Beyond Fact
Everybody Reads Book Series

Prepared for

OMSI
Everyday Encounters with Science

by
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Executive Summary

This report contains findings from the evaluation study of the culminating program of the *Beyond Fact* project—Multnomah County Library's (MCL) Everybody Reads community reading project. Based on the previous work done on this project for the reading groups, Steven Johnson's *The Ghost Map* was chosen for Everybody Reads 2010. This community reading project took place during February and March of 2010 at multiple MCL branches and other venues throughout Portland. These book groups and other adult programs were implemented and evaluated during the months of February through May 2010 at 24 venues, including libraries, pubs, Portland's Wastewater Treatment Plant, The Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI), and Portland State University.

Project Description

The *Beyond Fact* project has four main goals: three for the public audience and one for the professional audience. The three public audience goals are to:

- Involve diverse audiences of adults in informed discussion and dialogue focused on science topics and relevant social, ethical, political, or philosophical issues.
- Attract new adult audiences beyond those typically reached by the current programs of either OMSI or MCL.
- Engage adults in reading and discussion-based learning that promotes science literacy.

The professional audience goal is to:

- Increase knowledge in the informal education community of effective practices to engage adults with relevant, potentially controversial topics.

This study was conducted by OMSI's Evaluation & Visitor Studies division with collaboration from the *Beyond Fact* project team. Various evaluation methods were used during this study including observations of book groups, surveys, and surveys of experts and facilitators. Data from these methods ranged from categorical, ordinal, open-ended responses to qualitative observations. Open-ended responses were collected, transcribed, and categorized after review of all responses. Data was analyzed using Excel to produce descriptive statistics. The methods and instruments are described below.

Findings

- Data collection activities were performed on 18 book discussion groups, one waste water treatment plant tour, three adult programs, and two author facilitated lectures
- 863 people participated in the data collection from these groups
- Nearly three fourths (73.4%) of those surveyed were new to Everybody Reads activities

Demographics of all the participants to all events

- 76% were female
- 74% were 45 years old or older
- 93% were white
- 97% of participants were not Hispanic or Latino
- 88% were college educated or higher
- 45% had a professional or graduate degree
- 76% tended to be interested in science and technology
- 10% were not as interested in science and technology as the rest of the group
- 57% reported that they were familiar with science and technology
- 14% rated in the middle of the scale for familiarity in science and technology

Findings related to project impacts

Impact 1: Involve diverse audiences of adults in informed discussion and dialogue focused on science topics and relevant social, ethical, political, and philosophical issues.

- Participants were involved in informed discussion and dialogue focused on science topics such as the nature of scientific thought and reasoning and to the implication for future epidemiological outbreaks.
- Participants from various age groups and backgrounds attended the book groups, although not as demographically diverse as was expected.
- 82% felt the subjects were relevant to their everyday life.

Impact 2: Attract new audiences beyond those typically reached by current programs of either OMSI or MCL.

- 42% had not been to OMSI in the past 12 months.
- 26% had only visited once in the past 12 months.
- 16% of participants had never attended an MCL book group or been to the library in the last 12 months.

Impact 3: Engage adults in reading and discussion-based learning that promotes science literacy.

- The vast majority of participants in the book groups actively engaged in each of the book group discussions about a scientific topic.
- Participants were also observed as being curious and interested in the topic.
- 44% reported being curious to learn more about various topics related to the science presented in the book or at the event.
- 77% reported that they had discussed material from the book outside of the book group.
- 21% had done further research on their own about the information presented in the book.
- Most were observed as being open to others' thoughts and ideas.
- Only a few participants were observed showing signs of skepticism toward parts of the book, specific items, or in general the science process, science, and society.

Participants' knowledge and attitude changes

- Observations indicate that the majority of participants understood the basics of the science presented in the book.
- Most participants mentioned that they talked about the book with someone else, the majority being family and friends.

Emergent outcomes of respondents

- For 39%, the presence of experts, speakers, and the author were the most enjoyable aspects of the programs.
- For 30%, the discussion, the diversity of opinions and interpretations, and opportunity to ask questions were the most enjoyable aspects of the programs.

Lessons Learned

Developing and delivering the Everybody Reads program around a science book was a very valuable experience for both OMSI and MCL. This showed that science can be a compelling draw and that there was indeed an interest in these kinds of programs. The events were very

successful at achieving all of the goals of the *Beyond Fact* project. Some lessons were learned by the facilitators, experts, evaluator, and participants. Some of these lessons are reported below.

First, involving an expert in the discussion was very valuable. Even if some of the participants or the facilitator have science backgrounds, it was very useful to have a scientist sitting in of whom the technical questions could be asked. One of the unwritten goals for the *Beyond Fact* project was to put a human face on scientists, and involving them in the groups went a long way to achieve that end. As mentioned above, making science more human was an important factor that many participants noticed or gained from the book groups.

Second, not only was it an opportunity for the public to learn more about science, but it was a chance for OMSI staff in particular to learn about the public's understanding of science and their taste in topics. In general, developing and hosting the book groups was a way to test our perceptions and learn how to communicate about science more effectively.

And lastly, when participants were asked what they liked least about the event, the majority responded with either "nothing" or to keep up the good work. Of those who had comments, most were logistical in nature or wanting more information.

Conclusions

The results from the *Beyond Fact* book groups were positive in many ways. Diverse perspectives were represented and appreciated at the book group discussions (by participants, experts, and facilitators), although the demographic diversity of individual participants could be improved upon. An effort should be made to try to advertise and conduct these book groups in other areas of the city of Portland that may be more ethnically diverse. It might also be worthwhile to conduct these book groups outside of both OMSI and the MCL library system (e.g., community centers or other organizational centers). Another possibility would be to include community organization leaders that have better ties with more diverse audiences in the book group planning and implementation phases. These leaders could help conduct the discussions and potentially lead the discussions in participants' primary language if necessary (e.g., Spanish).

Participants enjoyed the facilitator and expert's input and comments throughout all of the discussions. The facilitators and most of the experts did a good job of staying on topic and not dominating the discussion. It was discovered in 2009 that the facilitators needed to discuss the experts' role more clearly in the book groups. The Everybody Reads book groups were sure to set aside some time that was specifically for asking the expert any questions participants might have. While these questions sometime arose throughout the discussion, having time set aside made sure participants were able to ask all of their questions.

Future projects should use methods and measures that can be explored to gain a better understanding of participants' habits of mind before, during, and after attending the book group discussions. Self-reporting was a moderately effective way to measure these habits after the discussions, although an effective method was not identified for measuring habits beforehand.

Lastly, more should be explored with the emergent outcomes associated with this project. Participants' willingness to discuss the book outside of the book groups was remarkable, although not clearly understood. This question was asked as several items, and participants

were not asked to expand on what they discussed and how often or how long they discussed the topics. As mentioned earlier, this multiplier effect is important for informal education institutions and should be better understood. If a method could be designed to follow up with those involved in the discussion outside of the book group, a better understanding of this multiplier effect could be gained. Similarly, more should be understood about participants' "research" outside of the book group. Understanding in more detail about what participants are researching could be important to understanding where adults are getting scientific information.

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Introduction

This report contains findings from the evaluation study of the culminating program of the *Beyond Fact* project—Multnomah County Library's (MCL) Everybody Reads community reading project. Based on the previous work done on this project for the reading groups, Steven Johnson's *The Ghost Map* was chosen for Everybody Reads 2010. This community reading project took place during February and March of 2010 at multiple MCL branches and other venues throughout Portland. These book groups and other adult programs were implemented and evaluated during the months of February through May 2010 at 24 venues, including:

- Libraries
- Pubs
- Portland's Wastewater Treatment Plant
- The Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI)
- Portland State University

Various evaluation methods were used during this study including observations of book groups, participant surveys, and surveys of experts and facilitators. Data from these methods ranged from categorical, ordinal, open-ended responses to qualitative observations. The study was conducted by OMSI's Evaluation & Visitor Studies division with collaboration from the *Beyond Fact* project team.

Project Description

The *Beyond Fact* project has four main goals: three for the public audience and one for the professional audience. The three public audience goals are to:

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- Attract new adult audiences beyond those typically reached by the current programs of either OMSI or MCL.
- Engage adults in reading and discussion-based learning that promotes science literacy.

The professional audience goal is to:

- Increase knowledge in the informal education community of effective practices to engage adults with relevant, potentially controversial topics.

These goals will be achieved through the partnership of OMSI and MCL to plan, develop, implement, and evaluate various programs: science book discussion groups, Engaging with the Experts lecture series, and MCL's Everybody Reads. The project team will share the successes and failures of the project through various dissemination methods to the informal education community.

This portion of the *Beyond Fact* project (MLC's Everybody Reads) took place during February and March 2010 and was evaluated during the months of February through May 2010. Based on the previous work done on this project for the science book discussion groups, Steven Johnson's *The Ghost Map* was chosen for Everybody Reads 2010.

Certain guidelines needed to be specifically followed when choosing the book. These guidelines included: book length (200–300 pages was ideal), availability from the publisher, cost of the books (and whether or not it was available in paperback), and the feedback gathered from the science book discussion groups in 2009.

The majority of the book group meetings were facilitated either by OMSI staff or by MCL staff and observed by an OMSI evaluator. The facilitators had read the book and had written a set of discussion questions to prompt conversation, if needed. Twenty-one out of the 27 book groups were also joined by local experts who were available to answer science-related questions.

In addition to the book group discussion evaluations, one waste water treatment plant tour, three adult programs, and two author lectures were evaluated.

In an effort to reach diverse audiences, book groups were located at fourteen different library branch locations around the city of Portland. The book groups each met on different days. We discovered, however, that some of the same book group participants found the experiences valuable enough that they would come to the groups regardless of where they were held, even if it involved a long trip across town.

Summary of activities:

- 27 book groups lead by staff and joined by local experts
- 2 author lectures
- 3 waste water treatment plant tours
- 3 adult programming with seniors

Methods

Various evaluation methods were used during this study including observations of book groups, post-surveys, and surveys of "experts" and facilitators. Data from these methods ranged from categorical, ordinal, open-ended responses to qualitative observations. The methods and instruments are described below.

Observations

Observations were conducted by an OMSI evaluator at 18 of the 27 book groups to help understand the dialogue and discussion around the book. These 18 groups were chosen as a sample of convenience. Notes were taken to catalog who started various threads of discussion, how many members contributed to the discussion on that thread, who asked questions and to whom the questions were posed, and brief notes detailing the content of the discussion. Additionally time was kept for each thread of discussion.

OMSI evaluation staff also attended one of three tours of the waste water treatment plant, three adult programs, and the two lectures given by the author Stephen Johnson. After each event, the observations were transcribed and the evaluator's overall thoughts were transcribed in an electronic document. These observations were first analyzed for overall impression of involvement of participants; next, the content of the dialogue and discussion was analyzed for common themes; and lastly, overall impressions were analyzed to generalize results across all of the events.

Post-Survey

After each event, participants were invited to fill out a post-survey about their experience (Appendix A). A total of 863 attendees participated in the post-event surveys during the entire four-month period. The same survey was used for all events except the Science Pub author's lecture, which had a few minor adjustments.

Expert Evaluations

As mentioned above, content experts attended 21 of the book groups to participate in the discussion and to share their expertise on the topic and answer any technical questions about the topic. After the book group, each of the experts was given a survey to fill out at their convenience (Appendix B) and return to MCL or OMSI staff members. The survey asked them about their experience with the book group discussion, what they thought their role was and how well they achieved that role, and their opinion about the diversity of the discussion. They were also asked their perception of participants' ability to grasp the book's main point and if they felt participants struggled with any of the scientific concepts. Six of the experts completed and returned a survey.

Facilitator Evaluations

Similar to the expert surveys, after each book group the facilitators of the book groups were given a survey to fill out (Appendix C). The survey asked the facilitators which topic they felt got the best and worst response, whether or not they felt participants grasped the concepts, and how diverse and open the discussion was. They were also asked what they enjoyed most and least about the discussion and what they thought they could do differently to improve the discussion. An evaluation was filled out by each facilitator after each book group, resulting in a total of 17 completed facilitator surveys.

Findings

During the four months of February to May 2010, a total of 27 book discussion groups were delivered at 19 different MCL branch library locations and four other venues. There were also three adult programs and three wastewater treatment tours. Finally there were two lectures with the author. Evaluations took place at 22 of these events (Table 1). A total of 863 people participated in the evaluations of these book discussion groups, wastewater treatment plant tours, science pubs or author's lectures, and adult programs. For just the book groups, a total of 238 people participated in the evaluation. Total survey participation in the book groups ranged from a low of one person to a high of 28 people. According to the facilitator counts, an average participation across all of the book group meetings was just under 19 people. Since taking the survey was optional, counting the surveys would not be a reliable method of estimating participation. This is higher than was anticipated with the original goal of an average of 15 participants.

Preregistration was not required to attend the book groups and attendance at all events was free. Attendance varied by book group/location. It may not be known exactly why some book groups had much higher attendance than others; although some conclusions could be that the location was not as ideal for as many people, the day and time may not have worked or, in at least one case, weather may have been a factor.

The largest groups were for the author lectures at PSU and at the OMSI Science Pub at the Bagdad Theater. An estimated 600 people attended the science pub and 250 attended the talk at PSU. Of these, 423 participated in the evaluation of the program by filling out surveys distributed on their seats prior to their arrival. The three tours of the waste water treatment plant had an estimated 30 participants with four completing the evaluation survey. The three adult programs at PSU had an estimated 150 attendees with 77 participating in the evaluation.

Discussion in locations within the community
One of the primary goals of the *Beyond Fact* project was to provide convenient access to science-themed programs. This goal was identified through research on other adult programs in what were the barriers to attendance at such events. This goal was achieved by providing programs at various locations within the community through multiple library branches. As discussed above, the book discussion groups were located at 27 locations, ranging in geography throughout the city of Portland (Figure 1).

Most groups consisted of participants that were associated or familiar with that branch location.

Table 1. *Beyond Fact The Ghost Map* evaluation locations and participation.

Location	Evaluation Participants
Albina Library	13
Bagdad Theater	270
CAP Pageturners Group	13
Capitol Hill Library	14
Central Library	8
Central Pageturners	1
Fairview Library	11
Gregory Heights Library	3
Gresham Library Pageturners	23
Hillsdale Library	14
Hollywood Library	22
Lucky Lab	13
Midland Library	28
North Portland Library	20
Northwest Library	11
OASIS Room	10
PSU Fun w/Epidemiology Session	49
PSU Memorial Coliseum	153
PSU Narrative Nonfiction Lecture	28
Sellwood Library	14
St Johns Library	15
Wastewater Treatment Plant	4
Woodstock Library	1
Unknown Location	125
OVERALL TOTAL	863

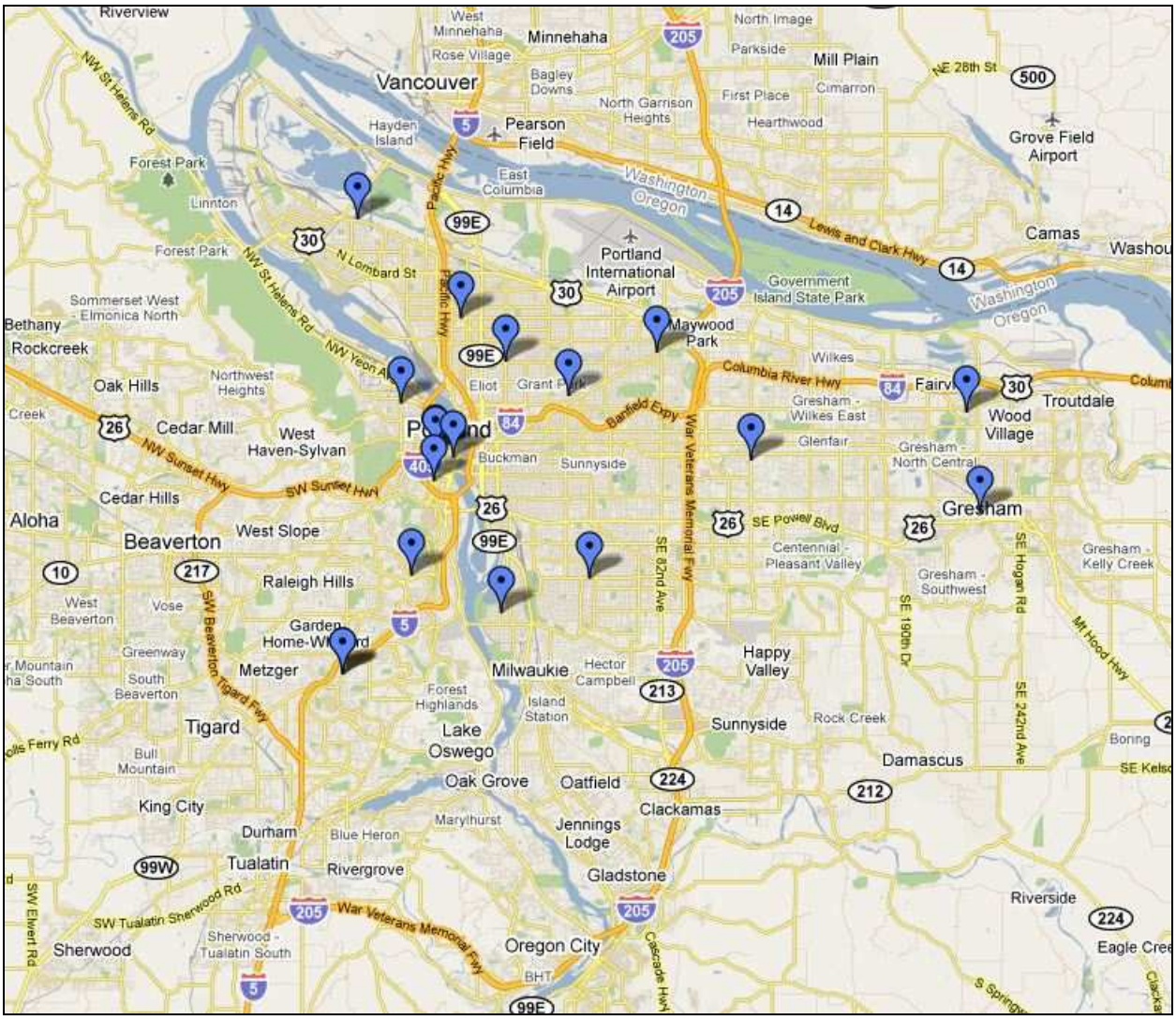

Figure 1. Map of locations that hosted *Beyond Fact* book groups (from Google Maps 2010).

Demographics of participants at all venues

Participants tended to be female (76%) and 45 years old or older (50%). Compared to a front-end survey of typical MCL book groups during the planning of the *Beyond Fact* book groups, the gender and age makeup of participants during the summative evaluation is similar. *Beyond Fact* participants were slightly younger than the typical MCL book group (50% over 45 years old vs. 85% over 45 years old) although similar percentages were female (76% vs. 81%). *Beyond Fact* book group participants tended to be white (93%), not Hispanic or Latino (97%), and well educated (88% had a college education or higher and 45% had a professional or graduate degree).

Table 2. Gender

(n=761)	Response Frequency	Response Count
Female	76%	580
Male	24%	181

Table 3. How old are you?

(n=863)	Response Frequency	Response Count
14–24 years old	8%	73
25–34 years old	9%	81
35–44 years old	11%	96
45–54 years old	9%	78
55–64 years old	15%	133
65–75 years old	14%	120
75+ years old	33%	282

Table 4. What is your ethnicity?

(n=700)	Response Frequency	Response Count
Not Hispanic or Latino	97%	678
Hispanic or Latino	3%	22

Table 5. What is your race? (Check all that apply.)

(n=738)	Response Frequency	Response Count
Native American or Alaskan Native	2%	16
Asian	3%	21
Pacific Islander or Native Hawaiian	0%	3
Black or African American	2%	12
White	93%	686

Table 6. What is the highest level of education you have completed?		
(n=710)	**Response Frequency**	**Response Count**
Some high school	2%	13
High school graduate or GED	1%	8
Some college or vocational school	9%	63
Associate, bachelor, or vocational degree	25%	180
Some graduate or professional school	17%	124
Master, professional, or doctorate degree	45%	322

During the post-survey, respondents were asked to indicate their interest in and familiarity with science and technology on a seven-point scale ranging from 1, "I have no interest/familiarity," to 7, "I am extremely interested/familiar" (Tables 7 and 8). In general, participants tended to be fairly interested in science and technology with 76% of respondents reporting 5 or higher, and almost one-third reporting 7 (31%). Although most of respondents were highly interested in science and technology, there were some participants that were not as interested as the rest of the group (10%), rating on the "I have no interest" end of the scale. This indicates that there was at least some diversity in the interest levels of participants in science and technology, which was also reflected in observations of participants' comments during discussions.

As for participants' familiarity with science and technology, they tended to rate lower on this scale than their interest. Just over half of participants (57%) reported that they were familiar with science and technology, almost one-quarter (20%) rated directly in the middle of the scale, and a little more (23%) reported that they were not so familiar with science and technology.

Table 7. How would you rate your interest in science and technology? (n=768)								
I have no interest	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	I am extremely interested
Response Frequency	1%	3%	6%	14%	19%	26%	31%	

Table 8. How would you rate your familiarity with science and technology? (n=769)								
I have no familiarity	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	I am extremely familiar
Response Frequency	2%	6%	15%	20%	27%	19%	12%	

Participants were also asked about how often they take advantage of opportunities to learn about science (Table 9). There was a wide variety of responses, nearly uniformly distributed across the possible responses. "A few times a week" (33%) was the most popular response followed by "daily" (22%), "once a month" (22%), and "once a week" (21%). Lastly, 2% reported never taking advantage of these opportunities.

Table 9. How often do you take advantage of opportunities to learn about science?		
(n=755)	**Response Frequency**	**Response Count**
Daily	22%	165
Few times a week	33%	247
Once a week	21%	160
Once a month	22%	167
Never	2%	16

Findings related to project impacts

As mentioned above, multiple impacts were defined by the project team to be achieved through the various *Beyond Fact* programs. Results from the Everybody Reads evaluations will be presented for each of the three public audience impacts as described below.

Impact 1*:* Involve diverse audiences of adults in informed discussion and dialogue focused on science topics and relevant social, ethical, political, and philosophical issues.

This goal was judged successful based on the following criteria: the format of the program combined the presentation of information with mostly participant-lead discussion; people of diverse backgrounds, scientific engagement levels, and multiple viewpoints attend; and participants report that topics are relevant to their everyday life and community. It is interesting to note that the respondents were very highly educated (45% with a master's degree or higher).

Based on evaluator observations, session facilitators, and feedback from the experts, participants to the book discussion groups were involved in informed discussion and dialogue focused on science topics ranging from the scientific process and progress, the nature of knowledge, community participation and collaboration to public health and social issues. The book group format was almost entirely dialogue focused and nearly completely participant lead, so this goal was easily achieved. The discussions were informed and lead by a facilitator knowledgeable about the book and topic and were also informed by the knowledge and experiences of invited experts in the topic. While the facilitators started the discussion and inserted questions when the discussion started to slow a bit, most of the discussion was participant lead. Most of the experts also were not seen as "experts" but more as a member of the book group that was there to share their knowledge and perspectives on the topic of the book. Each of the experts that attended a book group was asked how well they thought all of the participants engaged in the discussion around the book. All of the experts reported that everyone participated and many thought the discussions couldn't have gone much better. Comments included:

> *"There were lots of participants. Also there were thoughtful and deep comments."*
>
> *"Really enjoyed the discussion and getting to share information about public health."*
>
> *"I really enjoyed hearing others' perceptions of the book. I also enjoyed talking about the science and the social issues involved."*

As mentioned above, participants from various age groups and backgrounds attended the book groups. While the book groups may not have been as diverse as they had originally hoped to be (e.g., demographically diverse), diverse perspectives were brought to each of the book groups.

These perspectives ranged depending on the book group, but most of the book groups had at least one self-identified "non-science" person that brought a different perspective compared to some of the other participants. Each of the experts was asked to comment on how diverse were the views and opinions represented in the discussion they attended. Almost all of the experts commented that they felt like diverse viewpoints were presented during the discussion, and that the discussions were by no means "one-sided." Comments included the following:

> *"Conversation veered off into relevant areas of scientific progress, the nature of knowledge, and community collaboration."*
>
> *"There were differences of opinions regarding sections of the book. And different opinions were offered regarding 'choices'."*
>
> *"It was nice to have other scientists there, and people from a wide array of backgrounds."*

When participants were asked how relevant the subjects presented in the book were to their everyday life, over three-quarters (82%) felt the subjects were relevant and over one-third (37%) felt they were very relevant (Table 10). The goal of the project was that over two-thirds (66%) of participants would find the topics relevant to their life.

Table 10. How relevant do you think the subjects presented in this book are to your everyday life? (n=722)

Very irrelevant	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	Very relevant
Response Frequency	1%	2%	5%	10%	21%	24%	37%	

Impact 2*:* Attract new audiences beyond those typically reached by current programs of either the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry or the Multnomah County Library.

The initial goal of the project was to be considered successful if at least 25% of the participants of the *Beyond Fact* project were new to either OMSI or MCL. The book groups far exceeded this initial goal for reaching new audiences of both OMSI and MCL. When asked how many times they had visited OMSI within the past 12 months (considered a new audience by OMSI standards) just under half of participants (42%) had not been to OMSI during this time period. Only one-third had been to OMSI more than once during this time period (32%). When asked if they had visited the MCL or attended one of their events in the last 12 months, only 16% reported that they had not been to any MCL during this time period and over three-quarters (78%) had been more than once.

Table 11. Combined Results: How many times have you visited OMSI in the past 12 months?

(n=769)	**Percent**	**Count**
What's OMSI?	0%	3
0 times	42%	322
1 time	26%	199
2–5 times	22%	171
6+ times	10%	74

When looking at the distinction between the Science Pub attendees and the attendees of the other programs, there are differences in these results. As the Science Pub is a regular offering from OMSI, these participants were more likely to have been to OMSI in the last 12 months. Thirty-two percent of these Science Pub attendees had not visited in the last 12 months and 53% had visited once or not at all in the last 12 months. In comparison, 48% of the book group attendees had not visited OMSI in the last 12 months and 76% had not visited at least once in the last 12 months.

Similarly, the book group attendees were more likely to have visited the MCL system than were the Science Pub attendees. Twenty-three percent of the Science Pub attendees had not visited MCL in the last 12 months and 31% had visited one time or not at all. Twelve percent of book group attendees had not visited MCL in the last 12 months and 18% had visited one time or not at all.

Table 11a. Science Pub Attendees: How many times have you visited OMSI or attended an OMSI Science Pub in the past 12 months?

(n=258)	Percent	Count
What's OMSI	0%	0
0 times	32%	83
1 time	21%	55
2–5 times	29%	74
6+ times	18%	46

Table 11b. Book Group Attendees: How many times have you visited OMSI or attended an OMSI Science Pub in the past 12 months?

(n=511)	Percent	Count
What's OMSI	1%	3
0 times	47%	239
1 time	28%	144
2–5 times	19%	97
6+ times	5%	28

Table 12. Combined Results: How often have you visited the Multnomah County Library or attended one of their events in the past 12 months?

(n=765)	Percent	Count
0 times	16%	122
1 time	7%	50
2–5 times	18%	139
6+ times	59%	454

Table 12a. Science Pub Attendees: How often have you visited the Multnomah County Library (MCL) or attended one of their events in the last 12 months?		
(n=256)	**Percent**	**Count**
0 times	23%	60
1 time	8%	20
2–5 times	22%	56
6+ times	47%	120

Table 12b. Book Group Attendees: How often have you visited the Multnomah County Library (MCL) or attended one of their events in the last 12 months?		
(n=509)	**Percent**	**Count**
0 times	12%	62
1 time	6%	30
2–5 times	16%	83
6+ times	66%	334

Clearly, one of the side effects that both OMSI and MCL hoped would come out of these book groups is that participants to the *Beyond Fact* book groups would attend or participate in other activities at both OMSI and MCL. Participants were asked if they had been to any previous Everybody Reads 2010 events, almost one-third (27%) answered yes, although the majority of the respondents (73%) answered no (Table 13).

Table 13. Have you been to any previous Everybody Reads 2010 events?		
(n=763)	**Percent**	**Count**
Yes	27%	203
No	73%	560

It is believed that one of the main reasons these book groups were reaching a new OMSI audience is due to the advertising efforts of the project. When asked how they found out about the events, the most commonly reported method (72%) was through the organizers (including promotional websites, library, OMSI, *Oregonian* newspaper advertisements, Everybody Reads catalog, and TriMet advertisements), with the Multnomah County Library being the most popular source (34%); the next most commonly reported method (36%) was through word of mouth (including friends and family, through school, through co-workers, or through the book clubs), with friends and family being the most common word of mouth (22%) (Table 14).

Table 14. How did you find out about this event?		
(n=775, total responses=866)[a]	**Percent**	**Count**
Library	34%	267
Friend/Family	22%	173
ER Catalog	12%	91
School	7%	58
Book Club	6%	45
Oregonian	7%	57
MCL Newsletter/E-mail/Website	6%	50
MCL Branch Advertisement	4%	33
OMSI Newsletter/E-mail/Website	7%	55
TriMet	1%	5
Other	4%	32

[a] Respondents may have listed more than one source.

Impact 3: Engage adults in reading and discussion-based learning that promotes science literacy.

Impact 3, one of the main goals of the project, was to increase science literacy through discussion-based learning in the adult population. This goal was more difficult to evaluate than originally expected. It was initially thought that evaluations of this impact would judge participants' science habits of mind (American Association for the Advancement of Science, 2007) including:

- An open mind toward considering new scientific ideas that is balanced with skepticism toward accepting these ideas without adequate proof
- Exhibiting curiosity, openness, and skepticism
- Active participation in group discussions on scientific topics

While researching how to best evaluate participants' habits of minds, little information was found that effectively achieved this for a similar type of project (e.g., shorter term program with adult audiences). Most studies looked at habits of minds for longer-term activities such as classes or a long-term discussion group (Lynch & Lembach, 2007) and many were with younger audiences (American Association for the Advancement of Science, 2007). While this impact was important to assess, a number of methods were used and tested to try to understand the effect the book groups were having on individuals' science habits of mind.

An evaluator was present at about half of the book group discussions to take notes and observe how book group members were participating in the discussion. These observations also helped identify how participants were engaging in the discussion and to catalog scientific habits of mind activity among participants. In other words, observations of participants' actions, such as showing skepticism toward someone else's statement or openness toward another's ideas, were used as evidence of their scientific habits of mind.

Most participants were observed as being open to others' thoughts and ideas. This does not mean that participants were not critical or skeptical of others' ideas (actually, many showed signs of skepticism toward others' ideas), but that they were open to listening to what everyone

had to say. At no point did anyone ever get "cut off" or interrupted while voicing their opinions. Many participants commented that their favorite part of attending the book groups was hearing others' opinions and seeing what others thought about the book/topic. Many of the experts commented on how open they thought the discussion was; one commented that what she enjoyed most was "Everyone is smart, well read, well informed. They are also quite vocal and opinionated. It is always lively," and another enjoyed "Sharing ideas, learning from each other." Facilitators' comments about the diversity and openness of the group varied. Most of the book groups were thought to be very open to diverse viewpoints, although there were a few discussions where facilitators thought, although the discussion was open and diverse, there was nothing very controversial discussed. A few other comments about what the facilitators liked best are as follows:

> *"The respect for all ideas."*
>
> *"The lively discussion."*
>
> *"Dr XXX (the invited expert) was wonderful—the people were enthusiastic about him and the book."*
>
> *"The quite articulate guest (the invited expert) who made this event highly relevant and enjoyable."*

Only 5% of the participants were skeptical about the science presented in the book. In general, this particular book wasn't chosen as an example of controversial science but rather to discuss the nature of the scientific process itself and its role in society. Of these participants, 9% mentioned being skeptical toward the science presented in the book and 91% toward specific terms or ideas presented in the book. While participants did allow other participants to voice their opinions about various parts of the book (as mentioned above), many would raise questions about that opinion in a cordial way. While very few discussions got into a "heated" debate, questions were raised against the author's opinions and other participants' comments.

Table 15. What are you skeptical about in relation to the science presented? (Coded responses)

(n=45)	Response Frequency	Response Count
Specific items	91%	41
General, science process, science and society	9%	4

Participants were also asked if they were curious to learn more about the science presented at the events or the book, and almost half (44%) of the respondents answered the question affirmatively; the majority (89%) mentioned being curious about specific aspects and a few (5%) mentioned being curious about the science process and principles and its role in society (Table 16).

Table 16. What are you curious to learn more about with respect to the science presented at this event or in the book? (Coded responses)		
(n=383)	**Response Frequency**	**Response Count**
Specific aspects	89%	339
Science process and principles, role in society	5%	19
"Yes, I'm more curious"	7%	25

While some participants came to the discussions with prior knowledge or curiosity toward the subject matter presented in the book, many were more curious after reading the book. This was also evident in the fact that over one-fifth (21%) of participants performed some sort of "outside research" about the information presented in the book, mainly using Internet search (62%) or other books (26%).

The last, more obvious measure of potentially increasing participants' science literacy was to involve them in active participation in a group discussion around specific scientific topics. This was clearly achieved with the book group discussions. The original goal of the project was to have at least a majority of participants actively engage in these types of discussions; nearly every participant in the book groups actively engaged in each of the book group discussions based on facilitator surveys and evaluation staff observation results. While every participant did not engage at the same level, every individual had the opportunity to speak about the book. Both the participants and the experts enjoyed this format and were impressed with how comfortable it was to speak their opinion.

From the evidence presented above, the *Beyond Fact* book groups do appear to be having an effect on increasing participants' science literacy. Participants exhibited many traits of scientific habits of mind (e.g., openness, skepticism, and curiosity) observed during the discussions. Both the facilitators and many of the experts report that participants were "getting" the science and understood most of the concepts. The participants also expressed much curiosity about the topic presented in the book and about science. They also reported that the book groups were open to a variety of viewpoints but were also skeptical at times of both the authors' views as well as other participants. The evidence is present that the *Beyond Fact* book groups help promote participants' science literacy.

Participants' knowledge and attitude changes

While it is believed that participants' knowledge and/or attitudes toward science and technology were influenced by reading the book and participating in the discussion this was difficult to objectively assess. Observations indicate that participants understood most of the material presented in the book and could grasp many of the concepts.

During the post-survey, participants were asked to indicate how knowledgeable they were on the science presented in the book before they read it on a seven-point scale ranging from 1, "never heard of the subjects," to 7, "know the subjects very well" (Table 17). In general, more than half of the participants (55%) tended to have some knowledge, reporting 4 or higher, and almost half of the respondents (45%) weren't very knowledgeable on the science presented in the book, reporting 3 or lower.

Table 17. How knowledgeable were you on the science presented in this book before you read the book? (n=513)								
Never heard of subjects	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	Know the subjects very well
Response Frequency	5%	20%	20%	19%	21%	9%	6%	

As mentioned above, participants' prior knowledge was assessed, and it can be concluded that the book group discussions positively influenced the participants' knowledge about the science presented in the book for those who weren't very knowledgeable on the topic.

Emergent outcomes

This section will report results that were not necessarily anticipated by the project team, although some may not be that unusual. Regardless, they are reported below in a brief format.

Participants were asked whether or not they had talked about the book with anyone else. The majority of respondents (77%) reported that they had done just that (Table 18). This helps demonstrate that the topic was not only good at facilitating a discussion during the book group, but also starts discussion outside. Seventy-eight percent reported talking to friends and family. Twenty-three percent talked about it in a school or book club setting outside of the Everybody Reads book club, and 13% talked about the book with co-workers or clients. This multiplier effect is of key interest to informal science learning institutions and may be larger than we anticipate.

Table 18. Have you talked about *The Ghost Map* with anyone else?		
(n=789)	**Response Frequency**	**Response Count**
Yes	77%	609
No	10%	79
Didn't read it	13%	101

Table 19. Who did they talk to?		
(n=349) written responses	**Response Frequency**	**Response Count**[a]
Family, friend	78%	272
Book club, school	23%	82
Co-worker, clients	13%	45
Other	4%	15

[a] May have more than one response

Similarly, 27% of participants had already passed the book on to someone else and another 27% planned on passing the book on (Table 20). This, coupled with talking to others about the book, adds to this multiplier effect.

Table 20. Did you pass *The Ghost Map* on to someone else?		
(n=782)	**Response Frequency**	**Response Count**
Yes	27%	215
No	25%	194
I plan to pass it on	27%	213
I don't have the book	20%	160

One of the outcomes that arose was the participants' motivation to do outside research to get a better understanding of something that was brought up in the book. Twenty-one percent of participants reported that they had done some research of this nature; the majority (65%) didn't do so. Conducting informal research about the material shows that some of the participants were curious and motivated to learn more than what was presented in the book.

Table 21. Have you done any "research" about the information presented in *The Ghost Map*?		
(n=784)	**Response Frequency**	**Response Count**
Yes	21%	162
No	65%	512
Didn't read it	14%	110

Participants were asked about what they enjoyed most about the *Beyond Fact* events (Table 22). Most respondents mentioned the experts, speakers, or the author (39%); a similar number of respondents (30%) enjoyed the discussion, the diversity of opinions and interpretations, and the questions and answers. Other aspects of the events that participants enjoyed most were the topic, the learning opportunity, and the intellectual stimulation.

Table 22. What did you enjoy most about this event? (n=774)		
Enjoy Most Category	**Response Frequency**	**Response Count**
Experts, speaker, author	39%	301
Discussion, diversity of opinions and interpretations, Q&A	30%	231
Topic, learning, intellectual stimulation	25%	191
Other	7%	51

When asked what participants enjoyed least about the events, the most commonly reported response (49%) was logistics issues such as lighting, sound levels, and availability of seating (Table 23). The second most commonly reported response included wanting more depth or additional information (15%). Other comments were about various aspects of the questions and answers (8%) and lastly the subject or the book itself (5%). Twenty-four percent had comments that were not easily categorized.

Table 23. What did you enjoy least about this event? (n=306)		
Enjoy Least Category	**Response Frequency**	**Response Count**
Logistics issues	49%	150
Wanted more depth, new info	15%	46
Aspects of Q&A	8%	23
Subject, book	5%	14
Other (non-categorized)	24%	73

Expert surveys

While various results from the experts' surveys have been reported above, additional results will be reported below. All of the experts that attended a book group discussion reported that they enjoyed the discussion. When asked what they thought their role was in attending the discussion, all felt like they had similar roles: to answer questions and provide technical background information when needed. Almost all of the experts reported that what they enjoyed most about attending the book groups was the discussion, more specifically, hearing what each participant had to say about the book. Some even commented that it was nice to hear different perspectives, many of which they themselves had not noticed. When asked what they enjoyed least, the most commonly reported response was logistical in nature (sound levels or seating arrangement). All of the experts felt like the facilitators did a good job of leading the discussion and interjecting their comments when needed. One of the experts felt that there could have been a little more preparation to discuss with the others who were presenters.

When asked how these discussions compared to other group discussions they had conducted/attended, most had little to compare this to. That is, this appeared to be the first group discussion of this kind that many of the experts had attended. Two of the experts had participated in other Everybody Reads events and described these events as being similar.

While not directly asked about the presence of experts, participants (43%) commented that the presence of the experts was the best part of the event. The facilitators, as well, found the experts to be wonderful resources to add to the discussion.

Facilitator surveys

As mentioned above, after each book group the facilitators were asked to complete a survey reflecting on their experiences with that book group. The same questions were asked after each book group and were presented to the facilitators beforehand. Highlights from these surveys will be reported below. While some of the results from the facilitator surveys are mentioned above, a few general comments are reported below.

For the most part, the facilitators felt well prepared for their role. In general, they prepared by reading the book and doing some brief research about the topic to familiarize themselves with it. In most cases, they found the discussions to be lively and interesting with a variety of opinions and points of view expressed. They also found people making, and interested in, the connections between the cholera outbreak and current public health issues such as the N1H1 virus and the disaster in Haiti (with the potential for a cholera outbreak). For the most part these facilitators are librarians at the MCL and what they enjoyed most about the groups was talking to the participants. They were also very complimentary of the invited guest experts and found that they added value to the discussion. They also commented on the partnership between OMSI and the library in a positive way and a few had ideas of other partnerships they could explore in the future (for example, a partnership with the art museum).

Lessons Learned

Developing and delivering the Everybody Reads program around a science book was a very valuable experience for both OMSI and MCL. This showed that science can be a compelling draw and that there was indeed an interest in these kinds of programs. The events were very successful at achieving all of the goals of the *Beyond Fact* project. Some lessons were learned by the facilitators, experts, evaluator, and participants. Some of these lessons are reported below.

First, involving an expert in the discussion was very valuable. Even if some of the participants or the facilitator have science backgrounds, it was very useful to have a scientist sitting in of whom the technical questions could be asked. One of the unwritten goals for the *Beyond Fact* project was to put a human face on scientists, and involving them in the groups went a long way to achieve that end. As mentioned above, making science more human was an important factor that many participants noticed or gained from the book groups.

Second, not only was it an opportunity for the public to learn more about science, but it was a chance for OMSI staff in particular to learn about the public's understanding of science and their taste in topics. In general, developing and hosting the book groups was a way to test our perceptions and learn how to communicate about science more effectively.

And lastly, when participants were asked what they liked least about the event, the majority responded with either "nothing" or to keep up the good work. Of those who had comments, most were logistical in nature or wanting more information.

Conclusions

The results from the *Beyond Fact* book groups were positive in many ways. Diverse perspectives were represented and appreciated at the book group discussions (by participants, experts, and facilitators), although the demographic diversity of individual participants could be improved upon. An effort should be made to try to advertise and conduct these book groups in other areas of the city of Portland that may be more ethnically diverse. It might also be worthwhile to conduct these book groups outside of both OMSI and the MCL library system (e.g., community centers or other organizational centers). Another possibility would be to include community organization leaders that have better ties with more diverse audiences in the book group planning and implementation phases. These leaders could help conduct the discussions and potentially lead the discussions in participants' primary language if necessary (e.g., Spanish).

Participants enjoyed the facilitator and expert's input and comments throughout all of the discussions. The facilitators and most of the experts did a good job of staying on topic and not dominating the discussion. It was discovered in 2009 that the facilitators needed to discuss the experts' role more clearly in the book groups. The Everybody Reads book groups were sure to set aside some time that was specifically for asking the expert any questions participants might have. While these questions sometime arose throughout the discussion, having time set aside made sure participants were able to ask all of their questions.

Future projects should use methods and measures that can be explored to gain a better understanding of participants' habits of mind before, during, and after attending the book group discussions. Self-reporting was a moderately effective way to measure these habits after the discussions, although an effective method was not identified for measuring habits beforehand.

Lastly, more should be explored with the emergent outcomes associated with this project. Participants' willingness to discuss the book outside of the book groups was remarkable, although not clearly understood. This question was asked as several items, and participants were not asked to expand on what they discussed and how often or how long they discussed the topics. As mentioned earlier, this multiplier effect is important for informal education institutions and should be better understood. If a method could be designed to follow up with those involved in the discussion outside of the book group, a better understanding of this multiplier effect could be gained. Similarly, more should be understood about participants' "research" outside of the book group. Understanding in more detail about what participants are researching could be important to understanding where adults are getting scientific information.

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Appendix A

Post- Event Survey **Date:** _____

1. What event did you attend today?

❑ Book group ❑ PSU Forum ❑ Wastewater treatment tour ❑ Author discussion @ PSU ❑ Author discussion @ Bagdad

2. Did you read The Ghost Map before coming to this event?

❑ Read none of the book ❑ Skimmed the book ❑ Read some of the book ❑ Read most of the book ❑ Read the entire book

3. Did you pass *The Ghost Map* on to someone else?

❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ I plan to pass it on ❑ I don't have the book

4. Have you talked about The Ghost Map with anyone else?

❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ I didn't read it

Briefly describe (ex. With my husband over dinner one night):

5. Have you done any further research about the information presented in The Ghost Map?

❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ I didn't read it

What resources did you use for the research? _____

6. How knowledgeable were you on the science presented in this book before you read the book?

Never heard of subjects **1 2 3 4 5 6 7** Know the subjects very well

7. How relevant do you think the science presented in this book is to your everyday life?

Very irrelevant **1 2 3 4 5 6 7** Very relevant

8. What did you <u>enjoy most</u> about this event?

9. What did you <u>enjoy least</u> about this event?

10. What are you curious to learn more about related to the science presented at this event or in the book?

11. What are you skeptical about, if anything, in relation to the science presented at this event or in this book?

Over

12. How would you rate your interest in science and technology? (Circle one number.)

I have no interest **1 2 3 4 5 6 7** I am extremely interested

13. How would you rate your familiarity with science and technology? (Circle one number.)

I have no familiarity **1 2 3 4 5 6 7** I am extremely familiar

14. Have you been to any previous Everybody Reads 2010 events? ❑ Yes ❑ No

15, How often have you visited the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI) or attended an OMSI Science Pub in the last 12 months (not including this one)?

❑ What's OMSI? ❑ 0 times ❑ 1 time ❑ 2-5 times ❑ 6+ times

16. How often have you visited the Multnomah County Library (MCL) or attended one of their events in the last 12 months (not including this one)?

❑ 0 times ❑ 1 time ❑ 2-5 times ❑ 6+ times

17. How often do you take advantage of opportunities to learn about science? *(This could be anything from watching the Discovery Channel, to reading science articles, to discussing science topics with friends):*

❑ Never ❑ Daily ❑ Few times a week ❑ Once a week ❑ Once a month

18. How did you find out about this event?

❑	Library / Librarian	❑	MCL Newsletter/E-mail/Website
❑	MCL Branch Advertisement	❑	OMSI Newsletter/E-mail/Website
❑	The *Oregonian*	❑	Everybody Reads catalogue
❑	TriMet advertisement	❑	Friend/Family/Word of mouth
❑	Other:_____		

19. Are you:

❑ Male ❑ Female

15. How old are you?

Age: _____

20. What is your ethnicity? ❑ Hispanic or Latino ❑ Not Hispanic or Latino

21. What is your race? (Check all that apply.)

- ❑ American Indian or Alaskan Native
- ❑ Asian
- ❑ Pacific Islander or Native Hawaiian
- ❑ Black or African American
- ❑ White
- ❑ Other: _____

22. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- ❑ Some high school
- ❑ High school graduate or GED
- ❑ Some college or vocational school
- ❑ Associate, bachelor, or vocational degree
- ❑ Some graduate or professional school
- ❑ Master, professional, or doctorate degree

Post Author Discussion Survey **Date:** 3/2/2010

1. Did you read The Ghost Map before coming to this event?

❑ Read none of the book ❑ Skimmed the book ❑ Read some of the book ❑ Read most of the book ❑ Read the entire book

2. Did you pass *The Ghost Map* on to someone else?

❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ I plan to pass it on ❑ I don't have the book

3. Have you talked about The Ghost Map with anyone else?

❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ I didn't read it

Briefly describe (ex. With my husband over dinner one night):

4. Have you done any further research about the information presented in The Ghost Map?

❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ I didn't read it

What resources did you use for the research? _____

5. How knowledgeable were you on the science presented in this book before you read the book?

Never heard of subjects **1 2 3 4 5 6 7** Know the subjects very well

6. How relevant do you think the science presented in this book is to your everyday life?

Very irrelevant **1 2 3 4 5 6 7** Very relevant

7. What did you <u>enjoy most</u> about this event?

8. What did you <u>enjoy least</u> about this event?

9. What are you curious to learn more about related to the science presented at this event or in the book?

10. What are you skeptical about, if anything, in relation to the science presented at this event or in this book?

Over

11. How would you rate your interest in science and technology? (Circle one number.)

I have no interest	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	I am extremely interested

12. How would you rate your familiarity with science and technology? (Circle one number.)

I have no familiarity	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	I am extremely familiar

13. Have you been to any previous Everybody Reads 2010 events? ❑ Yes ❑ No

14, How often have you visited the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI) or attended an OMSI Science Pub in the last 12 months (not including this one)?

❑ What's OMSI? ❑ 0 times ❑ 1 time ❑ 2-5 times ❑ 6+ times Also check here if you're a member: ❑

15. How often have you visited the Multnomah County Library (MCL) or attended one of their events in the last 12 months (not including this one)?

❑ 0 times ❑ 1 time ❑ 2-5 times ❑ 6+ times

16. How often do you take advantage of opportunities to learn about science? *(This could be anything from watching the Discovery Channel, to reading science articles, to discussing science topics with friends):*

❑ Never ❑ Daily ❑ Few times a week ❑ Once a week ❑ Once a month

17. How did you find out about this event?

❑	Library / Librarian	❑	MCL Newsletter/E-mail/Website/library advert
❑	Facebook or Twitter	❑	OMSI Newsletter/E-mail/Website
❑	The *Oregonian*	❑	Everybody Reads catalogue
❑	TriMet advertisement	❑	Friend/Family/Word of mouth
❑	Science Pub mailing list	❑	McMenamins website

❑ Other:_____

18. How could we improve the next Science Pub?

19. Are you: ❑ Male ❑ Female **15. How old are you?** Age: _____

20. What is your ethnicity? ❑ Hispanic or Latino ❑ Not Hispanic or Latino

21. What is your race? (Check all that apply.)

- ❑ American Indian or Alaskan Native
- ❑ Asian
- ❑ Pacific Islander or Native Hawaiian
- ❑ Black or African American
- ❑ White
- ❑ Other: _____

22. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- ❑ Some high school
- ❑ High school graduate or GED
- ❑ Some college or vocational school
- ❑ Associate, bachelor, or vocational degree
- ❑ Some graduate or professional school
- ❑ Master, professional, or doctorate degree

Appendix B

Everybody Reads 2010
Guest Scientist Event Evaluation

Date: _____ Location & Event:_____

Name:_____

---

1. What sort of communication did you have with Multnomah County Library or OMSI employees about this specific event prior to coming to the event?

2. What did you think your role was before coming to this event?

How well do you think you fulfilled that role?

3. Did you feel you were adequately prepared for your role at this event?

4. How well do you think the entire group engaged in discussion, if applicable?

5. Do you think a diverse group of views/opinions were represented at the discussion? Please explain:

6. Based on your interaction with the group, how well do you think group members got the book's and the event's "main message"?

7. Based on your interaction, how well do you think group members understood the science presented in the book or at the event?

8. Do you think any group members struggled with any of the concepts or any of the science presented in this book or at this event? Please explain and give specific examples:

9. What did you <u>enjoy most</u> about attending this event?

10. What did you <u>enjoy least</u> about attending this event?

11. Do you think there is anything else the facilitator/host could have done to make the event better? Please explain:

12. Do you think there is anything else *you* could have done to make the event better? Please explain:

13. How did this event compare to other events you have conducted/attended (if applicable)?

14. What are your final thoughts on the book, the discussion, the event, and whether or not there is anything that could be done to improve such hosted events in the future?

Any other comments you would like to share:

Thanks with your help for this project!

Appendix C

The Ghost Map
Event Facilitator Feedback Form

Date: _____ **Location & Event:** _____

Facilitator: _____

❑ MCL Employee ❑ OMSI Employee ❑ Other:_____

*** Note: This feedback form is going to all events, so some questions may not be applicable to you.***

Please provide the following information after the discussion if possible:
Total number of registrants:
Total number of attendees:
Number of waitlist attendees (if applicable):

1. What best helped you to prepare for this event?

2. Is there anything in addition you wish you had to help you plan for this event?

3. What topic or question do you think got the <u>best</u> response or generated the most interest (whether it be from you or a group member)?

What topic or question do you think got the <u>worst</u> response?

4. If applicable for your event, how diverse do you think the viewpoints and opinions were? How balanced were the viewpoints presented by group members?

5. How well do you think the group grasped the concepts presented in the book and how they related to your event? Were there any that the group really struggled with the concepts?

6. How open do you think the group was to allowing diverse and sometimes controversial viewpoints, if applicable?

7. What did *you* enjoy most about facilitating this group?

8. What did *you* enjoy least about facilitating this group?

9. What do you think you could have done differently to improve the event?

10. What are your final thoughts on the book, the discussion, the event itself, and whether or not anything would have helped this event run more smoothly?

Any other comments you would like to share:

Thank you for helping with this project!