

THE PROJECT REBIRTH LEARNING COLLABORATORY

About the Project Rebirth Educational Initiative

Project Rebirth is a feature-length documentary combining the intimate stories of 10 people coping with the aftermath of 9/11 and the rebuilding of Ground Zero. Produced by Director Jim Whitaker, the film represents the first full-length record of people dealing with grief, loss, and trauma, as well as the only living record of the rebuilding of the World Trade Center site. The Project Rebirth Educational Initiative was developed by the Columbia Center for New Media Teaching and Learning (CCNMTL) and Georgetown University's Center for New Designs in Learning and Scholarship (CNDLS) with the goal of disseminating Project Rebirth's full repository for educational purposes. The Initiative represents the first effort to deepen collective knowledge about loss and healing through collaboration, education, and research on trauma and recovery.

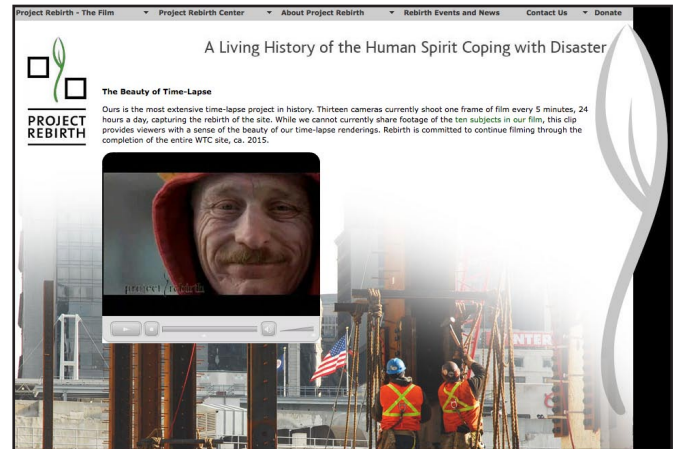
Overview

In 2010, CCNMTL will begin development of a prototype for the Project Rebirth Learning Collaboratory (PRLC), a virtual learning environment that facilitates interdisciplinary collaboration, education, and research on mass trauma and recovery through the robust Project Rebirth video library and accompanying web-based educational tools. The PRLC will connect a broad community of researchers, educators, and community-based practitioners—including Columbia University, Georgetown University, National September 11 Memorial Museum, the NYPD, the Arlington Fire Department, and the North Shore Child & Family Guidance Center—with the overarching goal of expanding the study of traumatic loss and improving the delivery of support for victims.

Background

In 2008, CCNMTL and CNDLS recruited university professors and practitioners from a variety of fields, including clinical psychology, social work, medicine, architecture, and business, to explore the pedagogical implications of Project Rebirth's extensive film archive, consisting of hundreds of hours of footage of interviews and time-lapse photography. Through this pilot project, the partners leveraged their capacity to facilitate the thoughtful study of the footage and to train professionals to better understand and respond to the impact of the events surrounding 9/11 and its long-term effects on human lives, local communities, our society and culture, and our country's place in the world.

In fall 2009, CCNMTL and CNDLS set out to enhance Project Rebirth's educational uses beyond higher education to include researchers, field workers, the K-12 community, and the general public. The two organizations conceived of the Project Rebirth Learning Collaboratory, a virtual environment that would provide access to the Project Rebirth Digital Library, advance the study of traumatic loss, and provide resources and online tools.



Educational Objectives

With the development of the Learning Collaboratory, the Project Rebirth Educational Initiative will begin the essential work of creating an exemplary partnership that includes universities, public and community-based organizations, to create a common system and set of practices that support learning and therapeutic interventions. By creating an environment that enables the use of Rebirth footage to deepen, enhance and spread knowledge about loss and healing, to or by anyone touched by trauma, the PRLC will become an active learning experience dedicated to understanding unimaginable events beyond our control and encouraging worldwide healing.

To achieve this level of activity, the PRLC will make it possible for different interest communities to connect with each other, especially in surprising and unexpected ways. These communities will include:

- First Responders
- Colleges and Universities
- K-12 Education
- Community-Based Organizations
- Public Service Organizations

Technological Infrastructure

The PLRC infrastructure will feature a searchable digital repository managed with a modular, open-source architecture; a range of access points and integration tools for its various users; streaming video footage coordinated with transcripts; a range of visualization and analytic tools built whenever possible with open source software; and web environments featuring individual and collective workspaces. These workspaces will be customizable for a range of curricular uses of Project Rebirth material.