

O'Bannon, T. & Goldenberg, M. (2008). *Teaching with movies: Recreation, Sports, Tourism, and Physical Education*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
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Laurel P. Richmond
Recreation & Leisure Studies Program
The University of Georgia

Increasingly, movies are used as tools to stimulate classroom discussion and to reinforce course material. Students and teachers often appreciate the use of movies in the classroom, as long as careful consideration is taken when selecting a movie. O'Bannon and Goldenberg have created an easy to use guide that simplifies the process of choosing a movie that aligns with desired course outcomes. The book directly addresses core concepts found in recreation, sports, tourism, and physical education classrooms. This well-organized resource, written for instructors, is useful not only for a movie buff, but also for a teacher unsure which movie would be most appropriate for their students learning.

The movies presented in this book were not selected simply because the authors felt they were worthy of attention. This resource grew out of a study conducted by the authors that surveyed faculty concerning their choice of classroom movies. Almost 100 movies were suggested by 67 respondents as useful in a variety of different classroom settings. The authors narrowed down the responses to address topics relevant to educators in the fields of recreation, sports, tourism, and physical education. Data was also collected concerning the core concepts movies in the classroom addressed. These core concepts were then narrowed down to 19 from the initial responses generated by the survey. Core concepts such as coaching, family issues, leisure behavior, leadership, and life stages are just a few included in the guidebook. The authors hope that this resource and data generated by their survey "...lend legitimacy to the practice of using movies as teaching tools" (p. xv).

In order to determine the usefulness of this resource, I decided to put this guide to use. I currently teach an advanced event management class that includes a strong focus on experiential education. I wanted to find a movie that would reinforce tenants of service learning. First, I turned to the "Movie Finder" section, located in the first several pages. Listed in this section, in grid form, are all of the movies discussed in this resource. I skimmed the concepts and while service learning was not one of the core concepts, I found environmental issues, diversity, inclusion, and teamwork as relevant core concepts. After thinking about the lecture that I was intending to give prior to looking through this resource, I decided that the core concept of teamwork best fit the course objective I was hoping to accomplish. Looking down the column of teamwork, I encountered approximately 20 movies that the authors determined would address this concept. Since I was not familiar with several of these movies, I needed to learn more about each choice. The authors anticipated my need and indicated the page number where I found detailed information for each movie.

Next, I accessed the detailed information on each movie in the “Now Playing” section. I was able to find the basics, such as the year, rating, and length of movie, the core concepts addressed by the movie, the scenes one might wish to show, framing questions used to introduce the topic to the students, debriefing questions, and concept organization used to conduct follow up activities. As I began to look at each movie listed under the core concept of teamwork, I specifically looked at the framing and debriefing questions that the authors suggested. These two sections provided me with possible questions to ask of my class and as well as steps to relate the material in the movie to course material. I found this to be useful in determining which movie I would choose, as these questions contained the specific topics that each movie addressed. I realized that teamwork, in this instance, was illustrated primarily by sports teams and athletic events. This was disappointing, as I was hoping for something more progressive that might appeal to all members of my class. After spending some time looking up each of the movies suggested, I eventually chose a movie unfamiliar to me, “The Endurance: Shackleton’s Legendary Antarctic Expedition.” O’Bannon and Goldenberg suggest that this movie be shown in its entirety and, in addition to the framing and discussion questions that aided in my choice of this movie, also include a section on concept exploration. This section provides follow-up activities that reinforce the ideas presented in the movie.

“The Endurance: Shackleton’s Legendary Antarctic Expedition” appealed to me due to the suggested discussion of leadership philosophies, styles, and the potential to learn more about an expedition and the large amount of planning involved, as well as long term impacts on the environment. This movie not only addresses teamwork, but I realized I could also use it to address service learning and experiential education in a broader framework. I will need to spend some time developing questions of my own to relate it back to course content, but there are several possible links that can be made to prior course content. This movie allows me to tie several topics together in a unique way.

Overall, this book is an excellent resource for including movies in the classroom. Showing a movie is a creative way for teachers to address and reinforce course content. However, it is important for users of this guide to remember that it is not possible for the authors to detail every scene of each movie. Instructors must make certain that they preview their movie choice to determine its appropriateness for their students. Prior to showing my chosen movie, I will watch and reflect on the questions that O’Bannon and Goldenberg include and also generate my own questions and activities to meet the needs of my specific class.

While this is a well organized resource, it is still only a guide to aid instructors in their choice of movie. Relying entirely on its content may not necessarily produce the expected results. Each individual instructor knows their class and their course content best and this book aids in making decisions, but the instructor must make the final determination of a movie’s worthiness. If used correctly, the guidance this book provides has great potential to enrich the classroom experience in a creative manner.