

2018 Oregon Doc Camp Report Impact Stories and Recommendations

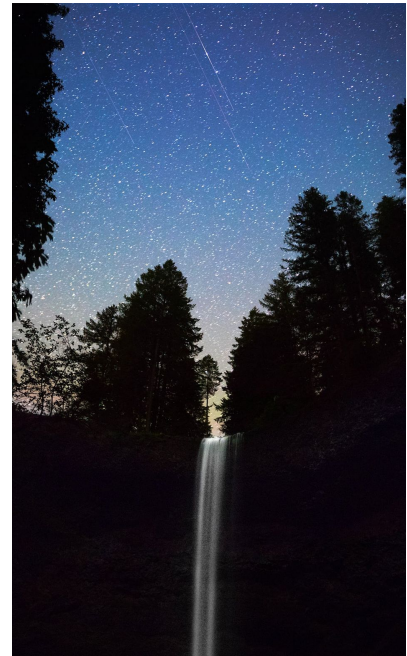
August 23, 2018

The 2018 [Oregon Doc Camp](#) was superb, thanks to the excellent [NW Documentary](#) team in Portland, which hosted the event. With permission from camp leader Jackie Weissman, documentary filmmaker [Pam Kilborn-Miller](#) invited each participant to share a specific impact that happened as a result of their own film(s). What changed for the better?

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Part One: Insights & Impact Categories

1. **Passion & Curiosity:** Films by the camp participants span a stunning range of local, national and international topics: Nature, music, art, adventure, health, ostracism, sexual abuse, democracy, poverty, diversity, children, women, solar technology, history, false convictions, injustice, gentrification, marijuana, horses & donkeys, little free libraries, mob mentality, dam removal, suicide, illegal electronic waste, master Italian tailors and more!
2. **Evidence vs. Desired Impacts:** Most of the stories include examples of evidence-based impacts informed by feedback from the audience; an individual or organization in the film; or a personal impact on the filmmaker. Other stories include desired impacts based on the film's goals.
3. **Surprise Impacts:** Some impacts were planned and others were a joyful surprise, such as a successful crowdfunding campaign that moved the film's retired 94 year old subject to start composing music again.
4. **Sequence:** Positive change can unfold before a film is released, thanks to crowdfunding campaigns and film trailers or teaser videos that raise awareness.
5. **Inspiration:** One filmmaker labored over a story for 11+ years and wanted to give up several times, but she learned from her subjects "don't let anyone discourage you."
6. **Change Starts Here!** Many stories reveal how societal transformation starts one person at a time.



2018 Oregon Doc Camp Location
Silver Falls State Park, Oregon
Photo: [Ben Grayzel](#), Doc Camp filmmaker

The following categories emerged from impact stories submitted by these filmmakers:

1. Audience

- Brian Clark
- Len Davis
- Rami Katz
- Malika Lee
- Ann Talman
- Mike Turner

2. Person or Organization (in the film)

- Gabriel Baron
- Len Davis
- Annette Frahm
- Abigail Hagan
- Molly Kreuzman
- Cambria Matlow
- Linda Robertson
- Diane Estelle Vicari

3. Community, City, Nation or World

- Len Davis
- Tiffany Ellis
- Amy Enser
- Ben Grayzel
- Don Hardy
- Keith Hitchcock
- Mary Knight
- Cornelius Swart

4. Personal (impact on filmmaker)

- Amy Benson
- Jeff Gersh
- Vicki Vasilopoulos
- Susan Wolf

5. Multiple Impacts (attributed to one film)

- Jeris Huntington
- Jackie Weissman

Part Two: Impact Stories from Oregon Doc Camp Participants

The following filmmakers describe a change that happened as a result of their film(s).

1. AUDIENCE:

- Brian Clark (brianjclarkproductions@gmail.com)
 - Film: [Champions of Democracy](#)
 - Impact: This 2015 video focused on the role of a specific NGO in Ukraine. Staff in the organization's Washington DC headquarters and the Ukraine country office said the video really helped explain, clarify and promote work being done by NGOs that are assisting grassroots civil society organizations in Ukraine and elsewhere. The result was that the NGO community saw the importance of civil society to democracy.

- Len Davis (len@pangeality.com)
 - Film: ["The Thrill is Gone, Chicago Beach Guitar Love"](#)
 - Impact: In 2007, Len posted a video of Mexican-American men singing the Thrill is Gone by B.B. King. Ten years later, the daughter of one of the men saw the video and told Len her Dad had passed away and the family didn't think any video existed of him playing music, so the daughter was stunned, thrilled and deeply grateful to stumble upon Len's video.

- Rami Katz (ramikatz@gmail.com)
 - Film: [The Issue of Mr. O'Dell](#)
 - Impact: The story of a 94 year old civil rights activist was not accurately portrayed until this film was completed. Rami said that Mr. O'Dell's words of wisdom inspire audiences to learn from the past and stand strong together to inspire tangible change.

- Malika Lee (likalee3779@yahoo.com)
 - Film: [Seattle to Limbe: The Journey to Sisterhood](#)
 - Impact: The film's teaser raised awareness and moved an audience member to realize they need to ask for permission before touching another person.

- Ann Talman (atalwoman@aol.com)
 - Film: [Woody's Order!](#)
 - Impact: An exceptional young man named Mark Steidl with cerebral palsy saw Woody's Order! twice and told Ann how much it meant to him using his Dynavox communicator which he activates with his eyes. He then interviewed her with his device and made a podcast which just won A Golden Quill Journalism Award in Pittsburgh. A news article about Mark said he's been unable to use his arms or

legs since birth; Mark cannot make clear sounds and he requires a feeding tube. Mark has no cognitive impairment and has always been fully integrated into a normal classroom setting. Woody's Order! had a profound impact on Mark because he witnessed the striking difference between Woody's opportunities as someone born with cerebral palsy in 1948 vs. Mark who was born in 1995. The focus now is on "real abilities." At age 3, Mark learned to use a DynaVox Talking Computer and attended a state-of-the-art school for kids with special needs; he composes music; performed in theater camp, attended college and won a national technology award. Ann hopes that Woody's life as seen through the documentary hopefully will impact lives for many years to come.

- Mike Turner (thewaywetalkmovie@gmail.com)
 - Film: [The Way We Talk](#)
 - Impact: This film explores the ways stuttering has affected the filmmaker's life—the journey of coming to terms with stuttering not being curable, and it being inheritable. After a screening at UCLA, an older man in the audience stood up and said, with a good stutter, "I'm 70 years old and have never introduced myself in public before. My name is J-j-j-jim." ...and then he sat down. He received a standing ovation.

2. PERSON OR ORGANIZATION IN THE FILM:

- Gabriel Baron (gcbaron@gmail.com)
 - Film: [Evidence of Hope: Investigating Sexual and Gender Based Violence in Syria and Iraq](#)
 - Impact: This film focused on international criminal investigators working with the United Nations and Justice Rapid Response (JRR) to investigate sexual and gender-based violence in conflict zones. Gabriel was told the largest fundraising success ever for JRR was likely due to the film. JRR ensures the worst crimes known to humanity are investigated promptly and professionally.
- Len Davis (len@pangeality.com)
 - Film: [Italian Artist Lorenzo Barbieri @ Gaudi Parque Güell in Barcelona Spain](#)
 - Impact: Len filmed an Italian artist in Barcelona and later received this message from him: "My Great Destiny Friend, you can't believe me.. three days before i leave Barcelona, my companero de piso, called himself Morad has robbed my bag with my laptop and my sketchbook!! I felt die.. The only thing that i still have it's your video..I've seen it with tears in eyes, but for joy too.. THANKS FOR BEING THERE!"
- Annette Frahm (annette@frahmcomm.com)
 - Film: [Girls and Glaciers](#) (Password: Girlsandglaciers)

- Impact: [Inspiring Girls Expeditions](#) won a [Force of Nature Fund](#) grant from REI thanks to Annette's film, which allowed the nonprofit organization to expand its program.
- Please contact Annette for a link to view the complete film.

- Abigail Hagan (abby.hagan@yahoo.com)
 - Film: [Guillo](#)
 - Impact: The story focuses on Dr. Gregorio "Guillo" Yanez, a practicing doctor at the Shoulder to Shoulder clinic in Santa Ana, Honduras. He received a medical education despite having to fight issues of poverty since birth. The impact of this film is that the clinic was able to use it for fundraising.

- Molly Kreuzman (molly@earthseasoned.com)
 - Film: [Earth Seasoned #GapYear](#)
 - Impact: To show how young women are as capable as young men to be able to live primitively in the Oregon Cascade Mountains for an entire year. And to reiterate how vital time in nature is for all of us to remember what is truly important. And while we may enjoy nature differently, that nature belongs to all of us without regard to income, race, religion, orientation, political affiliations etc.

- Cambria Matlow (cambria.matlow@gmail.com)
 - Film: [Burning in the Sun](#)
 - Impact: This film won the environmental award at Cinema for Peace Festival in Berlin. The prize was a check for Richard Komp, who appeared in the film, to increase his ability to make an impact. Richard trained locals in Mali to build solar technology on their own and the check allowed Richard to continue this work around the world.

- Linda Robertson (robertson@hws.edu)
 - Film: [Daughters of the New Republic: Harriet Tubman and Sarah Bradford](#)
 - Impact: This historical documentary focuses on a collaboration between Harriet Tubman and her biographer Sarah Bradford that transcended race, class and gender. It revealed Harriet's contribution to the Underground Railroad, her leadership role in a Civil War raid, and much more. The film also focuses on Sarah's commitment to bring Harriet's story to life at great personal cost over many years. The documentary retrieves Sarah Bradford from the well of history. She gave us Harriet Tubman's voice.

- Diane Estelle Vicari (docdanceproductions@gmail.com)
 - Film: [Shadow Man: The Sammy Nestico Story](#)

- Impact: Legendary classical, jazz and big band composer, orchestrator, writer, arranger and educator Sammy Nestico was stunned that so many people responded on Facebook to the Kickstarter crowdfunding campaign for his film, that at the age of 94, 2.5 years after retirement, it moved him start writing music again.

3. COMMUNITY, CITY, NATION OR WORLD:

- Len Davis (len@pangeality.com)
 - Film: [The Digital Dump](#)
 - Impact: The president of Nigeria assembled his cabinet to watch Len's film about the illegal electronic waste trade Nigeria. Len later heard that the president was moved to tears by the film.
- Tiffany Ellis (www.jadamalifilms.com/contact.html)
 - Film: [Koorliny Noonook Boodja: Back to Country](#)
 - Impact: This project included three Aboriginal oral histories, plus filmmaking and interview training for Aboriginal youth, who then collaborated with elders to document the history and significance of their homeland. The project helped facilitate communication between generations and trained kids in storytelling plus technology.
- Amy Enser (amy@higherames.com)
 - Film: [Dyna Does Dressage](#)
 - Impact: This underdog story about the first mule ever to compete at the national level in the competitive equestrian sport of dressage changed the equine community's prejudices about mules around the world. It led to a policy change regarding which animals are allowed to compete.
- Ben Grayzel (bengrayzel@gmail.com)
 - Film: [High School](#)
 - Impact: Ben's film about marijuana in an American public high school changed drug education because he exposed the disconnect in knowledge between students and teachers. Ben's film was not anti-drug propaganda, but on a personal level Ben began to doubt whether legalizing weed was a good idea based on his personal experience and what he witnessed in school. Ben was interviewed for a television news story, which helped validate his work.
- Don Hardy (don@ktffilms.com)
 - Film: [Witch Hunt](#)

- Impact: In the mid-1980's, dozens of working-class Moms & Dads in Bakersfield, California had their lives destroyed when their town was whipped into a frenzy by allegations of child molestation and they were convicted of this horrible crime without any evidence. When we interviewed them for the film, after all of their convictions had been overturned, it was the first time they'd been given a chance to tell their stories. One family requested to have their identities hidden when they recounted their saga. Years later, when the film premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival many of the families profiled in the film took the stage for the Q&A and received a standing ovation from the audience. Even the couple who didn't want to be identified in the film. Now, they knew people believed their story and they could stop hiding from injustice.
- Keith Hitchcock (info@hocusfocusmedia.com)
 - Film: [Little Free Libraries](#) on Seattle Channel
 - Impact: This story inspired people to build tiny libraries in front of their homes, which creates community and increases the sharing economy. The Seattle Channel staff said the story had above average views and reach.
- Mary Knight (maryknighthappy@yahoo.com)
 - Film: [Am I Crazy? My journey to determine if my memories are true](#)
 - Impact: This is a personal documentary which explores recovered memories. Mary didn't remember her childhood trauma until she was 37-years old. Sitting across from professionals who don't believe memories like hers are credible enabled Mary to confront her past and become even more certain of her recollection. Mary's film has received positive feedback from survivors and from professionals who work with survivors in such countries as Australia, Canada, Germany, Norway, and Britain. She's pleased that sharing her own process and happy ending helps others heal. Since children are, unfortunately, still being abused in extreme and horrendous ways, the fact that people who have no related life experiences become aware of this type of abuse by watching the film is the impact Mary finds most rewarding.
- Cornelius Swart (pricedoutmovie.com/filmmakers)
 - Film: [Priced Out: 15 Years of Gentrification in Portland, Oregon](#)
 - Impact: Oregon has very loose tenant/landlord regulation and there are a great number of landlords in the Oregon legislature: Over 30 percent in the Senate, and over 40 percent in the House in 2015. The impact of this film is that a Senator who opposed low income housing and was also a landlord lost his seat in an election.

4. PERSONAL (for the filmmaker):

- Amy Benson (benson@nonfictionmedia.com)
 - Film: [Drawing the Tiger](#)
 - Impact: If someone had told me before I began our feature documentary that it would take 7 years, would require raising 300k via grants, crowd funding and asking people for money, all nighters, letting go of hygiene... I would have run away. But I have NO regrets. The process changed me profoundly. I now have the confidence to do the things I want to do. I learned about creating a team & about my own leadership skills. I am not afraid to ask for what I need/want. I am not afraid of failure. I am proud of the film. I am proud of myself.
 - Also, Amy's film created a positive ripple effect when she helped the lead character's best friend (who was not in the film) get into a two year advanced nursing program. This person is now on the board of directors for an NGO.

- Jeff Gersh (Jeff@NarrativeLab.com)
 - Film: [What's a River For? The Elwha Undammed](#)
 - Impact: Over six years, Jeff's company ([NarrativeLab](#)) documented the largest dam removal in American history. He said that feeling the first shake of the earth and seeing the river crash through the wall was like watching the birth of a child. Within days, salmon were swimming up the re-opened sections of the Elwha river for the first time in 100 years. For a different film that supported people who have lost someone to suicide, Jeff described notes he received from viewers around the world. The personal impact was experiencing that his work "mattered to someone."

- Vicki Vasilopoulos (vicki@orestesfilms.com)
 - Film: [Men of the Cloth](#)
 - Impact: Three Italian master tailors share their pride and devotion to their Old World craft while confronting their challenging role in the twilight of their career. Vicki filmed this story over 11 years and wanted to give up on it several times, but she learned from the master tailors "don't let anyone discourage you."

- Susan Wolf (swolf.redspokefilms@gmail.com)
 - Film: [Mata Hari: The Naked Spy](#)
 - Impact: Mata Hari represents the power we have to re-invent our own lives. She overcame a lot of trauma in her early life, but she never became a victim. Susan said the audience was moved by Mata Hari's struggles to live a sexually free and independent life in a time when it was difficult for women to do that. "Learning about Mata Hari's life and discovering how relevant her story is today was the most interesting part." Susan said Mata Hari inspired her with how courageously she faced her death.

5. Multiple Impacts (attributed to one film):

- Jeris Huntington (jerishuntington@gmail.com)
 - Virtual Reality Film: [Shifting POV: Standing Rock](#)
 - Multiple Impacts: The VR 360 film we shot on the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation served in three ways: 1. Because of its novel 360 surround orientation close to the Front Lines of the 11.20.16 Bridge Action, the No Dakota Access Pipeline #NODAPL legal team used the video for legal defense of the Water Protectors involved in the action. 2. This film instigated the first **Social VR / VR for Good and Social Impacts Panel** in AltSpace VR which opened the door to a new virtual reality pathway used for Social Good. 3. This film won an inaugural 2016 Oculus Launchpad Award. 4. Finally, the film heightened the awareness of what it was to stand on the front lines during the peaceful protests with the Water Protectors at the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation during the NODAPL protests.
- Jackie Weissman (jackie@nwdocumentary.org)
 - Film: [Rock N Roll Mamas](#)
 - Multiple Impacts: In this hour-long documentary, three indie rockers/mamas strive to follow their creative dreams while also providing for their families in an alternative lifestyle that is often judged harshly by our society. Over the course of seven years, award-winning filmmaker Jackie Weissman followed Kristin Hersh of Throwing Muses, Zia McCabe of The Dandy Warhols, and the up-and-coming hip hop artist, Ms. Su'ad. The film takes us into their daily lives as they struggle with both economic instability and the rigors of touring with children, all interwoven with the blood, sweat, and personal fulfillment they find in performing. Rock N Roll Mamas played to sold out audiences all over the world. This film created a very robust online community with fans from all the musicians followed; As a result, the film continues to have a following on Facebook. To further the impact of the film, Jackie Weissman recently published a chapter about her experiences making Rock N Roll Mamas in the academic journal, [The Music of Motherhood: History, Healing, and Activism](#).

PART THREE: RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE IMPACT

- **Len Davis, Pangeality Productions:**
 - [Connectivity Project](#) by Rose Madrone. Watch these short films about the ripple effects of our actions in an interconnected world.
- **Jax Deluca, National Endowment for the Arts**

Jax emphasized the importance of partnerships and recommended the following sites:

 - Doc Society (formerly BritDoc): [Impact Guide and Field Kit](#)

- American University: [Center for Media & Social Impact](#)
- [The Fledgling Fund](#)
- **Stephanie Malone, Ken Burns film company:**
Stephanie worked on the Ken Burns documentary titled “[The National Parks: America’s Best Idea](#).” She attended Doc Camp and offered the following ideas to improve impact:
 - Ask yourself “what change do I want to effect?”
 - What are your impact themes?
 - Impact producers plan earlier rather than later.
 - Partnerships are key.
 - Funding might come from community partners, direct corporate funding or an NEA grant for engagement and impact.
 - What will you measure? For example, how many people watched the film? How many partner screenings? Books checked out? What were the ratings?

Thanks to the Oregon Doc Camp organizers, presenters and participants for making this report possible. (Photo below: Jan Sonnenmair, 2018)



About the Author



[Pamela Kilborn-Miller](#) is currently producing a documentary film in Seattle. After working in the KING-TV documentary unit, then Microsoft for ten years, Pam’s clients included the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Amazon. She co-founded a global movement that led to managing a [TED Prize project](#) with 150 partners in 30 nations. Pam is delighted to return to her first love with [a doc film](#) that’s tentatively scheduled for release in 2021. Feel free to contact her at pamelakilbornmiller@gmail.com.