Supreme Court opinions, reports, and memos. Different documents allow the reader to explore how the presidents themselves saw their powers, and to understand the thinking of those who agreed or disagreed with these assertions of executive authority. Though not directly presented or annotated, the Constitution is discussed within the other document annotations, providing Constitutional context that supports or refutes the claims made by document authors.

The volume presents sixty-four selected documents with context to explain not only the particular presidential powers being examined but also the people, politics, and other compounding forces that shape our government. Though documents from many presidential eras are explored, the largest groups of documents are from the presidencies of George W. Bush (twelve), Barack Obama (nine), and Franklin Delano Roosevelt (nine).

End matter includes a timeline that gives brief context for each event related to the presented documents, additional reading, and an index. The timeline is not particularly useful, as the documents are already presented in a chronological format, but it may be helpful for quick references. The additional readings are organized alphabetically by author, rather than by subject or time period, which may present a challenge for novice researchers.

In comparison to a similar work, CQ Press’s The Evolving Presidency: Landmark Documents, 1787–2015, edited by Michael Nelson (2015), there is some, but not much, overlap between documents explored. Additionally, Presidential Power is unique in its approach to annotate the primary sources themselves, instead of providing commentary ahead of or after the document text.

Presidential Power is a good resource for high school or undergraduate students exploring the presidency and its balance with the other branches of federal government. It exposes students to the use of primary documents—which are critical to this area of research—and provides enough context for those who are exploring the subject for the first time.—Emily Mross, Business and Public Administration Librarian, Penn State Harrisburg, Middletown, Pennsylvania


Race in American Film is a three-volume encyclopedic treatment of race and racism in American cinema, from the early film era to modern times. The editors, Daniel Bernardi and Michael Green, address the question of “American cinema’s place in American and world culture with respect to the question of race” (xxi). For the purpose of this three-volume set, they define “race” broadly, using Omi and Winant’s definition of race as a “shifting yet reforming complex of meanings that works to shape our sense of selves and those we see as similar—thereby allowing us to see others as different.”

The concept of race, therefore, is subject to change over time and among different social groups.

The volumes that make up Race in American Film cover three categories: films that are considered as outright racist; films that attempt to subvert (however poorly or imperfectly) racism; and those films by nonwhite directors that feature nonwhite characters and themes (xxvi). The entries, signed by their authors, are listed in alphabetical order with cross references to other entries in the volumes. Each topic has a “Further Viewing” section, suggesting other films covering the same topics but not discussed in the encyclopedia, and a “Further Reading” section that includes bibliographical sources used to research the article as well as additional references for study. Each entry is written in accessible English, without jargon, and should be easily understandable by most general readers. At the beginning of each volume is an alphabetical list of entries and a list of films broken down by era (“Early Film to 1928,” “Classic and Mid-century Era, 1929–1969,” and “Contemporary Films, 1970–”). There is also a guide to related topics that lists films dealing with a particular subject or genre, such as film noir or immigration, and volume 3 contains a comprehensive bibliography and index, as well as a list of contributors and their credentials. Bernardi and Green, the editors, are film and media scholars at San Francisco State University and Arizona State University, respectively, and their contributors are experts in film studies, sociology, history, ethnic studies, and related fields.

Race in American Film succeeds well in its intent to present a comprehensive history and reflection of race and racism in American cinema. It is admirably current, discussing events such as the Black Lives Matter movement and films released as recently as 2015. Missing are entries on some contemporary African American directors, such as Steve McQueen and Ava DuVernay; it is to be hoped that a future edition would include some of these filmmakers as well. Overall, Race in American Film nicely fulfills its stated purpose, providing in one resource a good jumping off place for readers interested in the topic of race and film and giving researchers suggestions for further study. Highly recommended for high schools, public libraries, and colleges and universities, particularly those that support film and media studies programs.—Amanda K. Sprochi, Health Sciences Cataloger, University of Missouri, Columbia


In recent years, Routledge has published several works on various aspects of race and media, including The Race and Media Reader, edited by Gilbert B. Rodman (2014). The book under review complements Rodman’s earlier work, although it has a different purpose and focus within this well-studied subject. Campbell also carves out a bit of space for his work