Of a Nation* with a \$50 M budget.

## 2.2 Aims: Objectives and Goals

By completing this unit of study, students will demonstrate proficiency in the following areas: the writing of a shooting script; the writing and electronic publishing of analyses with appropriate accompanying images; the shooting and editing of raw footage in the service of creating short narratives and persuasive arguments.

## Section Three: Unit Description

---

### 3.1 Outline: Texts and Methods

I have long flirted with the idea of incorporating the work(s) of the “godfather of independent American filmmaking,” Guilford, Connecticut resident John Sayles into my curriculum. Sayles, not unlike the pioneering filmmaker John Cassavetes before him, uses income generated from steady work in the motion picture industry (Cassavetes as an actor; Sayles as a screenwriter) to self-finance small scale productions. Not only does Sayles’ work allow him to create film art on his own terms, as an auteur if you will, but it is also at the core of many of his films, especially that which will be a centrepiece here, his 1987 feature *Matewan* .

Yeah. The preface to Studs Terkel’s book *Working* says, “You don’t make love for eight hours a day, you don’t eat for eight hours a day- the only thing that you do for eight hours a day is sleep and work.” That’s a huge part of your life, and how people, in this society anyway, identify themselves, and are identified by other people. That’s why so many of Hitchcock’s guys are architects. In the ecology of certain movies, you need the person to be able to missing for a long period of time and off having an adventure- and nobody knows what the fuck an architect does. They have little plans rolled up, and they go and visit a building site every once in a awhile, but they kick off for a week and a half and have an adventure-nobody misses them. And it’s kind of a classy thing; they obviously went to college, and da-da-da. Otherwise you’ve got to go and work (Sayles and Smith 76).

In addition to Sayles’ fascination with and desire to show his characters at work on screen, he recently commented at a screening of his most recent feature *Go for Sisters* at the Whitney Center, as a part of this year’s Arts and Ideas Festival, that he feels a deep connection to *Matewan* and cites it as a personal favorite because of the way his crew connected with the community on location in the mountains of West Virginia. Sayles is both interested in his crew as a community and the way communities are represented in his films.

*Matewan* is my anchor text for representing the American labor movement of the early twentieth century. It clearly demonstrates the tensions between the *indigenous* [is this a *sic* or not?] West Virginia coal miners, the ‘scabs’ i.e. newly immigrated Italians and somewhat recently freed blacks, and the coal company i.e. big business and its gun thugs, specifically here Baldwin-Felts agents.

Sayles wrote and directed *Matewan* at the same time that big business with the aid of actor-cum-President “Let’s win one for the Gipper” Ronald Reagan was busting the air traffic controller’s unions. In addition to

starring Chris Cooper, fellow Williams College graduate David Strathairn (Sayles is a Williams alum), and Will Oldham AKA Bonnie “Prince” Billie and star of director Kelly Reichardt’s *Old Joy*, *Matewan* features James Earl Jones as “Few Clothes” Jackson the de facto leader/representative of the black miners (this was not long after Jones played Troy Maxson the protagonist in August Wilson’s Pulitzer-prize winning drama *Fences* ).

Five years after directing *Matewan* Sayles worked as a day player on Spike Lee’s epic biopic *Malcolm X*, which is one of the two Spike Lee joints included in this unit representing the Civil Rights and Black Power movements. Sayles plays the FBI agent who while monitoring the wiretap of X’s hotel room makes a derogatory comment about Dr. King’s indiscretions, something to the effect that by comparison X “is a monk.”

Prior to viewing the opening credit sequence of Lee’s film in seminar, I have oft times vacillated on how much pre-teaching is required for students to grasp Lee’s critique of America’s brand of democracy circa the 1990s. I often survey students to find out if they have any prior knowledge of Rodney King and or the LA riots.

Gavin Smith suggests that Lee’s *Do the Right Thing* and Sayles’ *City of Hope* are excellent companion pieces that explore urban communities of the time; however, most of my students study *Do the Right Thing* in their junior English classes alongside the speeches of both X and MLK. Additionally, I have recently discovered that although *City of Hope* is available via streaming and on VHS, it has never been released on DVD (this is according to the experts at Best Video in Hamden, Connecticut).

## 3.2 Details: Sample Lesson Plans

### 3.2.1 Collectivism in Sayles’ *Matewan*

Opener:

FEW: It true you a Red?

JOE: Yeah, I spose it is.

FEW: Then how come you don’t carry a gun?

JOE: (smiles) We carry little round bombs. Don’t you read the papers.

In the teaching of John V. Last’s opinion piece “TV for Tot’s: Not What You Remember,” in which he briefly deconstructs *Thomas the Tank Engine* as a paean to free-market capitalism, going as far as to say that it would have “Karl Marx turning in his grave,” it came to my attention that my senior students are unaware as to who Marx was.

In small groups students (two to four) research the following key terms and historical figures and report out their findings: Karl Marx, IWW (International Workers of the World)/Wobblies, CE Lively, Sid Hatfield, scab, scrip.

Big Questions:

What are the major conflicts in Sayles’ *Matewan*? Who are the parties involved? What is the film’s POV? What elements contribute to its establishment and how do they impact tone and mood?

Mini Lesson/Instruction:



*Point of View (POV)* is the perspective from which the story/narrative is being told. Traditionally narratives are told from either first person, third person-limited, or third person omniscient point of view. As you critically view director John Sayles' *Matewan* consider from whose point of view the story is being told, what film elements communicate the POV, and what affect the POV has on you, the viewer.

*Tone* is the artist's, or in this case filmmaker's, attitude towards his subject or audience.

*Mood* is the emotional impact the work has on its audience.

*Imagery* when discussed in purely literary terms refers to descriptive language that appeals to any of the five senses. A related film term is *mise en scene* which is sometimes used to refer to everything within the camera frame: lighting, composition, actors, costumes, props, and sets.

Workshop:

Prior to critically viewing the film students will analyze Theodore Roethke's poem "My Papa's Waltz" placing special emphasis on POV, tone, mood, and imagery. Students discuss the tone and how imagery contributes to their understanding of the narrative.

Next, students critically view *Matewan* . While viewing students begin to establish three-column critical viewing logs. Students are to record information in at very least the first column while viewing; the remaining columns may be backfilled after discussion. In the first column students record formal elements, whether they be part of the *mise en scene* or the soundtrack, that contribute to their understanding of terms covered in today's Mini Lesson/Direct Instruction. For example, the film begins and ends with non-diegetic voice over narration (its first appearance is on the fourth page of the screenplay, approximately in the first five minutes) which indicates that the POV is at least in part first person.

Summary/Review

Homework/Extended Learning Activities:

1. Write a shooting script for an adaptation of "My Papa's Waltz" or other short narrative that details *mise en scene* in support of a specific tone.
2. Create a storyboard, a series of drawing that layout the coverage and types of shots you will need in a given scene. Remember the artistic quality of one's storyboard is secondary to the information being conveyed. The completed storyboard should include a variety of different shots i.e. long, medium, close up etc. that contribute to the tone of the overall piece.
3. Students use their three columned critical viewing logs to write blog posts 250 to 500 words in length in which you analyze *Matewan* in whole or in part paying particular attention to one or more of the following: tone, mood, POV. Be sure to include one or more images that directly relate to the point(s) you are attempting to make.

Materials:

Class copies of Theodore Roethke's poem "My Papa's Waltz."

Excerpts of the shooting script for *Matewan* from *Thinking in Pictures* .

Sayles, John. *Matewan*. Perf. Chris Cooper, Will Oldham, and James Earl Jones. 1987. DVD.

### 3.2.2 Separatism and the Struggle for Human Rights in Lee's biopic *Malcolm X*

Opener:

In small groups students (two to four) research the following key terms and historical figures: Rodney King, conk, Marcus Garvey, Joe Louis, NOI (Nation of Islam), COINTELPRO, Louis Farrakhan.

Mini Lesson/Direct Instruction:

*Bildungsroman* in literary criticism refers to a subgenre of coming-of-age stories that is marked by a gradual yet substantial transformation in its protagonist especially in terms of his or her moral growth.

*Biopic* is a film that dramatizing the life of an historical figure.

*Dolly shot* or tracking shot is when the camera is mounted on a wheeled base that runs along a track. Lee's trademark dolly shots place the camera and an actor, most often his film's protagonist, on the same dolly, thus the character appears to remain static while the set or location appears to recede.

*Montage* is a series of quick edits that is often accompanied by a non-diegetic soundtrack and represents the passage of time.

*Signature style/auteurism* certain filmmakers such as Spike Lee have a strong creative vision that incorporates recurring 'vocabulary' and motifs. Lee's style often incorporates bright color palettes, racial tensions, and a visual effect, the dolly shot.

Workshop:

Students critically view director Spike Lee's landmark biopic *Malcolm X*. While viewing students establish three-column critical viewing logs. Students are to record information in at very least the first column while viewing; the remaining columns may be backfilled after discussion. In the first column students record formal elements, whether they be part of the mise en scene or the soundtrack, that contribute to their understanding of terms covered in today's Mini Lesson/Direct Instruction. For example, the film begins with a montage that includes non-diegetic voice over of Denzel performing "I Have a Nightmare (I Charge the White Man)" against a series of cuts between a burning flag and actual footage of the Rodney King beating.

Summary/Review

Homework/Extended Learning Activities:

Students use their three columned critical viewing logs to write blog posts 250 to 500 words in length in which you analyze *Malcolm X* in whole or in part paying particular attention to one or more of the following: Bildungsroman, montage, and auteurism. Be sure to include one or more images that directly relate to the point(s) you are attempting to make.

Materials:

Excerpts from *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*.

Lee, Spike. *Malcolm X*. Perf. Denzel Washington and Angela Bassett. 1992. New York: Forty Acres and a Mule, 2000. DVD.



### 3.2.3 A Study of Sound, Fury, Power, and Revolution: The Ninety Minute Monologue *A Huey P. Newton Story*

Opener:

In small groups students (two to four) research the following key terms and historical figures:

Mini Lesson/Direct Instruction:

*Allusion* is a reference made to an earlier well-known work esp. the Bible or mythology, or an historical figure or event that the author/artist/filmmaker assumes her audience has prior knowledge of.

*Documentary* refers to genre of filmmaking that is generally considered to be nonfiction; *documentaries* often rely on archival footage and “talking head” interviews to tell their stories.

*Homage* is from the French for RESPECT; three excellent examples of homage are as follows: director Spike Lee’s referencing of Charles Laughton’s *The Night of the Hunter* in *Do the Right Thing* with Radio Raheem’s take on Harry Powell’s “Story of Love and Hate: The Story of Left-hand Right-hand;” director Jim Jarmush’s homage to Japanese filmmaker Seijun Suzuki’s *Branded to Kill* in *Ghost Dog: the Way of Samurai* with their assassinations via bullets through waste pipes; director Brian DePalma’s homage to Sergei Eisenstein’s *Battleship Potemkin* , specifically of his borrowing of the pram in distress from “The Odessa Steps” to his train station shootout in *The Untouchables*.

*Improvisation*

*Monologue*

Workshop:

Students critically view director Spike Lee’s film of Guenveur Smith’s one man show *A Huey P. Newton Story* . While viewing students establish three-column critical viewing logs. Students are to record information in at very least the first column while viewing; the remaining columns may be backfilled after discussion. In the first column students record formal elements, whether they be part of the mise en scene or the soundtrack, that contribute to their understanding of terms covered in today’s Mini Lesson/Direct Instruction.

Summary/Review

Homework/Extended Learning Activities:

Students use their three columned critical viewing logs to write blog posts 250 to 500 words in length in which you analyze *A Huey P. Newton Story* in whole or in part paying particular attention to one or more of the terms covered by Direct Instruction. Be sure to include one or more images that directly relate to the point(s) you are attempting to make.

Materials:

<http://www.amazon.com/Firing-William-Buckley-Black-Movement/dp/B007POAJKU>

Guenveur Smith, Roger. *A Huey P. Newton Story* . Directed by Spike Lee. New York: Forty Acres and Mule, 2001. DVD.

## Section Four Assessment

---

In addition to enhancing student interactions with fictional works, this unit incorporates a variety of non-fiction readings and films. The unit includes a culminating project-based learning activity where students apply newly acquired knowledge especially as it relates the development of their own visual and cultural literacy.

Students blog regularly while critically viewing the films. Samples of previous Metropolitan Business Academy film studies student work may be found at <http://introfilmatmetro.blogspot.com/>.

### Note

---

1. *Montage* is a term that refers to an assemblage of images through a series of quick edits or cuts and sounds that often symbolize the passage of time. The technique is often attributed to Russian filmmaker Sergei Eisenstein. In the opening credit sequence to his film *Malcolm X*, Lee incorporates the technique by including a non-diegetic/voice over narration of Denzel Washington reciting an incendiary X speech intercut with a burning American flag and actual footage of the Rodney King beating.

## Works Cited and Reading List

---

Apkon, Stephen. *The Age of the Image: Redefining Literacy in a World of Screens*. New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 2013.

Cullen, Jim. *Popular Culture in American History*. UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013.

Eisenschitz, Bernard. *Nicholas Ray: An American Journey*. London: Faber and Faber, 1993.

Jacobson, Sid and Ernie Colón. *The 9/11 Report: A Graphic Adaptation*. London: Viking, 2006. Print.

Gaventa, John. *Power and Powerlessness: Quiescence and Rebellion in an Appalachian Valley*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1980.

Golden, John. *Reading in the Dark: Using Film as a Tool in the English Classroom*. Urbana: NCTE (National Council of Teachers of English), 2001.

Golden's book is a practical guide for anyone who is just getting started moving away from using movies in the classroom as reinforcement and beginning to use films as texts. In addition to having chapters on terminology and cinematic effects, film and reading strategies, and analysis, Golden includes his approach to teaching a number of complete films including John G. Avildson's *Rocky* and Spike Lee's *Crooklyn*. The book also includes a number of reproducible activity sheets.

Guenveur Smith, Roger. *A Huey P. Newton Story*. Directed by Spike Lee. New York: Forty Acres and Mule, 2001. DVD.

Lawson, John Howard. *Film the Creative Process: The Search for an Audio-Visual Language and Structure*. New York: Hill and Wang,

1964.

Lee, Spike. *Malcolm X* . Perf. Denzel Washington and Angela Bassett. 1992. New York: Forty Acres and a Mule, 2000. DVD.

Maynard, Richard A. *The Celluloid Curriculum: How to Use Movies in the Classroom* . Rochelle Park, New Jersey: Hayden Book Company, 1971.

Although one might assume that a book on using film in the classroom from the 1970s may be dated and obsolete, this could not be further from the truth. Yes, much has changed since Maynard wrote the chapter “A Practical Guide to Teaching with Films”; however, his anecdotes about teaching in Philadelphia public schools seem all too familiar to today’s veteran teacher (almost half of a decade later). Additionally, Part II of the book “The Movie as the Message- Film as a Historical and Social Object of Study” includes seven chapters on topics ranging from “American Cinematic Interpretations of War,” “The Great Depression on Film,” and “Movies and McCarthyism.” Maynard’s chapter on “Movies and Literature” also retains significance.

Neufeld, Josh. *A.D.: New Orleans after the Deluge* . New York: Pantheon, 2009. Print.

Sayles, John. *Matewan*. Perf. Chris Cooper, Will Oldham, and James Earl Jones. 1987.

Sayles, John and Gavin Smith. *Sayles on Sayles* . London: Faber and Faber, 1998.

Sayles, John. *Silver City and Other Screenplays* .

*Thinking in Pictures: The Making of the Movie Matewan* .

---

<https://teachersinstitute.yale.edu>

©2019 by the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, Yale University

For terms of use visit <https://teachersinstitute.yale.edu/terms>