CONNECT!ONS Med!aLit moments

| Consortium for Media Literacy | Volume No. 93 | June 2017 |

In This Issue…

Media AND Information Literacy

Media AND Information Literacy: Evolving Together
Part 2

There is no substitute for talking with librarians and community leaders to catch the sense of excitement and promise around the virtual – and physical – reinvention of libraries.

In every setting, whether in an academic library or a public library, a maker space or a study space, libraries are actively seeking out new ways to serve patrons, and expanding notions of what it means to be an educated citizen, prepared for the world today. Libraries are well prepared to support anywhere, anytime learning, and librarians are strong advocates for citizens' understanding their rights and responsibilities regarding intellectual freedom and education.

Media and information literacy support the way that libraries operate today, since these literacies provide the intellectual frameworks upon which learning occurs in a society that is unbound by geography, time and space. Today, "library land" inhabits an enormous universe of online and offline information and services. How lucky we all are to be able to participate in such a rich, unlimited environment – an environment designed to serve we, the people.

In this issue of *Connections,* we invite you to become better acquainted with the librarians of today, and with ideas that will shape the libraries of tomorrow. We're pleased to share a MediaLit Moment Activity that was created by Mya Stark, Executive Director of LA Maker Space.

Research Highlights

Los Angeles Public Library System: Interview with Susan Broman

With more than 60 branches and 6 million volumes, the Los Angeles Public Library System serves the largest population of any publicly funded library system in the United States. The system is overseen by a Board of Library Commissioners with five members appointed by the mayor of Los Angeles in staggered terms in accordance with the city charter.

Susan Broman is Director of Emerging Technologies and Collections for the Los Angeles Public Library, where her unit provides support services to help staff with responsibility for direct public services, such as IT and websites.

Tessa Jolls: Susan, please tell us about your role within the LA public library system.

Susan Broman: In addition to managing the acquisition, purchasing and distribution of the physical collection and purchasing for the digital collection, the unit supports emerging technology, which encompasses new technologies and how they might both affect the way the library system delivers service and also the expectations that such technologies bring to how staff and patrons want services to be delivered.

In libraries, there's the traditional role of checking out books, and then there's the technology. They're intermingled, and we try to make sure that we are treating all of our patrons -- whether they come to us electronically or walking into our building -- as library users and library patrons, and treating them the same.

TJ: From the patron standpoint, you want your support services to be invisible, to be geared toward convenience?

SB: In many cases, one of the things that we are doing is to help people not just have access to technology and to broadband, but to learn more about how they can best utilize what technology they already have themselves, as well as what's available to them. We're doing a lot of work with training our staff on how to help people with their own devices. Here at the central library, we're going to be expanding this service, and we have something called a Tech TryOut cart. We set up in the lobby where it's really busy, and have a table full of different types of devices that people might be interested in or maybe they haven't seen before. They can try out new devices and services.

They can see what library services are available to them for free, and talk with somebody who's knowledgeable. I would say 50% of the time, our librarians who are at the cart are helping people with their own devices. For example, a patron may say, "Oh, I have a phone and I don't really know what to do with it," and the staff will say, "Well, you can download this app and then you'll be able to check out eBooks," and show the patron how to do a few things.

It's not just about having access but also helping people connect with us.

TJ: Are there some other examples of new initiatives that you've undertaken to uncover all of the possibilities for people?

SB: We deal a lot with youth and teens, and we are moving more towards working with families and adults doing STEAM programming, and getting kids and teens' hands on coding in a fun and safe environment. We have a huge initiative, it's called Full STEAM Ahead where kids are doing electronics projects, and that's been a big initiative for us over the last couple of years.

We work with partners and STEAM, of course, is Science Technology Engineering Art and Mathematics. We work with different partners to train our staff on how to do a specific program theory. One of the most recent ones we did is teaching 3D printing. Staff is trained on how to use a 3D modeling program, like Teak or CAD, and then they help a class do a project that results in something that's printed. You're not only teaching 3D printing but you're also teaching about 3D modeling, which is a very important skill.

A lot of kids take to it easily because they're used to playing video games, especially like Minecraft, which are 3D. In the game, you have to look around walls, corners and buildings. Adults have a little bit harder time, since they are typically not as familiar with playing video games.

TJ: This connection between video games and 3D printing shows how the technology integrates, how the ideas behind it, the skills sets -- all of these things add up to more literacy in terms of using the technology and understanding the applications.

Regarding media literacy, the LA Public Library has undertaken some specific partnerships. Last year, you exhibited "State of Deception," a media literacy program focused on propaganda that was developed by the National Holocaust Museum through the Media Education Lab headed by Renee Hobbs.

SB: Yes, that was a great partnership and a very successful program, with many classes coming to the library to experience the exhibit. It was just before we started calling everything false news or fake news. We've just started working on some potential workshops that libraries can hold specifically about that issue of fake news and basically evaluating sources, which is something that is a core part of librarianship.

We're doing other programs to contextualize information. For example, we've always provided legal information, not legal advice, but legal information --- where you go to find this information, in terms of knowing your rights. We are re-contextualizing that, so that is available both in our libraries and on our websites.

TJ: Have the innovations in the digital space changed how you're thinking about physical space?

SB: Yes, definitely. The library has moved from a place where you go to sit quietly and absorb something, into a place that offers a more active learning experience. We're trying to make it so that we have more places for people to meet as a group; more places for people to sit and discuss. A lot of our libraries are getting more and more into the children's arena, like providing learning toys and recognizing that play is an important part of a child's development. We're designing around that, and trying to create more spaces for people to craft their own experience at the library. If they want a quiet place to sit, we provide that, but if they want to sit and talk with somebody, there's a place for them to do that as well.

Some of our libraries are tiny, so it's not possible to do everything in our libraries, but one of the things that we've done here at the Central Library and at a couple of our branches is to offer laptops that people can check out to use inside the library. So rather than stay in the place where the computers are, they can move around the library a little bit more flexibly to use that resource, which is a heavily used service at the library.

And of course, people bring their own devices and phones and laptops and tablets. Occasionally, we've seen people bring their own printers.

TJ: Susan, where do you see libraries heading? Do you see some major changes in store, or do you think that you're already on the path to accommodate the digital environment?

SB: I think we'll continue to see libraries bringing more and more resources to the digital environment. But the physical library is becoming an increasingly important part of a community where people come together, to either take advantage of those resources or to create things, or to learn how to do things in a variety of ways. We have a lot of online training, and we also have a lot of in-person classes. We're trying to accommodate different types of learning, and we're expanding what's available. I've been in libraries for about 25 years now, and I have seen the shift of how libraries are becoming a more and more active learning environments, with many more programs.

For example, we have a lot of initiatives at the library around health and around financial literacy, around language learning literacy. Citizenship is a huge initiative that we have going on right now, and we are welcoming in new Americans. And then to follow up on all that, we also have online support. We have Career Online High School that allows people who didn't get a high school diploma to go to the public library and apply to work towards a high school credit, and earn a high school diploma through the local library at no cost to them. That's both a digital and a physical offering. Support is there for patrons if they need it at the library, but a lot of what they're doing is in a digital format that they can access from anywhere. But they're still using the library, whether they're sitting in a coffee shop or in their house or on the beach; they're library users.

TJ: How exciting! The digital environment does extend the library to the beach, but with the combination of the support that you're providing for lifelong learning and the specific needs that people have around topics such as finance, rights -- these different arenas are very specific to people being able to have successful and productive lives. People can engage not just with their own individual learning but also on a community basis.

SB: That's a key point -- the ability to switch out between individual learning and community learning. It's the choice of individuals to be able to craft that lifelong learning experience for themselves with the help of the library.

LA Maker Space: Interview with Mya Stark

Mya Stark is Executive Director of LA Maker Space, where she has served since 2014. There, she has led the organization through an all-volunteer membership model to an education nonprofit to create and lead inspiring trainings for educators in do-it-yourself science and technology facilitation.

Tessa Jolls: You are heading LA Maker Space. What was your inspiration?

Mya Stark: I joined the organization right as the idea was being explored to take Making into the libraries, and I immediately thought that was the best idea I'd ever heard. I come from a family of engineers, and grew up watching my father tinker in the garage. When my little brother (now a physicist) got old enough, he joined one of LA's early "hackerspaces," which are the more rarified precursors to makerspaces. I thought that was great: my brother and his engineering and scientist friends—as well as plenty of artists with an interest in tech—were creating their equivalents of my dad's garage together. They were able to get much cooler equipment, but also, they were able to share and advise on each other's projects rather than working in isolation like my dad. The idea of bringing, in essence, my dad's garage plus my brother's friends, into the library, where the public could not only have more access to learning tech skills, but also connect with the whole self-reliant, autodidactic culture of Making—was tremendously exciting.

TJ: From what I understand, LA Maker Space is focused on working with libraries. Why is this? What libraries and how wide-spread? What services do you work on together? Why is this important for libraries and for LA Maker Space to do this work, and what is different about it from past ways of doing things?

MS: LA Makerspace's desire to work with libraries came from a very Maker perspective on education. LA's higher-end private schools all have makerspaces and have for years. Public schools, especially in under-resourced areas, want to do the same but are facing major challenges. We thought—how could you "hack" that? i.e., how do you create a workaround with what you've got? The answer was: leverage the existing infrastructure of public libraries.

They are in every neighborhood, equally, regardless of resources. And, for a major percentage of Angelenos, they're one of the few safe spaces to be after school. Not only that, but the fact is libraries are the only place where 35% of LA's population has access to broadband internet.

Meanwhile, there is a definite drive and desire among librarians to bring STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) into the branches as a way to transform their mission of public information for the 21st century. Our library work began with the LA Public Library system's visionary Full STEAM Ahead program, where they'd gotten funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) to hire a number of vendors to do science and tech workshops for the public. Our idea was that, because of our Maker learning style, we'd be able to help the librarians learn to run these workshops independently, even though none of them had previous backgrounds in things like coding or robotics. In the beginning of this year, we formed a similar partnership with the County of Los Angeles Public Library system, so now we have the opportunity to do this for 134 branches combined, a service area of 13 million.

TJ: Where do you see this type of collaboration heading in the future? Or what would you hope to see?

MS: We hope to see librarians not only facilitating the workshops we've practiced together independently, but also seeking out new projects that interest them and doing those with the public too. We'd also like to see the culture become self-sustaining within both institutions, so that it is something the librarians are teaching their peers long after we are gone. In this view, we would continue providing support of various kinds, and, a thriving connection to Maker communities. All of that begins with the construction of the first library Makerspace in Los Angeles, which we are fundraising for now, and will really be a flagship and a hub for libraries and other educators in LA to absorb and dive deep into that culture of Making.

TJ: How do you see media literacy being part of this approach?

MS: Well, there are a lot of connections and crossovers between media literacy and Making. Number one, the single biggest part of a Maker identity is that, "I create things as well as consume them." The world of media we are immersed in is nearly 100% driven by messages that want to get us to consume. So, to focus on what you can self-reliantly create, you pretty much have to be "woke" in that regard. Also, media literacy, at this point, is almost synonymous with digital literacy, if it's still even worthwhile making that distinction. The aspect of digital literacy that we are most concerned with is, of course, coding literacy as that's a huge part of what we teach. I feel like—you don't necessarily have to know how to do it, but, if you are using a magic box all day with absolutely no idea whatsoever how it works—I don't think you are fully "literate" in a Western environment. Because a huge part of your world is unknown to you. And boy is that going to get more so with the AI/machine learning revolution already in progress.

TJ: Is incorporating media literacy education one of your strategic goals for your work?

MS: Absolutely, in a number of ways. A big part of the Maker movement is sharing out what you have learned, creating tutorials and making videos is a big part of the culture we are trying to encourage so that's integrated into everything. One of our program areas is Stop Motion Animation, we are teaching what are the parts of a story, how do you "make" a story. And, as for coding literacy—we use both Scratch, a block-based visual language created at MIT, and we also teach coding using the super popular video game Minecraft.

TJ: What might be done to improve the media literacy efforts for libraries and maker spaces, in your experience?

MS: Well, not speaking for the libraries but from a Maker point of view, I think media literacy efforts could be improved by developing more innovative approaches to the issue of code literacy—a lot like what you guys did in your video games issue of *Connections*. How can we become conscious of and think critically about "messages" that aren't conveyed in words, pictures, narratives, or sounds—but in the way the world around us is constructed? [Douglas Rushkoff](#) has pointed out that all the other kinds of communication we use, we know how to both consume and produce them—when we learn language, we learn to speak, not just listen; we learn to write as well as read. YouTube, Snapchat, etc. have made the same thing possible for video, for the generation growing up now, certainly. How are we going to do it for code?

Blackburn College – Interview with Spencer Brayton

Spencer Brayton currently serves as Director of the Learning Commons at Blackburn College in Carlinville, IL. In this position, he oversees library and academic support services, in addition to teaching and embedding media and information literacy across the curriculum.

Tessa Jolls: How do you see media and information literacies intersecting? And also, where do you see some differences?

Spencer Brayton: There is overlap in terms of the definitions and the wording used to define media literacy and/or information literacy. Some of the questions that we need to ask ourselves when we're looking at media and information include, Who is the author? What's the author's purpose? What's the bias? What's not there? Accessing information and media applies to both; but I think the new point that information literacy was not addressing — and media literacy is – is the ability to produce. How are people choosing to be able to produce their own information?

If you look at the [Association of College and Research Libraries' (ACRL) Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education](#), I've been doing some work in terms of aligning our course in Media and Information Literacy here at Blackburn with those concepts and with that framework, and a lot of times I can see if you simply plugged "media" into where they had "information," it works out the same way. There are six Frames: Authority Is Constructed and

Contextual, Information Creation as a Process, Information Has Value, Research as Inquiry, Scholarship as Conversation and Searching as Strategic Exploration. As an example, the media and information literacy course I co-teach with my colleague Natasha Casey aligns with two areas of the Framework for Information Literacy: Information Creation as a Process and Information Has Value. Further, the word information can easily be replaced with media in both areas to achieve the same meaning and outcomes: Media Creation as a Process and Media Has Value. Those in the discipline of media literacy believe that all media have bias and are produced to convey a message (Information Creation as Process). Similarly, this discipline believes that media is valuable for education, can be used to influence, understand the world, and that legal and socioeconomic interests influence media production and dissemination (Information Has Value). The way we teach our combined course supports this overlap.

TJ: What do you see as major change in the library field?

SB: For so long, we were teaching information literacy as a set of skills that you need to attain. For example, the CRAAP Test and now Checkology, which is a list of how to verify information - there are 10 or more steps you're supposed to take, with sub-steps, to verify that something is not fake or mostly credible. They ask good questions, but it is overwhelming. The library world has been teaching this skill-based acquisition and supposedly, when you master that, you go off and graduate, and you are "information literate." In the last decade, we are coming to grips with the fact that's not really what we need to teach; we need to bring in more critical pedagogy, which is how I also see media literacy crossing paths with information literacy.

TJ: One of the other shifts that we're seeing is that it's not about "mastering" content information. The challenge is to continuously improve the process skills, and there is a continuum of knowledge and capacity in terms of having the skillset to do that. Now we're realizing that there really is not an end to it.

SB: Yes, and we also have to address the "Gee-Whiz" (Renee Hobbs) about technology, too. It's "Here, we're going to give you an iPad and you're literate with technology." That's supposed to be how you understand technology. Now, libraries have maker spaces. We're not just having you play with technology with no structure there, but we focus on important concepts and takeaways, too. It's not just giving the person the tool.

TJ: Exactly. In media literacy we see that the Core Concepts inform our user's world view, and inform how they approach information and media. There's definitely a value-added to a conceptual approach, because we're seeing that without that context, it's too easy to have people pressing buttons, but not understanding why. What do you see happening in libraries with maker spaces?

SB: There is a general shift in how people understand libraries. A lot of times I still run into people, students, faculty or staff who think that a library is just books and databases. That's it.

It's very much **not** that place anymore. Obviously, we do have those resources but most importantly, we are a societal institution. If you look at the literature about learning space design, there's a lot of research on how you design a learning space and what kind of technology to include.

Here (Blackburn College), for example, we have collaborative workstations. We have some new technology where students can work on projects together on a large screen, toggle among their devices. Mobile furniture and mobile whiteboards -- a lot of tutors and students are using those things. We also designed a space for podcasting.

There are a lot of non-traditional services that people don't think about. In terms of databases— I'm not sure about other libraries, but I know in academic libraries, we want to challenge what these companies are making us pay increasingly every year in terms of database fees. This is similar to the understanding that media literacy encourages of the economic structure – isn't it five or six companies that own most of television production? It's the same with the top publishing companies in the US. That's why you see libraries wanting to break through in terms of open access and changes in scholarly publishing; advocating for other options through the tenure process too, in terms of peer review- using blogs for example. There's plenty of open access journals that are peer reviewed, but it's tough for somebody to gain tenure if they don't publish in an elite journal. We're trying to break down some of these power structures, and that's similar to critical media literacy.

TJ: How do we help our communities make sense of media and information literacy?

SB: Seeing the librarian as an educator is key. Librarians in some institutions have faculty status/tenure-track and are required to do publishing. Libraries seems to be in this weird gray area all the time. There are common practices and common ways to move forward. Some institutions, you're not faculty, but you teach and you're responsible to design an entire department, a large department for learning, and you publish just as well. In other institutions, you are tenure track, you're an educator trying to teach, present, and publish for tenure. There are still misunderstandings and stereotypes of libraries and librarians. At our core, we are librarians first.

TJ: What domains are librarians operating in, and where do you see the field moving toward?

SB: The role of an educator is going to continue to be important but it's going to vary by institution. At Research I schools, they're going to have their own future, and how they think things are going to go, and some of that may work for other institutions and some may not. Some larger schools, they're into hiring people with PhDs in Geographic Information Systems. They may work in the library, but they may not have a title of a librarian; they bring in people from outside the field to work in a library and to help with data analysis work that helps to support students and faculty.

Learning space design within libraries is very big, and I see that continuing because of digital technologies, and we're going to have to keep redesigning space that supports learners and their technology needs as well.

We try to be all things to all people on campus. For example, you'll have liaison librarians for different academic departments- one librarian supports the communications department, another supports political science. We're always going to find different ways to support how disciplinary faculty teach, and how their students are going to learn. We're also going to continue to work with Student Affairs, for example career services and student success centers. What kind of software can we help career services with in terms of student employment post-graduation? How are students learning those tools? How are they learning social media, LinkedIn, so that maybe they're networking better and using technology to make connections? I think the sky is the limit, and it's going to be dependent on institutional needs; how trends move forward.

TJ: It's not the Dewey decimal system anymore!

SB: For sure. We have a lot of past stereotypes to address that put libraries and librarians in a box, and we're saying, "Wait a minute, that box isn't even relevant anymore, much less all of the aspects that the school would be missing out on."

I always try to complicate perceptions about my role as a librarian, to complicate those stereotypes for people. That really seems to be when we're most successful, when we can complicate what people think we do, and bring something new to the table. I think the only reason that Natasha Casey (a communications/media literacy professor) and I have been able to collaborate so much is because we have a shared passion for complicating what these two literacies – media and information literacy – mean, and sometimes faculty think they're already teaching these literacies, or think that they are bringing a librarian in to show students the databases. That's not information literacy – a librarian doesn't have to demonstrate databases. Another researcher could do that, or the instructor.

There are plenty of examples of librarians who have become CIOs, chief information officers at colleges and universities because their roles are so overlapping nowadays, compared to maybe even 20 years ago.

TJ: In some ways, libraries are becoming the new community media centers.

SB: Yes, we are. You see that in public libraries too. At some institutions, undergraduates have to build a digital portfolio throughout their undergraduate education. Librarians maintain digital learning labs and they will help students use software to put together a portfolio or whatever else an assignment may be.

TJ: Do you think differences between media and information literacies are disappearing?

SB: I like to think that they're disappearing, but they are not. This is especially true in higher education, we're notoriously siloed in terms of our practices. It's tough to collaborate. I think there are definitely places where work can be done to bring them together more, especially at institutional levels (UNESCO's Global Alliance for Partnerships in Media and Information Literacy (GAPMIL), NAMLE and the American Library Association).

UNESCO's definition of media and information literacy is great in terms of bringing the two together. Once you bring more librarians into the mix, it will be all the more powerful in promoting these concepts.

To me, there are glaringly obvious connections between the fields. We need more interdisciplinary conversations.

TJ: Now we have the cloud. We can easily -- much more easily -- make these connections between the disciplines and I think when we do, we will find that there are a lot of language barriers in the sense that each field has its own vocabulary, but in a lot of ways, we're talking about the same things. I think as these barriers to examining ideas from other fields and being able to share more information together -- as that becomes more possible -- then inevitably you have that eureka moment where you discover that there's a lot more in common than there is different. And where there are differences, they can be bridged.

SB: Right, and that is exactly how [Natasha Casey](#) and I started working together. She brought me into her communications class one day to talk about information resources. I said, "Can I see the syllabus before I come in, just to prep some things?" When I saw the syllabus, I thought, "Wow, we're talking about deconstructing text in media, and questioning some of that power structure, and deconstructing advertisements…" I said, "This is called information literacy." Just by looking at her syllabus and then looking at the assignments, I said, "This is what librarians are doing too." We realized we have a lot of commonalities and we could move forward together.

GAPMIL & NAMLE Meetings June 26-28

The North American Sub-Chapter of the Global Alliance for Partnerships in Media and Information Literacy (GAPMIL), a project of UNESCO, will have its second meeting at Roosevelt University, 430 S. Michigan Avenue in **Chicago** from 1-5 PM on Monday, June 26 during the pre-conference session of NAMLE, which will hold its conference at Roosevelt University on June 26-28.

The GAPMIL meeting (GAPMIL is a UNESCO project) is open to all and attendance is free, thanks to the generous support of NAMLE, which is a GAPMIL member, along with leading Canadian organizations such as MediaSmarts. GAPMIL will form Working Groups and the Steering Committee at this meeting; Working Groups include Advocacy/Policy Development; Outreach/UNESCO Liaison; Research/Policy Development; and the Steering Committee/ Operations for GAPMIL NA. For more information and to RSVP, please contact gapmilnam@gmail.com

See all pre-conference events or **register for NAMLE** here.

International Visitor Leadership Program

CML's Tessa Jolls provided media literacy training as part of the International Visitor Leadership Program sponsored by the U.S. State Department on May 15, 2017 in Los Angeles. Attendees came from Republic of Armenia, Lithuania, Romania, Norway, and Estonia.

About Us…

The Consortium for Media Literacy addresses the role of global media through the advocacy, research and design of media literacy education for youth, educators and parents.

The Consortium focuses on K-12 grade youth and their parents and communities. The research efforts include nutrition and health education, body image/sexuality, safety and responsibility in media by consumers and creators of products. The Consortium is building a body of research, interventions and communication that demonstrate scientifically that media literacy is an effective intervention strategy in addressing critical issues for youth. **http://www.consortiumformedialiteracy.org**

Resources for Media Literacy

Media and Information Literacy Resources

As libraries have expanded their vision and their reach, the literature on their activities has exploded. Below is a sampling of articles that give a picture of how libraries are reinventing themselves:

https://www.chipublib.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2015/04/cpl-maker-lab-making-to-learn.pdf

https://www.lapl.org/whats-on/exhibits/state-of-deception

https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/2016/12/27/fighting-fake-news/

http://www.slj.com/2016/11/industry-news/teaching-media-literacy-now/

https://www.oaklandlibrary.org/blogs/from-main-library/truth-lies-and-quibblers-media-literacy-new-era

http://oedb.org/ilibrarian/a-librarians-guide-to-makerspaces/

http://www.ala.org/transforminglibraries/future/trends/makers

To look at stereotypes of librarians portrayed in film, take a look at *The Hollywood Librarian*, a film distributed by the Media Education Foundation: https://shop.mediaed.org/the-hollywood-librarian-p196.aspx There is also a trailer of the movie available at that link.

Media AND Information Literacy Part 1 can be accessed here.

Med!aLit Moments

How to Make a Maker

The Maker Movement as we know it today is generally held to have coalesced around the launch of MAKE: Magazine in 2005. MAKE: was created by Dale Dougherty, co-founder of O'Reilly Media (a publishing company focused on computer language handbooks), and creator of the first-ever commercial website on the Internet in 1993. He had initially intended to call the magazine HACK, after the original meaning of the word "hacker"—not someone who breaks into computers, but someone who takes things apart to make them better. However, his daughter Katie, then in her early 20s, was adamant that he call it something else. Hacking didn't sound good, she said, she didn't like it. She suggested he call it MAKE, because "everyone likes making things."[i]

From the start, Making was meant to spread beyond expert hackers to "everyone." In this MediaLit Moment, students will discover the values that Makers identify with and promote, by examining a "crappy robots competition" that started in Japan and became popular with Makers worldwide.

AHA!: Makers have values and they want me to share them!
Grade Level: 6-8
Key Question #4: What values, lifestyles and points of view are represented in or omitted from this message?
Core Concept #4: Media have embedded values and points of view.
Key Question #5: Why is this message being sent?
Core Concept #5: Most media messages are created for profit and/or power.

Materials: Computer with high speed internet access, data projector, projection screen
Crappy Robot Competition Video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cOi-pvVQokk
Printouts of "What is Hekobon?" *(sic)* PDF

Activity: Start by asking the students to describe their image of someone who makes robots—a roboticist. What education would they have? How old would they be? How smart would they have to be? Do the students think they could be roboticists? Why or why not?

Then, view the video with students. There will probably be a lot of laughing as the crappy robots fight each other and fail. Ask the students if this video matches up with their idea of a roboticist from earlier. It probably doesn't. However, this silly idea has become very popular in the Maker community and now Hebocons are held all over the world. Why? What is so appealing about Hebocon? Those elements tell us about what the Maker community values.

Next, hand out the "What is Hekobon?" *(sic)* PDF[ii]. Let the students know it has been translated from Japanese by Google Translate—i.e. It's a crappy translation like the crappy robots.

Have the students break into 3 groups, one for each section of "What is Hebocon?": 1.

"Heavy,"/"First, Heavy Robot"/"Second, Heavy Creator;" 2. "Can I make a robot without technology?"/"Hebocon for everyone;" and 3. "Knowledge of the Hebocon."

Ask each group to answer Key Question #4 for their group's section.

Rejoin and have each group report the values they discovered. Once there is a consensus, have them apply Core Concept #5: "Most media messages are created for profit and/or power." Since no one makes money off of Hebocon, what kind of "power" might its creators and organizers be seeking? If they reach the conclusion "the power to spread their values to be shared by others," ask the students which of their own values they would want the power to spread, and how they might go about doing so.

Extended Activity: Have the students plan and promote a Hebocon for their class or school. When producing their rules and promotional materials, direct the students' attention to Key Question #5 for producers, "Have I communicated my purpose effectively?"

This MediaLit Moment was created by Mya Stark, Executive Director, LA Maker Space,
http://lamakerspace.org

[1] Gui Cavalcanti, "Is it a Hackerspace, Makerspace, TechShop, or FabLab?," *MAKE:* (blog), Maker Media Inc., May 22, 2013, http://makezine.com/2013/05/22/the-difference-between-hackerspaces-makerspaces-techshops-and-fablab[1] ヘボコンマスター 石川 大樹, "ヘボコンとは?," @*nifty* (portal), NIFTY Corporation, accessed May 11, 2017, http://portal.nifty.com/hebocon/whats.htm .