

**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 20<sup>th</sup> 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