

CALL FOR PAPERS

Animating History: “Disney Americans” and Other Myths

An area of multiple panels for the Film & History Conference on “Film and Myth”

September 26-30, 2012

Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA

<http://www.filmandhistory.org>

Deadline: June 1, 2012

We live in a world made of myths, legends, and histories that are communicated, and often, conflated, by our entertainment media. For many of us, history’s earliest lessons have been animated – brightly-colored and endearing, with soundtracks that range from comical to compelling – taught by movies and television programming. These lessons and legends, inextricably linked to the studios that produced them, are the building blocks of not only Western popular culture, but also, our collective constructions of the past. Disney’s *Pocahontas*, BBC’s *Horrible Histories*, and *Animaniacs*’ “The Ballad of Magellan” all shape our early understandings of histories and cultures, in ways that sometimes last long after we have turned off Saturday morning cartoons.

How does animation shape our conception of history and historical mythology? What are the benefits and drawbacks of the “Disneyfication” and co-opting of cultural products and national histories? What periods of history attract the most attention in animation? What historical myths are coming into prominence in the media as we move toward an increasingly globalized media culture?

This area, comprising multiple panels, will include presentations on animation produced for film, television, and new media, in both Western and non-Western modes of animation.

Possible topics include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Telling history – animation as education (*Liberty’s Kids; That’s America, Charlie Brown; Time Squad*)
- Myths and legends – Co-opting and crafting cultural narratives (*Mulan; Hercules; Robin Hood; Ben and Me*)
- Alternate histories – Animated counternarratives (UPA, Warner Bros., independent animators)
- Selling “history” – Collect the complete set! (Disney, Warner Bros., Cartoon Network)
- History’s greatest hits – Popular genres in animation
- Animation and national identity – Porky as the American everyman

- Saturday (morning) school – history lessons from Bugs Bunny, *Tintin*, *Schoolhouse Rock* and *Johnny Quest*

Proposals for complete panels (three related presentations) are also welcome, but they must include an abstract and contact information, including an e-mail address, for each presenter. Please e-mail your 200-300 word proposals by June 1 2012 to the area chair:

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