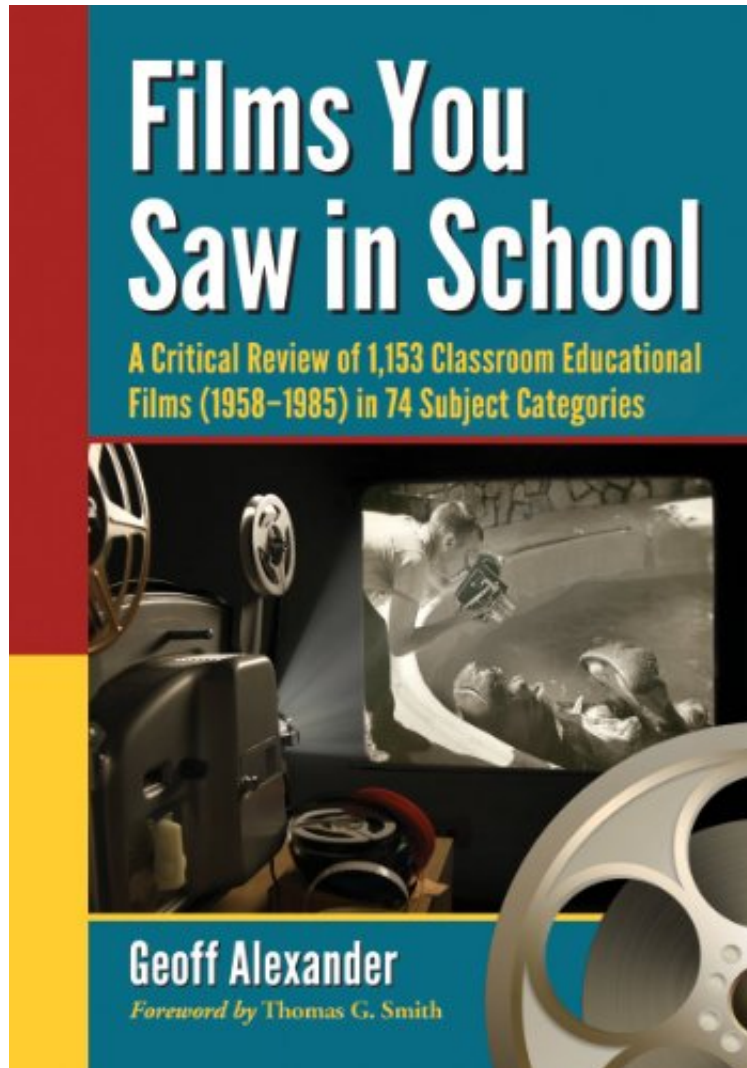


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Films You Saw in School: 1,153 Classroom Educational Films, 1958-1985

Geoff Alexander, Foreword by Thomas G. Smith
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Geoff Alexander, Foreword by Thomas G. Smith : Films You Saw in School: 1,153 Classroom Educational Films, 1958-1985 before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Films You Saw in School: 1,153 Classroom Educational Films, 1958-1985:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A remarkable, very readable journey through the world of educational films By George McQuilkin This is a fine piece of scholarship in an area of classroom instruction which has received little attention despite its one time prominence in schools. Initially, I expected it to be an account of the content of individual film titles, but it's a highly readable, discursive look at different subject areas - social studies,

history, literature, foreign language instruction, etc. - and the films (and filmmakers who made them) which were used to support teaching of these subjects. Even if you didn't see many of these films in schools, the lively, informative descriptions of these titles - including how they were made and the filmmakers who made them - is compelling reading. Alexander has gone to great length to research the background to these titles, and one feels that he has viewed each with a critical eye as well as talked to many of the filmmakers. He's also made a collection of the films (250+ at last count) accessible online by locating and/or digitizing as many as possible. A webpage showing where many of the films can be found is at [...]. Having worked for several decades myself in educational films, I found many new bits of information which I hadn't known before. Most of us have heard of and even seen the remarkable, pioneering film *Nanook of the North* by Robert Flaherty, made in 1922 and said by John Grierson to be the first 'documentary' (a word Grierson apparently coined), but how many of us know of the dozens of subsequent films on Inuit culture made by the National Film Board of Canada and others? Another example: Alexander reveals some of the unknown stories behind the making of the pioneering Bell System Science Series (e.g. *Our Mr. Sun*, *Hemo the Magnificent*, etc.) including the fact that several were directed by Hollywood legend, Frank Capra, who stipulated that he be allowed to imbed religious messages into the the narration. Similarly, Alexander devotes time to Milan Herzog's ground breaking foreign language series (*Je Parle Franais*, *La Famila Fernndez*, *Emilio en Espaa*, *Encyclopedia Britannica Films*). He records various anecdotes in their making (the French series was 120 films!) including Herzog's account of his persuasive method of getting his hands on the original, first lightweight Nagra recorder produced by Kudelski. These and other stories make the book a wonderful, thoughtful, thorough and engaging read for anyone who has ever been curious about how all these educational films in schools came to be. George McQuilkin Producer and former President, Churchill Films

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A wealth of stories. By Larry Yust I learned more about the educational film business by reading Geoff Alexander's "Films You Saw In School" than I had learned in years of wrtling, directing and producing educational films. A fascinating, informative and valuable book. A wealth of stories about the people involved in an often hidden but vital part of the history of American film. Larry Yust

Millions of dollars in public funds were allocated to school districts in the post-Sputnik era for the purchase of educational films, resulting in thousands of 16mm films being made by exciting young filmmakers, an era which lasted until videotape became dominant around 1985. The most interesting films were in the areas of science and the humanities. This book discusses more than 1,000 such films, including many available to view today on the Internet. People ranging from adult film stars to noted physicists appeared in them, some notable directors made them, people died filming them, religious entities attempted to ban them, and even the companies that made them tried to censor them. Here, this remarkable body of work is classified into seven subject categories, within which some of the most effective and successful films are juxtaposed against those that were didactic and plodding treatments of similar thematic material. Many of the films are fascinating, and much of their content remains relevant. This book will appeal to educators and home schoolers looking for exceptional content, to media and educational historians and archivists, and to anyone seeking an unforgettable viewing experience.

"recommended"--Choice; "recommended"--ARBA; "a thorough, fascinating assessment of the cinematic prowess and educational substance of nearly every classroom film over a period of almost 30 years"--Examiner.com; "Putting together jigsaw puzzles affords a particular pleasure: that of finding a piece that fits the hole in the middle of an almost fully assembled section of the picture...Alexander's new book performs just such a function for an emerging cluster of scholarly publications on nontheatrical media, interlocking but not overlapping with these other works and filling in a blank space in the critical examination of twentieth-century commercial film production"--The Moving Image. From the Author This is the companion volume to my first book "Academic Films for the Classroom: A History." About the Author Geoff Alexander is the director of the Academic Film Archive of North America, in San Jose, California, the first archive solely dedicated to the history, preservation, and scholarship of the classroom educational film.