

Film Analysis for Home Movies

Home movies provide evidence of the past and are valuable resources for historical research. Below are questions you can ask. Then consider those questions in relation to any and all historical, cultural, social, political, and economic questions that might be associated with the filmmaker or subjects of the films in a greater historical context (i.e. why these films are important).

Background information about the filmmaker and The Andrew Avery Collection: Andrew Avery was a Bainbridge, Georgia resident, agriculturalist, Baptist, and educator. He depicts diverse aspects of life in Bainbridge and surrounding areas such as Climax and Attapulgus. The bulk of what he filmed was farming and agricultural practices, local students, and schools. He also shot a reel depicting African American life in Bainbridge. These films were all shot sometime between 1930 and 1950. The University of Georgia's Walter J. Brown Media Archives owns copyright to The Andrew Avery Collection.

Scene #1 – Peanut Harvesting



1. Who is being depicted in these films and why is that important to consider given the approximate time period that these films were shot? Who was the filmmaker? Why did he perceive this as an important historical artifact?

2. What is the historical context? What kinds of things were going on in South Georgia at this time and how is that reflected through this footage?

3. Why did the filmmaker choose to film this? Why might it have been important?

4. When were these films shot? What does the footage say about this time period?

5. Where is the footage taking place and why is this important?

6. How does the footage show how our society has changed between then and the present-day?

7. Consider all the above questions in relation to social, cultural, political, economic, and historic aspects of 1930s-1950s South Georgia and compare it to the present day. What has changed and why? Why is it important to examine these films using these various lenses? Use your answers to the question above to consider the time period and topics of this footage and how these clips can be used in different historical studies (medical history, textile history, agricultural history, technological history, political history, etc.)

Scene #2 – Elementary Students Standing for the Pledge of Allegiance (The Bellamy Salute)

Background Information on the footage: The Bellamy Salute was the primary way student in the United States said the pledge of allegiance before 1940. With the rise of Fascism in the 1940s, in Italy and Germany, Congress required schools to switch over to the “hand over heart” method.



1. Who is being depicted in these films and why is that important to consider given the approximate time period that these films were shot? Who was the filmmaker? Why did he perceive this as an important historical artifact?

2. What is the historical context? What kinds of things were going on in South Georgia at this time and how is that reflected through this footage?

3. Why did the filmmaker choose to film this? Why might it have been important?

4. When were these films shot? What does the footage say about this time period?

5. Where is the footage taking place and why is this important?

6. How does the footage show how our society has changed between then and the present-day?

7. Consider all the above questions in relation to social, cultural, political, economic, and historic aspects of 1930s-1950s South Georgia and compare it to the present day. What has changed and why? Why is it important to examine these films using these various lenses? Use your answers to the question above to consider the time period and topics of this footage and how these clips can be used in different historical studies (medical history, textile history, agricultural history, technological history, political history, etc.)

Scene #3 – The African American Hospital



1. Who is being depicted in these films and why is that important to consider given the approximate time period that these films were shot? Who was the filmmaker? Why did he perceive this as an important historical artifact?

2. What is the historical context? What kinds of things were going on in South Georgia at this time and how is that reflected through this footage?

3. Why did the filmmaker choose to film this? Why might it have been important?

4. When were these films shot? What does the footage say about this time period?

5. Where is the footage taking place and why is this important?

6. How does the footage show how our society has changed between then and the present-day?

7. Consider all the above questions in relation to social, cultural, political, economic, and historic aspects of 1930s-1950s South Georgia and compare it to the present day. What has changed and why? Why is it important to examine these films using these various lenses? Use your answers to the question above to consider the time period and topics of this footage and how these clips can be used in different historical studies (medical history, textile history, agricultural history, technological history, political history, etc.)
