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Clive Thompson talks technology at the Hilton Fort Collins



by **Haleigh McGill**

2 pm, October 17, 2014

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New York Times contributing writer and Wired columnist **Clive Thompson** discussed changing technology and its implications on everyday life on Wednesday night at the Hilton Fort Collins.

Thompson shed important insight on four trends that he has seen develop with the progression of modern technology, including public thinking, ambient awareness, new literacies and collaborative thought. He also briefly touched on topics such as instant gratification and the pros and cons of internet identity obscurity.

Public thinking

“[Public thinking] is the idea that ... in the age of the internet, people are able to talk out loud about the things they are wondering about or thinking about, and get responses from other people,” Thompson said.



In regards to how far public thinking can help us to reach, Thompson recounted a story about a Kenyan woman named **Ory Okolloh**, who kept up with a blog during a **rigged 2007 election** in Africa that led to the government shutting down public media access. She asked her followers to email her regarding attacks on protestors and other outrageous acts, and then posted a blog entry about finding an easier way to map out the violence using crowd sourcing. Within 48 hours, using online collaboration based off of Okolloh's public thinking, **Ushahidi** was born.

"It's a little piece of software that rides on top of Google Maps, and anytime there is a crisis in the world now ... they put up a map and they say [to the public] 'please contribute the knowledge you have'", Thompson explained. "This quickly became so rich with information that the **United Nations** and the **U.S. Military** stopped using their own intelligence and just used [Ushahidi]."

Ambient awareness

This is the idea, according to Thompson, that the collection of a few short messages or posts like someone's Twitter feed, is a small number of "ambient signals" clueing readers into a glimpse of that person's life environment.

"Months or years of these posts creates a much richer picture, in the same way a thousand individual, pointless dots make up a large picture," Thompson said.

He credits this idea as the reason people prefer shorter posts.

"It's this almost ESP-like sense of being able to know what's going on in peoples' lives, and even inside their minds, by paying attention to a lot of very small things," he noted.

New literacies

"People are doing a lot more communicating in new forms that we didn't really use a lot before; photo, video, audio," Thompson explained. "These became the new literacies, the new ways of formalizing thoughts."

Thompson discussed how people within the online community have started

utilizing multiple forms of communication in order to broadcast their ideas or insights, and then generate community conversations and debates. People are able to manipulate photos in artistic, professional and deceptive ways, and YouTube provides a platform to share videos that relay all kinds of information from how-to tutorials, to **vlogs**, to revealing things within popular movies and TV shows that typically go unnoticed when watched the first time around.

Computers are smaller and have gone more mobile, photo and video editing is cheaper and more accessible, and there are thousands of apps available to enhance everyday lives. Thompson believes these aspects of modern technology have a positive impact on the way ideas are formulated.

“People do new things and think in new ways,” he said.

Collaborative thought

To exemplify the power of collaborative thinking using today’s technology, Thompson shared the story of a man named **David Baker**, an American biochemist who was searching for a quicker, more efficient way to fold proteins in order to study diseases. It started as an automatic screensaver that people could simply download and the data would be sent to Baker, but when errors in the folding occurred, he turned it into a challenging online game called **“Folding”**.

“[Players] realized they had to do this collectively,” Thompson explained. “They started doing all kinds of public thinking ... and used new literacies ... to show how they [folded the proteins].”

According to Thompson, those involved in the game became so good at it that Baker presented them with his biggest challenge: HIV protein folding.

“He gave it to them, and three weeks later [the players] figured it out,” Thompson revealed. “In three weeks, they had done what scientists around the world with super computers in ten years had been unable to do.”

To close the evening, Thompson read a quote from his book, **Smarter Than You Think**, that sums up the relationship with the aforementioned trends and changing technology in general.

"In order to reap the benefits of the online world requires social work," Thompson said.

Collegian Reporter *Haleigh McGill* can be reached at news@collegian.com, or on Twitter [@HaleighMcGill](https://twitter.com/HaleighMcGill).

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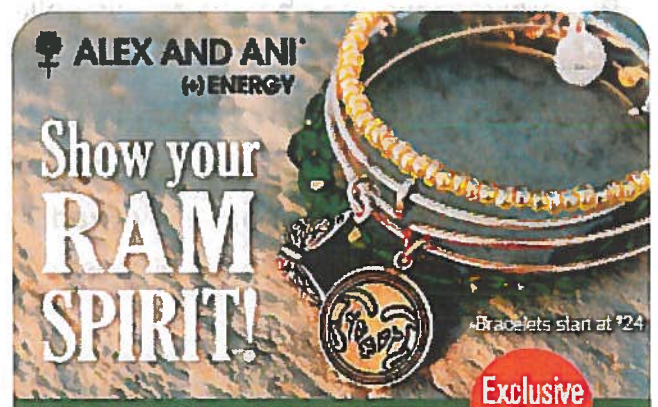
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The Denver Post Books Calendar, 10/26/2014

Posted: 10/26/2014 12:01:00 AM MDT

DenverPost.com

1107 Pearl St., Boulder, 303-447-2074, boulderbookstore.net

Oct. 30: 7:30 p.m. Silvia Pettem and Tito Roberts will discuss and sign their new 2015 calendar, "Boulder in the 1950s."

First Congregational Church

1128 Pine St., Boulder, 303-447-2074, boulderbookstore.net

Oct. 28: 7 p.m. The Boulder Book Store presents Chuck Palahniuk who will discuss "Beautiful You." Tickets are \$30 and include a signed copy of the book. There are no signings at the program; all books will be pre-signed. Purchase tickets in advance or at the door.

Midtown Arts Center

3750 S. Mason St., Fort Collins, 970-484-7898, oldfirehousebooks.com **Oct. 30:** 7 p.m. Old Firehouse Books and the Poudre River Public Library District present Craig Johnson, author of the Longmire series of books and the basis for the A&E cable series. His latest is "Wait for Signs: Twelve Longmire Stories." Tickets are \$12.88 (includes a paperback copy of "Spirit of Steamboat") or \$23.62 (includes "Spirit of Steamboat" and a hardcover of "Wait for Signs"). Reservations required.

Mizel Arts and Culture Center

Jewish Community Center, 350 S. Dahlia St., maccjcc.org/jaamm-festival

Through Nov. 9: The seventh annual 2014 JAAMM Fest — Jewish Arts, Authors, Movies & Music Festival continues with authors, playwrights, movies, musicians and more. Author visits on Oct. 26 include Andrea Jacobs and Paula Burger ("Paula's Window") at 10:30 a.m., Charles Dennis ("The Magiker") at 12:15 p.m., Ayelet Waldman ("Love and Treasure") at 2 p.m.; Oct. 27: Scott Cowen ("The Inevitable City: The Resurgence of New Orleans and the Future of Urban America") at 7 p.m.; Oct. 31: Gail Sheehy ("Daring: My Passages") at 11 a.m., Assaf Gavron ("The Hilltop") at 12:30 p.m.; Nov. 2: Heidi S. Hyde ("Elan, Son of Two Peoples") at 11 a.m.; David Kertzer ("The Pope and Mussolini") at 4 p.m., Community Read: Michael Chabon with Adam Rovner at 6:30 p.m.; Nov. 9: Ari Goldman ("The Late Starters Orchestra") at 11 a.m., Hesh Kestin ("The Lie") at 4 p.m., Adam Rovner ("In the Shadow of Zion: The Promised Lands Before Israel") at 6 p.m.

Old Firehouse Books

232 Walnut St., Fort Collins, 970-484-7898, oldfirehousebooks.com **Oct. 29:** 6 p.m. Gregory D. Zeigler will discuss and sign "The Straw That Broke."

Park Hill Golf Club

4141 E. 35th Ave., e-mail fordedit@aol.com, coloradopresswomen.org/events.shtml

Nov. 1, reservation deadline noon Oct. 27: 9 a.m. The Colorado Press Women's annual Authors Forum features award-winning Colorado writers including Laura Pritchett ("Stars Go Blue"), TaraShea Nesbit ("The Wives of Los Alamos") and Gregory Campbell ("Pot, Inc."), who will discuss and sign copies of their books. \$30, \$25 CPW members, includes lunch.

Tattered Cover, Colfax

2526 E. Colfax Ave., 303-322-7727, tatteredcover.com

Oct. 27: 7 p.m. Linda Hull will read from and sign "Black Thursday: A Mrs. Frugalicious Shopping Mystery." **Oct. 28:** 7 p.m. Don Morreale will discuss and sign "Cowboys, Yogis, and One-Legged Ski Bums: The Extraordinary Lives of Ordinary Coloradans."

Oct. 29: 7 p.m. Peter Decker will read from and sign "Red, White & Army Blue" as part of the Rocky Mountain Land Series.

Oct. 30: 7 p.m. Roger Stone will discuss and sign "Nixon's Secrets: The Rise, Fall, and Untold Truth about the President, Watergate, and the Pardon."

Nov. 1: 2 p.m. Assaf Gavron will discuss and sign "The Hilltop."

Tattered Cover, Highlands Ranch

9315 Dorchester St., 303-470-7050

Oct. 28: 7 p.m. Stephanie Barron will read from and sign "Jane and the Twelve Days of Christmas."

Oct. 29: 7 p.m. Craig Johnson will read from and sign "Wait for Signs."

ClimateWise, Business Smart



Jeff Barnes and Erin Senseman
Poudre River Public Library District
ClimateWise Platinum Partner
Photos by Cambon Studios



City of
Fort Collins



Waste Reduction: Poudre River Public Library District

All wrapped up

In considering projects to reduce its environmental impact, the Poudre River Public Library District faced unique challenges and opportunities in coordinating various facilities. When the District wanted to reduce solid waste, it enlisted the help of ClimateWise. In 2013, as part of its Employee Recycle Challenge, the library district asked ClimateWise to conduct an assessment of the district's administration building, which resulted in an invitation to join the City of Fort Collins' pilot project to recycle soft plastics including: shipping materials, bubble wrap, shrink wrap and plastic bags.

The overall goal of the pilot was to divert soft plastic materials from the landfill. In keeping with the district's commitment to ensuring environmental responsibility, employees in all three libraries and the administration building took up the challenge and began collecting soft plastics.

The plastics were taken to the pilot drop off site during normal travel between library district facilities, so there was no increase in travel or staff time. Adding soft plastics to the district's recycling program was a simple step toward a larger solid waste reduction.

Jeff Barnes, of the Poudre River Library District, commented that the project's results have been amazing. He said the library district takes a 30-gallon bag to the pilot drop off site every week and the only additional resource required was a separate collection container.

Recommendations

The Poudre River Public Library District recommends a ClimateWise assessment to determine which materials, such as soft plastics, can be eliminated from the landfill.

ClimateWise. Business Smart.

The Poudre River Public Library District serves more than 180,100 people across 1,800 square miles in northern Larimer County. Anchored by three libraries and an administration building in Fort Collins, the district is dedicated to matching diverse needs, interests and priorities with exceptional opportunities for learning, intellectual stimulation and personal enjoyment. The organization is committed to creating a community where innovation is encouraged and environmental responsibility is ensured.

"ClimateWise staff is always there to answer questions and provide guidance as we've developed our employee recycling challenges. The ideas we get from ClimateWise programs and partner tours greatly help us with our sustainability goals."

Jeff Barnes, Poudre River Public Library District

Questions?

Thinking of starting a soft plastics recycling program? Louise Mosnik would be happy to talk more about the Poudre River Public Library District's project. Contact her at Lmosnik@PoudreLibraries.org.

Call ClimateWise at 970-221-6700 for more information about a zero waste audit.

Soft plastics diverted from the landfill:

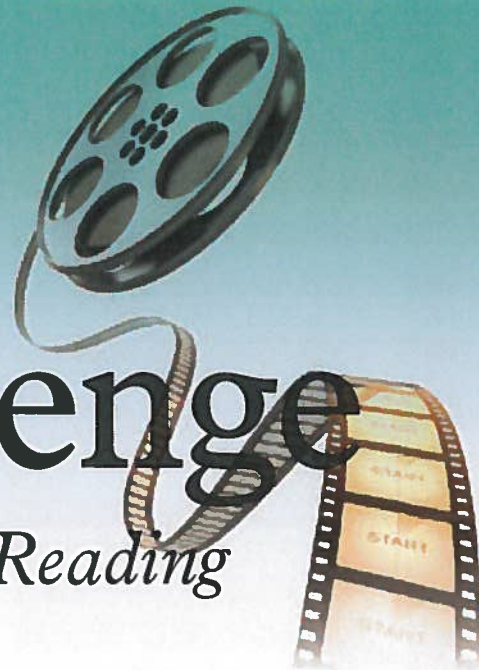
- Weekly:
30 gallons
- June 1 - Dec. 31, 2013:
1,200 gallons



Jeff Barnes and Erin Senseman
Poudre River Public Library District
ClimateWise Platinum Partner
Photo by Cambon Studios

CSLP Teen Video Challenge

Teens Get Creative to Promote Reading



Book dominoes. A library rap. Beatles trivia. Claymation Creatures. A 1950s diner. Getting immersed in the story of a book—literally. All to promote libraries and all on screen in 90 seconds or less.

These are just a few of the creative ways teens encouraged their peers to read over the summer this past year through their entries in the CSLP Teen Video Challenge. This fun program, now entering its fifth year in 2015, invites teens in most states to create public service announcements (PSAs) that public libraries in any of those states can then use to promote their CSLP summer reading programs to teens.

CSLP—the Collaborative Summer Library Program—is an extremely popular program used in public libraries across the United States as well as a number of territories and the Cayman Islands. Libraries in member states have access to all the thematic slogans, artwork, program manuals, and incentives produced by CSLP each year. CSLP itself is a member-driven organization, with the majority of the ideas and work for the program, and its support materials, created by librarians across the country who have volunteered to contribute content and ideas. “CSLP has a long, proud history of collaboration and developing programs that appeal to audiences young and old,” said Karen Yother, youth services coordinator for the Community Library Network in Idaho and current president of CSLP. “The Teen Video Challenge was a unique and fun way to engage teens with technology, the library, and their community.”

WHY HAVE A CONTEST TO PRODUCE A PSA?

Initially, member libraries in CSLP had access to professionally developed PSAs to promote their summer library programs for children and teens on television, radio,

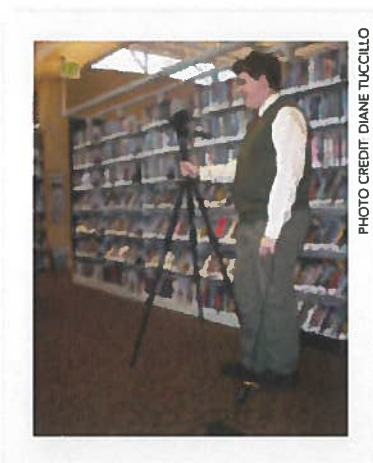


PHOTO CREDIT: DIANE TUCCILLO

POUDRE RIVER PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT'S “BOOK OF MONSTERS” DIRECTOR BRIAN SULLIVAN DRESSED FOR THE PART.

and online. The organization still continues to offer a professionally produced PSA specifically aimed at children aged four to twelve each year. Since marketing to teens is quite different from marketing to children, CSLP members understood that different videos and audio tracks would be needed for the teen program to remain appealing to this particular audience. In 2010, it was suggested that the teens would be the best group to create a PSA that would be of interest to them, and from there, the Teen Video Challenge was born.

Karen Balsen, youth services coordinator and library development specialist for the New York State Library, and chair of the CSLP public relations and marketing committee at that time, was instrumental in launching the Teen Video Challenge. Balsen said, “If the teens themselves promote the idea of summer reading to their peers, we would have a program with double the ‘bang for the buck.’” Balsen noted that if teens created videos promoting summer reading, they would encourage their friends to watch these videos on social media sites, especially YouTube. According to Balsen, “This peer-to-peer communication would spread the message of the value of libraries and reading over the summer months to teens much better than something coming from adults.”

WHAT IS THE TEEN VIDEO CHALLENGE?

The concept of the Teen Video Challenge itself is fairly simple: Invite teens to create a PSA that reflects the CSLP theme for the summer and encourages students to visit their local library, have them load it on YouTube, and then ask each state to select one out of all their state entries to be the winner. To get more of that “bang for the buck” that Balsen referred to, CSLP decided to award a cash prize to one teen/teen team in each member state rather than fund one single PSA to be used by everyone. The CSLP public relations and marketing committee decided to have

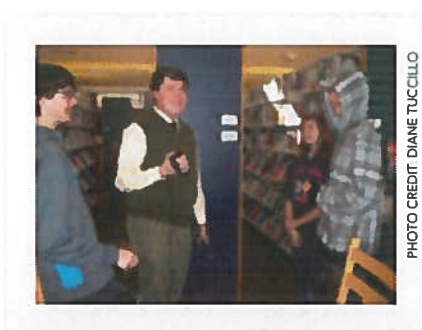


PHOTO CREDIT: DIANE TUCCILLO

BRIAN GUIDES TEEN IRS MEMBERS NATHAN MAHONEY, CAMBRIA CORP, AND JARED CORP THROUGH A SCENE.

winning videos from each state rather than one national winner for two main reasons: First, having multiple teen winners would help to spread the word about summer reading and libraries throughout a larger group of participants. Second, and most important, teens would be able “to show different perspectives on the advantages of public libraries and participation in summer reading for teens,” according to Balsen. What CSLP members get through the contest are a variety of PSAs that are humorous, inspiring, informative, or even cautionary, as seen in some of the Orwellian entries this past year.

In 2014, twenty-six states participated in the challenge. In most of those states, the state library coordinates the program. For those at the state level, this involves customizing the required forms, promoting the contest to public library staff, and later, creating and coordinating a judging panel or other method to select the winning video. In some states, a panel of library staff from across the state makes the selection; other states involve local/state television production staff in the judging, and some use the popularity of each video on social media as the selection criteria. The idea is that librarians in each state will use their winning video as their PSA to market to teens, so it only seems fitting that each state pick the one that they believe will appeal best to the teens in their part of the country.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES AND SCHOOLS— PERFECT PARTNERS

Public libraries take it from there: promoting the challenge and encouraging teens to create a PSA. Library staff can use social media, in-library advertising, library websites and newsletters, teen advisory groups, schools, local businesses that appeal to teens, and other methods to promote the challenge and highlight the subsequent winners. Besides the prize money and recognition that comes from winning a state contest, the experience of creating a PSA, working with a team of peers (though teens can create a PSA individually), supporting and promoting libraries and summer reading programs nationwide, encouraging their peers to read, and having a lot of fun are all excellent benefits that library staff can highlight when promoting the contest.

Promoting the program to middle and high school teachers, especially technical or video production teachers, can be a highly successful way to increase teen participation in the challenge (as well as an excellent way to start or further partnerships with schools). Two teachers in Colorado have involved their students in the challenge for the last two years and plan to continue in future years. Both teachers have assigned



PHOTO CREDIT: DIANE TUCCILLO
ARIANNA DEEDS, NATHAN MAHONEY, JARED,
AND CAMBRIA SHARE A LAUGH WITH BRIAN.

For libraries that have video equipment and editing software, the challenge presents the perfect opportunity to invite teens in to the library to use the resources to create a very practical and creative STEM project.



PHOTO CREDIT: DIANE TUCCILLO
BRIAN GUIDES NATHAN THROUGH ACTING MOTIONS.

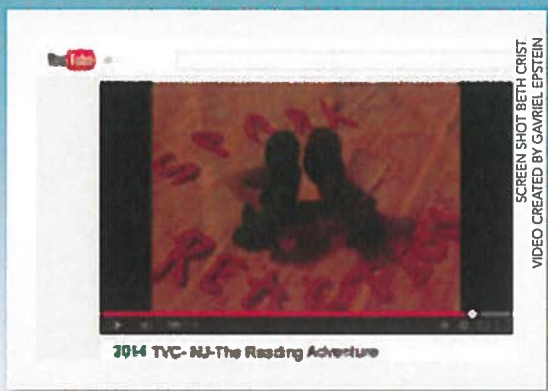
their students the job of creating a PSA for the challenge as a required class project. After pairing their students for the production teams, the students of each teacher submitted six videos. According to Jonathan White, the video production teacher at WarrenTech, the Career and Technical High School for Jefferson County Public Schools, “Incorporating the Teen Video Challenge as part of an all-class assignment was a no-brainer.” White says, “Video contests are everywhere these days, and I think, as instructors, we have a responsibility to help open the doors to some of the more worthwhile causes out there. Not only was the Teen Video Challenge geared toward the exact age group I teach—eleventh and twelfth graders—but it also raises awareness for something that all children need to be involved in: their local libraries.”

For libraries that have video equipment and editing software, the challenge presents the perfect opportunity to invite teens in to the library to use the resources to create a very practical and creative STEM project. It’s also a great occasion to train teens on using the equipment. Teens may also use their own equipment or resources available at their schools. Beyond what may be available at the schools, some states have also used the Teen Video Challenge as an opportunity to offer statewide video programs and training to teens. The South Carolina State Library, for example, offers cameras, lighting equipment, green screens, and laptops with editing software for public libraries to use with their teen groups. Regional training sessions were also offered across South Carolina in 2013 to help teach teens and librarians how to use the equipment. No matter who owns the equipment that the teens use, the end result is the same—a quality learning experience on the creation of a PSA, communicating a simple message, and using technology to do so.

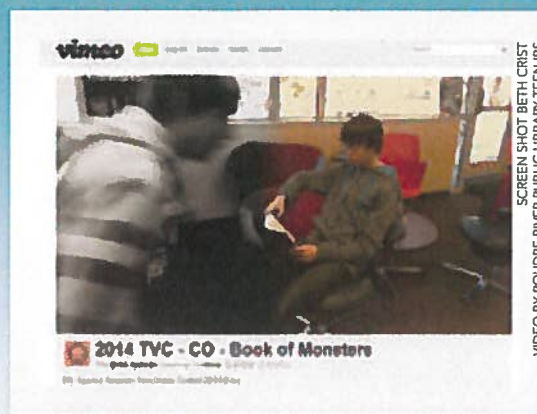
TURNING IT OVER TO THE TEENS

Teens can play different roles in producing the PSAs. Video production requires creating the script, filming, directing, and editing, and many videos also involve acting, selecting background music, lighting, creating artwork and original music, and staging props and backdrops. This offers many creative and useful opportunities for teens to be involved even if they don’t want to appear in front of the camera or do the tech production.

The contest rules also serve as a great learning experience for teens. PSAs must be between 30 and 90 seconds in length, cannot feature the name of a specific library or teen group, and must use music that is in the public domain. Music seems to be one of the more challenging parts of the contest for



THIS PSA, ENTITLED "THE READING ADVENTURE," BY GAVRIEL EPSTEIN OF THE HIGHLAND PARK PUBLIC LIBRARY, WON THE NEW JERSEY TEEN VIDEO CHALLENGE. IT FEATURES CLEVER CLAYMATION CHARACTERS TO TELL ITS STORY OF ADVENTURE AND THE WONDERS OF READING.



THIS SCREEN SHOT FROM THE TEEN IRS'S FINISHED PSA SHOWS A CREATIVE SPECIAL EFFECT OF THE VIDEO CHANGING FROM COLOR TO BLACK-AND-WHITE. THE VIDEO WAS AN HONORABLE MENTION IN THE COLORADO TEEN VIDEO CHALLENGE.

many teens—as this could be their first exposure to terms such as public domain, royalty free, or copyright—but the students end up working well within the restrictions as evidenced through the numerous entries each year (over 100 in 2014 from the twenty-six participating states). Should any teens be considering a career in film production, guidelines and restrictions are something that they will encounter again and a program such as the Teen Video Challenge is a great introduction to these concepts.

Teen advisory groups (TAGs) of some libraries create a PSA for the challenge as a fun group project that helps to support their library mission and summer reading program. The TAG of the Poudre River Public Library District in Colorado, named the Interesting Reader Society (Teen IRS), was one such group. Six members made a creative video they named "Book of Monsters" that was an honorable mention in the state challenge. Along with having a lot of fun filming and editing the video, they embraced the purpose of the project and found it fulfilling. As Jared Corp, one of the teens involved, said, "A project like this really does support reading in the summer. These videos tell kids that reading is a great and joyous thing to do."

Diane Tuccillo, teen services librarian at the Poudre River Public Library District, encouraged the Teen IRS to participate in the challenge and appreciates that the project allows teens freedom and creativity. "Our teens had a fun, challenging, and creative experience. That is what it is all about . . . giving teens control, allowing them to create and have a voice, and not letting adult influence impact what they are doing. What an amazing feeling that must be for these teens, to know they did it all themselves and contributed to encouraging other teens to read."

2015 TYC—UNMASK

CSLP will be holding the Teen Video Challenge again this year for the summer hero theme, "Unmask." General contest rules and information, as well as all the winning videos from years past, can be found online at <http://cslpreads.org>. Public librarians interested in participating should check with the CSLP representative in their state for specific deadlines and guidelines, and a list of state representatives can be found on CSLP's website. The deadline for video submissions varies from state to state—most contest entries are due sometime in late February or early March. School librarians

interested in partnering with their public library to participate should contact their local librarians.

The Teen Video Challenge presents great opportunities for library staff, teachers, and teens alike. From the CSLP perspective, Balsen says it best: "The idea is to strengthen the connection between public libraries and teens. If you promote something, you will value it more, and hopefully use it more." For teachers, White says for many of his students, "this assignment got them out of the classroom and into their local library" and that "they now saw a powerful and *free* resource center that wasn't just for school, it was for them and their lives." From the teen perspective, Bethany Hagerott, winner of Colorado's 2014 challenge, sums up the crux of the project: "Reading has always been a big part of my life—from Dr. Seuss to Charles Dickens. I hope that my video and the other videos in the contest can inspire a new generation to enjoy reading." ■

Beth Crist, youth and family services consultant at the Colorado State Library, is currently the Early Literacy Committee chair at CSLP. Each year, she looks forward to seeing the great PSAs that the imaginative and talented teens in Colorado create for the Teen Video Challenge.



Charlotte Johnston is the director of the Harvin Clarendon County Library in Manning, South Carolina, and the current chair of the Marketing and Public Relations Committee for CSLP. Prior to her current position as a library administrator, Johnston worked for ten years in children's and young adult services, and still prefers to read books written for a young adult audience—especially novels in verse.



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