

ALA VRT Panel

Promoting Public Performance Rights at City Tech

The strength of promoting PPR at the New York City College of Technology, locally known as City Tech, has been partnering with classes. City Tech is a commuter school located in the heart of downtown Brooklyn, so we don't have much of a college "culture" where students, our target audience, come to view a film. They typically go to class and then go home or work.

When I first came to City Tech, there was an internal film screening library committee called Cinem@Tech where we would plan monthly screenings of films with PPR or those within the public domain. This proved largely unsuccessful, despite posting flyers, social media campaigns, and email announcements.

That changed with the screening of 2008's *in complete world*, a documentary focusing on Brooklyn voters during the 2008 presidential election. We had partnered with the Grants Office, who not only had a much larger reach to other departments than the library, but also acquired the PPR. They also invited the director to answer Q&A. This had an amazing turnout, where we had to move the screening from a classroom to an auditorium.

We have also had success partnering with other departments such as the English and African-American Studies Depts, having a "locked-in" audience as instructors would bring their classes for screenings. One such example is the NEH/Gilman-Lehrman funded grant, *Created Equal*.

This grant provided four films with PPR: *The Abolitionists*, *Slavery by Another Name*, *Freedom Riders*, and *The Loving Story*. A scholar would introduce and show clips of the films, as well as speak of their historical context. The scholar would have a discussion with students regarding the clips. The grant also provided funds for beverages and food. The event itself was promoted using flyers, social media, and in-class announcements.

Scholars included faculty within and outside City Tech. Dr. Prithi Kanakamedala, related *The Abolitionists* with Brooklyn's local historical context. Prof. Dionne Bennett provided scholarly insight on the working conditions of convict labor and their modern day implications using the film, *Slavery By Another Name*. She also discussed the Black Power/Liberation Movements for *Freedom Riders*. Dr. Kevin Mallard of Syracuse University discussed the legality of interracial marriages in the times of *The Loving Story*. A variety of classes participated in the screening, including Blacks in Science, Technology and Business, Black Theater, African American History, and a class entitled Hip Hop Worldview.

We have also labeled "PPR" on our physical media and bib records in the catalog. This has made no impact on the success of our screenings, but we felt it important to inform faculty that these items have PPR.