

A History teacher's perspective

# Using film to engage





*Think about what will make a greater impression on the mass consciousness. Myriad scholarly studies of Dane law and Dark Ages Europe or Michael Hirst's Vikings? ...We should acknowledge film and television as important historical sources of our time*



# Film as evidence

There is no evidence that Vikings drank out of the skulls of vanquished enemies. This was a misconception based on a passage in the skaldic poem *Krákumál* speaking of heroes drinking from *ór bjúgvíðum hausa* (branches of skulls). This was a reference to drinking horns, but was mistranslated in the 17th century as referring to the skulls of the slain.

# Film as perspective



Thirteenth-century chronicler John of Wallingford described a grave problem of Englishwomen seeking out Danish men as lovers because of their appealing "habit of combing their hair every day, of bathing every Saturday, and regularly changing their clothes," in contrast to local men

# Film as empathy

Othering is the process of casting a group, an individual or an object into the role of the 'other' and establishing one's own identity through opposition to and, frequently, vilification of this Other.

Yiannis Gabriel





# Film as historical significance

- Vikings are a key part of the Eurocentric legacy often overlooked in history curriculum
- Viking invasions were seen by medieval Christians/Courts as the “Wrath of God”
- The romanticised ideal of Vikings (written in the 19<sup>th</sup>C) were used in propaganda campaigns in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century
- Huge contemporary influence on popular culture

[View all](#)



 Follow



 Follow

**Ragnar lothbrok**

@Ragnar\_Kingman

Film and new media

# References

- Marcus, A. S. (2005) "It Is as It Was": Feature Film in the History Classroom, *The Social Studies*, 96:2, 61-67, DOI: 10.3200/TSSS.96.2.61-67
- Kaes, A. (1990). History and Film: Public Memory in the Age of Electronic Dissemination. *History and Memory*, 2(1), 111-129. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25618592>
- Gabriel, Y. (2012) The Other and Othering: A short introduction. Yiannis Gabriel Stories, music, psychoanalysis, politics, reviews, the odd cooking recipe ... 10 September 2012. Retrieved 15 June 2016 from <http://www.yiannisgabriel.com/2012/09/the-other-and-othering-short.html>
- Gordon, E.W. An Introduction to Old Norse (2nd edition, Oxford 1962) pp. lxx-lxx.
- Ólafsson, M. in Ole Worm, Runar seu Danica Litteratura antiquissima, vulgo Gothica dicta (Copenhagen 1636).
- Stoddard, J. D. & Marcus, A. S. (2006). The Burden of Historical Representation: Race, Freedom, and "Educational" Hollywood Film. *Film & History: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Film and Television Studies* 36(1), 26-35. Center for the Study of Film and History. Retrieved June 13, 2016, from Project MUSE database.
- Stoddard, J. D. & Marcus, A. S. (2010). More Than "Showing What Happened": Exploring the Potential of Teaching History with Film. *The High School Journal* 93(2), 83-90. The University of North Carolina Press. Retrieved June 13, 2016, from Project MUSE database.
- Stratton, E. (2013) Is TV's Vikings historically accurate? Who really knows. *The Guardian* 9 April 2013. Retrieved 15 June 2016 from <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/apr/09/is-vikings-historically-accurate>
- Ullidtz, Per (2014). 1016: The Danish Conquest of England. Copenhagen: Books on Demand. p. 300.
- Weinstein, P. B. (2001). Movies as the gateway to history: The history and film project. *History Teacher*. 35 (1): 27.



# Image attributions

All images (except Slide 6) are related to *Vikings* (TV show) on *The History Channel*. The following are the websites they were found

Slide 1: <http://www.bleedingcool.com/2014/07/25/on-the-set-with-vikings-experience-at-san-diego-comic-con-is-immersive-has-a-comic/>

Slide 2: <http://i.imgur.com/LT0edLL.jpg>

Slide 3: <http://villain-lover.tumblr.com/post/109141997294/gustaf-skarsgard-as-floki-in-vikings-season-2>

Slide 4: <https://www.riffsy.com/view/riff/4786515/L-OREAL-Viking-GIF>

Slide 5: [http://vikings.wikia.com/wiki/Category:Children\\_Characters](http://vikings.wikia.com/wiki/Category:Children_Characters)

Slide 6: By Source, Fair use,  
<https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?curid=29994814>

Slide 7: <https://twitter.com/search?q=ragnar%20lothbrok&src=tyah>