A Film to Decrease Worldsuck

An Honors Thesis (HONR 499)

by

Hannah Lindgren

Thesis Advisor
Peter "Sonny" Wingler

Ball State University
Muncie, Indiana

April 2013

Expected Date of Graduation

May 2013
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Abstract

A Film to Decrease Worldsuck is a documentary in which self-proclaimed "Nerdfighters" explore what and who a Nerdfighter is, where Nerdfighters came from, and what they do. Produced, directed, and edited by Hannah Lindgren as her senior honors thesis, this film – eleven months in the making – is comprised of convention footage gathered by two primary videographers as well as crowdsourced interviews and video from dozens of Nerdfighters. A play on the Nerdfighters’ charity fund, The Fund to Decrease Worldsuck, A Film to Decrease Worldsuck aims to shed light on what this amazing group of young people is doing to help the world. It will screen in ten cities around the world from March to August.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Sonny Wingler for advising me on this project. Without his faith in me, and his willingness to tell me when I was wrong (which I think he might have enjoyed a little too much!), this film could not have been made.

I would also like to thank my parents for helping me financially, emotionally, and mentally – pretty much in every way possible besides making the film! Without their never-ending encouragement and love I would not be where I am today. Their support means the world to me.

Finally, I would like to thank the over one hundred Nerdfighters and non-Nerdfighters that collaborated with me on this project. Their help includes, but is not limited to: contributing money, filming interviews, promoting on social media, and submitting music, art, and footage.
NARRATIVE

A look inside the process of making A Film to Decrease Worldsuck.
A CHANCE ENCOUNTER  
(Or: How My Senior Thesis Happened)  

When it came time to decide what to do for my honors thesis, I initially resigned myself to doing a research paper rather than a creative project, even though I knew I would enjoy a creative project far more, because I knew how busy I would be during my last year of school. But when I happened to run into John Green, one-half of my favorite YouTube vloggers, the Vlogbrothers, at the movie theater, I changed my mind. I remember thinking how passionate I am about the community of people who are fans of Hank and John Green – the Vlogbrothers. At the time, I felt merely at the fringe of Nerdfighteria – not entirely a part of it. I admired the work done by the brothers and their followers, and their dedication to each other and the things that they loved. Slowly, the idea for the film grew until it dominated my thoughts, so I decided to go for it. Making this film as my honors thesis enabled me to put into practice all that I have learned while at school, as well as learn first-hand all the steps of documentary production.

By the end of April I had two videographers (Kayla Sprayue and Paul Weller) and a faculty advisor (Sonny Wingler) on board! I created a website and social media pages. In late April, Kayla and I filmed a video that explained what I wanted to do for the film. The video also asked Nerdfighters to help by participating in a social media campaign to gain permission from the Vlogbrothers to make the film. In the end it took less than 24 hours to get a response, via Twitter, from John Green. John gave their permission, but said that they were unable to sit for interviews for the foreseeable future due to busy schedules. This comment helped me form the idea for the film to be made more by Nerdfighters and about Nerdfighters, rather than just about the Vlogbrothers. I decided that by filming at VidCon (the online video convention started by the Green brothers), and receiving submissions of vlogs by Nerdfighters, telling us what being a Nerdfighter means to them, I could tell the story of Nerdfighteria.

In May, we launched a Kickstarter campaign to raise the money to send Kayla, Paul, and myself to Anaheim, California, to VidCon. My grandparents collectively donated $500, but the film was going to cost around $2,000 total. We set our Kickstarter goal for $1,000 and we continued our social media campaign, this time to get the attention of Nerdfighters who would contribute money to the film in exchange for rewards (such as credit in the film, posters, and copies of the film). There was a rush at the beginning, but we stalled at around a few hundred dollars. Then with about a week to go, John Green retweeted something one of our social media volunteers had sent via Twitter, and overnight we received a rush of backers and were within sight of our goal. With four days to go, we had exceeded it. The next step was to book our tickets to VidCon. Through email, we were able to secure press passes, we booked plane flights and the hotel, got insurance for the Ball State TCOM cameras, and were ready to go for VidCon in late June.
In November, I felt that we needed a push to get more excitement out of the Nerdfighter community, so I put together our first trailer. This trailer was intended to be more of a call for more vlog entries, and it did succeed in doing that. In the trailer, we asked Nerdfighters to tell us their story, to help us tell the story of Nerdfighteria. Because of promotion from Nerdfighter sites like the Tumblr page “Effyeahnerdfighters,” we received more than 1,600 views on our trailer in about a week. We also received a handful more vlogs. However, the biggest benefit was that more Nerdfighters than ever became aware of the film, and we gained many more followers on all of our social media pages.

Also in November, I came up with the idea to screen the film in cities around the world. I knew that eventually I wanted the film online, but it seemed very anti-Nerdfighter to keep it strictly online. I then thought of the idea to make use of the title, “A Film to Decrease Worldsuck,” and not only have the film decrease Worldsuck by raising awareness of Nerdfighteria, but also by doing something that helps others. So I decided to make the screenings of the film into opportunities for Nerdfighters to decrease Worldsuck at the local level. Each screening would be tied to a charity or non-profit, and instead of charging an admission fee for the event, we would ask for donation items for that charity.

In order to organize these screenings, I needed money, and we had exhausted our supply from Kickstarter and then some. I then applied for an ASPiRE grant through Ball State, and received $200 toward creating and mailing posters and copies of the DVD to each screening location. These screenings will happen from March to August 2013, and thanks to the grant we can now send the necessary supplies. To choose the locations for the screenings, we held a contest during the months of January and February 2013. Potential hosts had to tell us when they wanted to have it, where they wanted to have it, which charity they would like to help, and much more. In the end we chose 10 locations: Muncie, IN, Indianapolis, IN, Palatine, IL, Tahlequah, OK, San Jose, CA, Pittsburgh, PA, Boston, MA, New York, NY, Washington, D.C., and Dublin, Ireland.

The culmination of nearly a year of work, these events will be incredibly rewarding. Whether I will be there in actuality or in spirit, I know that these events will bring Nerdfighters together, and in doing so help decrease Worldsuck by an enormous amount. After all of the screenings have taken place, I will put the film online for all Nerdfighters and non-Nerdfighters alike to see.

Producing this film as my senior honors thesis gave me real-world experience in every aspect of documentary production. From conception to completion, I was responsible for things like social media, marketing, logistics, fundraising, editing, and distribution. What this production required me to do is exactly what I want to do with my career, and it was so much more than I could have learned solely in the classroom. I will not say that making this film has been easy. At times I asked myself why I did not just write a paper and save myself time and stress. But in the end there is nothing like having an entire community join with you to create something that will mean so much to so many people. I became part of an incredible community, and I now have the ability to share that community with others.
IMAGES

Promotional items, screenshots, and other images from making the film.
KICKSTARTER CAMPAIGN

Liza Jayne @LifeasLiza
@hankgreen @realjohngreen Could you give exposure to a Nerdfighter documentary Kickstarter trying to meet their goal? kck.st/JtCKAx
Retweeted by John Green
View media

$1,142 pledged 114% funded 24 backers 4 days to go

28 BACKERS
$1,177 PLEDGED OF $1,000 GOAL
0 SECONDS TO GO

FUNDING SUCCESSFUL
This project successfully raised its funding goal 23 minutes ago.
FOR EVERY

50

PEOPLE

who sign up for our newsletter, we will give away...

1

11x17 promotional poster &

2

dvds of the film

SIGN UP TODAY!
WE WANT YOU
- to be on the -
A FILM
TO DECREASE
WORLDSUCK
VOLUNTEER TEAM
{ social media }{ outreach }{ promotion }{ résumé experience }
Send your info to nerdfightersdocumentary@gmail.com!

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR VOLUNTEER TEAM:
VICKY  bob
dania  marisa
ANNA

A FILM
TO DECREASE
WORLDSUCK
So what should I vlog about?

- How did you become a Nerdfighter?
- Have you/how did you meet Hank Green?
- What is Brotherhood 2.0?
- How did Nerdfighteria develop?
- Tell us about Hank's music!
- What's the definition of a Nerdfighter?
- Tell us a story about a Nerdfighter gathering!

- Have you/how did you meet John Green?
- What are some Nerdfighter inside jokes?
- What has Nerdfighteria done to help decrease worldsuck and increase awesome?
- Tell us about John's books!
- Why do you think Nerdfighteria grew so quickly?
- What makes being a Nerdfighter so awesome?
FIRST SET OF POSTERS

A FILM TO DECREASE WORLDSUCK
{ the nerdfighters documentary }

A FILM TO DECREASE WORLDSUCK
{ the nerdfighters documentary }
VIDCON

A Film to Decrease Worldsuck
A nerdfighters documentary
help us tell the story of nerdfighters
(tell us your story)

Nerdfighters Documentary at VidCon!

408 views

NerdfightersDoc 13 videos

Subscribe
WANTED

STATE OR COUNTRY LIAISONS
TO HOST NERDFIGHTER GATHERINGS
AND INTERVIEW NERDFIGHTERS
FOR A Film to Decrease Worldsuck

- REWARD -

Email nerdfightersdocumentary@gmail.com for more information.

NERDFIGHTERS DOCUMENTARY
liaison team
MUSIC SUBMISSIONS

CALLING ALL NERDFIGHTER MUSICIANS.

nerdfightersdocumentary@gmail.com

NERDFIGHTERS DOCUMENTARY

musicians
THE FINAL PUSH

A Film to Decrease Worldsuck - Trailer 1
NerdfightersDoc • 13 videos

IT'S NOT TOO LATE!
SUBMIT A VLOG FOR
A FILM TO DECREASE
WORLDSUCK

Click the link below or email us at nerdfightersdocumentary@gmail.com!

WE CAN'T MAKE THIS FILM WITHOUT YOU!
We're also excited to say that we've received a $200 grant from BSU that will allow us to send supplies out for 10 screenings across the US!

A rough edit of the film will be done on Thursday! Exciting!

We're looking for music for the film! If you or anyone you know might be interested, pass it on! pic.twitter.com/xvRgh27P

We have over 1,000 views on our trailer! Thanks #Nerdfighters! youtu.be/0VkJvCL9-xWs

At a loss about what to vlog? Here's an updated list of questions you can answer! pic.twitter.com/gBXINWnK

Have some unanswered questions about how to contribute to the film? Check out our quick FAQ video - youtu.be/K5iqbJlwDkA

Hey @realjohngreen & @hankgreen - Check out the trailer for A Film to Decrease Woldswuck. It's happening! Exciting! :) youtu.be/0VKCLv9-xWs

Here it is! The first A Film to Decrease Woldswuck trailer :) youtu.be/0VKCLv9-xWs
SCREENINGS CONTEST

DECREASE WORLDSUCK!
Donations for a local charity will be collected at each screening.

A FILM TO DECREASE WORLDSUCK
- The Nerdfighters Documentary -

This summer only.
10 cities will host screenings. Could yours be one of them?

To get information about hosting one of these events, email nerdfightersdocumentary@gmail.com!
PRODUCTION

Items utilized and created during the production process.
Questions for Hank and John Green:

Tell us what Brotherhood 2.0 is and how it came about.

What made you decide to use YouTube as an outlet?

How has the YouTube vlog community changed since you started? Were there many vloggers when you started?

Who were you fans of before/how did they influence you?

Why did you decide to continue vlogging after Brotherhood 2.0?

What is good about the YouTube community?

What are your thoughts on YouTube as a global community/promoter of international communication?

What is a Nerdfighter? What is Nerdfighteria?

What is the typical Nerdfighter like? Why do you think they relate to you?

How did the Nerdfighter community develop? Did it surprise you?

Give us a little background on how Nerdfighteria grew from the Brotherhood 2.0 era to what it is today.

What about Nerdfighteria and the Nerdfighters inspires you?

What are some of the philanthropic efforts Nerdfighteria is involved in?

Tell us about Kiva.org and Water.org and how Nerdfighteria is involved.

What is the Fund to Decrease Worldsuck? What is the Project for Awesome?

Tell us a little about how knowledge and learning is valued by Nerdfighteria and what you guys do through your various educational projects to help promote that.

Do you have any good stories you can share about individual Nerdfighters? People who fell in Nerdfighter love, Esther, etc.

What is the Tour de Nerdfighting, and what is it like for you to go on the tour?

Do you think Nerdfighters help decrease Worldsuck? In what ways? What else can people do to help?

Should the viewers become Nerdfighters? 😊

Has starting this, forming Nerdfighteria, etc. changed your life? How?

What do you see in the future of YouTube for the community and for vloggers?
Rewards for "A Film to Decrease Worldsuck" Support

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Rewards for "A Film to Decrease Worldsuck" Support

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VidCon 2012: “A Film to Decrease Worldsuck” Schedule

Tuesday, June 26

• Paul picks up half of the equipment

Wednesday, June 27

• Hannah travels from NYC to California
  o Leave NYC 10:15am
  o Arrive Anaheim 2:45pm
• Paul travels from Indy to California
  o Leave Indy 11:40am
  o Arrive in Anaheim 2:50pm
• Airport offers shuttle service – go to the customer service desk – usually $10 per person or something like that
• Check into the hotel (can check in after 4pm)
  o Sheraton Park Hotel at the Anaheim Resort
  o 1855 South Harbor Boulevard, Anaheim
  o California 92802, United States
  o Phone: (714) 750-1811

Thursday, June 28

• Kayla picks up equipment on the way to the airport
• Kayla flies from Indy to California
  o Leave Indy 7:20pm
  o Arrive in Anaheim 10:30pm
• Hannah and Paul attend the Official Industry Party 7-10pm

Friday, June 29

• 8:00am – Registration – Hall A Foyer
• 9:00am-10:45am – Arena
• 11:00am-12:00pm
  o 201AB – “Lights, Camera, Activism! How YouTube Creators Are Changing the World Through Online Activism”
  o 207B – “U Trollin’”
  o 207D – “Effective Community Management on YouTube”
  o 208AB – “So You Want to be a Vlogger? Now What?”
  o Ballroom CDE – “Hank and John say “Hi””
• 12:00pm-1:00pm
  o Lunch and try to interview YouTubers/Nerdfighters
• 1:00pm-2:00pm
  o 207D – “Making the World Better with Online Video”
  o 209AB – “Vloggers Tell All”
• 2:15pm-3:15pm
  o 207D – “Effective Community Management on YouTube”
• 3:30pm-5:00pm – Arena
• 8:00pm-11:00pm – Arena – Concert
• 11:00pm-1:00pm – Arena – Dance Party?
Saturday, June 30

- 8:00am – Registration – Hall A Foyer
- 9:00am-10:45am – Arena
- 11:00am-12:00pm
  - 201AB – “Collaborate with a YouTube Star... in just 1 hour!”
  - 206AB – “The Evolution of Storytelling on the Web”
  - 209AB – “Easy as 1, 2, 3. Education on YouTube”
  - 210B – “The Rise of Viral Videos”
- 12:00pm-1:00pm
  - Lunch and try to interview YouTubers/Nerdfighters
- 1:00pm-2:00pm
  - 205AB – “Web Series Spotlight: The Lizzie Bennet Diaries”
  - 207B – “My Favorite Web Series”
- 2:15-3:15pm
  - 205AB – “Songwriting for YouTube”
  - 210D – “Digital Diversity: Emerging Leaders in the Multicultural Video Landscape”
- 3:30pm-5:00pm – Arena
- 8:00pm-11:00pm – Arena – Concert

Sunday, July 1

- Check out of hotel (by noon)
- I think we may have to take a taxi back to the airport
- Paul flies back to Indy
  - Depart 7:45am
  - Arrive 8:24pm
- Kayla flies back to Indy
  - Depart 9:00am
  - Arrive 6:30pm
- Hannah flies back to New York
  - Depart 7:45am
  - Arrive 8:28pm

Monday, July 2

- Return all equipment
NERDFIGHTER GATHERING INSTRUCTIONS

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT:

• **Sound** – What sort of microphone/sound recording device do you have? Do you need to be in a quiet location for this gathering? When you are interviewing someone, should you pull him or her away from the rest of the group so you don't get excess noise?

• **Tripod** – Vlogs can really be either handheld or on a tripod, so do what works best for you, but remember how many of these interviews you will be doing, and think about whether you want to hold a camera up for that entire time.

• **Background** – What will be in the background of these interviews? Should you switch it up every once in a while?

• It would be great if you could also get footage of the gathering itself. People talking, milling around, playing music, laughing, doing the Nerdfighter sign, etc.

ASKING QUESTIONS:

• The interviewer's voice will not be in the final film, so remember to tell your interviewees to rephrase the question in their answer. For example, if I asked “What is Kiva.org?” they would need to respond, “Kiva.org is...” not “It is...” This will make it easier for us to edit.

• You are not restricted to the questions listed below. You may ask whatever questions you would like. However, you need to cover the questions below several times with multiple people. We will want to cut between people telling essentially the same things; otherwise it gets boring just looking at the same person!

• You also do not have to cover EVERY question with EVERY person. Spread the love around!

• Try different techniques to change it up – you could interview two people at once, for example.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

• What was Brotherhood 2.0, how did it come about, and what is it now?
• How did the Nerdfighter community develop?
• How long have you been watching Vlogbrothers videos?
• What is a Nerdfighter? What is Nerdfighteria?
• What is the typical Nerdfighter like?
• Why are you a Nerdfighter?
• How did you become a Nerdfighter?
• Why do you think Nerdfighteria grew so quickly?
• Tell us about Hank's music!
• Tell us about John's books!
• What are some Nerdfighter inside jokes? Explain how they came about.
• In what ways to Nerdfighters help decrease Worldsuck?
• What are some of the philanthropic efforts Nerdfighteria is involved in?
• Tell us about Kiva.org and Water.org and how Nerdfighteria is involved.
• What is the Fund to Decrease Worldsuck?
• What is the Project for Awesome?
• Tell us a little about how knowledge and learning is valued by Nerdfighteria and what the Vlogbrothers do to promote that.
• Have you been to the Tour de Nerdfighting? What was it like?
• Tell us a story about being a Nerdfighter (meeting fellow Nerdfighters, Hank and John, etc.)
• How has becoming a Nerdfighter changed your life?
Nerdfighter Gatherings
- for -
A Film to Decrease Worldsuck

State/Country Liaisons Must:

- Be located in or be willing to travel to a location most convenient for the majority of Nerdfighters in that state/country.
- Have access to good video equipment and be competent in how to use it (or have someone who can film for them.)
- Send the A Film to Decrease Worldsuck team an example of their videography.
- Have software enabling them to send the files (via Dropbox) and be able to edit them into pieces if they are too large.
- Remain in email contact with the A Film to Decrease Worldsuck team and have at least one phone or online chat conversation prior to the gathering.
- Be willing to sign a waiver releasing their rights to what they filmed.

State/Country Liaisons will receive:

- A "Videographer" credit (if they do the filming, otherwise it goes to whoever filmed) and a 
"(state/country) Liaison" credit in the final film.
- An 11x17 poster signed by the production team.
- A DVD copy of the final film signed by the production team.
- Major props.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Email nerdfightersdocumentary@gmail.com to inquire whether there are already gatherings scheduled for the state/country.
   • Give a link to an example of your videography.
   • Tell us what video equipment and editing software you have.

2. Choose a location.
   • City as well as a place you know will be open and free, such as a library, playground, park, etc.
   • Please also make it a neutral location, meaning not your own or someone else's house.

3. Inform your state/country about the gathering.
   • Create a Facebook event.
   • Utilize already-established Facebook groups for the state/country.
   • The A Film to Decrease Worldsuck team will provide a marketing photo to share via social media.

4. Meet with (via phone or online chat) the A Film to Decrease Worldsuck team to go over how to run the gathering and do the interviews.

5. Gather!

6. Send A Film to Decrease Worldsuck the footage.
   • Request permission to the Dropbox folder.
   • Cut up the footage into pieces that will fit in the folder.
   • Let us know when you plan on putting them in there so we can take them out as you do so, in order to have enough room (the folder is only capable of holding 7 GB.)
POST PRODUCTION

Items utilized and created in the post-production process, including grant information and publicity.
A FILM TO DECREASE WORLDSUCK
ROUGH EDIT REVIEW

GENERAL QUESTIONS

How did you like the music? Was it too loud or soft at some points? Did it distract from or add to the story?

The music at 26:35 that randomly throws up again after Hank’s vlog threw me off a little. At 31:10 there was Christmas music in the background under the kitchen and the regular music? Also, the song at the end before the credits but was really... sad? Much a. It was kinda weird.

Other than that, I loved the music & thought it really complimented the rest of the film.

Besides the lack of audio editing yet, could you understand what everyone was saying? If not, could you be specific with a time that you could not understand them?

The interview around 15:10 - there was a lot of background talking that distracted me from following what the yellow shirt girl was saying. Also the interview at 26:10.

Did you feel that any one section went on too long? If so, please describe the section.

I thought that the 2 sections of Job 4 (no flowers is to logothist) were really similar, and I knew it wasn’t actually all that long but it kind of felt like it a bit. I think if I’m being critical here that you could combine them or cut out some of the repetition and it would make more sense.

Did you feel that any information was unnecessary or irrelevant? If so, please describe which information.

37:52 - not sure if people would be confused about the TARDIS example, hehe

Also you should definitely add a definition of vidicon in there somewhere. Like why are all these people there?

How was the balance between seriousness and humor?

It was good! I like the comedy part next to the inside jokes part because it seemed nicely balanced that way. I laughed and I cried and it was great.

How was the b-roll (non-interview video) to talking head (interview) ratio? If room for improvement, which do we need more/less of?

- At 29:14, the escalator footage, the girl on the left who looked really uncomfortable was the only thing I could pay attention to.

- B-roll was awesome. I think you had a good balance. I liked seeing the footage of times I also saw the faces of nerdfighters in the interviews.

I especially liked the logothist clips you chose.

Does the film get across the point that Hank and John created the community but really Nerdfighteria is about the Nerdfighters? If not, how could we improve that?

Yes! I liked the slow evolution from talking about Jeff to talking about the whole community, & there were enough references back to Jeff in the last few sections of the film that it tied it all together.
Is the film clear on its emphasis of an online, global community? If not, what information do you think needs to be added in order to paint a complete picture?

I don't think anyone mentioned the forum, or the ring, or tumblr - I know how important those things are to our community, but I don't know if non-NF's would realize how we were online more than just watching the YT videos.

QUESTIONS FOR A NERDFIGHTER

Does all of the information seem accurate? If not, what information seems inaccurate?

Yep, all that I can remember.

Is there an equal amount of time spent on Hank and John?

I think so. There may have been a bit more on John, but I think that's okay - you got access to all the important parts of both of them.

Is there a balanced amount of time spent on the Vlogbrothers and the Nerdfighters? There should feel like there is slightly more time spent on the Nerdfighters. If that is not the case, please say so.

I think it was actually much more focused on the NF's, as it should be. Even in the sections about John, it was all about NFs perceptions of them & how they influence us, which I liked.

Does the order of the sections make sense? If not, what needs to be switched around?

Like I said before, I think the 2 separate sections on John are slightly unnecessary, but I loved the order of the rest of them.

Did we accurately express how we combat Worldsuck? If not, what information do you think needs to be changed?

The charities were covered well. I think there could have been more emphasis on combating worldsuck simply by being a nice person - being polite, standing up for people, being welcoming. It's mentioned in other parts of the film but not in that section explicitly. I don't think.

Are Nerdfighters represented accurately? If not, how do you think they are represented inaccurately? Please give examples.

I feel like there wasn't any focus on nerdfighters who became nerdfighters without watching the vloggers. I have quite a few NF friends who were either 1) nerdfighters (and identified as such) long before they saw any videos or 2) NF's who still haven't seen the videos. I don't think it's a necessary component, while it probably is the most common gateway to the community.

Are the inside jokes explained accurately? If not, what information should be changed?

The FTL one - there was an interview who said that we convinced John that it meant Beyond the Horizon. But I thought someone just suggested that and he liked it so he tried to make it a thing, and now it's a thing.
* I don't know if my answers made it clear, but I LOVE THE FILM. It was absolutely brilliant and I am SO EXCITED for everyone in NerdNightia to see it, because I'm sure they'll love it too. FANTASTIC JOB, MISS HANNAH LINDBREN.
Is the film clear on its emphasis of an online, global community? If not, what information do you think needs to be added in order to paint a complete picture?

Questions for a Nerdfighter

Does all of the information seem accurate? If not, what information seems inaccurate?

Yep, all that I can remember.

Is there an equal amount of time spent on Hank and John?

I think so. There may have been a bit more on John, but I think that’s okay - you got across all the important parts of both of them.

Is there a balanced amount of time spent on the Vlogbrothers and the Nerdfighters? There should feel like there is slightly more time spent on the Nerdfighters. If that is not the case, please say so.

I think it was actually much more focused on the NFs. As it should be. Even in the sections about JoH, it was all about NFs perception of them & how they influence us, which I liked.

Does the order of the sections make sense? If not, what needs to be switched around?

Like I said before, I think the 2 separate sections on JoH are slightly unnecessary, but I loved the order of the rest of them.

Did we accurately express how we combat WorldSuck? If not, what information do you think needs to be changed?

The charities were covered well. I think there could have been more emphasis on combating WorldSuck simply by being a nice person - being polite, standing up for people, being welcoming. It’s mentioned in other parts of the film but not in that section explicitly. I don’t think.

Are Nerdfighters represented accurately? If not, how do you think they are represented inaccurately? Please give examples.

I feel like there was no focus on nerdfighters who become nerdfighters without watching the vlogbrothers. I have quite a few NFs who were either (a) nerdfighters (and identified as such) long before they ever saw any videos or (b) NFs who still haven’t seen the videos. I don’t think it’s a necessary component, while it probably is the most common gateway to the community.

Are the inside jokes explained accurately? If not, what information should be changed?

The FTL one - there was an interview who said that we convinced John that it meant French the llama? But I thought someone just suggested that and he liked it so he tried to make it a thing, and now it’s a thing.
Dear Hannah,

you inspire me everyday

A FILM TO DECREASE WORLDSUCK ROUGH EDIT REVIEW

GENERAL QUESTIONS

How did you like the music? Was it too loud or soft at some points? Did it distract from or add to the story?

See attached notes.

Besides the lack of audio editing yet, could you understand what everyone was saying? If not, could you be specific with a time that you could not understand them?

I thought everything was easily understood.

Did you feel that any one section went on too long? If so, please describe the section.

Had the inside jokes segment been any longer, it would have been too long.

Did you feel that any information was unnecessary or irrelevant? If so, please describe which information.

I enjoyed all the information presented in the film. As someone who knows very little about Nerdfighteria, nothing ever seemed unnecessary to me because it was all new information, but I don't know if a Nerdfighter would feel that way.

The balance was great. There was enough of both. I would be careful of putting too much more serious info because they’re really impactful now standing out.

How was the b-roll (non-interview video) to talking head (interview) ratio? If room for improvement, which do we need more/less of?

I thought the b-roll was very effective. I never felt that an interview went too long. Also, they were in very natural places. I never felt strange about the transitions.

Does the film get across the point that Hank and John created the community but really Nerdfighteria is about the Nerdfighters? If not, how could we improve that?

Yes, particularly because at the end of brotherhood 2.0, the girl says, "the fans became Nerdfighters." Also, the guy at 29:40 explains it really well. "It started with the videos but it goes beyond that."
Is the film clear on its emphasis of an online, global community? If not, what information do you think needs to be added in order to paint a complete picture?

I think it is very obvious. I feel that I could explain what a Nerdfighter is to another person now.

QUESTIONS FOR A NERDFIGHTER

Does all of the information seem accurate? If not, what information seems inaccurate?

Is there an equal amount of time spent on Hank and John?

Is there a balanced amount of time spent on the Vlogbrothers and the Nerdfighters? There should feel like there is slightly more time spent on the Nerdfighters. If that is not the case, please say so.

Does the order of the sections make sense? If not, what needs to be switched around?

Did we accurately express how we combat Worldsuck? If not, what information do you think needs to be changed?

Are Nerdfighters represented accurately? If not, how do you think they are represented inaccurately? Please give examples.

Are the inside jokes explained accurately? If not, what information should be changed?
QUESTIONS FOR A NON-NERDFIGHTER

Do you understand what VidCon is? Is its relevance to Nerdfighteria clear? If not, what do you think needs to be clarified?

No, I think it has something to do with YouTube.
No, I don't know how it's relevant, other than John & Hank's presence.

Is Brotherhood 2.0 and vlogging explained understandably? If not, what questions do you have?

It is very clear --- when did it start?

Do you get the whole picture of who John Green is? If not, what do you still have questions about?

yup!

Do you get the whole picture of who Hank Green is? If not, what do you still have questions about?

yup!

Do you have a full understanding of what a Nerdfighter is? If not, what do you still need to know?

yup! I finally get D.F.T.B.A!!

Do you understand what Worldsuck is and how to combat it? If not, what questions do you have?

yup!

Do you feel like we introduced anything without explaining it right away, but explained it in a section later? If so, please state what we need to explain.

I think what a Nerdfighter is -- a person of passion, as opposed to something more specific, is not clear immediately.
Opening

I love the shots in the opening sequence. The film from behind the audience where you can see their cameras is really cool. Also, I love the wide, crowd shots.

1. I have no clue what Vidcon is, other than it has something to do with YouTube.
2. I don't like the song, initially. I think the volume is good. But, I do like it at the Tube (AFTRON)
3. I didn't understand the "day before" idea right away. I like it but it's a little confusing the comparison you've making.

The bridge into Brotherhood 2.0 is awesome. Totally Awesome

Brotherhood 2.0

1. I want to video blog to you.
   1. I think the lack of music is weird.
      Really good explanation. I completely understand how it started.

John & Hank

I really like the inclusion of the father
I love Hank singing
I like the inclusion of John's story because initially it seems Hank heavy.

1. For some reason, the transition from the last girl to the beach to "The Vlog Brothers" is weird to me.
   I love the material, but it doesn't flow well.

The Vlog Brothers

1. I like the intro song
   I know I keep saying that but thank you for the examples of who they are. They really add to it
Nerdgnteria (Cont.)

* At 28:30, I started liking the music
  - it's her voice, it's distracting
  2:30:15 - you cut her off, can't she finish her sentence?

What the community is, is portrayed in a very inspiring way.

Gatherings

1. I like how the gatherings are explained, but I feel like I don't understand. Where, how, etc?
the music is fine - not distracting

Changing Lives

Girl in iscalet sweater, star won't go out intern, is a really nice, sentimental addition

1. Music is a little weird
20:40 - "Learning to Live me" - really sweet
I like that John & Hank are brought up
the Ball State girl in her room says great things, but she's shiny in
the music is better when people aren't talking at the end for the title

I love the last John & Hank montage

♥ last song ♥ you... Really ♥ you
Nerdfighters
1. I think the music is a little too quiet
saw the crowd shots - again

World Suck
1. WS is cool in weird place

I love the music
LIVE Easter story - John's video is really powerful

2. Do the small business charities & water charity
have names?

You can actually do something - really useful message

Nerdfighter - inside (so) jokes
Really like the beginning footage

The music is good

In Your Pants -”It & J is good

The Obama story is really funny
1. I don't like the BSU "gang" sign clip. It's awkward.
2. Any longer and it would be too long
3. Could there be a different way of ending this
section?

Nerdfighteria - online community

1. Really don't like the song behind. It's definitely
not loud enough, but I might not like the song.
This part comes off "Nerdy" and it's great
STUDENT CREATIVE ARTS COMPETITION

Information, Guidelines, and Grant Proposal Components

(Revised Fall 2012)

INTRODUCTION
Ball State University offers a variety of internal programs that support student projects. The University Creative Arts Committee would like to encourage students to consider applying for an ASPIRE Creative Arts Grant. Funds can be provided to assist in project costs such as travel or supplies.

ELIGIBILITY
Applicants must be enrolled at Ball State University, Burris Laboratory School or the Indiana Academy as one of the following:
- Graduate Student
- Undergraduate Student
- Burris High School Student - grades 11 or 12 (follow instructions/deadlines for Undergraduate Students)
- Indiana Academy High School Student - grades 11 or 12 (follow instructions/deadlines for Undergraduate Students)

CREATIVE ARTS PROGRAM DESCRIPTION
The goal of the creative arts program is to provide support to those projects that propose the creation and/or presentation of works of creative art. Eligible projects are those in areas supported by the National Endowment for the Arts: Arts Education, Dance, Design, Folk & Traditional Arts, Literature, Media Arts (Film/Radio/Television), Museums, Music, Music Theatre, Opera, Presenting, Theatre, and Visual Arts.

Successful applications are most likely to be found in the following examples:

Music
- Composition
- Conducting
- Instrumental or vocal performance, live or via recording

Theater
- Original scripts and screenplays
- Original set, costume, or makeup design
- Stage or film/video performance
ASPiRE
STUDENT APPLICATION COVER SHEET
CREATIVE ARTS PROGRAM

Name (Project Director) Department Position
Hannah Lindgren Telecommunications/Honors Undergraduate
Telephone 317-997-8174

Name (Project Co-Director) Department Position
Telephone Preferred E-mail

Faculty Mentor (Required) Department Position
Sonny Wingler Telecommunications Instructor
Telephone Preferred E-mail
317-439-2612 pawingler@bsu.edu

Project Title: Nerdfighters Documentary: A Film to Decrease Worldsuck

Summary: (Two to three sentences describing the project)
Nerdfighters Documentary: A Film to Decrease Worldsuck, a documentary that I have been working on since March of 2012, is my senior honors thesis. The film explores the incredibly interesting online community known as Nerdfighteria, whose members, called Nerdfighters, are avid followers of the YouTube vloggers The Vlogbrothers. Made of event footage, interviews taken by liaisons across the country, and vlogs sent in by Nerdfighters, this collaborative documentary is truly one of a kind.

Is this proposal a resubmission of a previous application? Yes ☐ No ☑

If yes, what was the original competition date?

Total Budget Request: $237
Executive Summary: A Film to Decrease Worldsuck

In Spring and Summer 2013, the world will learn more about a group comprised of thousands of people called “Nerdfighters,” who are almost entirely ages 14-24. This uniquely collaborative documentary -- my senior honors thesis -- will tell the story about these young people who make a huge difference in this world, yet few know about them. While there is a built-in target audience for this documentary, it still needs to be publicized to create excitement and “buzz.” This grant would help tell this global story to an international audience, both “inside” and “outside” the group.

Description of the Project

Nerdfighters are self-proclaimed nerds who fight for social justice, equality, education and other worthy causes (they use the phrase “decrease worldsuck.”) This group was formed around two brothers, Hank and John Green, who, in an attempt to start talking more after having started separate lives across the country, began producing blogs to each other in the form of videos on YouTube. In March 2012, I accidentally met Nerdfighters co-founder and author John Green in an unlikely (albeit fitting) place – a movie theater. Because he is a local, he frequents many of the same Indy locations that I do, so this serendipitous meeting was not a surprise, but it was a delight. After the meeting, the idea for the project formed: using testimonials from Nerdfighters across the globe, I will collectively tell this story for the first time, using the very genre that inspired the movement.

This documentary will be a massive global storytelling project, woven with a common thread of shared interests, like the community itself.

Already, A Film to Decrease Worldsuck has its followers. Using a web site and social media, I convinced the Green brothers to allow me to do the project. I successfully fundraised more than $2,500 to fly three of us to a video convention hosted by the Green brothers in California to capture footage. There, we shared business cards calling to Nerdfighters to share their stories by sending in vlogs, as well as interviewed Nerdfighters, including Hank and John’s father. The footage captured there will help weave the story. Now we need to take the project to the next step.
Goals and Objectives

When the film is released, a campaign to raise awareness about the film and the impact of these young Nerdfighters needs to be launched. This layered approach to publicizing the documentary will include: 1) acknowledgement of the film funders, many of whom are Nerdfighters, through a gift poster that also can be placed in locations where the film might be shown and raise awareness and distributed to those who come to the premieres as a collectible and mailing of those posters to backers; 2) a social media and fundraising campaign to fund Indy Reads which supports literacy, an important issue to Nerdfighters; and, 3) host ten “Nerdfighter gatherings” to premiere the film – one on campus as my thesis presentation, another at a bookstore in Indianapolis as the culmination of the fundraising campaign for Indy Reads, one at a film festival in Noblesville, and seven more across the country. Funds will be used to promote and publicize these events.

Significance

My interest in documentary films originates from my similar interest in being a Nerdfighter and through studying anthropology as my minor – it’s all about the human story and how we connect. The collaborative nature of this project is what makes it unique as a documentary and in fact at its core salutes the very art that Hank and John Green celebrate. This promotional campaign to lift these stories of individual Nerdfighters and what an impact this movement has made on them, is in itself a celebration of what Nerdfighting is all about. By spreading the word of Nerdfighters through this documentary, we hope to inspire others to follow their example by actively engaging in helping others. Documentaries are traditionally passive in their exploration and sharing of ideas; this documentary will be active in both its presentation as well as its call to action.

Timeline and Dissemination

There have been two phases to the development of Nerdfighters Documentary: A Film to Decrease Worldsuck.

1) Phase 1 took place in April-June 2012, when more than $2,500 was raised through a Kickstarter program, social media campaign and personal solicitations to buy insurance and send a film crew to VidCon in Anaheim, California in June. That portion of the project is complete and has netted the foundational footage for the documentary. No money is being sought for this portion.

2) Phase 2 is the promotional phase and the portion covered under the Aspire grant request, which will include an additional viral campaign to promote the release of the video. A recent YouTube trailer netted more than 1,400 views of the project promotion in less than a week, and a worldwide following has been developed out of the Nerdfighters audience. In Phase 2, we will take the documentary to the road and in addition to the central Indiana premieres of the documentary in Muncie, Indianapolis and Noblesville, it is hoped at least seven other venues desire to host premiere parties that also combine philanthropy with the viewing of the film. After that time, the film will be uploaded onto YouTube for use anywhere.

The desire is for ten “launch” venues to host a premiere (seven plus the three central Indiana locations), with locations given billing on an 11-inch by 17-inch four-color glossy poster. These movie posters are popular among those in the targeted demographics (high school through mid 20s). A total of 500 posters would be produced, with approximately 290 posters used for the central Indiana venues, and 30 each for the remaining seven venues. The price of these posters was located online, as the best possible price available from UPrinting. The graphics for the posters will be developed in kind by a BSU art student.

Location hosts also will be sent a toolkit digitally that includes a sample news release for distribution to local media, a digital image of the movie promotion for use on websites, etc., a link to the movie for the premiere, and the posters. All costs related to these seven venues would be covered by the venue host.

For at least three of the non-central Indiana venues, depending on their location, it is hoped Director Hannah Lindgren can travel to the venue using funds from her parents and her own pocket (target cities would be Chicago, St. Louis and Cincinnati, all within easy driving distance). To these venues, she would bring the posters. For the remaining 4 venues, the shipping of the posters would be covered by out-of-pocket funds.

Travel for the 6 of the 10 showings also would be covered out-of-pocket, primarily the cost of gasoline, as it is anticipated that housing and related costs for the out-of-area venues would be donated through friends and family who live there. For the remaining 4 venues, Skype links can be arranged for a post-viewing conversation with the director, when desired.

In true Nerdfighter tradition, venue hosts will be required to promote that attendees bring, as admission, something to support a local charity. For example, central Indiana participants will be asked to bring books to donate to the Indy Reads bookstore. Indy Reads helps fight adult illiteracy. Other suggested donations might include food for a food pantry, or pillows for a homeless shelter. Hosts will make arrangements for those items to be distributed to the appropriate location.

In brief, funds requested from the Aspire grant for Phase 2 includes only the following:

- $237 to produce 500 high quality four-color 11 X 17 glossy posters (price is from UPrinting on line)
BALL STATE DAILY NEWS ARTICLES
PROPOSALS

The original proposals for A Film to Decrease Worldsuck.
Hannah Lindgren  
Senior Honors Thesis Proposal  
Spring 2012, for Fall 2013

1. For my senior Honors thesis, I am going to produce a documentary entitled, “A Film to Decrease Worldsuck.”

   a. The purpose of this documentary is to spread the word about a unique group made up of hundreds of thousands of people called “Nerdfighters,” who are almost entirely ages 14-24, and who make a huge difference in this world, yet no one knows about them.

   b. The outcome of this project will be a documentary, which I intend to submit to film festivals and screenings throughout the U.S., and then hopefully put on the Internet so Nerdfighters around the world can see it.

2. I want to complete this project because I believe in this group of people, and I think one thing that is polarizing our nation, and our world, in addition to politics, is age. I think that a lot of members of the older generations tend to think the younger generations aren’t doing anything to help the world. In the case of the Nerdfighters, that just isn’t true. And I want to spread hope about where we’re headed.

   a. As a film and television studies track of the TCOM major, I did not receive formal training on producing films. Yet I just completed a $10,000 grant-funded documentary for WIPB. Every opportunity I give myself to learn more outside of the classroom is beneficial for me in the long run. And this project really utilizes my anthropology minor as well.

3. What’s great is we already have a built-in audience that we know will want to see it, the Nerdfighters, but what we want to strive for is being able to show it to other people. Spreading hope is not always the easiest thing to do, but if any art form can do it, it would be documentary film.

   a. I expect that others will leave this film feeling filled with hope, and knowledge about this community, as well as a desire to make an impact themselves.

Also attached is my formal documentary proposal.
"A Film to Decrease World Suck"

A Documentary

by Hannah Lindgren
Story

In our society, it is not easy to find a group of young people willing to donate their money to build a well in Africa, rather than spend it on clothes or to go to the movies, or who love knowledge and learning so much that they would rather spend their time watching videos about history and science than watching the *Jersey Shore*. Enter the VlogBrothers.

In 2007, brothers Hank Green, a musician and environmental journalist, and John Green, an author, decided to start the project Brotherhood 2.0, where they would end all text-based communication and communicate with each other solely through video blogs on YouTube. Soon they gathered a following, and the rest, as they say, is history.

The VlogBrothers, as they become known, now have over 212 million total views on over 900 videos that have been uploaded in the past five years. Their fans, called Nerdfighters, are a dedicated group of mostly young people, who, inspired by Hank and John, are fighting to “decrease world suck,” through global awareness, philanthropy, and knowledge.

Through other endeavors like Hank’s music and John’s books, as well as their many philanthropic efforts and various side projects, including YouTube channels devoted to teaching science and history, Hank and John Green have created a community that is uniquely its own. In no other community in the world can young people come together through common interests as much as in Nerdfighteria.

The goal of this documentary is to share the story of the VlogBrothers and Nerdfighters; to spread the thoughtfulness, empathy, and awareness that are so infectious within this community, and to make others aware of what an amazing movement this is. The least this film can do is inspire people through the knowledge of what these young people are doing to better the world, and spread hope that the coming generations are aware of what is going on all around us, and they plan to do something about it.
About the Filmmakers

- Hannah Lindgren - Producer, director, editor
  
  Hannah has five years of experience producing and editing for film and television throughout her high school and college careers. In addition to numerous freelance projects throughout the Indianapolis area, she is currently finishing producing a half hour documentary on the Gas Boom in East Central Indiana in the late 1800s for WIPB, a PBS affiliate, which was produced after receiving a $10,000 grant. In this project she manages a crew of eleven. She has also been an executive producer of the student-run television show Indiana Outdoors for the last three years.

- Paul Weller - Camera
  
  Paul has over four years of experience behind the camera through various film and television projects in his college career. He has been the cinematographer on all of the freelance projects Hannah has produced, including the Gas Boom documentary for WIPB. He has also been an executive producer of Indiana Outdoors for the last three years in addition to running camera on Ball State Sports Link and working for WIPB.

Film Facts

- Length: 30 to 45 minutes
- Intended audience: people of all ages, but especially Nerdfighters, parents of Nerdfighters, youth in general, and 20-30 year olds
- While the VlogBrothers medium is also through video, this film will attempt to show a behind-the-scenes look at the culture and history of this community and movement. A 360-degree view of what Nerdfighting is all about and the role this community plays in the world.
- The film will be a hybrid of direct cinema and interviews.
- B-roll footage will be very fly-on-the-wall, with limited use of tripod and will attempt to really capture the emotions of the fans at events, while also having the stark difference between that and the still interviews.
- Archived footage of old VlogBrothers/Brotherhood 2.0 videos will be incorporated, especially when it comes to telling the history of how the VlogBrothers came about.
- We will also utilize as many videos as possible from other YouTube vloggers, with their permission, such as videos that were in the Project for Awesome, a viral charity event on YouTube.
- We would like to use as much natural sound as possible, but also incorporate Hank's music (live and pre-recorded). It will be nice if any of the DFTBA Records artists will allow us to include their music.
- Distribution: Entered into film festivals like Heartland in Indianapolis. Also public screenings as a thesis review in the spring of 2013. Eventually we would like the film to be on the Internet so that Nerdfighters everywhere could have a chance to see it.
A FILM TO DECREASE WORLDSUCK
INTERVIEW RELEASE FORM

I, Daniel Collins (interviewee) hereby authorize producer Hannah Lindgren and her film crew, including but not limited to Alice Evans (interviewer) to interview me for the film, "A Film to Decrease Worldsuck," a Nerdfighters documentary, on 30/10/12 (date) in Cardiff, Walfas (city/state/country). I understand that my interview includes my name, likeness, image, voice, and performance on film, tape, or otherwise.

I understand and agree that the above may be edited or otherwise altered at the sole discretion of the producer and film crew and used in whole or part for any and all broadcasting, non-broadcasting, audio/visual, and/or exhibition purposes in any manner or media, in perpetuity, throughout the world.

I understand that the film, tape, or otherwise of me will be maintained and made available indefinitely by the producer and film crew for such research, production (e.g., radio, television, film festivals, World Wide Web, exhibitions, related advertisements), and educational purposes as the producer and film crew shall determine.

I hereby grant, and transfer to the producer and film crew all rights, title, and interest in the interview and video documentary, including without limitation the literary rights and the copyright. I hereby release the producer and film crew and their representatives from all claims and liability relating to said documentary.

The producer and film crew agree to retain the integrity of the interviewee’s image and voice, neither misrepresenting the interviewee’s words nor taking them out of context.

I attest that I have voluntarily agreed to be interviewed and that this document contains the entire and complete agreement concerning the use and preservation of my interview.

INTERVIEWEE: Daniel Collins
Signature: Daniel Collins  Date: 30/10/12

INTERVIEWER: Alice Evans
Signature: Alice Evans  Date: 30/10/12

PRODUCER: Hannah Lindgren
Signature: Hannah Lindgren  Date: 9/26/12