

Reading Reel Nonfiction:

Documentary Films for Young Adults

Documentary films? Is this *The ALAN Review*? Yes. And yes. And please keep reading. Just as others have argued effectively that teens enjoy *reading* nonfiction (see Ed Sullivan’s “Some Teens Prefer the Real Thing: The Case for Young Adult Nonfiction” [2001]), they also enjoy *viewing* nonfiction. We have seen students enthralled in a documentary film, begging to keep watching when the class period ends (and even asking to see more documentaries). But that’s not the only reason to share documentary films with your students. Many state standards call for English teachers to provide students with multiple texts—fiction and nonfiction, written, spoken, and viewed. Documentaries can enhance instruction in nearly any content area. They offer a powerful, visceral, and visual complement to classroom instruction and reading. Add to that the recent box office success of theatrically released documentaries and the ease of acquiring films through online venues—which means there are more films available and easily accessible than perhaps ever before—and there couldn’t be a better time to introduce your students to documentary films.

But our purpose here is not only to argue that documentary films are worthwhile texts for the classroom, but also to point to some films that we have come to view as implicitly or explicitly

young adult and to explain why it’s worth categorizing them this way. For teachers, watching documentaries means thinking about how they might work as texts for viewing in our classrooms. And, over the years, as we’ve kept our eyes open for documentaries we could use in our teaching, we have realized that there are some documentaries that share characteristics with the young adult literature that we love. As with YA literature, there are documentaries with young protagonists and with thematic connections to teens’ lives. To be sure, there are differences between what we might term “YA films” and YA literature. One significant difference is that documentaries are almost never marketed specifically to teens. And *this* is why many teachers and teenagers may not realize that they exist.

We decided that compiling a list of quality YA documentary films would be a worthwhile project because they offer some things that teens can’t get elsewhere: compelling stories of real adolescents complete with all the complexities of life. We hope that putting together this list of documentaries will enable teachers and adolescents to find films they’ll enjoy and learn from. And while YA documentaries will certainly appeal to teens, using them in the classroom also allows teachers to integrate the films’ content into topics of study. Additionally, using YA documen-

We decided that compiling a list of quality YA documentary films would be a worthwhile project because they offer some things that teens can’t get elsewhere: compelling stories of real adolescents complete with all the complexities of life.

taries allows teachers and students to practice some important media literacy skills.

One thing we're *not* trying to do in this article is detail the best methods for teaching documentary films in the English classroom (although we'll share

What is the filmmaker's point? How is it being made? Am I convinced? Am I being manipulated fairly?

an idea or two). For a comprehensive presentation of teaching strategies, you should read John Golden's essential *Reading in the Reel World: Teaching Documentaries and Other Nonfiction Texts* (2006). In fact, this article is not solely about documentaries we recommend for class-

room use. As with other works of literature, some of the documentaries we discuss would work well when shown to an entire class, while others would be more appropriate for group study or independent viewing. Some would be worth showing in their entirety, while others might work best for excerpted scenes. We trust teachers to make these kinds of decisions. We have simply compiled a list of films that can be categorized as YA. However, we're teachers, we've seen each film in its entirety, and we think they could work well in classrooms. (When there are concerns about content, we have noted that.)

Strategies for Exploring Documentary Films in the Classroom

How do you get started teaching with documentaries? Before showing a documentary film in his class for the first time, Nathan always puts up on the overhead a provocative quote from *Time* magazine's film critic, Richard Schickel: "A documentary is an arrangement (or, if it includes historical footage, a rearrangement) of nonfictional film, structured to support the pre-existing ideas of the filmmaker. Only the terminally stupid or the childishly innocent imagine that anyone making a documentary film aspires to objective truth" (Schickel, 2003). Of course, no one wants to be thought of as terminally stupid or childishly innocent, but that's often how documentary films are used in classrooms—in blockheaded or naïve ways. Rather than teaching documentaries as "the truth," teachers should help students to recognize that these films are

works of art *constructed* by filmmakers to tell a story or present a particular point of view. Learning to read documentaries like this helps students to ask and answer the following questions: What is the filmmaker's point? How is it being made? Am I convinced? Am I being manipulated fairly?

To help students understand that documentaries are *constructed*, Nathan points to the 2003 PBS documentary *The Murder of Emmett Till* (Nelson, 2003, NR, 60 min.), directed by Stanley Nelson. The concluding scene in the film is breathtaking and powerful, but viewers should recognize they are being manipulated. Stanley Nelson has a point to make, and he makes it by skillfully editing historical footage and contemporary interviews together with music. One part of the scene is worth talking about in detail. Students who watch the film will understand, by the time they reach this scene at the end of the film, why it works so well as an example of the constructed nature of documentaries, but because we haven't watched the rest of the film together, here is some historical background.

In 1955, Emmett Till, a 14-year-old black boy from Chicago, was murdered while visiting his cousins in Mississippi. Two white men kidnapped Emmett and, after brutally beating and killing him, dumped his body in the Tallahatchie River. They did this because Emmett had supposedly whistled at one of their wives a few days earlier. The men, who later confessed to the crime, were acquitted at a trial that received international media attention. During the trial, two black men, Mose Wright and Willie Reed, risked their own lives to testify against the killers (both Wright and Reed fled Mississippi immediately after the trial). In the conclusion to *The Murder of Emmett Till*, Nelson focuses briefly on the heroism of these two men and on the idea that Emmett's death sparked the civil rights movement.

With that background in mind, here's how one moving moment in that final scene plays out. We see Mamie Till Mobley, Emmett's mother, speaking in a contemporary interview. She says, "When people saw what had happened to my son, men stood up who had never stood up before." As she says this, Nelson cuts to black-and-white historical footage of Mose Wright standing up in a cotton field. Mamie continues, "People became vocal who had never vocalized before." As she says this, Nelson intercuts more black-

and-white historical footage—a close up of Willie Reed, who is initially looking to his left. Then Willie turns and looks directly into the camera. In these few seconds, Nelson powerfully makes a point: these two men embody the kind of heroism that Mamie Till says drove the civil rights movement. And Nelson makes that point by carefully combining historical and contemporary footage with mood-setting music. In other words, he manipulates the footage, editing it in a certain way to make a lasting impression.

Alan has successfully used John Golden’s strategies in *Reading in the Reel World* with a variety of high school students. He especially likes Golden’s three-part viewing framework—having students focus

on the visual track, the audio track, and the text track one at a time. He uses a handout adapted from Golden’s book (see Fig. 1) to discuss part of a nonfiction film, and he has students practice with a compelling clip from either *The Heart of the Game* (Serrill, 2005, PG-13, 97 min.; see annotation below), the opening sections of *Tupac: Resurrection* (Lazin, 2003, R, 112 min.), or the school lunch scene from *Super Size Me* (Spurlock, 2004, PG-13, 100 min.). You can have all students look for what’s going on in all three tracks, or you can divide the class into three groups and have each group look at one of the tracks. Students get the idea pretty quickly—after all, they’ve been watching movies their whole lives! At this point, you just

Three “Tracks” of a Nonfiction Film	Sample Clip
<p>Visual Track: All pictures seen onscreen</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Primary footage</i> (“A-roll”) like interviews, reenactments, action as it occurs • <i>Cut-away</i> (“B-roll”) to another scene being referred to in the A-roll, such as cutting to a quick scene of something being described in an interview • <i>Archival or found footage</i> shot by someone else. Can include news broadcasts, home movies, still shots, maps, charts, headlines, etc. 	<p>Title:</p>
<p>Audio Track: The sound in the film</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Dialogue</i> • <i>Narration</i> (on screen or off screen) by filmmaker or actor—happening “live” as it’s filmed, or recorded later and added. If the narration is by an unknown person (not a character or the filmmaker), it is sometimes called “<i>Voice of God</i>” narration. • <i>Music</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Diegetic</i> (could logically be heard by someone in the film) • <i>Non-diegetic</i> (music added after filming, intended for the audience; could not be heard by people in the film) • <i>Sound Effects</i> (also diegetic and non-diegetic) 	
<p>Text Track: All the writing added to the film</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Subtitles</i> that identify the person or the location. • <i>Subtitles</i> also translate dialogue in foreign languages. • <i>Title screens</i> (whole screen of text) are sometimes used to provide factual information or a quotation. 	

*Adapted from John Golden, *Reading in the Reel World* (NCTE, 2006)

Figure 1: Parts of a Nonfiction Film (Documentary)*

want to have them start to notice what they are seeing and hearing and to use the technical vocabulary to describe it.

If he is going to teach a whole film, Alan uses a viewing guide format based on Golden’s frame (see Fig. 2 for a generic version of this). You can leave the questions in the “reflection” box very general, or you can create specific questions you want students to think about with each chapter or group of chapters. Alan likes to combine a “reader response” approach (“What did you notice? What do you make it mean? How about the rest of you?”) with aspects of

“close reading” (“How did the filmmaker convey that meaning? What shots or sounds had you come to that interpretation?”).

We usually recommend stopping the film and talking about it. We aren’t necessarily advocating this after every DVD chapter, but often enough to make sure the students understand what’s going on and that they are thinking about the film rather than just glossing over it in a video daze. (Students will complain, so hang tough!)

After viewing the film as a class, there are a variety of activities students can do, depending, of course,

DVD Chapter	Visual Track	Audio Track	Text Track
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Primary footage</i> (“A-roll”) • <i>Cut-away</i> (“B-roll”) • <i>Archival or found footage</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Dialogue</i> • <i>Narration</i> • <i>Music & Sound Effects</i> (<i>diegetic</i> and <i>non-diegetic</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Subtitles</i> • <i>Title screens</i>
	Notes:	Notes:	Notes:
<p>Reflection: What is the filmmaker saying here? What do you think about that? What questions do you have?</p>			
	Notes:	Notes:	Notes:
<p>Reflection: What is the filmmaker saying here? What do you think about that? What questions do you have?</p>			

Figure 2. Viewing Guide for Documentary Film

on your instructional objective: compare the film to a nonfiction print text, compare a theme or character from the documentary to one from a novel or short story, analyze the rhetorical strategies the filmmaker uses, debate an issue presented in the film, identify ethical issues faced by the filmmakers in creating the documentary, and so on. Again, the Golden book has a plethora of examples to choose from.

Final Exhortation

In these days of “reality television shows,” “nonfiction novels,” and “docu-dramas,” the lines between fiction and nonfiction have never been less clear, but students still want to know “Did that *really* happen?” They are still captivated by the words “based on a true story.” Studying documentaries in a classroom—with a group of curious and opinionated peers and an inquiring teacher—can give your students critical tools they will use for the rest of their lives.

Annotated Filmography: Recommended Films

[*Note:* Information provided for each film is title, country (if other than the United States), director(s), year of release, Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) rating, length. For films with R and PG-13 ratings, we include the MPAA justification for the rating. For films without MPAA ratings, we include content advisory notes, if necessary, at the end of each annotation.]

***The Education of Shelby Knox* (Marion Lipschutz & Rose Rosenblatt, 2005, NR, 76 min.)**

Shelby Knox is a 15-year-old self-proclaimed devout Christian who joins with other students in her Lubbock, Texas, high school to advocate for comprehensive sex education rather than the state-mandated “abstinence only” curriculum. In the process, she emerges as a courageous and principled activist (with somewhat baffled but loving parents). In the last third of the film, she also turns her attention to supporting the Gay–Straight Alliance at her school—because it’s the right thing to do given the development of her thinking. The film is a compelling story—both of a teen’s developing sense of morality and ethics and of civic engagement. It would be useful in a civics unit

focused on student rights, in a discussion of Kohlberg’s theory of moral development, or in conjunction with other works on the theme of heroism.

***The Heart of the Game* (Ward Serrill, 2005, PG-13 [“brief strong language”], 97 min.)**

Bill Resler is an unusual coach for the girls’ basketball team at Seattle’s Roosevelt High School—his day job is that of a tax professor at a local university—but he has some ideas about how to make these girls into champion ball players. During his second year with the team, Darnellia Russell, a ferociously talented player, transfers to the school, setting in motion a tense partnership for the next five years. This film has the scope and drama we more often find in fiction, with memorable characters, heart-stopping athletic action, and heartbreaking setbacks. Though it shares characteristics with fiction films like *Hoosiers* or *Breaking Away* or television shows like *Friday Night Lights*, the general “untidiness” of this real story invites discussion of teen pregnancy and its disproportionate affect on girls, on the differences between male and female athletic programs, and on the role of athletics in American schools (and, indeed, our society).

***I’m Still Here: Real Diaries of Young People Who Lived during the Holocaust* (Lauren Lazin, 2005, NR, 48 min.)**

Adapted from Alexandra Zapruder’s *Salvaged Pages: Young Writers’ Diaries of the Holocaust* (Yale University Press, 2002), this documentary presents a range of diaries belonging to teenaged victims of the Holocaust—male and female from several different European countries, some of whom survived and some didn’t. The fact that the diaries are presented one at a time allows teachers to select certain ones for inclusion alongside other Holocaust texts. When studied alongside any of the source texts—all of which are fairly short—the film provides opportunities for analysis of how a nonfiction text can be adapted into a film. Finally, this is one documentary that clearly has a “YA marketing” origin. The opening of the film addresses today’s young people, asking them to imagine themselves in a similar situation, and, on the DVD edition, there are several MTV promotional spots that draw comparisons between the Holocaust and the genocide in Darfur.

***Murder on a Sunday Morning (Un coupable idéal)* (France/USA, Jean-Xavier de Lestrade, 2001, NR, 111 min.)**

This 2002 Academy Award winner for Best Documentary Feature follows the trial of Brenton Butler, a 15-year-old black boy, who is accused of murdering an elderly white woman outside a hotel in Jacksonville, Florida. Although Brenton signed a confession and the woman's husband positively identified him as the killer, Brenton's public defender uncovers a shocking mishandling of justice by the Jacksonville police department. The film is as intense as any police-themed television show, but it also forces viewers to think beyond those fictitious depictions and come to grips with the realities of the American justice system that relies on the honorable efforts of people like Brenton's attorney to work properly—especially in the face of dishonorable efforts by others. (*Teacher advisory: Brief strong language, brief graphic images, adult smoking, sexual references.*)

***OT: Our Town* (Scott Hamilton Kennedy, 2002, NR, 76 min.)**

This intense, funny, and uplifting film follows a group of students and their two teacher directors as they prepare to perform Thornton Wilder's classic, *Our Town*, at Dominguez High School in Compton, California. It has been more than 20 years since the last student play was produced at Dominguez, a school students say is best known for its race riots and perennially powerful basketball team. The film won multiple awards, including Best Documentary at the Los Angeles and Santa Monica film festivals. (*Teacher advisory: Strong language, sexual references.*)

***Paper Clips* (Elliot Berlin & Joe Fab, 2004, G, 82 min.)**

Students at a rural Tennessee middle school initially set out to collect paper clips as part of a school project to help them better understand the number of Holocaust victims. They choose paper clips because they discover that the Norwegians used the paper clip as a symbol of solidarity against the Nazis during World War II. As their project grows, they receive donations of paper clips—along with stories of Holocaust victims—from around the world. The film deftly details not only the school Holocaust project, but also this small town's efforts to combat prejudice in its own

residents and in the world. The documentary—and the story it tells—is simple and moving.

***Spellbound* (Jeffrey Blitz, 2002, G, 97 min.)**

This engaging film profiles eight participants—mostly of middle school age—in the 1999 Scripps National Spelling Bee, both at home and during the competition in Washington, DC. It's surprisingly suspenseful and a deft portrait of American diversity at the turn of the millennium. In addition, the film explores the twin values of talent and hard work, of “making it,” and of the role of competition in adolescent development.

***War Dance* (Sean Fine & Andrea Nix, 2007, PG-13 [“some thematic material involving descriptions of war atrocities”], 105 min.)**

Northern Uganda has been torn by civil war for 20 years. The rebel army, known for its brutality, abducts children and forces them to be soldiers, often after killing their parents. In 2005, children at the school in the Patongo refugee camp prepare to compete in the nationwide music and dance competition. Against the backdrop of the competition and the volatile political situation, the filmmakers focus on three teenagers—Rose, Nancy, and Dominic—who tell their stories directly to the camera. This film is beautiful, horrific, and heartbreaking, with many possible connections to literature about the effects of war on young people and to other books and films about contemporary Africa.

***Whiz Kids* (Tom Shepard & Tina DiFeliciano, 2009, NR, 80 min.)**

Three remarkable 17-year-old students compete in the Intel Science Talent Search over the course of a year. Ana Cisneros, from Long Island, studies botany and aspires for acceptance to an Ivy League university and the financial support it will take for her to do that. Kelydra Welcker, from Parkersburg, West Virginia, conducts her research with an activist's edge, confronting the potential damage of contaminants being dumped into the Ohio River by her town's largest employer—in spite of the fact that her father's pension depends on the company. Harmain Khan, from New York City, conducts original research in paleontology and seeks to rise above his family's early dependence on welfare. All three teens are brilliant, blessed with

supportive teachers, and nurtured by families that are alternately proud and baffled by the genius in their midst. *Whiz Kids* is the best kind of “competition” documentary: by the climax of the film, we realize that all of the students are winners, regardless of the outcome. The film provides a great opportunity for teachers to explore with students issues like the role of talent and hard work in achieving success, the motivations for academic excellence, high school students’ attitudes toward their “nerd and geek” peers, and the value of public support for programs for gifted students (all three students attend public schools). (Check for DVD availability at <http://www.whizkidsmovie.com>.)

Annotated Filmography: Additional Films

***4 Little Girls* (Spike Lee, 1997, NR, 102 min.)**

Lee documents the 1963 church bombing in Birmingham, Alabama, by means of interviews with surviving family members, newsreel footage, and music by Joan Baez and Terence Blanchard (among others).

***American Teen* (Nanette Burstein, 2008, PG-13 [“some strong language, sexual material, some drinking and brief smoking involving teens”], 95 min.)**

Burstein spent the entire 2006 academic year following five seniors at Indiana’s Warsaw Community High School. Even though the five individuals represent certain stereotypical types—the artist/rebel, the jock, the wealthy alpha female, the band geek, and the handsome heartbreaker—it certainly captures the zeitgeist of the time.

***Anne Frank Remembered* (Jon Blair, 1995, PG, 117 min.)**

Winner of the Academy Award for Best Feature Documentary in 1995, this film contains vintage newsreels, photographs, and interviews with Anne’s surviving friends and family members, and home movie footage.

***Blindsight* (Lucy Walker, 2006, PG, 104 min.)**

Sabriye Tenberken founded Braille Without Borders to provide shelter and education for blind children in Tibet, where blindness is considered evidence of evil. Tenberken invites Erik Weihenmayer, the first blind man to climb Mt. Everest, to lead an expedition of

her students to climb a peak near Everest. Within a landscape of breathtaking beauty and life-challenging austerity, the filmmakers tell a suspenseful and inspiring story that challenges our definitions of adventure, success, and family.

***Born into Brothels* (Ross Kauffman & Zana Briski, 2004, R [“strong language”], 83 min.)**

Photographer Zana Briski teaches photography to children in the Calcutta brothels and tries to place them in boarding schools so that they can escape their current situation. The photography—her stills, their stills, and the cinematography—is gorgeous. The topic is disturbing, but the children are inspiring and heartbreaking. Winner of the Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature in 2004.

***The Boys of Baraka* (Heidi Ewing & Rachel Grady, 2005, NR, 84 min.)**

Each year, in an innovative project in Baltimore, 20 boys ages 12–13 are chosen to attend the Baraka School in Kenya, where they can develop academic skills, resilience, and self-esteem away from the poverty and violence of their old neighborhoods. This film focuses on four of the boys as they cope with homesickness, culture shock, and the thin line between hope and despair.

***Chiefs* (Daniel Junge, 2002, NR, 87 min.)**

Wyoming Indian High School, located on the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming, has a proud basketball tradition, and the Chiefs make it to the state championship game each of the two years covered in the film. In addition to following their on-court successes and failures, the film considers the off-court decisions that key Chiefs players must make as they prepare for life after high school. Winner of the Best Documentary award at the 2002 Tribeca Film Festival. (*Teacher advisory: Strong language, drug references, and teen drug use.*)

***The Children of Chabannes* (Lisa Gossels & Dean Wetherell, NR, 1999, 93 min.)**

During World War II, the town of Chabannes—in Vichy, France—sheltered 400 Jewish refugee children, many of whose parents had been sent to concentration camps. The teachers and townspeople risked their lives to provide the children with a semblance

of normal life. The film contains interviews with the children, now in their sixties, and their teachers, now in their eighties.

***Daughter from Danang* (Gail Dolgin & Vicente Franco, 2002, NR, 83 min.)**

In 1975, as American involvement in Vietnam was coming to an end, thousands of children—particularly mixed race children of American soldiers—were brought to the United States as part of “Operation Babylift.” Raised by a white family, Heidi Bub—real name Mai Thi Hiep—learns of her origin as a teenager. As an adult, she decides to visit Vietnam to be reunited with her mother.

***Devil’s Playground* (Lucy Walker, 2002, NR, 77 min.)**

Before making an unrevokable commitment to their church and way of life, Amish 16-year-olds participate in *rumspringa* (literally “running around”), a period of time that can last several years, during which they are allowed to leave the community and live an “English” lifestyle. This documentary chronicles several Amish teenagers who drink, do drugs, leave home, and wrestle with whether or not to be baptized into the church—each coming to different decisions. Although clearly focusing on teenagers with extreme behavior (according to the film, 90% of Amish teenagers join the church after *rumspringa*), Walker portrays them, their parents, and other members of their community sincerely. (*Teacher advisory: Strong language, drug use, underage drinking, and sexual references.*)

***Go Tigers!* (Kenneth A. Carlson, 2001, R [“language and a scene of teen drinking”], 103 min.)**

This film follows the three senior co-captains of the 1999 Massillon High School Tigers football team throughout the season (with plenty of great football action). It also chronicles the school district’s efforts to pass a levy in support of the schools, which it had failed to do the two previous years. Far more than just a documentary about sports, Kenneth Carlson focuses on the lives of these three boys while he also investigates the community of Massillon, Ohio.

***Hoop Dreams* (Steve James, 1994, PG-13 [“drug content and some strong language”], 176 min.)**

When they enter the ninth grade, Arthur Agee and William Gates have a dream: to play professional

basketball like their hero and fellow Chicagoan Isaiah Thomas. The film follows these two young men for their entire high school career and into college as they pursue their dreams. Winner of numerous citations for Best Documentary of 1994, including National Society of Film Critics and the National Board of Review.

***Jesus Camp* (Heidi Ewing & Rachel Grady, 2006, PG-13 [“some discussions of mature subject matter”], 87 min.)**

Nominated for an Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature in 2007, this film follows several children and their families as they attend a summer camp in North Dakota for evangelical Christian youth. Run by Pastor Becky Fischer, the purpose of the camp is to motivate and prepare a future generation of evangelical leaders.

***Scottsboro: An American Tragedy* (Daniel Anker & Barak Goodman, 2000, NR, 84 min.)**

In 1931, nine African American boys, ages 13–19, are accused—and convicted—of raping two white women in a small Alabama town. Although the allegations are patently false, the injustice is perpetrated for years and becomes an international cause célèbre. This documentary traces the history of the event, recreating compelling courtroom scenes using still photos and transcripts.

***Scout’s Honor* (Tom Shepard, 2001, NR, 57 min.)**

As a 12-year-old in Petaluma, California, Steven Cozza started Scouting for All, an organization devoted to ending the Boy Scouts of America’s ban on gay scout leaders. Steven’s story is interwoven with that of the elderly scoutmaster of Steven’s troop, who was expelled as a scout leader for his participation in Scouting for All. The film won both the Audience Award and the Freedom of Expression Award at the 2001 Sundance Film Festival. (DVD availability: Institutions should contact www.newday.com; individuals should contact Tom Shepard Productions, 611 Guerrero Street, No. 17, San Francisco, CA 94110.)

***Sons of Cuba* (Great Britain, Andrew Lang, 2009, NR, 88 min.)**

The world’s best boxers come out of schools like the Havana Boxing Academy in Cuba, which is at the center of this beautiful and touching film. At the Academy, nine- to eleven-year-old boys

train for hours each day to become what Fidel Castro calls “the standard bearers of the Revolution.” *Sons of Cuba* follows three boys and their coach as the boys prepare for the under-12 national boxing championships. (Check for DVD availability at <http://www.sonsofcuba.com>.)

Nathan C. Phillips taught English, film, journalism, and creative writing at Lone Peak High School in Highland, Utah, for six years. He is currently working on a doctoral degree at Vanderbilt University.

Alan B. Teasley teaches English methods at Duke University. He has served on the selection committee of the FullFrame Documentary Film Festival for six years. With Ann Wilder, he is the author of *Reel Conversations: Reading Films with Young Adults* (Heinemann, 1997).

Works Cited

- Golden, J. (2006). *Reading in the reel world: Teaching documentaries and other nonfiction texts*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Lazin, L. (Producer/Director). (2003). *Tupac: Resurrection* [Motion picture]. United States: Paramount.
- Nelson, S. (Producer/Director). (2003). *The Murder of Emmett Till* [Motion picture]. United States: PBS.
- Schickel, R. (2003, July 14). The alternate realities of hot documentaries [Electronic version]. *Time*, 162(2). Retrieved March 30, 2008, from <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1005219,00.html>.
- Serrill, W. (Producer/Director). (2005). *Heart of the Game* [Motion picture]. United States: Miramax.
- Spurlock, M. (Producer/Director). (2004). *Super Size Me* [Motion picture]. United States: Sony Pictures.
- Sullivan, E. (2001). Some teens prefer the real thing: The case for young adult nonfiction. *English Journal*, 90(3). 43–47.

Other Resources for Teaching Documentaries

- Barnouw, E. (1993). *Documentary: A history of non-fiction film* (2nd ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Cook, D. A. (2004). *A history of narrative film* (4th ed.). New York: Norton.
- Monaco, J. (2000). *How to read a film: The world of movies, media, multimedia: Language, history, theory* (3rd ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Stubbs, L. (2002). *Documentary filmmakers speak*. New York: Allworth.
- Tobias, M, Ed. (1998). *The search for reality: The art of documentary filmmaking*. Studio City, CA: Michael Wiese Productions.