

MEDIA IN ACTION



INTRODUCTION

CURRICULUM WORKSHOP SERIES

When Global Action Project (G.A.P.) was founded in 1991, it was one of a handful of groups working to engage young people in using media as a way to actively participate in the world around them. Since then, G.A.P. has connected with many hundreds of youth who have made media in order to inspire dialogue and change. Our mission is to work with young people most affected by injustice to build the knowledge, tools, and relationships needed to create media for community power, cultural expression, and political change.

Youth media practitioners often describe it as a way to give voice to young people. We go further than this. G.A.P.'s approach to media production and analysis cultivates young people's "critical literacy"—their capacity to interact with the world as thinkers, learners, and producers—by engaging them in a process of analysis, interpretation, reflection, and a "re-writing" of what is "read." Young people use storytelling to challenge dominant narratives and write new histories. In this way, powerful social justice media is far more than a megaphone for a young person—it's a way to make the world a better place.

Rewriting the story starts with an understanding of the forces that shaped it in the first place. Our curriculum fosters this understanding by helping young people identify the root causes of the challenges their communities face.



GAP YOUTH AT A RALLY

When they grasp this, they have a much broader context for their inquiry, messaging, debate, and production. It can also galvanize young people's creative and collective energy toward becoming effective social actors with powerful analytical and creative tools.

And this is why G.A.P.'s media arts workshops enable young people to move beyond a simple identification of social issues, beyond seeing the symptoms, to a deeper inquiry and inspiration to make media that will have an impact. At the same time, they develop as individuals - informed and engaged members of the world around them.

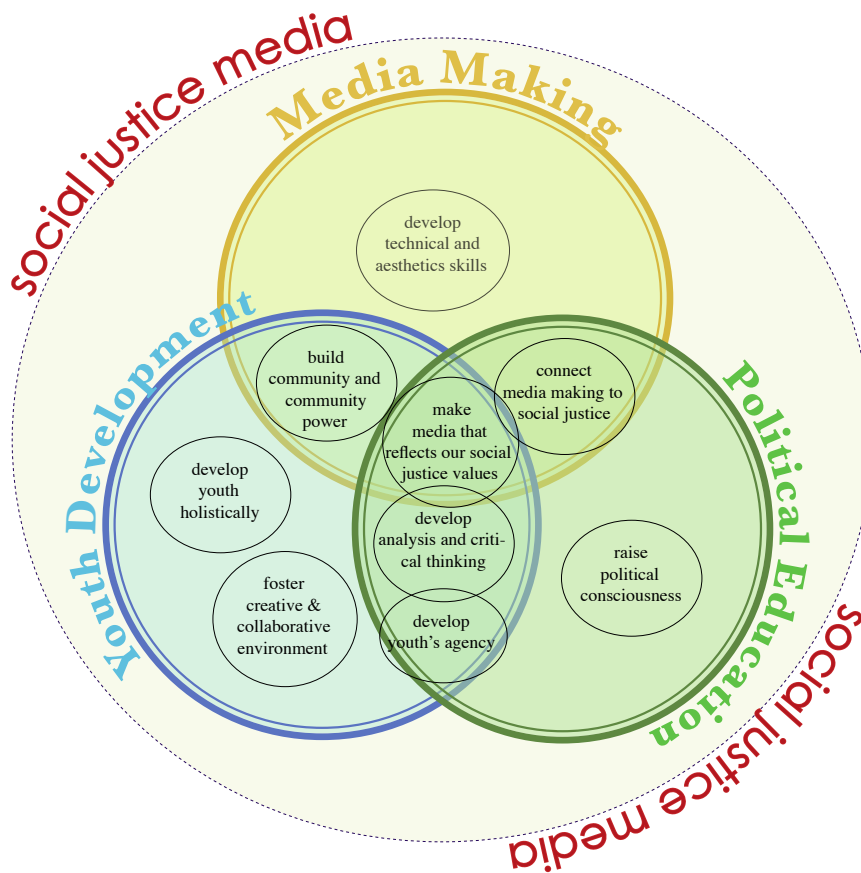
"Young people's work that focuses on individual learning and development, rather than on changing their surrounding, is not real participation—participation should not only give young people more control over their own lives and experiences but should also grant them real influence over issues that are crucial to the quality of life and justice in their communities." - Mullahey, Susskind & Checkoway (1999)

Our Approach

G.A.P. brings youth development and social justice together by supporting young people as they collaboratively produce original media. We structure all projects around this process. The core values that inform our approach are:

- A holistic approach to the healthy development of youth. A young person’s individual growth is inseparable from her critical awareness of the social and political worlds around her as well as her sense of agency in her community.
- Recognizing young people as agents of social change. Young people have the ability and desire to challenge systemic oppressions to bring about social justice.
- Popular education methodology. We value a teaching and learning process that allows youth and adults to experience the power of collective knowledge-building.
- Political education that promotes liberation, so that everyday people, rather than an elite few, control resources and the cultural discourse.
- Using high-quality and compelling works of media to foster young people’s agency as well as larger social, political and cultural change. A collective creative process that fosters inclusiveness, supports group problem-solving, and parallels our social vision of equitable power distribution.

Global Action Project
What We Do



- Develop Youth Holistically
- Make Socially-Conscious Media
- Raise Political Consciousness
- Build Community and Community Power

These values come together at the intersection of media-making, political education and youth development, and are reflected in the design of our programs as well as the media that young people make.

It’s why we use a popular education approach, engage youth in a collaborative, collective experience, and encourage dialogue, team-work and leadership. We also make sure to have a lot of fun.

Who should use the curriculum

This collection of workshops comes out of G.A.P.’s programs, and we have geared it to educators (both in and outside of school), organizers and facilitators working with young people (between the ages of 14-21) who are adversely affected by structural, institutional and cultural oppressions. We hope that it can be of use to those already engaged in movement-building and seeking ways to creatively and effectively bring young people into the mix as media-makers.

What this curriculum will not offer, however, are comprehensive video-making skills.

In general, what you will find in each section are warm ups, critical viewing activities, group discussion, political education, media analysis and production activities, and wrap ups for closure. For tips on what makes a good workshop space, please see our “Workshop Principles & Facilitation Tips” document.

Encouraging Creativity, Thought, and Active Solutions

At G.A.P. we foster creativity, thought, and active solutions toward effecting justice. We have found that youth thrive at the crossroads of these three forces. We hope this curriculum will do the same for you—members of the youth media field, organizers, educators, and practitioners—and others who seek new ways to meet young people at their brightest point of inspiration, create powerful communication tools, and become agents of positive change.



PEOPLE POWER



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