

**Title of Session:** Arts and Literacy - Brave New Voices

**Moderator:** BJ Berquist

**Guest Speaker:** Merilene Murphy and James Kass

**Title of File:** 20031201artlit

**Date:** December 1, 2003

Tapped In transcript for 2003.12.01 17:21:22

Room: After School Online

**BJ:** Welcome to tonight's Arts and Literacy discussion everyone!

**BJ:** If you are new to Tapped In discussions, I suggest you read the 10 steps above this chat window

**BJ:** we usually start all the discussions in Tapped In with introductions. Our guest speakers tonight are Merilene and James.

**JamesGst2:** So, let's get cracking. Brave New Voices - Merilene, you want to fill everyone in?

**BJ:** I'm an art teacher in Pennsylvania.

**JudyAS:** I'm a preservice K-12 in Georgia

**SusanR:** K to 8 Occasional Teacher, Ottawa, Ontario

**MerileneM . o O** ( BJB is doing intros, James )

**KurtGst1:** education student at the university of Akron

**PhilH:** I am a consultant/educator in Victoria Canada.

**BJ . o O** ( crackin' is much more descriptive )

**GelindoF:** I'm a grad student in sec.ed with an art cert.

**JamesGst2:** Executive Director of Youth Speaks, a literary arts education & presenter in San Francisco, NY, and Seattle

**MerileneM:** I am the president of telepoetics, an educator, writer and telecommunicator

**BJ** smiles happily...I think we're in for a real treat tonight!

**BJ:** James and Merilene, would you like to start now?

**MerileneM . o O** ( good crowd bjb has here )

**MerileneM:** James has to run shortly, so...

**BJ . o O** ( talk fast! )

**MerileneM:** James would you like to start & tell us about Youth Speaks

**MerileneM:** ...& what Brave New Voices is

**JamesGst2:** Brave New Voices is both an annual event and an active network of nonprofit organizations, educators, youth advocates, and youth from throughout the country. Youth Speaks is the founder and creator of Brave New Voices

**JamesGst2:** We do a host of educational and presenting/performing programs for teenagers.

**JamesGst2:** We've seen an incredible rise in the popularity of poetry and spoken word among teenagers from all backgrounds since Youth Speaks was founded in 1996

**ShannonMB:** Do you offer these programs to the public schools?

**JamesGst2:** Yes, we're in the schools and after school as well, everyday. We work with over 20,000 teens a year in the Bay Area alone

**ShannonMB:** That's great!

**JamesGst2:** We're best known for our events, particularly the Youth Speaks Teen Poetry Slam, which was the first teen slam in the country. But, we consider ourselves an educational organization first and foremost

**JamesGst2:** What we try to do with Brave New Voices is give an opportunity for new groups from around the country to grow their local programs, to get in touch with each other, and to give young writers a national peer group.

**MerileneM:** that's where Los Angeles comes in and telepoetics

**JamesGst2:** BNV takes place in a different city each year. Merilene, why don't you let them know what's planned for this April in Los Angeles.

**ShannonMB:** Do you have an official network for these local groups?

**MerileneM:** sure, James.

**MerileneM:** see <http://www.bravenewvoices.org/>

**MerileneM:** the info is all there

**LeslieGst3:** is there anything in the south east?

**MerileneM:** basically telepoetics is the local presenter this year (2004)

**JamesGst2:** BNV is both an event and a network. We've been active as BNV since 1998, and we're still trying to develop the network, as it's grown incredibly just these last few years. We've received a grant from the Ford Foundation to figure out how to best grow this idea.

**LauraAW:** yeah we are

**JamesGst2:** Yes, there are some groups in the south east - Atlanta, dc, Miami

**ShannonMB:** Are they listed under the name Brave New Voices?

**GelindoF:** Any in the sw?

**JudyAS:** How does a High School teacher get a chapter going in her school?

**JamesGst2:** yes, southwest. Albuquerque, Taos, phoenix, Austin

**GelindoF:** ok!

**MerileneM:** you should all check on the how link when you have a chance & join the Brave New Voices national network listserv

**JamesGst2:** we encourage groups to come out to Brave New Voices, or check out [www.poeticlicense.org](http://www.poeticlicense.org) - depending on what you want to do, there are different levels of support out there.

**LeslieGst3:** Sounds like something the kids could really get in to...and learn so much more by presenting

**JamesGst2:** we've got one book, called Brave New Voices, and are working on some more publications that are designed specifically for educators.

**MerileneM:** the kids really love it.

**ShannonMB:** Do you hold any type of competitive events?

**LeslieGst3:** I am checking out the website now.

**MerileneM:** we got involved with Youth Speaks only this April when I coached a team and took them to nationals in Chicago

**JamesGst2:** we focus almost exclusively on teenagers, 13-19 years old. Spoken word is something that transcends cultural, language, class, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic and other lines

**JudyAS:** Will Brave New Voices ever go to the college level?

**MerileneM:** the festival includes competitions, yes.

**JamesGst2:** there is a collegiate slam already - Brave New Voices is for teens. Some of the 19 year olds are in college

**MerileneM:** there is actually a national adult version of Brave New Voices

**PhilH:** listens intently

**JudyAS:** Great I will look into it!

**JamesGst2:** the poetry slam (a competition) is a great tool for young writers to really get involved in writing. there is an adult and collegiate slam (nps.com)

**MerileneM:** the young people I took to Chicago are the founding members of the bnv2004la planning/hosting committee

**MerileneM:** the committee is actually using the festival as the basis for project based learning

**ShannonMB:** What is the average number of participants for the festivals?

**LeslieGst3:** So they can present any way they want or only in certain categories

**GelindoF:** Can you describe the process briefly?

**MerileneM:** we are expecting 28 visiting teams from around the country. a team is four - six teen poets and 1-2 adult coaches

**ShannonMB:** That's great!

**JudyAS:** Have any of your poets/writers become successful?

**ShannonMB:** or famous?

**LauraAW:** in Georgia we have qcc's (state curriculum) we must cover...any tips for tying it into the curriculum?

**MerileneM:** we are also expecting a yet to be determined number of international teams and coaches from around the world who will participate via webcast

**JamesGst2:** it's a poetry event- focused on oral and aural poetics (from the mouth to the ear). teens present original work...we have had a number of poets featured on def poetry jam on HBO and Broadway, and a number have books and cd's. but we've only been around for 7 years -

**LeslieGst3:** that is really great.

**ShannonMB:** That's remarkable for such a short time!

**JamesGst2:** we match up a lot of what we do to the California state standards.

**ShannonMB:** I'm sure it can be incorporated with many English and Language/Writing standards...

**MerileneM:** Gelindo, what process did you ask about

**GelindoF:** the competitive process, what determines acceptance etc.?

**MerileneM:** teams are formed in local cities before they come to the nationals

**JudyAS:** Is there a Specific rubric- and who are the judges?

**MerileneM:** some teams are built in the schools and others develop at local open mic sessions

**PhilH:** James & Marilene I am interested in the adult version of Brave New Voices ...what is the web link for that?

**MerileneM:** sessions

**MerileneM:** James, do you know it by heart

**ShannonMB:** Are there local coordinators for major cities? Such as Atl?

**MerileneM:** it's <http://www.poetryslam.com/> Phil

**JamesGst2:** the adult slam is nps.com - judges for the youth slam are selected beforehand and selected in the moment from the audience - the idea is that anyone can be a poet and anyone can be a judge of poetry - democratic process

**LeslieGst3:** I see on the site that the poet gets 3 minutes...is there a limit on how short it can be?

**MerileneM:** no, Leslie

**MerileneM:** you would be surprised what can be explored in three minutes

**LeslieGst3:** I'm sure that is longer than you think when you're on stage

**MerileneM:** in fact, that is the loveliness of poetry. it is the most concise literary art form which exclusively relies on words to deliver the message (as opposed to ads which rely on pictures )

**MerileneM:** Shannon, you should ask James about joining the bnv listserv

**LeslieGst3:** So the performer can use his body only no props, costumes..etc

**MerileneM:** I have the link to subscribe here somewhere

**AboegneGst5:** How do you prepare for the event?

**ShannonMB:** So, James how would one go about joining the listserv?

**MerileneM:** absolutely -- you have to be inventive

**LeslieGst3:** that makes the poet 'own' their performance even more

**JamesGst2:** you can send me an email directly, with bnv listserv in the subject heading - [james@youthspeaks.org](mailto:james@youthspeaks.org)

**ShannonMB:** Thanks!

**LauraAW:** so how does the competition work?

**JudyAS:** Would speech classes help a student in the delivery of his Poetry?

**SusanR** notices some interesting writing exercises and warmups for students ....teachers can submit resources or lesson ideas

**LauraAW:** does it go from state level to nationals?

**MerileneM:** I FOUND IT also

**MerileneM:** it's [bravenewvoices2003-subscribe@yahooogroups.com](mailto:bravenewvoices2003-subscribe@yahooogroups.com)

**LeslieGst3:** I saw some exercises on the website about projecting your voice and speaking exercises

**MerileneM:** Judy, Leslie offered a good answer

**JudyAS:** Sounds like speech and communication classes could help?

**JamesGst2:** we focus on writing, critical thinking, performance...

**AboegneGst5:** Is this the only age level for this event?

**JamesGst2:** we're trying to develop a literacy culture -where young people can read, and respond, to the world they are in.

**LeslieGst3:** I've checked out the site and may be missing the information but, what's the cost per team?

**MerileneM:** most, if not all, of the coaches involved are educators. I think we are always thinking about weaving subjects together

**GelindoF:** Yay - just like art-based curriculum!

**JamesGst2:** the primary cost is getting to the event - we are considering instituting a small fee, maybe \$150 per team to help cover costs.

**LeslieGst3:** I see one is free open mikes

**MerileneM:** Leslie, the visiting teams are guests for five days. there is housing and food

**MerileneM:** food for those days provided

**ShannonMB:** This organization reminds me of the popularity of self-expression glorified in the 60'70's

**MerileneM:** yes, but James wasn't even born then. but I was

**ShannonMB:** However, I think its efforts are a good move!

**MerileneM** laughs

**JamesGst2:** beyond Brave New Voices, all of these local programs offers projects all year. There are big groups, like Youth Speaks, and there are single-classroom based projects run by one teacher.

**JamesGst2:** born in 1969, baby

**MerileneM** laughs

**JamesGst2:** I have to go - but thanks for the conversation. please check out [www.youthspeaks.org](http://www.youthspeaks.org) for more info about Youth Speaks. and try to come to BNV. Los Angeles in 2004, SF in 2005, NYC in 2006...

**JudyAS:** Are you interested in bringing your ideas to grade school levels maybe 4th or 5th grades?

**JamesGst2:** thanks!!!

**BJ:** Thank you so much for joining us, James

**JamesGst2** left the room (signed off).

**ShannonMB:** Thanks for all the web-sites I'll pass them along!

**MerileneM:** you're welcome

**AboegneGst5:** What are some of the single-classroom projects run by classroom teachers?

**JudyAS:** Thanks for all your great info-I'll be sure to visit your website!

**MerileneM:** as you all know, telepoetics is leading the local presentation of bnv2004la. are there questions about the project-based learning methods we are using

**SusanR:** This is innovative. I will pass this along to our Intermediate teachers

**ShannonMB:** Yes, can you give specific examples?

**LauraAW:** what r some examples?

**MerileneM:** are there any questions about how this Tapped In community is aiding our project

**MerileneM:** Shannon, we are using ti2 (the sac) as a meeting place

**BJ:** Oh, Merilene, did you mention that you have a student group room?

**BJ** . o O ( here in Tapped In )

**AboegneGst5:** What are the project-based learning methods?

**MerileneM** . o O ( bjb is reading my mind again )

**MerileneM:** well, in the group room we have here, we are looking at every aspect of putting the festival together

**BJ:** the bnv group is a great example of how teachers can use the student center

**MerileneM:** everything except team registration and travel stipends which is handled by Youth Speaks

**ShannonMB:** Sorry, not sure about the group room?!

**MerileneM:** thanks, BJ

**MerileneM:** please explain, bjb

**MerileneM:** to Shannon.

**BJ:** Shannon, there is a K-12 Student Center in Tapped In

**ShannonMB:** ok, I'll look for it!

**BJ:** Teachers can get a group room in the SAC (student center) and then get special student accounts for their classes

**ShannonMB:** I'm new to Tapped In!

**MerileneM:** it's really great

**MerileneM:** I found out about Tapped In from Jeff [Cooper]

**MerileneM:** only a few weeks ago

**BJ:** the SAC provides a safe and secure environment for students

**MerileneM:** the way we have our group room designed is centered on discussion

**BJ:** o O ( join one of the tips and tricks discussions if you need help or want to learn more about student accounts )

**ShannonMB:** for students to interact?

**JudyAS:** How can I get more info on the SAC?

**SusanR** hopes there will be another SAC orientation for interested participants

**MerileneM:** yes, we use the discussion to share between teen poets and mentors on the bnv2004la committee

**BJ** Nods to Shannon...interact within the class or among other classes

**ShannonMB:** okay, thanks!

**MerileneM:** our discussion is set up so each committee member has a topic (the topic is actually the person's name)

**ShannonMB:** Can you go back to specific examples of the project-based learning?

**MerileneM:** Shannon, I am actually talking about it now. about how our discussion is set up

**LeslieGst3:** I checked out the Youth Speaks part of the site..is there an online Youth Speaks workshop?

**ShannonMB:** Okay...I'm sorry...it's been a long day....I see the collaboration is the project...sorry!

**MerileneM:** the discussion forum allows people to interact with the group on specific event planning tasks and so forth and it also allows everyone on the committee to stay on the same wave length

**MerileneM:** Leslie, check the links in this transcript when you get them. otherwise please email me at [peazritr@comcast.net](mailto:peazritr@comcast.net)

**LeslieGst3:** thanks

**MerileneM:** Shannon, no -- you're ok. we are using the discussion in this way which may be different from how it is usually used

**MerileneM** nods you're welcome to Leslie

**ShannonMB:** so Tapped In provides a venue of sorts for the collaboration between students?

**MerileneM:** yes. we set tasks in the discussion and the replies are the thread

**MerileneM:** the discussion thread

**LauraAW:** how is this related to the bnv

**MerileneM:** Laura, we are the local hosts for bnv 2004

**LauraAW:** meaning your school??

**MerileneM:** and our student group is the committee along with mentors from my company and Youth Speaks

**LauraAW:** o...ok

**MerileneM:** we is a group of local teen poets and mentors

**MerileneM:** it's quite a project

**LauraAW:** sounds like it

**MerileneM:** but we are coming along

**LeslieGst3:** any tips for start up?

**MerileneM:** we have the Los Angeles convention center as our venue ---- whewhooooo!

**LeslieGst3:** wow that is huge huh?

**GelindoF:** How is promotion and marketing of the events publicized?

**JudyAS:** Who was the brainstorm behind BNV?

**MerileneM:** we are just starting to rile up the media blitz nationally, locally and internationally too

**MerileneM:** Judy, bnv is a Youth Speaks baby

**LeslieGst3:** I see tickets for sale on the ys site do you sell bnv tickets online as well?

**MerileneM:** Leslie, not yet

**MerileneM:** but please keep in touch on that

**LeslieGst3:** what are the prizes are they \$ or different type things

**SusanR:** Thanks for a provocative session, Merilene.

**PhilH:** Yes thanks Merilene

**ShannonMB:** Thanks for your info. I'm sure it will matriculate into Atlanta even more so in the future!

**PhilH** waves bye to all

**MerileneM:** you are all welcome. thanks everyone!

**LeslieGst3:** Yes I really enjoyed this session and learned a lot about bnv!!

**BJ** applauds wildly

**JudyAS:** Learned a lot Bye!

**AboegneGst5:** Thanks for enlightening me on bnv

**MerileneM:** Shannon you can participate from atl via webcast over the internet

**GelindoF:** ok thanks a million!

**ShannonMB:** neat!

**MerileneM:** bjb, thanks for a wonderful afternoon.

**BJ:** Thank you, Merilene..and tell James thanks too

**MerileneM:** I will. I cannot wait to read the transcript. this has been such a fast moving hour

**MerileneM** waves goodbye to everyone