

PFA Library CineFiles Project
Findings from College Professors Focus Group
10/24/07

Attendees:

Nancy Goldman, PFA Library
Anuj Vaidya, PFA Library
Dan Wu, Film Studies
Jonathan Haynes, Film Studies
Nicholas Paige, French
Robert Kaufmann, Comparative Literature

How do you use films in the classroom?

- Most professors seem to show the entire film, as opposed to clips
- Films are usually screened at a separate session
- Clips are rarely screened during class time
- Films are used as text, or are thematically linked to class

What curricular tools would be most useful to you in building new curricula?

- Stream clips, or add downloadable clips on the site
- Additional viewing lists are useful
- Include quick synopsis of film

What kind of documents would be most useful in support of films?

- Non-film studies professors do not use much secondary reading in support of film (the film itself is usually the secondary text)
- Reviews from the time of release
- Even if documents are not assigned to students, the professors will find it useful to browse through the database to prepare their own notes and lectures
- The documents on CineFiles offer an interesting source for historiography

What Themes/Topics or Titles should we concentrate on?

- Use Gary Handman's categories from the MRC
- PFA's topic list is too broad at the moment

What improvements would you most like to see on CineFiles?

- Schematic nature of website works
- Written instructions make it easy to navigate site
- Make sure that entire document can be downloaded as PDF (most professors like to upload the docs onto the class Blackboard site)
- Include 'Find Similar Items' option on CineFiles
- Organize the database by subject

Important Resources:

<http://www.bifi.fr/public/index.php>

Suggestions on Outreach/Recruitment:

- Work with Tony Cascardi at the Townsend Humanities Center, to prepare a feature on CineFiles in the Townsend Newsletter
- Highlight what CineFiles can offer to non-film studies departments

- Use tours or classroom visits as vehicles for outreach
- Follow up the newsletter feature with an email to depts/profs
- Approach professors individually, and ask to visit during their office hours
- Leverage sources of support within each department
- Model 'how to' use CineFiles for different departments

**PFA Library CineFiles Project
HS Teachers Focus Group
7/10/07**

Attendees:

Nancy Goldman, PFA Library
Anuj Vaidya, PFA Library
Stephanie Sapienza, PFA Library Intern
Barbara Blinick, Lowell HS/SFUSD, History & Social Science
Steve Shimmon, Lowell HS
Kate Kordich, College Prep HS
Kenneth Jacobson, Castro Valley HS

How do you use films in the classroom?

- To illuminate a point (usually never more than 10-15 minutes) and to stimulate discussion
- By its relevance to theme (eg., *Chinatown* for 20th Century Lit., *Vertigo* for California Historical Lit.); Show entire film – the film is the text
- To reintroduce ‘subjectivity’ in films (esp. in history classes)
- Teachers use fictional features differently from documentaries
- Teachers use films differently across different subject areas (e.g., History vs. Economy)
- It is important to factor in that different teachers have different approaches

What curricular tools would be most useful to you in building new curricula?

- Take 3-4 units within a lesson plan and build on them
- Lesson plans (Goals, Objs, Process, Eval) can be at multiple depth levels: quick & dirty, intermediate or advanced
- Study questions are more useful, as opposed to full-blown curricula
- Clip guide (Put out a call for clips OR assign 2 films to 10 teachers to generate excerpt list)
- Recommended secondary sources/bibliography
- A few important links (the more self-contained the better)
- Suggestions for alternative assignments
- Provide practical tips – such as *how can I use this image in PowerPoint?*
- Other things to include:
 - General discussion questions
 - Things to think about
 - Point to other resources
 - Spotlight on certain clips from the film
 - One way to approach this film with these questions
 - Content questions
 - Technique questions

What kind of documents would be most useful in support of films?

- Film-related documents
- Documents relating to the issues raised in the film
- Revisionist history of a film could be useful
- Be very clear about how primary sources can be worked into the curriculum
- Ephemera such as stills, press kits, posters, etc

What Themes/Topics or Titles should we concentrate on?

- Start with what teachers are already using
- Start with topics that already have a visual component
- Offer incentive to teachers to provide their curricula
- Collect titles from teachers through surveys
- Make sure that the films are engaging across the spectrum
- Pick 1 or 2 strong films for each subject, as opposed to a long list
- Work backwards – what subjects have good films to teach

What improvements would you most like to see on CineFiles?

- Organize CineFiles by subjects and cross-reference
- Include Visual Literacy documents/exercises pertaining to each film
- Add context to the materials (i.e., how can this be used in the classroom)
- SPOTLIGHT ‘teacher picks’ on the CineFiles Website (resources that teachers have found most useful on the site)

Important Resources:

- National Council on Economic Education
- Yale Film Analysis Website

Suggestions on Outreach/Recruitment:

- Important contacts:
 1. District specialist (SF)
 2. Curriculum point people
 3. Asst Principal of curriculum
 4. Dept Heads
 5. Other orgs doing similar work (World Affairs Council/Bay Area Mosaic/ORIAS)
 6. Reach teachers directly
- 2 hits are better than one (use all methods – flyers, calls, emails)
- Go to schools (as opposed to asking teachers to come to us)
- Work into professional development days (districts and school) – the school days can be specialized for each subject area
- Work with principals
- Put together packet of incentives
- Do a 10-minute Best of CineFiles PowerPoint presentation
- Put together a sample curriculum model
- Organize a Cultural Event – Free screening with relevant curriculum packets (and free food!!)
- Get course curriculum guide from schools
- CAIS (every other march) – useful event
- Plan different staff development sessions for different subject areas
- Does this work for all schools – or do we need to work towards the lowest common denominator