

APR18-2018-020043

Abstract for an Invited Paper
for the APR18 Meeting of
the American Physical Society

Harnessing Curiosity and Storytelling to Engage the Public

BECKY THOMPSON, American Physical Society

One of the hardest parts of public engagement is grabbing and holding people's interest. Kids are often seen as naturally curious but that curiosity doesn't drop off as they reach adulthood, it just gets buried a bit. To engage either kids or adults it helps to tap into that curiosity; answering their questions, and then answering questions they didn't know they had is key. This talk will focus on two different approaches to engaging people through natural curiosity; using comics and using movies. Good storytelling makes the reader curious as to what will become of the characters. How will it end? By creating a laser superhero and an engaging story readers are taken on an adventure and learn some science along the way. As people watch movies and TV they often find themselves wondering things, like, could there really be a 700ft tall ice wall? Could dragons fly? Was there room for Jack on the door? Could a reindeer really jump across a crevasse? Science can answer many of these questions in a way that makes people want to listen.