

Running head: LIGHTS! CAMERA! Library Film Education in ACTION!

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I. Executive Summary

Increasingly, libraries are looking for ways to incorporate programming and media and digital literacy into the services they offer their patrons. While computer access and use in libraries is on the rise, and digital literacy efforts are made to accompany that shift, librarians often overlook the resources of their film collections and online film and video resources for providing additional critical learning experiences for their patrons.

“Movies represent a major part of our cultural heritage, and more than one third of library circulation consists of audiovisual materials” (Hobbs, 2016). As part of a graduate course in Film Education in Libraries (LSC597) during spring semester 2016, students from the Graduate School of Library and Information Studies at the University of Rhode Island were assigned the task of designing and executing a film education program in a library setting. With the intention of reaching youth through film and media, and by partnering with librarians and staff from a local children’s film festival, the experiential learning assignment was to create a rich, film-based learning experience.

First using an online “digital coffee house”, the graduate students formed teams based on location and shared interests, then began brainstorming ideas using the web-based project management tool Basecamp. The three-person team that eventually formed for this project lived in northern and southern Rhode Island and New Hampshire and met in person as a full group only on the day of the program event.

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The eight week process of creating that event included initial planning and goal setting, finding a suitable location, partnering with both library and Providence Children's Film Festival staff and other community partners, creating and implementing marketing, documentation, and evaluation plans, and working effectively together to share tasks. The team's final collaborative product - *Around the City and Around the World* - was a film and media literacy program for youth ages eight to fifteen intended to meet numerous goals in four areas: Program, Audience, Thematic/Collection, and Community. The program featured the screening of two short public service announcements, a locally produced short film and part of an hour-long documentary. Before, during and after the media screenings, questions about film language, genre, authorship, point of view, and film techniques utilized were introduced, and opportunities to meet a filmmaker and practice the hand clapping games from the documentary *Let's Get the Rhythm* were presented.

An intense learning experience in collaboration and communication, as well as in program planning, implementation, and evaluation, the result was a successful film education event that provided many insights and recommendations for others interested in providing similar engaging programming utilizing film and other moving media.

II. Course Assignment: Collaborate and Create a Library Film Event

The fully online course, Film Education in Libraries (LSC597), is a Special Topics in Library and Information Studies offered through the University of Rhode Island (URI). The course was designed to explore "the theory and practice of film education with particular attention to its application in school, academic and public libraries through a

unique partnership with the Providence Children’s Film Festival” (Hobbs, 2016). Using an experiential learning model, and with a focus on the needs of children and teens, the course seeks to advance the programming abilities of library and information professionals, incorporating collections, materials, and services to meet the needs of children, youth and families. Course instructor Dr. Renee Hobbs, is one of the nation’s leading authorities on digital and media literacy education.

The first weeks of the course explored the use and history of film use in libraries, film reviews, film festivals, and media education in and out of school. The partnership with the Providence Children’s Film Festival (PCFF), an annual eight day exploration of the best of independent and international children’s cinema held every February, introduced students to Anisa Raoof, the festival’s Executive Director, during the second class session. Ms. Raoof was an ongoing presence on Basecamp, and film project advisor throughout the course. In mid-February, students chose at least one event during the festival to attend, then reviewed and analyzed the program in a report intended to provide constructive feedback to PCFF staff and board.

In late February, LSC 597 graduate students began to share information and form groups based on location and similar interests, first using a “digital coffee house” document, and eventually moving to an online project planning site called Basecamp. Team .docgrlls was formed by two students from northern and southern Rhode Island. A third team member from New Hampshire joined ten days later. The team’s original plan was to show a film with a female empowerment message. *Let’s Get the Rhythm*, a documentary exploring the significance and universality of hand clapping games, which one of the team members had seen at the festival and reviewed in a course report, was

decided on as the feature film for their program. As planning progressed, the program widened its perspective to include both male and female empowerment, and the themes of travel via film, and the importance of free play and leisure activities. Incorporating media literacy and film education throughout the event was a key goal.

III. Producing Around The City & Around The World

The assignment to attend at least one film event at the 2016 PCF festival provided a good context for getting started on planning the event. One team member saw three feature films, nineteen shorts, and attended three workshops, including two with the filmmaker following screenings of *Let's Get the Rhythm*. She had also used the film for an earlier review and reflection course assignment, so was already very familiar with the film and possible workshop activities, and had made some observations and suggestions for improvement in her review that the team decided to try to incorporate in their event.

Those suggestions were:

1. Include, in the introduction, more about the genre of the film.
2. Make more attempts to engage the audience by determining prior knowledge of the subject matter of the films about to be screened. In a film like *Let's Get the Rhythm*, that could mean asking those present if they know any hand-clapping games, and maybe even allowing a quick demonstration before mentioning the workshop.
3. Using prior knowledge, challenge the audience to watch actively: How many of the games in the film do you recognize? Whose voices are you hearing? There are a number of very helpful guides listed in the Bibliography section and online

(Baker (2010), Buckingham (2003), Heartland Films (2012), etc.) for introducing youth to media literacy.

4. Consider use of the PCFF passport and The Language of Film word search inside to bring attention and awareness to one element (animation, documentary, setting, sound, costume) prior to the screening that could set up some follow-up questions at the end. In a film like this, you could ask, “How many countries do we visit during this film?” which might engage some youth to pay closer attention.
5. Could PCFF partner with some local schools to provide short media literacy workshops either for teachers or students prior to the festival venues?
6. Acknowledging short attention spans, could you consider stopping the film halfway through, have a bit of active participation, allow a water or bathroom break, engage about the second half, then restart?
7. It would have been great to see more diversity at the larger venues and ticketed events. I wonder if sliding fee scales, promotional contests in the schools to win tickets, or more collaboration with youth-serving organizations in the city would be helpful in that regard. Roy (2012) shares an interesting model for community partnerships in her article.

All the suggestions directly related to a film education workshop were utilized in some way during the program event planned by the team.

Once the film and program goals were decided on, a desirable library location and program date needed to be chosen. Team members discussed their personal goals for the program and determined an urban public library setting would be the best option. The

Fox Point Library in Providence was chosen due to the diverse demographic in the neighborhood and the fact that it shares a building with the Boys & Girls Club. This partnership would ensure a diverse turnout for the planned event, which eventually was scheduled for the afternoon of April 19th, during a spring vacation week for Rhode Island public schools.

The final program featured four types of moving media, discussion of key media literacy ideas and the children engaging in hand clapping games. The team showed two Canadian public service announcements (PSAs) that were around one minute each, but packed with important media ideas and powerful messages. Those PSAs, *What's Your Thing?* and *We Are Girls* were used to break up the program into segments and engage the children in discussion. *Woven*, a seven minute short filmed in Providence, was shown to highlight the neighborhoods of the city, including ones the children knew and lived in. The program's feature film, *Let's Get the Rhythm* was not shown in full, with the age and attention level of the audience in mind.

Because the team had decided to have a bathroom and snack break at a mid-point in the two hour event, donations were sought from local stores. The local Whole Foods Market provided a gift card that covered both healthy snacks and needed paper products.

IV. Event Goals Overview

Two members of the team met in person in early March 2016 to start planning the event. Prior to meeting, they had each written down their personal goals for the event to compare and consolidate when they met, create a task list, and start dividing up tasks.

Even at that early stage of planning, team members knew they wanted to create an engaging, fun, and interactive program in collaboration with multiple community partners. The consolidated goals list they created followed the model from a course reading, the ALA *One Book, One Community* guide (2003), that divided the goals into the four areas of Program Goals, Audience Goals, Thematic/Collection Goals, and Community Goals.

V. Program Goals

The first goals the team considered were goals for the program itself. The ALA *One Book, One Community* guide stresses the importance of goals in all types of program planning.

“By setting goals you will be able to articulate your plans, your needs for assistance and the impact that you hope this program will have on your community. By setting clear goals you convey your vision for this program to your supporters, colleagues, sponsors, partners and the general public” (2003).

Each goal set would help team members with program planning, and potentially provide other libraries a framework for film and media programming. The team had four goals for their program: to produce an engaging and informative film event for children; to promote the use of film and media literacy; to create a professional portfolio item or model for future programs; and to enhance course learning through teamwork.

Producing an Engaging & Informative Program

To produce an engaging and informative film and media program it was important to understand the event audience and attempt to meet their needs as both movie viewers and active children. Alan Jacobson's article *How to Offer More Than a Movie* states "choose discussable movies— rich films with a lot of ideas and characters patrons understand" (2011). The right film or films is key to executing a successful film program. The team was able to obtain leftover "passports" - small, colorful booklets that allowed children to track their "travels" through film - from the Providence Children's Film Festival. A film language word search in the back of the passport was used to help the children understand key terms used in film to help kick off the program. In addition they used Media Literacy Smartphones - cards with key media literacy concepts and questions - from the Media Education Lab at URI, to create question and answer sessions between each film. Sean Greene, the creator and star of *Woven* and film student at URI, joined the program and engaged the children in a question and answer session about what it takes to make a film. As the program came to an end the children took turns demonstrating the hand clapping games they knew and were able to be the stars of their own show.

Promoting the Importance of Film and Media Literacy

Libraries have taken on a new role in communities and must realize their potential as more than simply book receptacles. The Aspen Institute recognizes the future of public libraries in their report *Rising to the Challenge: Re-envisioning Public Libraries*.

"Public libraries are poised to play a leading role in helping individuals and communities adapt to this changing world. Many libraries already are linking

individuals to information and learning opportunities, driving development and innovation, and serving as community connectors”(2015)

Reaching each child in attendance at the event with film education and media literacy concepts provided the team the ability to make one small community connection at a time. In order to reach this goal with the age group in attendance, the team needed to keep the program as interactive as possible without losing sight of this key element.

Using the smartphone cards between each screening, they were able to ask the children for their observations and feelings on each film. By doing this they were able to gauge what the children knew about film and media literacy and help them to gain a better understanding of topics that were new to them.

Professional Portfolio Item & Model for Future Programs

As a new experience, the team wanted to be sure to produce a program that could be used as a personal and professional portfolio item as well as a framework for future programs. According to the Young Adult Library Services Association’s (YALSA) “students make 1.3 billion visits to school libraries in a given year, about the same as nationwide attendance at movie theaters” (2016). If children’s and young adult librarians are not already looking to incorporate or enhance film and media programs, the twenty-first century digital climate is the perfect time to seek guidance and expand programming.

VI. Audience Participation

To achieve good audience participation, there were several points that needed to be taken into consideration. The team already knew that their target audience was children,

so they had to take into account what they would need to create a great media program. It is important to think about the children from the area relative to the diversity of the films. “Because research shows that youth want to watch movies with characters they can identify with or aspire to be like, it is important to look for movies with diversity in character representation, especially if you are working with a diverse group of boys and girls” (Heartland Film, 2012, p.16). Providence has a diverse population, so three of the four films that were chosen featured culturally diverse children, children that our intended audience could easily relate to and understand.

Original Plan

The primary target audience was twenty to twenty-five children ages eight to fifteen years old. The team originally wanted parental participation, but eventually decided to focus on the youth participants and specifically targeted adult invitees. They wanted to encourage engagement from the library and Boys & Girls Club staff, whose familiarity and authority with the children attending might be helpful. The team also wanted the staff to observe the program impact on children, and help with snacks, prizes, and media literacy and film information distribution, if needed.

Given the age group involved, and the timing of the event during a school vacation week, the team’s major goal was for the children to have fun while learning something from the program. They also hoped that the film and book display would inspire the children to continue to explore the world through film, and their individual interests through all library materials. The team wanted the children to know that these great resources were available to them through their local libraries.

Actual Turnout

When it was time for the program to begin, more children than expected had arrived. The majority of children came from two different Boys & Girls Clubs. Almost thirty children, ages five to thirteen, two high school students who were documenting the program, and five adults were in attendance. With the larger turnout and children from a lower age group, a smaller youth-adult ratio might have been helpful. The children's librarian, Laken Hottle, mentioned this in a follow up interview conducted by one of the team members. Hottle felt "more helpers available in order to break the children down into age based groups"(2016) would have been an excellent way to help with the media literacy education aspect of the program.

Instead of having parents attend the event, a media literacy handout was sent home with the children to give to their parents. This handout, created from , was intended to be a learning tool for families to use together. It provided tips on how to use media with children, be a media use role model, and establish time limits for various media.

Staff Participation

PCFF staff advised the team throughout the semester in numerous ways, and were disappointed they couldn't attend the program as they'd be out of the country attending a film festival on event day.

Both the library and Boys & Girls Club staff did postering and recruitment at their sites. They provided valuable advice about best days and times of day for our program, based on their better knowledge of our target audience. Boys & Girls Club staff obtained necessary permission slips and photo releases for attending children. Library staff provided their non-profit 501c3 information needed for donation requests.

For the week before the event, and the week following, the Fox Point Library staff put together a book and media display based on a handout that was created by a team member to recommend more quality films available through the library that the children might enjoy. Many of the films included in the handout related to the themes of the program - travel, freeplay, hobbies, and documentary films.

Boys & Girls Club staff provided access to the community room they operate and share with the library for programming use. Library staff allowed the team to use all their audio/visual equipment necessary for the program, including a laptop, video projector, sound system, and projection screen.

During the event, Boys & Girls Club and library staff helped keep an eye on the children, allowing the student team to be able to keep the program running without being in charge of bathroom breaks and going after the few children who wandered.

VII. Thematic/ Collection Goals

When selecting themes for the film project, there was a lot to keep in mind. The team had to think about what their target audience would be interested in. (Heartland Film, 2012). *Let's Get the Rythm* is a documentary about hand clapping games, and shows how they exist all around the world. This inspired the idea of traveling the world through film, as well as a focus on the importance of children's free play. The film is a documentary, and the team wanted to explore that genre of film with the children attending. It is also a film that features girls and women almost exclusively, somewhat of a rarity in the world of film, and girl empowerment was an early desired aspect for the program. Eventually,

due to audience sensitivity and inclusion concerns, this changed to all youth

empowerment.

Original Goals

The team's original plan was to inform their audience that there are a number of quality films they can access through their local library. To achieve this they decided to look into the Rhode Island Library system and the PCFF Film Hub. They also decided to look into other media sources such as the internet. In addition, they looked into other books and games that could be shared with their audience.

Library and PCFF Film Resources

By looking through the library's resources and the PCFF Film Hub, they were able to come up with a list of quality films that related to the themes of the program - chosen play and free time activities, travel, and collaborative games. Since the feature film being shown was a documentary, and it was possible that this was the first exposure to documentary film for some children, the list included other documentaries children could enjoy. This list was handed out to the children at the program and given to the Fox Point Library and Boys & Girls Club staff to offer to parents coming to their facilities. The library staff used this list to create the display table with some of the films on the list they could access for event day. They added appropriate theme-related books to this display.

Internet Resources

The team was interested in promoting the use of the internet for accessing quality feature films, documentaries and other educational or inspiring moving media. The public

service announcements *We Are Girls* and *What's Your Thing*, as well as the short film

Woven were all available on YouTube.

The team used the internet extensively themselves to access the Ocean State Library system and the PCFF Film Hub for research. The internet also helped them locate additional books and films for the resource list.

Games/Play Resources

Many of the films on the film list had to do with play, learning and travel via film. Each film showed the children how other children globally experience and participate in the importance of play. Each film also documented fun, games, and children's play in action. *What's Your Thing?* Helped the team create an interactive conversation with the children about all of the things they enjoy to do for leisure and creativity. The children were excited to be involved in a discussion about what their favorite things to do were.

The film *Woven* showed a day in the life of a teenage boy. This explored the kind of things he liked to do, one of which was skateboarding. There was not much reaction to this film until the children realized that it was filmed in Providence, which sparked more interest. During the post-screening discussion, when the filmmaker/star was introduced and skateboarded into the room, the children reacted with excitement. Most of the children wanted to talk to him and had many questions about the film and filmmaking process.

The public service announcement *We Are Girls* was shown to kick off the girl empowerment part of the program. It was the first screening in the second half of the program, after the bathroom and snack break, when some interviews with the children

were conducted and first half prizes were being chosen. As a result, it was observed that some of the children were not paying attention when this media selection was playing.

The final film was *Let's Get the Rhythm*, the hour-long documentary about hand clapping games. The children were actively engaged with this film from the beginning. It wasn't long before many of them had paired off and started their own hand clapping game. The team decided to end the film even earlier than they had planned so the children could continue to play hand games instead of watching others play them on the film. Those who wanted to were invited to the front of the room to show off their hand clapping game skills. This went on for about ten minutes, and even some boys got into the act.

VIII. Community Goals

“A public library is constructed for use by the people. Its purpose is to address a community's character and needs, and to anticipate its changes. Its services and collections serve the commonwealth in that place. And by its presence and programs, it creates something that lives.” – Dr. David Carr (ALA, 2014)

Importance of Children's Play

The team was somewhat shocked when they learned while planning this event that the Rhode Island General Assembly was considering a bill that would mandate twenty minutes of recess time for students in grades K – 5 (Crandall, 2016). Their surprise was that time for free play needed to be mandated, especially for that age group. The news made them even more pleased, however, that they had identified highlighting the importance of children's play as one of their goals, all film choices for the event

celebrated children's free play and chosen activities, which are important ingredients in healthy child development.

Realizing the impact of public policy on the lives of children, the team members added a member of the General Assembly Education Committee and the local City Council member, to their list of planned invitees, which also included representatives from the Providence After School Alliance, the RI Department of Education, and the Providence Parks and Recreation Department. Unfortunately, these invited guests were unable to attend.

Media Literacy and Library Film Education

The Center for Media Literacy web site, defines media literacy as

“a 21st century approach to education. It provides a framework to access, analyze, evaluate, create and participate with messages in a variety of forms – from print to video to the Internet. Media literacy builds an understanding of the role of media in society as well as essential skills of inquiry and self-expression necessary for citizens of a democracy”(CML, 2016).

While the team was not ready to take on media creation in their event, they did want to have the program be as interactive as possible, and to introduce the children to some basic film education and media literacy activities. They were interested in providing access, perhaps for the first time, to a documentary film with children's voices, and, later in the planning, to a short filmed in their own city by a student filmmaker who was able and willing to come talk about his experience making the film. They also wanted to

introduce their young audience to basic analysis and evaluation of media messages, including looking at gender representation.

Cultural Understanding and the International Connection

Providence, like so many urban areas in the country, is now a “minority majority” city. With a population that in the 2010 census identified as 49.8% White, including 39.6% non-Hispanic, 16% Black or African-American, 27.8% Hispanic or Latino, and 6.4% Asian, the team wanted to make sure their program was culturally inclusive, especially since the children who attend the library and Boys & Girls Club where the event would be held are very culturally diverse. Except for *Woven*, the final selections for screening all featured children of diverse cultural backgrounds

Partnering for Film Appreciation and Education

The unique partnership with the Providence Children’s Film festival staff with the course, and particularly with the film education project, was a great benefit and exciting added dimension to the course learning experience. The team was fortunate to be able to access both the Executive Director and Director of Programming, Eric Bilodeau for help with their project. That support took on many forms, including, but not limited to: advice about necessary poster information; provision of graphics for possible use in film promotion, sharing experience with and advice about obtaining film rights; donated PCFF Passports and other materials for use at the event; sharing community connections for event recruitment; helpful comments about editing needs for event handouts; and providing feedback about film event choices.

Making a Case for Collaboration

A key takeaway from the ALA *National Impact of Library Public Programs Assessment* (2014) reading was the list of advantages of collaboration, which helped us think about possible benefits to our collaborators as well as for our event, and provided a good framework for analysis of that area of our event planning and implementation.

- *The ability to reach new audiences. Each partner brings a potentially different segment of the community to program experiences, allowing for establishing new connections;*

The team was fortunate in their choice of library venue, that it shared a building with a Boys & Girls Club, and was down the street from an elementary school. Partnering with PCFF also brought their audience in contact with our program through their social media and family activities calendar connections.

- *Enlarged capacities and expanded skills. Not only may partners offer complementary skills, they may also have services, locations, technology, and other assets that broaden the library's capacities, and they may teach by example in ways that have a lasting impact on the library;* The Fox Point library had all the projection and sound equipment we needed for the program. They also provided maintenance help in cleaning and setting up the room, which was a real bonus. Hopefully, the team's knowledge and expertise in planning and facilitating a program, selecting media, and promoting use of the library was a fair trade of resources.

- *Greater attention, attraction, and publicity. Each partner brings new marketing outlets and connections, as well as media relationships;* While all community partners did what they could posting in-house and distributing our flyer online, the event probably got the

most exposure via PCFF staff connections to media outlets for promotion. However, the participants at the event were almost all from two Boys & Girls Clubs in the city, so that connection proved to be the most fruitful.

- *Expanded perspectives. Different audiences and their leadership provide a variety of fresh ways to view other people's experience, values, and issues;* The team was surprised but pleased that a group of children from another Boys & Girls Club in the city were brought to the event by bus. It was great to have children from different neighborhoods there to lend a different perspective on the films screened, and in the discussions about travel, library resources, and media literacy. It also helped to have high school student and adult perspectives to gather their impressions of the event and how it could have been improved. The informed and experienced perspective of PCFF staff was a benefit throughout the entire process.

- *Ability to create and nurture more relationships. From introduction to building value, the project may expand into additional partnerships and more fruitful community contacts;* One of the team members was interested in making professional connections for future employment opportunities, another was exploring the potential to create a model program to offer to other libraries or after-school programs in the area. The project provided valuable experience and contacts in both regards.

- *Greater ability to respond to demographic shifts. Partnering with different interest and ethnic groups and those that serve newcomers offers a way into reaching and responding to their needs;* The team was pleased to have a few children in the audience raise their hands when the team asked if anyone had a real passport, and where they had traveled

(Dominican Republic, Thailand, Japan). Along with informing adults about children

from, or with ties to other countries, it may have sparked an interest in foreign travel for some of the other children.

- *Opportunity to build something totally new. Combined resources and skills, new audiences, and different creative ability all offer the potential to create something entirely new, from products to organizations;* In this case, the team believes the combination of library resources and expertise, PCFF resources and expertise, Boys & Girls Club resources and school vacation week participants, and the team's expertise in film and media literacy education was a unique and winning combination.
- *A chance to energize staff. No matter how good an organization is, the staff can find the work repetitive. New ideas, new people, and fresh opportunities can energize and enliven staff participation;* In attendance at the event was a staff member from the Metropolitan Career and Technical Center (the Met School) in Providence. She was instrumental in finding two students who had make-up work or time needs to document the event. She was also able to provide the team with some post-program feedback that is beneficial for future events. "I was impressed that you were able to run this movie critic program for young people that were much younger than the audience you planned for. The young people were engaged and interested and shared their insights and ideas about the movies. It just goes to show me how I sometimes underestimate the reasoning skills of young people." (Niebels, 2016). She suggested staying with a younger audience since her experience was that some teens and preteens have a predisposed fear of libraries due to

late fees from their childhood, which the team found to be an interesting observation worth investigating.

- *A first point of contact for potential library users. A community collaboration can introduce people to the library and its services for the first time or in a different way, offering the possibility of expanded use;* When they asked, the team discovered that some of the children attending did not have a library card, and they used the opportunity to explain how easy it was to get one. The film list handout was designed to better acquaint participants and their families with quality films available through the library system, and the display table to link library resources to film event themes for further exploration.
- *A position in the community. New partners may help place libraries more at the center of their communities, bringing them to the table of decision-making and leadership; and*
- *New eyes and ears to recognize community needs. Even though libraries have long been excellent barometers of community changes and needs, having more input from different sectors widens that ability.* The team is confident that a part of what was accomplished at the event was to open up the perception of the “quiet” library to include a place to play, explore, view and talk about films, and learn new skills for their 21st century media life.

The team agrees with the ALA reading authors “that the great advantage of a collaborative program is that the process and product become far more than the sum of its parts”(ALA, 2014).

IX. Marketing***Marketing to the main target audience (Youth ages 8-15)***

Since the team was confident that they would not have a problem getting their hoped-for 20-25 youth from library and Boys & Girls Club recruitment, they didn't think a widespread marketing effort was necessary for that target audience. Instead, they hand-delivered copies of the event poster one member had created to both organizations, to be posted in strategic locations. They also sent both partners registration sheets created for help with sign-ups.

Marketing to parents

The team originally wanted to try to get some parent involvement as well. Due to suggested audience size, capacity limitations, and the decision to hold the event at a time when most parents are working, they decided to focus on youth and youth-serving staff as their primary audiences, and provide some handout resources that youth participants could take home or parents could pick up at the library and Boys & Girls Club. Parents interested in having their children attend the event could learn about the program via the event posters at key sites, including the parents' room of a nearby elementary school; on the Providence Community Library online calendar of events; and on the calendar at KidInfo – a Rhode Island online family activities web site.

Marketing to older students & community partners

One of the event goals was to attempt to have cross-age and community collaborative aspects to the film education event. Both were sought, along with spreading awareness about the event, to selected community partners – the closest middle school after-school

program, an alternative high school with a media arts center, and an inner city educational center including an Academy of International Studies. This marketing was done via email and in-person communication with key personnel at these youth-serving organizations. The team also contacted potential funding/contributor sources, and were able to get a \$100 gift card for healthy snacks and paper supplies from a neighborhood Whole Foods store.

X. Documentation

The team realized that effective documentation of the library film education event could serve many purposes and meet more than one of their stated goals.

1. It could provide evidence of how well they produced “an engaging and informative after-school film/media literacy program for children grades 4 through 7 (Program goal #1).
2. A videotape of the event could be used for team self-assessment and evaluation purposes and as a reference for final event reporting needs.
3. A videotape created by high school student(s) doing portfolio work could potentially be used in some form for student portfolios, as well as a work sample for team member professional portfolios.
4. Photo documentation of the event could be used in the required course Ignite presentation and, in some cases, in social media posts.
5. Documentation can be used to share with community partners and others who were interested in attending, but couldn’t be there on the day of the event.

The team based decisions about the documentation plan by asking: What do we need/want to document, for what purpose? What documentation methods are available to us? How will we deal with restrictions, i.e. no photos or videotape of Boys & Girls Club kids without release forms? Who can do the documenting?

They decided to use photography and videography for documentation, and to use their contacts at two local high schools to recruit older student help. Through connections with staff at the alternative high school they were able to meet a student who needed an extracurricular project and had some technical skills. She has received permission to borrow school videotaping equipment for the day of the event. A team member met with her a week before the event to review the event goals and agenda, the films to be screened, and expectations of her. They met again the day before the event at the library to check out the equipment, introduce her to library staff, review plans again, and answer any remaining questions. Another student volunteer came to the second meeting.

One team member volunteered to do photo documentation of the event. The team planned to identify the Boys & Girls Club participants with a star sticker on their name tags, but since most of the attendees were from Boys & Girls Clubs, and their directors had received limited releases from parents, it became unnecessary.

XI. Evaluation

The evaluation plan included both qualitative and quantitative measures to help the team learn if and how well stated event goals were achieved.

Quantitative measures:

1. How many children registered for event? How many attended on event day? *The team never received information about registrations from the Boys & Girls Club until the day of the event, when 27 pre-registered children attended. No children registered at the library.*
2. How many of the DVDs and books from event and library display or PCFF film list were checked out in the weeks following the event? *According to the children's librarian, eight DVDs and two books from the display table were checked out in the week following the event.*
3. How many children at event already had a library card? *The majority of children had a library card, but eight to ten hands were raised when children were asked who didn't have one.*
4. If not all, was there a change in weeks following? *This information was not available at the time of this report.*
5. How many older students participated in the event and in what roles? *Only a few students in the twelve to fifteen age range attended the program. Two high school students documented the event.*
6. How many adults and how many community organizations were contacted and made aware of this event? *Twelve adults from education, government, and youth-serving organizations were directly invited. Many others may have learned about the event via marketing efforts. Five adults in addition to the graduate student team attended.*

Qualitative measures:

1. Compare answers from student pre- and post-screening straw polls and discussions. *The team decided not to do pre and post-screening straw polls.*
2. Observe and note youth participation/attention during event. Were they engaged? *Children were very engaged with the program until the last half hour, when attention and activity diversified.*
3. Observe and note youth activities in the weeks following the event. Was there an increase in hand clapping games at Boys & Girls Club? Did any participating children sign up for a library card? Check out the library display on games and travel? *Other than the data about the display table, the team has not yet conducted this research.*
4. What was the impact on participating older students? *The older students reported at a post-event debriefing that they enjoyed their participation in the event.*
5. What was the reaction of participating staff? *In an interview conducted the following day with Lisa Niebels from the Met School she shared positive feedback. "I loved seeing the response of the young people to the skate movie, they noticed that the message of the movie was made without dialog. I loved the excitement of the kids when they were able to ask the filmmaker questions. I was most impacted by the way these youth responded to being respected enough to question the film maker. They had good questions" (2016). Also interviewed was*

Laken Hottle, the children's librarian from Fox Point, who was able to be in attendance for more than half of the program and shared her insights as well. "I thought it was great that your team was able to get the boys engaged and involved in the handclapping as well. One little boy stayed after to learn some hand clapping games on YouTube with me" (2016).

What the Children think

During the course of the program, one team member spoke individually with twelve children. Each child was asked what their favorite part of the program had been so far, why it was their favorite, and how they would explain the program to their parents when they went home. Her results and reflections from those interviews follow:

When it came to what their favorite part of the program was and why, the results were very interesting. Five of the children loved meeting the filmmaker/actor. There were a variety of reasons given from "He had a skateboard" to "My mom is a director". The most common answer was along the lines of "I got to meet somebody famous." This makes a lot of sense. From a child's perspective, they probably would not think that a director or actor would be from their home town. Being exposed to a film and then getting to meet the star they saw on the screen and the person who wrote the film would definitely make them excited and a little starstruck.

Three children really loved the film *What's Your Thing?* When talking to them, they were actually more excited to talk about what their individual hobby was, such as basketball or dance. This conversation was their favorite part because they "could learn about what other kids liked to do" and they could "talk about what they like to do." From

a child's perspective, this information could be very interesting. It is a good way for the children to learn about each other. They can also share what it is that they love .

The last four children broke off into four different categories. The first one really liked the snacks. She said it was because she was hungry. This makes sense as two hours is a long time to ask any child to sit still and the timing of the program could have easily been around snack time in the child's home.

The next child really enjoyed the conversation at the beginning of the program involving music and sound. Her explanation for why she liked it was "I like to hear". This was the youngest child interviewed and it was humorous to see how matter of fact she was about this information. She even said that she was going to tell her mom that she likes sound. Musical/rhythmic learning is an accepted learning method. Perhaps this child is music and sound oriented.

The next child was celebrating her birthday. She thought the best part of the program was winning two prizes. She was very practical about her reasons for why this was her favorite part. "I need clothes so I have some socks and it's my birthday so I have a Ben and Jerry's Ice Cream coupon." Prizes would delight any child and it is understandable why she loved this part of the program.

The last child surprised me with her favorite part of the program. She really liked the idea that the different films could teach her a bit about other cultures and what other children like to do in other parts of the world. She said that it was very interesting. As a child, it may be difficult to think about the fact that there are children in other parts of the

world who may enjoy the same things you do and could teach you new, fun things. It is a real eye opener.

For the final question regarding what the children would tell their parents about the program, there were only a handful of different answers. The first child said that he wouldn't tell them anything. This probably had something to do with the fact that it was still early on in the program.

The next answer was fairly common. It had to do with getting to meet the director/actor. Many of the children were excited to share this with their parents. Another popular answer went along with *What's Your Thing?* It was "I learned about what other kids liked to do."

The last, and most common answer, I am happy to say was, "I had fun."

XII. Findings/Recommendations:

1. The team knew going in, that the program's schedule was tight and that might prove to be a challenge. While they were pleased that at the event all the films and clips were all shown, that the filmmaker visit was a success, and that the program moved along nicely, they wished there had been more time for discussion of some of the topics the team explored very briefly, including: use of passports; how to travel the world through film; the benefits of having a library card; media literacy; film language; and filmmaking. There were glimpses of insights into what impact those discussions were having, or might have had, if extended. While the fast pacing and amount of screen and play time might have worked fine for the

- children, either a series approach or companion workshop for parents and staff might support the education and information components.
2. Using the questions, “What did you learn?” and “What would you like to learn more about?”, the team incorporated an exit ticket system to gather input from the children at break time as well as at the end of the program. The final exit ticket was less successful given the young children had dispersed into other activities or had lost interest in doing any more school type of work. The tickets at break came back with several messages about films, travel and general play. One child wrote “I learned that can make some film for a movie”. Another stated “I learned how to make a film a direct a movie.” A final observation on culture was “I learned that a lot people can do the same hand clapping games.”. All suggested evidence that both film selection and discussion had portrayed messages of empowerment and universality.
 3. More or different recruitment of older students as helpers for future programs might add to their attendance rate. The team felt additional input is needed about what would attract them besides the need for school credit/portfolio contribution. Community service requirement, perhaps? Our April school vacation week timing was good for Met School students who needed to make up time/work, and also good for offering a program option for the extended day care needs of the Boys & Girls Clubs.
 4. A need for more specific guidance regarding desired documentation of the event, and timelines for getting it to team members was identified. While a team member met twice with one high school student and another time with both prior to the

event, the timing needs of high school students and graduate students weren't always in synch.

5. In seeking donations for needed event supplies from local stores, one team member learned that, while interested in supporting such projects, many national chain stores require sixty days lead time for donation requests. A good thing to keep in mind for future events. On the other hand, they were surprised to be offered a \$100 gift card from Whole Foods Market, more than was needed for all snacks and supplies.
6. While at times challenging, collaboration with community partners was also rewarding, and helped to create a successful library film education program and an increased sense of community and connection for collaborators.

XIII. Summary

The library film education program *Around the City and Around the World* resulted in an excellent learning tool for the team members to use for future library film education projects, and provided their community partners an engaging and informative school vacation week activity for youth. The experiential learning involved all aspects of program planning, implementation and assessment from initial goal setting through evaluation. The goals in each of the four identified areas assisted the team members and their multiple community partners to create a new program experience for their youth participants, and exposed all in attendance to key film education and media literacy concepts and skills. The team learned from their own experiences and that of others in attendance how such a program might be even further improved in the future. Feedback received from both adults and children was, and will continue to be helpful in

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understanding the impact film programming can have on libraries. If librarians are looking for ways to incorporate programming and media and digital literacy into the services they offer their patrons, they need look no further than their own film collections and potential community collaborators to create fun and educational events and bring new patrons in their doors and to their collections.

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