Film literacy practice & policy

Tales from the Golden Age (2009), Pan's Labyrinth (2006)
“we now live in a post-factual democracy. When the facts met the myths they were as useless as bullets bouncing off the bodies of aliens in a HG Wells novel...But can anybody tell me the last time a prevailing culture of anti-intellectualism has led to anything other than bigotry?”

Nicholas Barrett
Definitions of media literacy remain contested, with different dimensions emphasised or marginalised. Arguably the biggest concern in attempting to reach a consensus on a definition of media literacy is the tendency in some policy statements to undervalue the importance of critical or creative/communicative dimensions.”

“But as argued by Svenja Ottovordemgentschenfelde, while Ofcom thus does much to support media literacy initiatives in the UK, it is charged with not only supporting but with also actively promoting media literacy for UK citizens – a role that Ofcom is arguably at risk of neglecting at the moment.”

http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/media-policy-planner/2014/03/20/media-literacy-in-the-uk-and-europe/
Film literacy is part of MIL

UNESCO MIL Curriculum for Teachers - Ecology of MIL
“Films can inspire us to be courageous, they can inspire us in many ways to be creative about the future... they can inspire us to be internationalist... You have launched what I think will be right throughout the United Kingdom one of the greatest things that happened this year and in future years - the UK film club.”  

Gordon Brown
Film clubs in the UK grew from a pilot of 25 schools to 7,000 participating schools in 4 years supported by the Department for Education and latterly by the British Film Institute. They are now on course for 15,000.
Research has also shown that attending a film club regularly has improved children’s confidence, motivation to learn and literacy as well as their communication and critical skills. For many it opens up to culture for those who may not otherwise have cultural experiences, broadening their horizons and understanding of the world. Digital distribution allows for new film club models at extremely low cost per participant.
National interest in film clubs across Europe

6 pilots planned or taken place:
- Belgium
- Spain
- Turkey
- Lithuania
- Latvia
- Russia

4 film club networks
- United Kingdom
- Denmark
- France
- Sweden

7 very interested in film clubs
- Ireland
- Greece
- Italy
- Portugal
- Romania
- Poland
- Netherlands

Film club interest so far:
- 17 countries
Storytelling has been at the heart of education for millennia and film is now the most advanced form of storytelling. Films can help bring history, geography, languages and a range of other subjects to life.

Films cost billions of Euros to make and they are already paid for with excellent production values telling every conceivable human story. Why wouldn’t we want to make this high quality educational resource available in schools?
Pilots – educational impacts

- Educators expressed that students enjoy analysing the content of films - 87% Romania and 85% Spain
- They feel more confident after acquiring broader understanding of film - 75% Romania and 71% Spain
- A high proportion of students express opinions and are more critical - 97% Romania and 85% Spain, as a result of their film club experience.
National ingredients & challenges

KEY INGREDIENTS
- National partner
- Ministry of Education involvement
- Evidence of impact
- License for schools
- Digital platform
- Broadband infrastructure
- Support network

CHALLENGES
- No license agreement
- Lack of European titles
- Cinema resistance
- Educational resistance
- Poor internet
- No after school provision
- Making it affordable
“Film, more than any other medium, reflects back to us our dreams and our aspirations. Not only can it enrich the quality of our lives, it can help us arrive at a far better understanding of the lives of others, something that, at this point in our history, may well be more critical than ever.” Lord Puttnam to an audience of film club leaders
Empathy Project

Working with partners in Spain and the Basque region, Cyprus and Northern Ireland, the Empathy Project will use film to give insights into both conflict and reconciliation and to start conversations across community divides.
Empathy Project - watching

Young people from film clubs and youth clubs from both communities come together to watch and discuss six films from around the world that explore conflict, peace and resolution.
Empathy Project - exchange

Young people from all three territories travel to stay with their peers in two other participating territories and host exchanges in their own country, asking questions and sharing insights.
Empathy Project - documentaries

Young people will get together in teams to make films that explore the seeds of the conflict and ways to move their communities forward.
"My name is Biniam and I am 15. I have come from Eritrea and walked through a desert to be safe here in Britain. My Film Club teacher, Ben, showed the film Jaws to us. It was the most exciting film I have ever seen...I am now practising my reading by reading the book Jaws by Peter Benchley. This film, my teacher, and Mr Spielberg have helped me. I hope this film can help you."
The Lives of Others Project

In 2015 there were approximately 380,000 asylum seekers under the age of 18 entering Europe and nearly 89,000 of those were unaccompanied. Many come from Syria, Afghanistan, Eritrea and Somalia. Integration of migrants and asylum seekers, especially children remains a major challenge and media coverage of the “crisis” does not often promote empathy or understanding.
The Lives of Others Project

Film has a unique way of providing insights into the lives of others and this project aims to screen films from the cultural background of children newly arrived in schools in Europe together with films from the host country’s culture to build empathy and understanding between classmates and foster faster and deeper integration.
These film literacy projects will:

- help participants be active citizens and deal with issues of equity and social inclusion and contribute to societal cohesion
- promote peace, understanding and empathy amongst participants, their peers and within their communities
- Promote discussion, empowerment and youth voice
Finally, if we use media to learn **through** media as well as to learn **about** media - just think how many subjects will this allow us to bring to life and how much would this help young people to become confident in dealing with and interpreting media.

All the film literacy projects that I am involved with champion youth voice and its importance cannot be overemphasised.
Mark Higham, Film Literacy Europe  email: mark_dream@mac.com

Tales from the Golden Age (2009),
Pan's Labyrinth (2006)

Més que un barri (2014)