



From Half-Pipe to Full-filment: Leveraging Interest-Driven Identities as a Strategy for Technology Learning

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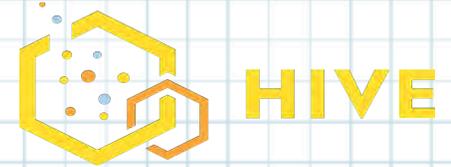
AERA Meeting, Chicago, April 17, 2015

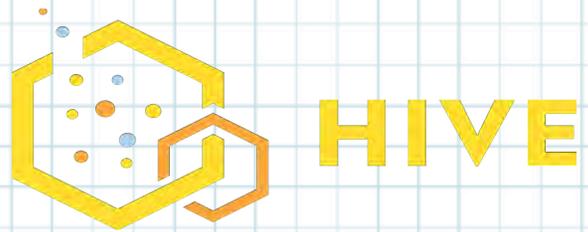


How does a program create a hybrid space that positions skateboarders as experts in the service of technology learning?

- ❖ *Overview of the program*
- ❖ *Theoretical frames for program design and youth case analysis*
- ❖ *What does 'learning as transformation' look like within the experience of one youth participant?*
- ❖ *Reflections and future implications?*

Mozilla Hive NYC Learning Network





Mozilla Hive NYC Learning Network is

- *“an ecosystem of opportunities” where young people to develop 21st-century skills.*
- *“a city-wide laboratory” where organizations collaboratively design connected learning experiences*

- HiveNYC.org, March 2014



Skateboarder Students

The background image shows a skate park area. In the foreground, a young person in a green shirt and black cap is looking down at their skateboard. In the middle ground, another person in a red jacket and green cap is standing on a skateboard. In the background, a third person in a grey hoodie and black cap is walking. The area is paved with bricks and has a chain-link fence in the background. There is graffiti on a brick wall to the left.

Demographics

- ❖ Age 15 to 28
- ❖ 95% Black and Latino; 20% female
- ❖ Predominantly low-income/working poor
- ❖ Majority from 1st generation immigrant families
- ❖ Mostly from single parent households

Skateboarders

- ❖ Underserved and misunderstood population
- ❖ High rates of ADHD, learning, and behavioral issues
- ❖ Disengaged from school/organized, adult-led activities
- ❖ Creative, innovative, free-spirited, entrepreneurial; very cohesive community

Kickflip



❖ Sessions: 2x week for 6 weeks at Parsons/The New School

❖ Audience: High school-aged skateboarders. Largely disengaged from school.

❖ General learning content: principles of game design, coding, micro-circuitry, presentation

Program Components





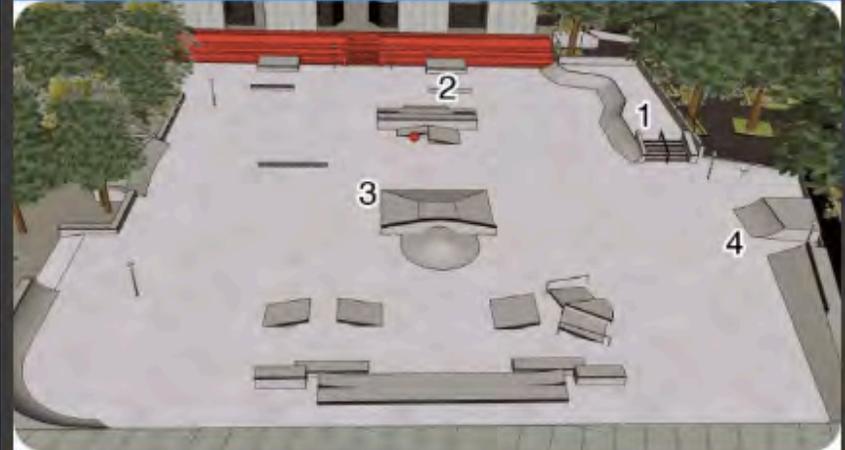


Relay Rush is a relay race on skateboards. The goal of teams is to complete the obstacle course doing the hardest tricks in the fastest time. players man obstacles and land a sucessful trick/trick line on said obstacle then rush over to their next team mate. This action is repeated until the last player has gone.

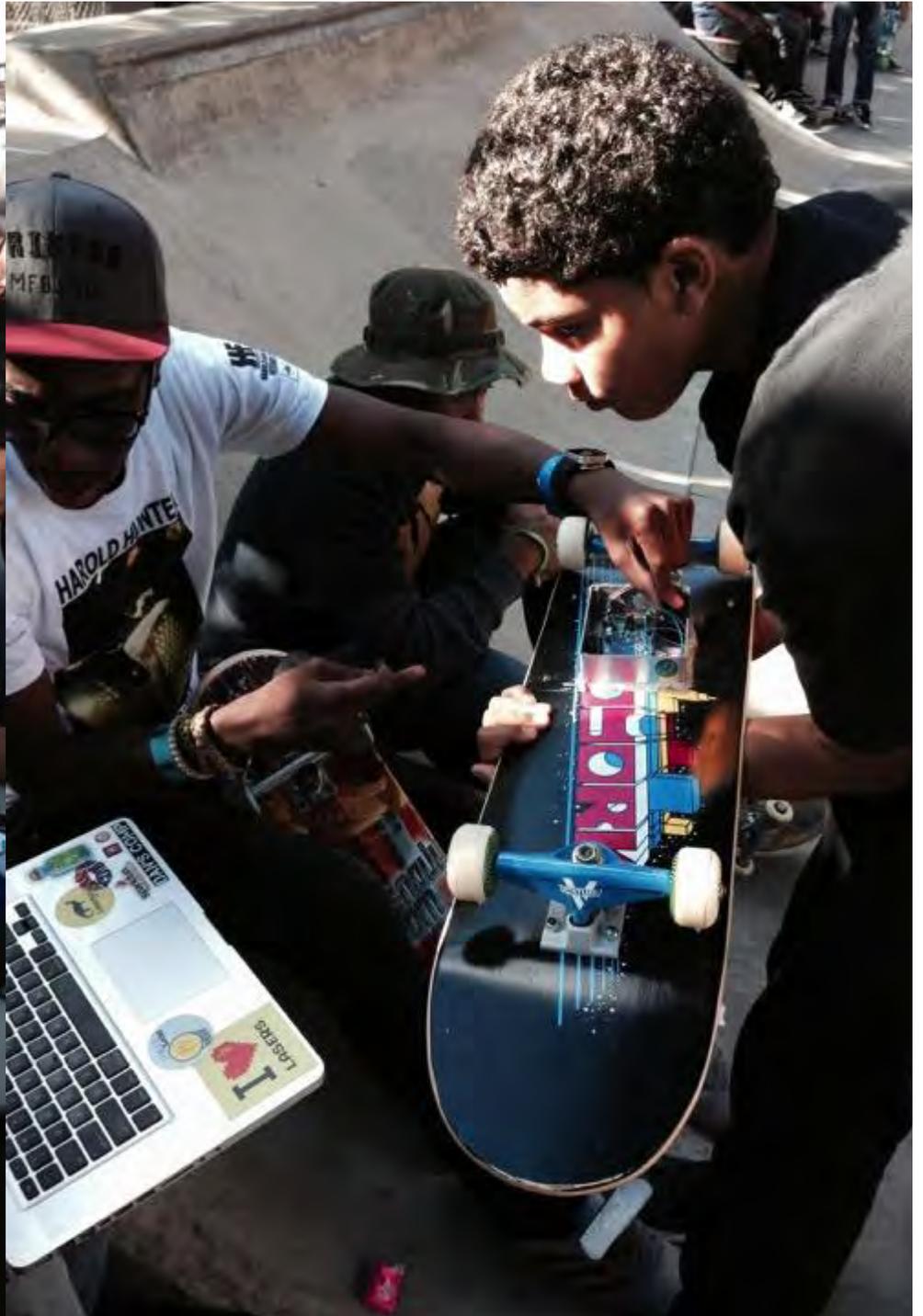
THE CATCH: players must submit their trick decisions too the ref before the game begins. All trick decisions are final. Players get penalized for missing. The more you miss the higher the penalty. Players can cop-out for a default score.

A cop-out is any trick other than the one the ref has registered for you.

L.E.S.



Proceed

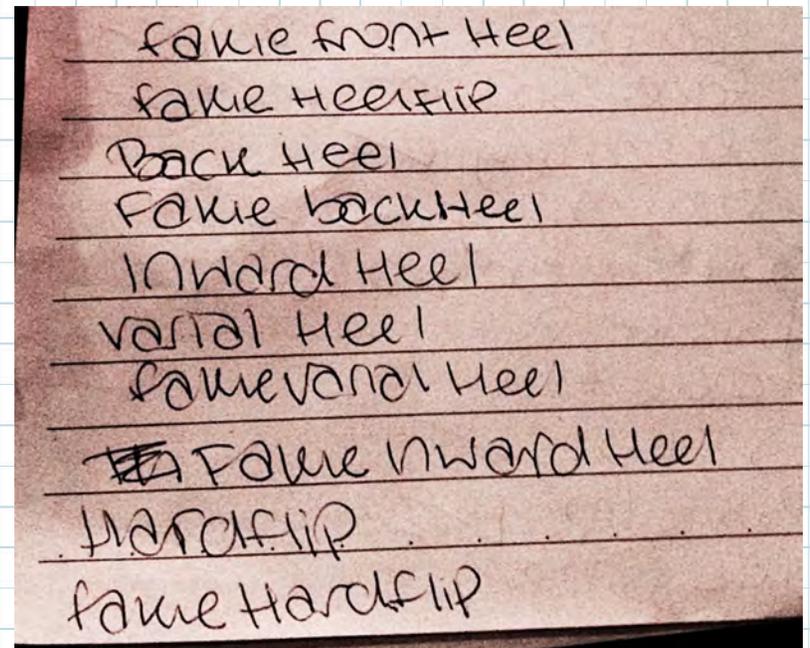


Theoretical Framework for Program Design and Youth Case Analysis

- ❖ Established a **hybrid space** where youths' existing interests, identities and resources are valued; what is considered legitimate technology learning is a personal decision (Barton, Tan, & Rivet, 2008)
- ❖ Youth are **positioned** as *being successful learners, as experts, as providing value to their communities*, (Harré & Van Lagenhove, 1991; Davies & Harré, 1990)

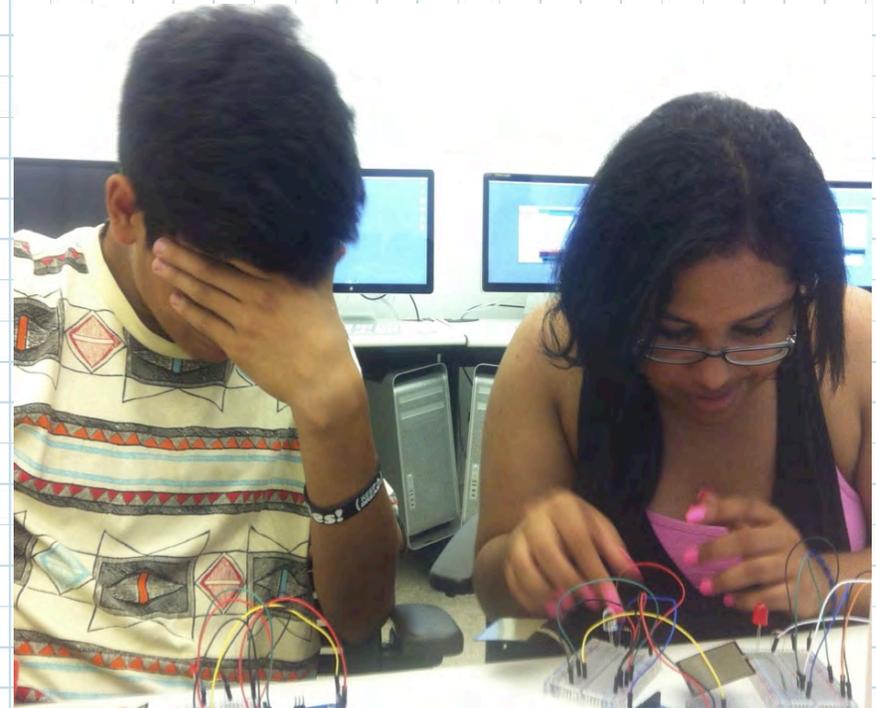
Hybrid space where existing interests, identities and resources are valued

- ❖ Youth invited to invoke their skater and videogamer identities and knowledge.
- ❖ Participation required knowledge of skater culture and discourse, as well as skating ability.
- ❖ Youth exposed to game design. Nick (teaching artist) included examples from popular video games into his lessons.



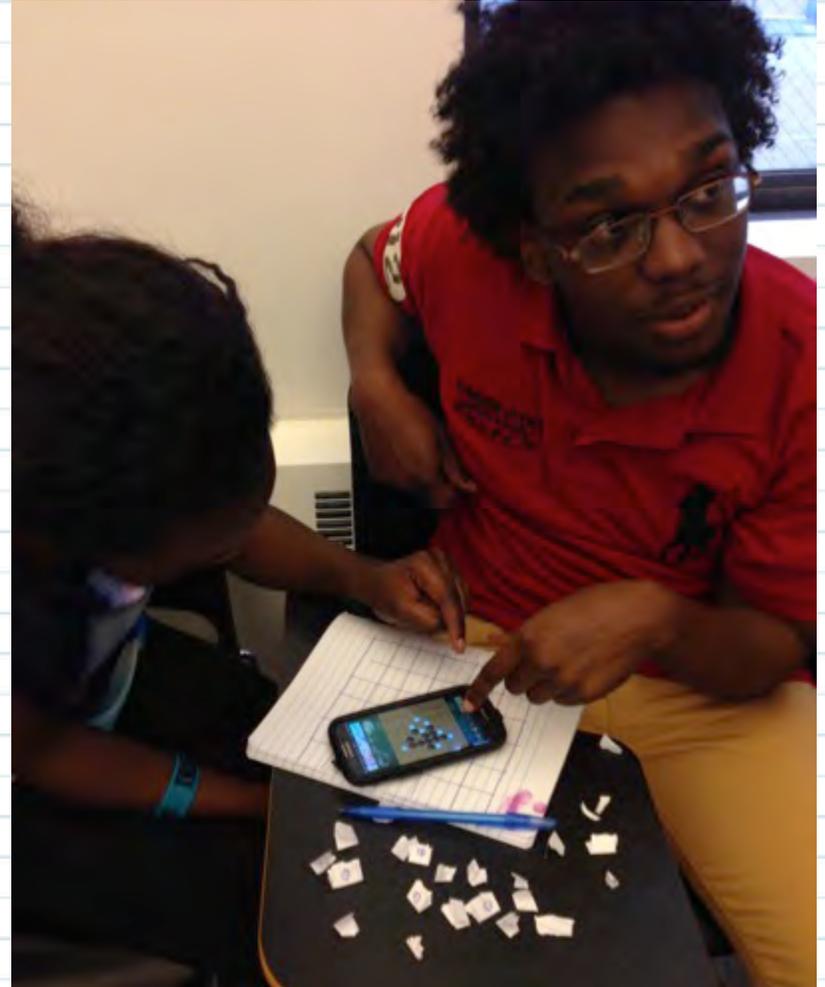
Positive Positioning

- ❖ Skaters positioned as:
 - ❖ Having **‘good’ qualities for engaging with technology**—i.e., persistence and a high tolerance for failure.
 - ❖ Experts uniquely qualified to design the skate game.
 - ❖ Bringing value to their community.



Experiences of one participant: 'Cerebral'

- Interpretive case studies of interest development.
- Data collection (>1 yr): End of Kickflip 2.0 to Kickflip 3.0.
- Data includes interview with Cerebral and Kickflip teaching artists, participant observations of Kickflip 3.0, archival video.
- 19 years old
- Planning to be a detective—
Accepted to a college known for its criminal justice program.



Trajectory of transformative positioning

Toward end of Kicklip 2.0, Nick gives Cerebral his biz card.

Decided to explore game design. Reaches out to Nick for advice.

Reads game design books; watches game design YouTube videos.

Decided to come to Kickflip 3.0 to continue interacting with Nick.

Developing a platformer game with some friends outside of college time.





Kickflip 2.0 Archival Interview

“[Kickflip] gives us like a chance to like prove that we’re not delinquents, we’re not just dumb kids...it gives us an opportunity to prove that we’re smart...**[the] stuff that we’re learning here is not stuff that ordinary people can do and the stuff that we actually learn from skateboarding is applied here...**

...skaters are just stubborn; we keep working until we get what we’re looking for, we achieve the goal that we’re trying to achieve and **the program gives us an opportunity to show that perseverance that we learned skateboarding in a more positive light.**”

Findings: Cerebral's 'transformation'

- ❖ Kickflip allowed him to position himself/'skaters' to others in a "more positive light."
- ❖ Appreciated that learning technical material required knowledge he developed as a skater.
- ❖ Authored new identity as someone who would like to make games.

Influenced by:

- ❖ Exposure to game design practice
- ❖ Nick's positioning of him as "having a head for game design" and someone worth advising.
- ❖ Cerebral's self-positioning—informing Nick about his change in plans and the reading and research he did between Kickflip 2.0 and 3.0.
- ❖ Nick noticing Cerebral's growth and positioning him as someone who was no longer a novice.

Reflections and Future Implications

- ❖ Transformative positioning may require multiple and extended interactions by the same individuals.
- ❖ A spectrum of engagement was observed—what are some other important factors that need to be considered?
- ❖ How can positioning be used in more inclusive ways?



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Thank you!

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