



THE PUTNAM VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
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OUR AMERICAN HISTORY  
A FREE PROGRAM SERIES - OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

# Lincoln Before *Lincoln*

Early Cinematic Adaptations of the Life of America's Greatest President

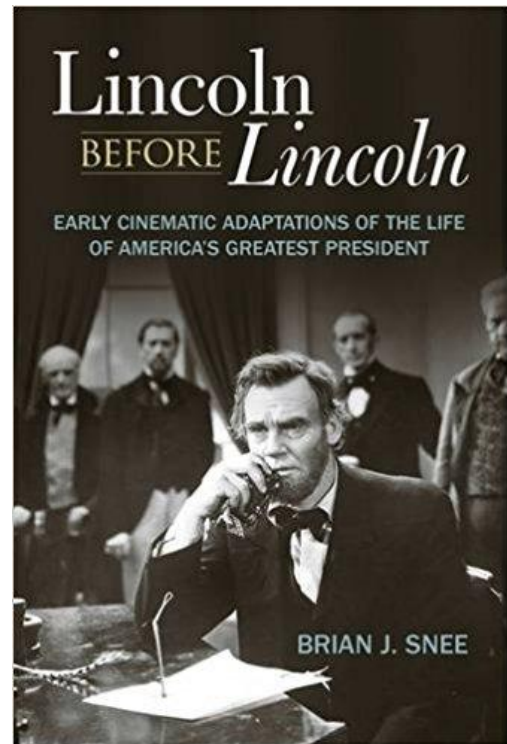
with **Brian J. Snee**

**Professor of Communications and Media**

**Saturday, December 9, 2017 at 10:00 am**

Remembered as the Savior of the Union, Abraham Lincoln is one of America's most revered presidents. There have been tens of thousands of books published about him since his death, but he has proved to be a surprisingly daunting subject for filmmakers. Despite a wealth of biographical materials, relatively few full-length motion pictures have taken the man and his life as a primary subject. In this detailed study, Brian J. Snee provides a sweeping overview of the cinematic representations of the sixteenth president from the silent era up to Steven Spielberg's *Lincoln* (2012) – a film which, he argues marks a seismic shift in the way Hollywood presents the *Great Emancipator* on Screen.

The absence of video and other recording technology during Lincoln's lifetime forever shrouds his mannerisms, thought processes, and interactions with his peers and advisors. That man, Snee argues, is lost to history. This fascinating study offers a revealing and groundbreaking assessment of how Hollywood has imagined and re-imagined America's greatest president on-screen, contributing to the popular image of the legendary man.



## **Brian J. Snee**

Brian J. Snee is professor of communication and media at Manhattanville College. His recent TEDx Talk was titled, "How the Virtue of Eloquence Became a Vice." He is the author of "Lincoln before *Lincoln*," and the co-editor of "Michael Moore and the Rhetoric of Documentary" and "The Rhetoric of the New Political Documentary." He is a frequent speaker at academic conferences and professional events, most recently as keynote speaker at the 2017 meeting of the Lincoln Society. He is currently writing about the use of Lincoln's image in WWII-era propaganda.

**This FREE program will be held at the Putnam Valley Library  
30 Oscawana Lake Road ♦ Putnam Valley, NY 10579**