

SPLIT ESTATE *Screening Guide*



This guide will help you use a screening of SPLIT ESTATE to build community, spark debate, and motivate meaningful action in your community. Whether you're planning a screening in your neighborhood, non profit, school, faithbased orga-

nization, or other venue, we can help you make the most of your event. Full of background information, helpful tips, and discussion questions, use this guide to make your screening of SPLIT ESTATE a stirring, informative, and rewarding event.

Georgia Armenta Gabehart

and her children

Farmington, New Mexico 2009.

CREDITS: This Screening Guide has been adapted from Working Films' Screening Guide for ScreeningHQ.org (license: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/>), and the Bullfrog Films' SPLIT ESTATE Screening Guide.



ABOUT SPLIT ESTATE

SPLIT ESTATE maps a tragedy in the making, as citizens in the path of a new drilling boom in the Rocky Mountain West struggle against the erosion of their civil liberties, their communities, and their health. Exempt from federal protections like the Clean Water Act, the oil and gas industry has left this idyllic landscape and its rural communities pockmarked with abandoned homes and polluted waters. As our appetite for fossil fuels increases, despite mounting public health concerns, SPLIT ESTATE cracks the sugar coating on an industry that assures us it is a good neighbor, and drives home the need for alternatives—both here and abroad.

above: Hydraulic fracking in a
neighborhood
Silt, Colorado 2007.

right: Drill workers atop a rig.
Silt, Colorado 2007



ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

Debra Anderson is a filmmaker and activist.

Her documentaries ignite awareness and inspire dialogue and creative action around environmental justice and human rights. Her feature-length directorial debut, *SPLIT ESTATE*, effectively broke the story of health impacts from natural gas drilling and fracking to a national television audience when it premiered in 2009.

The film won the 2010 Emmy for Outstanding Individual Achievement in a Craft: Research, and has now broadcasting internationally.



Photograph by Jennifer Esperanza



The SPLIT ESTATE

Community Engagement Campaign

Citizens take to the street to protest Tecton Energy's plans to drill in the Galisteo Basin. Santa Fe, New Mexico, 2007.

quickly became an integral part of a larger movement, connected with hundreds of citizen action groups and nonprofits to advance a clean and just energy future. The film continues to be utilized as an important tool for change by grassroots activists around the globe.

PLANNING YOUR SCREENING

Your SPLIT ESTATE screening can be an opportunity to build community and spark debate and action on oil and natural gas development, and the industry practice known as fracking. Follow this step-by-step guide to help you organize a screening, pick a location, publicize the event, plan a post-screening discussion, and encourage meaningful action.

1

GET THE DVD

Visit the SPLIT ESTATE website to find out how to buy the DVD and download additional resources like high-resolution photos. (http://www.splitestate.com/buy_dvd.html) Depending on what venue you use, you may need to secure screening rights.

Here is a basic outline of permissions for different kinds of screenings:

House parties are a nice way to bring friends, family, and neighbors together, raise awareness and get everyone more involved in the issues raised by the film. Schedule your house party around a broadcast, DVD release, national day of action, holiday, or just because! You may use a home-use DVD, purchased from our website or Amazon.com, a Netflix rental, or a TV broadcast for this kind of party.

Community screenings in a library, church, community center, or other public space offer an opportunity to reach a larger audience and build a broader base of support for your efforts. Community screenings require a DVD that is licensed for public use from our distributor, Bullfrog Films (bullfrogfilms.com). DVDs purchased or rented on-line from Amazon or Netflix are for home use and house parties, not for this kind of screening. Campus screenings are a community screening only when hosted by a student or community group.

Educational screenings take place in classrooms, auditoriums, and other spaces in schools and on college and university campuses. Libraries or academic departments typically secure the rights for DVDs by purchasing an educational license, which is available at Bullfrog Films.

2

REGISTER YOUR EVENT

Register your SPLIT ESTATE screening event at ScreeningHQ.org. Here you can also find publicity materials including flyers and a press release template.

3

CHOOSE A LOCATION

Secure a venue for your screening that will be comfortable, have the right atmosphere, and provide the basics. This could be your living room, a community center, a place of worship, or even a park—you decide.

DON'T FORGET

If you need to reserve a space, try to contact the venue at least two months in advance and confirm your reservation within two weeks of the screening. Here's what you'll need:

A television or projector with a screen large enough for everyone to see.

Speakers that provide plenty of volume.

An accessible entrance for all people, including those with disabilities.

Seating that's comfortable.

An information table for petitions, handouts and a sign-up sheet for follow-up with attendees.

If you are planning to provide snacks and drinks, make sure there is a place to set them up and that the venue permits refreshments.

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PROMOTING YOUR SCREENING

Your Community and the Issues

Here are some questions to ask before you plan your screening:

What messages in the film connect to your community?

Who's involved in the issues and who has a stake?

What's already happening to address the problem?

Considering these questions will help you determine what to focus on when promoting your event.

Finding Your Audience

Consider the following to help you identify your target audiences:

Who has an interest in the topics at hand?

Who has the power to make a decision or implement change to resolve the issue?

Who can influence the decision-makers?

Who has expressed interest in similar topics or issues?

Who has been left out of the conversation, but needs to be heard?

Who would you most like to attend the screening?

Screening of **SPLIT ESTATE**

Grand Junction, Colorado.

2009.

Photograph by Lee Gallat



Generating Interest

Get the word out! There are many ways to make sure people know about your event, including posting flyers, advertising, local radio, local press, social media, and word-of-mouth. Other ways to help leverage your reach include:

Invite guest speakers and panelists.

This can be a fantastic way to draw audiences and encourage discussion and debate after a screening. When looking for speakers to participate in a discussion or Q&A, try contacting local nonprofit representatives, teachers, professionals, or government officials who have expertise or insight

into the film's issues. You may be able to arrange interviews for your guests on local radio and with local press in the days/weeks before your screening. It may also be possible to arrange a Skype interview with an expert, the filmmaker, or others associated with the film from a distance.

Tell your friends. Utilize list-serves, bulletins, flyers, and social networking sites to let folks know about the screening. After you register your event at ScreeningHQ.org, you will be able to gain access to a number of resources to help you spread the word.



Tell your allies. Engage organizations or constituencies that you know will be interested and ask them to co-sponsor the screening event.

Tell community stakeholders. Invite community leaders, such as religious leaders, elected officials, or a policy expert on the issues covered in the film to participate. Tell them why their participation is important, and ask them to preview the film so they can help you talk to reporters or mobilize their constituents.

Tell the press. Contact reporters who cover related issues. Be in touch early on, let them know that your event will be part of a national screening campaign, and give them the local angle: How do the issues raised resonate in the community? Why should your audience be passionate? What impact do you hope to have? (See more in Make Your



Screening Media-Friendly, page 15). You may also want to contact your local public radio station to try and set up an interview or get listed in community announcements.

Other ideas. Give some thought to who is already working on energy issues and the health of your water and air resources in your community. Can they help sponsor the event? Spread the word? Speak on a panel after the screening? Potential partners might include your local watershed association, water-conservancy and clean air organizations, a solar panel or wind power provider, a local (or national) organization fighting fracking, agricultural groups concerned about soil and water quality, and faith-based groups questioning the long-term health and environmental effects of unregulated drilling, among others.

Drilling rig next to homes.
Niwot, Colorado, 2009.

Photographs by Wendy Bristol

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AT THE SCREENING

Setting Goals

What do you hope to achieve with your screening of SPLIT ESTATE? Answering this question will help make every step of the way easier and more effective.

How do you want to catalyze action? Influence county commissioners to weigh recent environmental research in their decision-making? Build stronger protective ordinances in your town? Fundraise for a local initiative to protect your community's water? Perhaps you want to generate a lively post-film discussion

about questions to ask and actions to take if a natural gas company wants to drill/frack in your area. Maybe you want to motivate or organize members of your community to participate in a letter writing campaign to your government representatives, or build membership and alliances. Or maybe you simply want to provide an opportunity for families to watch together and become informed. How can you help people do something meaningful, or point them toward the most relevant resources?

Morgan flare pit
Silt, Colorado.

Photograph by Peggy Utesch





Make an Impact

Ranchers in Northwestern New Mexico move cattle up out of the gas fields to their summer grazing in the high Rockies, 2007

A screening is more than just a chance to watch a great film; it's an opportunity for the audience to get involved and do something! Consider one or two actions attendees can

take to make a difference. Look to ScreeningHQ.org for suggestions on how your audience can take some next steps.

Photograph by Debra Anderson

Find Partners

Consider partnering with other individuals or organizations to make your event more dynamic, split the workload, more effectively get-the-word out, and increase the turnout

and diversity of your audience. People and organizations directly affected by the issues are a great place to start looking for partners.

Protest demanding
renewable energy, Santa Fe,
New Mexico. 2015.



DELEGATE!

In order to make planning easier, ensure that the event is as successful as it can be, and have fun, we highly recommend that you delegate some tasks. These may include:

Inviting people by making calls, putting up flyers, posting to community calendars, sending a press release to local newspaper weeklies, and making announcements through organizational list-serves and social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and others.

Arranging for snacks and drinks.

Handling the technical aspects of setting up and playing the film.

Greeting attendees and collecting signatures for a follow-up list.

Introducing the film and any speakers, facilitating audience discussion, and keeping an eye on time.

Interacting with the media.

Documenting the event with photos and video.

Document the Event

Take pictures and video of your audiences' reaction to the film. Ask attendees how they liked the event and what they would like to see next. Did the film change their understanding, raise their awareness, or motivate them to take action? Pay attention to press representatives who attended and outlets that printed or aired stories. Save these!



Screening of **SPLIT ESTATE**.

Los Angeles, California.

2009.

Following Up

Create a contact list at your event so that you can follow up with your audience, and build a foundation for future action.

How did it go?

Help us build the SPLIT ESTATE community by letting us know how your screening went. Share photos, video, and press with your members, networks, and with us at ScreeningHQ.org, to show how the collective efforts around the film are making an impact.

Screening of **SPLIT ESTATE**.

IFC Center, New York City,

New York.

2009.



Where was it held? Who Attended? What went well, and was it challenging?

Did the film inform people and inspire them to meaningful debate and action? Your story may inspire others to replicate your efforts in their community.

THANKS!

We hope that this guide along with the **SPLIT ESTATE** website and ScreeningHQ.org helps you to have a meaningful screening that makes an impact. Contact us if you have questions along the way: info@splitestate.com or hello@screeninghq.org.

Screening of

SPLIT ESTATE,

Starz Denver Film Festival,

Denver, Colorado. 2009.



SPECIAL FEATURE

Make Your Screening Media-Friendly

Use the tips below to catch the media's attention for your event and cause.

Reporters need a story. There are certain activities, language, and hooks that can grab their attention successfully. Make your pitch pop out of the stack of releases they receive each day. Here are some suggestions based on the book *Stop Global Warming Now* by journalist/author Bill McKibben:

Court a Reporter. Ask to meet with the editor of a paper for ten minutes in person. If they say yes, it is a worthwhile investment. If not, think about other ways that you can engage a reporter who covers a beat that includes the issues raised in the film you're planning to show.

Give your event a local angle. Think from a local perspective and emphasize the significance of the film's content to your community in your press release and other communication you have with media outlets.

Send pictures. Share images or videos to accompany your story. Is your event going to

be photogenic? Can reporters view a clip of the film online in advance? Do you have any good quotes from important people about your event or the movie? Send these in (or as a supplement to) your press release.

What is new about the event? What are you planning to do about the issues the film raises that is unique or different from past efforts? Highlight these aspects of your screening event.

Register your screening event at Screening-HQ.org.

Create a Facebook Event and post your screening on our Facebook page.

Like our "SPLIT ESTATE – a documentary film" Facebook page, so you can keep up with news and announcements. Encourage your friends to do the same.

Follow us (@splitstatedoc) on Twitter and tweet about your event so everyone following you will be clued in and help spread the word.

TWO WEEKS OUT

Blog about your event, including a description of SPLIT ESTATE and the issues it raises. Be sure to include images, or embed the film's trailer from YouTube. Ask friends or your favorite blog outlets to link to your piece or write their own.

Submit an op-ed to your local paper or online news source to draw attention to the event and the related issues.

ONE WEEK OUT

Send a five-to-six sentence email description or a press release to reporters and follow up with a phone call to gauge their interest in attending. This email should succinctly describe your event, the national film campaign, and mention any big names that are coming. Include links to relevant websites, clips from the film, press that the film or your event has

already received, your editorial, and anything else you think is attention-grabbing.

Check in with your ScreeningHQ.org friends and RSVPs to make sure they're coming. Make your reminder stand out by including any updates or specific details that have unfolded as the screening draws near.

THE DAY OF

Do a technical test of your screening equipment and your DVD at least a few hours before the screening. It would be even better to do it days before your event. Screening equipment very often needs adjusting, and it has happened that one person forgot to order the DVD, expecting another to bring it. Don't make your audience wait while you figure things out.

Have a media representative from your organization or planning group on hand to answer questions.

Have a press release on hand and ready for reporters and bloggers who attend.

Be ready to send an updated version out after the event with some highlights, images, and a list of key people or speakers who attended.

Make sure you have background information on the speakers, interesting visuals, and other things needed to make your event easier to share.

Have a sign-up sheet to pass around for people who wish to give you their contact information so you can continue to communicate with potential partners, volunteers, and supporters of your efforts.