Healing Historic Wounds: Inclusion in Exhibits at State History Museums

Elaine Laura Carter

A thesis

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

University of Washington

2019

Committee:

Jessica Luke

Negin Dahya

Amalia Kozloff

Program Authorized to Offer Degree:

Museology

©Copyright 2019
Elaine Laura Carter

University of Washington

Abstract

Healing Historic Wounds: Inclusion in Exhibits at State History Museums

Elaine Laura Carter

Chair of the Supervisory Committee:

Jessica Luke

Museology

The purpose of the study was to understand how exhibit-related staff at state history museums are addressing inclusion in their exhibits. The study focused on characterizing how the staff thought about and engaged with inclusion in their work, and the strategies they used to make their exhibits inclusive. Using a case study design, data were collected from 11 museum professionals at seven sites through semi-structured interviews and documents, including strategic plans, mission statements, inclusion-related documents, and exhibit descriptions. Findings suggest that generally staff agreed with the American Alliance of Museums' (AAM's) definition of inclusion and looked to a variety of resources on inclusion. Inclusion was formalized at many sites as an institutional priority and exhibit-related inclusion work had increased at many sites. Being at a state museum influenced how exhibit-related staff thought about and engaged in inclusion work. Staff had conversations with each other about inclusion and sometimes related training as well. They felt that collaboration with external partners was a key strategy for making exhibits inclusive. Strategies for working with community members included balancing competing needs, equipping communities with museum tools, and having respectful dialogue. These results offer the museum field an understanding of how staff at a handful of state history museums are thinking about inclusion and the actions they are taking.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank everyone who helped me complete my thesis. A big thank you to all of the museum staff I interviewed who took time out of their busy schedules to share their valuable insight with me. Thank you for your honesty and openness as well as for being so friendly. Thank you to Dr. Jessica Luke for guiding me through this sometimes confusing and stressful process and for helping me shape my thesis into what it is today. Thank you to my other committee members, Amalia Kozloff and Dr. Negin Dahya, for their time and wisdom.

Thank you to the University of Washington Museology department for providing me the opportunity to study this topic and for making my grad school experience so positive. I am also incredibly thankful for my cohort who are some of the most fun and interesting people I've ever met and so helpful to talk to. Gabrielle, thank you for the thesis study parties and trading thesis advice and cat pictures. Heather, thank you for being my food buddy. Allison and Dorothy, thank you for being the best roommates and friends I could ask for. You made getting through this process so much easier, whether that was with thesis advice or fun breaks from working to chat or get tacos.

Finally, thank you to my family for supporting me in the pursuit of my dreams. Mom and Dad, I am deeply appreciative of your support of education and for taking me to so many museums as a kid. Your love and guidance got me here. Tessa and Leah, thanks for the fun times. Lastly, thank you to Hamilton for being a great distraction from thesis stress for the Ham Household and letting me pet you when the process got hard.

I could not have finished this thesis without your combined support. Thank you.

Table of Contents

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION 4
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW 8
THE CHANGING WORK OF HISTORY MUSEUMS 8
EXHIBIT DEVELOPMENT 11
Interpretation 11
Exhibit Ethics 14
Community Consultation 15
How an Exhibit is Created 18
DIVERSITY, EQUITY, ACCESSIBILITY, AND INCLUSION IN MUSEUMS 19
Diversity 24
Accessibility 25
Inclusion 30
Equity 32
INCLUSION IN MUSEUM EXHIBITS 33
Difficult History 33
Interpreting American Indian History 35
Interpreting African American History 38
Interpreting Community History for Other Ethnic Groups 40
Interpreting LGBTQ+ History 42
CHAPTER 3: METHODS 46
Sampling 46
Data Collection 47
Data Analysis 48
Limitations 48
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION 49
Q1. HOW DO EXHIBIT-RELATED STAFF AT STATE HISTORY MUSEUMS THINK ABOUT AND ENGAGE WITH INCLUSION IN THEIR WORK? 49
a) Staff agreed with AAM's definition of inclusion 49
b) Staff looked to a variety of resources about inclusion 50
c) Inclusion was highly valued at case study sites 52
d) Being at a state museum influenced how exhibit-related staff thought about and engaged in inclusion work 54
Q2. WHAT STRATEGIES DO EXHIBIT-RELATED STAFF AT STATE HISTORY MUSEUMS USE TO MAKE THEIR EXHIBITS MORE INCLUSIVE? 57
a) Collaboration was a key strategy for making exhibits more inclusive 58
b) Strategies for working with communities included balancing competing needs, equipping communities with museum tools, and having respectful dialogue 63
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS 67
CONCLUSIONS 67
How do exhibit-related staff at state history museums think about and engage with inclusion in their work? 67
What strategies do exhibit-related staff at state history museums use to make their exhibits more inclusive? 71
IMPLICATIONS 74
Implications for Research 74
Implications for Practice 75
REFERENCES 77
APPENDIX A 88
APPENDIX B 89

APPENDIX C **91**

Chapter One: Introduction

On April 30, 2015, then First Lady Michell Obama spoke at the opening for the new Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, saying, “You see, there are so many kids in this country who look at places like museums and concert halls and other cultural centers and they think to themselves, ‘Well, that’s not a place for me, for someone who looks like me, for someone who comes from my neighborhood’” (Burgard & Boucher, 2016). However, there is a movement in the field for museums to become more diverse, accessible, equitable, and inclusive and therefore be seen as welcoming to all (Ivy, 2018; Lott, 2018; Sandell & Dodd, 2010).

The American Alliance of Museums (AAM) has defined diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion to guide work in the field. AAM (2018) defines diversity as “…all the ways that people are different and the same at the individual and group levels. Even when people appear the same, they are different. Organizational diversity requires examining and questioning the makeup of a group to ensure that multiple perspectives are represented” (p. 8). They define equity as “…the fair and just treatment of all members of a community. Equity requires commitment to strategic priorities, resources, respect, and civility, as well as ongoing action and assessment of progress toward achieving specified goals” (p. 8). AAM defines accessibility as “…giving equitable access to everyone along the continuum of human ability and experience. Accessibility encompasses the broader meanings of compliance and refers to how organizations make space for the characteristics that each person brings” (p. 8). Lastly, AAM (2018) defines inclusion as “…the intentional, ongoing effort to ensure that diverse individuals fully participate in all aspects of organizational work, including decision-making processes. It also refers to the ways that diverse participants are valued as respected members of an organization and/or community” (p. 8).

Much of the conversations about diversity in the museum field seem to frame it as being specifically about racial diversity. For example, concerns about museum staff lacking racial diversity come up often (Farrell, 2010; Schexnider, 2017; Taylor and Kegan, 2017). Meanwhile, inclusion is used much more broadly in museums as will be explained in this chapter and throughout the thesis. At the same time, the two words are often used together. For example, AAM's (2018) facing change report says, "The proliferation of diversity and inclusion initiatives across sectors virtually guarantees that there will be debate about the terms of engagement" (p. 8). In some cases, it is difficult to untangle the two words, but ultimately, based on AAM's definitions, inclusion goes a step beyond diversity. Although diversity, accessibility, and equity are very important, this research study focuses on inclusion because according to AAM (2018), "Inclusion is central to the effectiveness and sustainability of museums" (p. 9).

There are museums who are prominently working to be inclusive. For example, in 2018 the Cleveland Museum of Art announced its "Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan" (Litt, 2018.) Although the plan covers more than just inclusion, it mentions specific steps the museum will take to increase inclusion. The museum plans to "Recruit, develop, and retain high-performing, talented employees with diverse backgrounds and perspectives…" and "Research and pilot new applicant pipelines and recruitment tactics locally, regionally, and nationally to increase the number of diverse applicants" (Cleveland Museum of Art, 2018, p. 16). Although the Cleveland Museum of Art has not specified how they plan to do some of this work, it seems that the museum is trying to have diverse individual fully participate in the organization's work. In another example, the Museum of Science and History in Jacksonville, Florida has gender neutral restrooms so that everyone feels comfortable at the museum (Justice, 2016). The executive director, Maria Hane, explained, "It's our mission to educate the community. So if we have that

as a mission and very core principle, then we have to create an environment that is very inviting to the entire community" (Justice, 2016, para. 5). This means the museum values diverse individuals as respected members of the community in at least this way.

AAM, an important leader of and contributor to the museum field, is a good example of the prioritization happening around the four values of diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion (DEAI). AAM has a Working Group on Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion (Ivy, 2018). Ivy (2018) writes, "Twenty museum professionals, representing a variety of disciplines, organizational sides and types, and perspectives, came together monthly…For six months, this group examined the characteristics of effective museum inclusion practices and considered what steps the field could take to promote DEAI" (p. 2). Although the working group focused on DEAI, their report "Facing Change" includes specific information about inclusion like their insight quoted above that "Inclusion is central to the effectiveness and sustainability of museums" (AAM, 2018, p. 9). AAM also created the position Director of Inclusion who leads "…the Alliance's strategic initiatives around diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion" (Ivy, 2017, para. 1).

The literature about inclusion reveals where museums fall short. It shows that museums must confront their own issues of inequality and not just focus on educating the public (Taylor and Kegan, 2017; Jennings and Jones-Rizzi, n.d., Kinsley and Wittman, 2016). For example, Taylor and Kegan (2017) state, "When museums continue to practice inclusion through programs and exhibits, but fail to address the culture of museums, it is like treating the symptoms of a disease, rather than the disease itself" (p. 34).

Meanwhile, there is little research about specific strategies that museums are using to try to be more inclusive. The literature covers how museums are inviting the previously-silenced

audience to contribute to exhibits, programs, and more in big and little ways, and in many cases, this fits at least partially into AAM's definition of inclusion (Anila, 2017; Lonetree, 2012; Patternson et al., 2017). But generally, this literature does not address the connection between community contributions and inclusion. Other strategies museums are actually using rarely get a mention.

The purpose of this study was to understand how exhibit-related staff at state history museums are addressing inclusion in their exhibits. This study was guided by the following research questions:

1) How do exhibit-related staff at state history museums think about and engage with inclusion in their work?
2) What strategies do exhibit-related staff at state history museums use to make their exhibits more inclusive?

This research many be interesting to museum professionals who do exhibit-related work or who are concerned about inclusion. It might also be of particular interest to museum professionals at any type of state museum. These audiences will be able to gain an understanding of how staff at a handful of state history museums are thinking about inclusion and what strategies they are using to make their exhibits more inclusive.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

The purpose of this study was to understand how exhibit-related staff at state history museums are addressing inclusion in their exhibits. This research was situated in four areas of literature: the changing work of history museums; exhibit development, including interpretation, exhibit ethics, community consultation, and creating an exhibit; diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion in museums; and inclusion in museum exhibits specifically. All of these areas of literature are interconnected and are tied back to the field's move to be relevant to a wider audience.

The Changing Work of History Museums

Richard (2014) explains, "…how a museum chooses to define and interpret history has a significant impact on how its visitors understand the past and, in turn, the present" (p. 40). Museums have changed significantly over time, even since the 1950s and 1960s (Beier-de Haan, 2006). Many of the changes they have undergone are tied to changes in the history field over the same time period. Starting around forty years ago there was "…a new shift toward cultural and micro-history, in which the emphasis is less on facts and more on the description of contexts and emotions, and in which the scientific analysis of sources is accompanied by inspiration, empathy, and understanding" (p. 186-187). This has led to museums telling stories about ordinary people and culture, as well as the use of oral histories.

Before this shift, museums tended to focus on grand histories of countries and important political figures and were "…rational scientific presentation[s] of a single worldview" (Beier-de Haan, 2006, p. 195). Now, history museums privilege the individual and their memories. As Beier-de Haan (2016) writes, "Autobiographical documents and personal testimonies (for example, on video) have become a staple of modern exhibitions, and are also an important part

of allowing for multiple interpretations rather than a single authoritative account of the past" (p. 187). As part of the move towards individuality, many history museums collect data from visitors about their opinions (Beier-de Haan, 2006). Similarly, visitors are invited to participate and not only have their own opinions, but also to express them. More and more history museums involve local communities in exhibits and programs, moving away from using an authoritative voice in interpretation, and instead using first-person voices (Adair, Filene & Koloski, 2011). This change came in part from the New Social History in the 1960s that prioritized interpreting history from the non-elite. History museums moved in this direction and then to inviting non-elite people to interpret history (Adair, Filene & Koloski, 2011).

These changes have caused more people who work in history museums to consider their own interpretations of history (Beier-de Haan, 2006). This includes asking questions like "Who owns the past? What gives me authority to speak for others? Who do I include and who do I exclude? Whose memories are privileged, and whose fall by the wayside? How can I generalize without ignoring? And how can I mediate between individual memory and the general interpretation of histories?" (p. 187). There has been a move away from specialist interpretation to increased use of experience-based interpretation because of the understanding that "…views of reality are individual and context-dependent" (p. 192). This is part of the move to make history museums meaningful.

The internet has also played a part in challenging the role of history museums (Adair, Filene & Koloski, 2011). Everyone can "…become their own archivists, curators, historians, and designers" on the internet as they create their own sites, curate photos, and do research (p. 11). This has played a role in museums shifting away from traditional ways of being (Adair, Filene, and Koloski, 2011). However, none of these changes discount the importance of history museum

staff, because working with the public on curation requires even more from museum employees. Adair, Filene, and Koloski (2011) explain, "What the museum 'lets go' of is not expertise but the assumption that the museum has the last word on historical interpretation" (p. 13). Public curation defies the ways history museums have traditionally worked.

However, change is slow. For example, it is only in the last thirty-five to forty years that museums started to include information about slavery and enslaved people in their interpretation (Gallas and DeWolf Perry, 2015). To this day, there are many museums with ties to slavery that ignore those stories (Gallas and DeWolf Perry, 2015). The Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) is a history museum with staff who have rethought how a museum should present American Indian[1] history. The permanent exhibits are meant as a contradiction to how American Indians have traditionally been exhibited in museums (Segall and Trofanenko, 2014). Segall and Trofanenko explain, "The NMAI has moved away from a mostly static, modern, colonial rendering of indigenous life by using a multiplicity of voices and perspectives in the attempt to represent the complexity and multiplicity of indigenous life" (p. 58). Many other museums have also done this through community consultation, which will be explained further below.

Much of the writing on the changing role of history museums is broad and covers museums of all types or even cultural institutions as a whole. For instance, even in a book about interpreting LGBTQ+ history, Bench (2015) writes about how cultural institutions have "expand[ed] their interpretive focus in an effort to reveal and interrogate standard social hierarchies" rather than specifying history institutions (p.11). Another reason for these shifting

[1] I have chosen to use the term American Indian when using a specific tribe name is not appropriate. This is because the term is popular in the American Indian community and "There is a feeling that American Indian better expresses the status of indigenous people in the United States because it is the only race in which the term *American* comes first" (Bench, 2014, p. IX).

attitudes is the changing ethnic makeup of the United States and a need for financial stability (Adair, Filene, and Koloski, 2011). As Adair, Filene, and Koloski explain, “Instead of taking public support for granted, museums are desperate to prove their worth to their communities, a stance that makes them more receptive to outside partners, voices, and interpretations” (p. 11).

Exhibit Development

Exhibits are a fundamental aspect of what museums do. According to Lord and Piacente (2014), “[Exhibits] are what these cultural institutions present to the public as their main attraction and their principal benefit. Especially in recent years, exhibitions have often dominated the public perception of museums almost to the exclusion of any other forms of museum life” (p. 8). But what purpose do exhibits serve? Lord and Piacente argue,

> The purpose of a museum exhibition is to transform some aspect of the visitor’s interests, attitudes, or values affectively, due to the visitor’s discovery of some level of meaning in the objects or content on display – a discovery that is stimulated and sustained by the visitor’s confidence in the perceived authenticity of that content (p. 12).

At the same time, exhibits should be educational and entertaining.

Interpretation

Interpretation is key to any exhibit. “Interpretation is a narrative and a method of communication to and with visitors; it might be written, spoken or visual” (Anderson, Rogers, Potter, Cook, Gardner, Murawski, Anila, Machida, 2017, p. 89). It presents the museum’s voice and views. Interpretation should support active looking: “It kindles the imagination, fosters inquiry, and allows visitors to make their own judgements” (Klobe, 2012, p. 49). Storytelling is also an important part of interpretation because it can help bring exhibits to life and is memorable and engaging.

Historically, museums communicated uni-directionally to audiences without letting or expecting audiences to communicate back to the museum (Anderson et al., 2017; Goswami, 2018). In many museums, this is still the case (McLean, 2011). This is due in part to the fact that "Many of the people who work in museums today still see themselves as experts and see their visitors and communities as uninformed novices in need of guidance" (p. 71). Multiple people have written about ways museums can re-consider traditional interpretation (Anderson et al, 2017; Anila, 2017; Goswami, 2018; Klobe, 2012). Many museums present information as fact rather than acknowledging multiple opinions or biases (Goswami, 2018). Goswami suggests that museums should be transparent in their interpretation and abandon the traditional authoritative voice. As Goswami explains,

> To reveal ourselves as the narrators of these histories – as individuals who are making choices based on our own backgrounds, experiences, and, yes, biases – is to make an important admission about the mediated, situated, and constructed nature of the stories we tell, or even have the option of telling. I would argue that this acknowledgement also has the potential to engage and empower museum visitors (p. 9).

Anderson et al. (2017) write about liberating interpretation, which means making it anti-oppressive and liberation-minded. To liberate interpretation it "…should move in the direction of being dialogic (conversational), de-centered (all people given equal consideration), and open source (sharing authority with audiences, particularly those directly affected by the legacies of our spaces)" and it should be "poly-vocal, multi-directional, and self-aware" (p. 90-91). They also include a guide with strategies for transforming interpretation, tactics for changing the interpreting planning process, and strategies for in-gallery interpretation.

Anila (2017) writes about "interpretive practices for inclusion" (p. 110). Although she is writing about interpretive practices for art museums, many of the practices are also applicable for other types of museums. One practice is to identify gaps by determining whose stories the

museum is telling and whose they are not. Then the museum should try to fill the gaps to tell a more complete story. Community consultants are very helpful when it comes to filling these gaps. Another practice is creating undisciplined spaces, which are spaces "…where boundaries of disciplinary knowledge dissipate and new ways of thinking emerge" (p. 111). Anila also suggests multiplying meaning through polyvocality. This can be accomplished by allowing for visitor feedback while developing an exhibit and while it is open. Another practice is doing no harm. This means working with communities who will be impacted by an exhibit to make sure the interpretation is sensitive and not appropriative. Anila also suggests presenting disruptive truths because "By actively creating counter discursive spaces, marginalized voices are amplified and suppressed histories are surface" (p. 113). Lastly, Anila says that museums should be cultural futurists. Because the United States is moving towards being a majority minority country, "It is necessary now, more than ever, for museums to act with their audiences to develop new tools and narratives to inform the ways we negotiate the racial landscape of America" (p. 115).

Interpretation is of special concern for exhibits about difficult history. Rose (2016) defines difficult history as "…histories of oppression, violence, and trauma" (p. 28). Difficult history is discussed in more detail below. Klobe (2012) writes, "In the process of planning potentially controversial exhibitions and programs, museums must find ways to acknowledge multiple interpretations, and involve and balance the voices of diverse groups" (p. 50). Interpretation, like exhibit planning, is collaborative and requires the skills of many people (Rabinowitz, 2016). In cases of interpreting a culture that is not the dominate culture of the museum staff, interpretation work often goes beyond the museum staff and includes people from that culture (Klobe, 2012). This will be addressed further below. Perhaps most importantly,

"…museums have an obligation to present sensitive issues…Exhibitions must advance cultural equity, understanding, empathy, and tolerance and show the universality of human values. The interpretation in which the museum engages should bring insight to all and…it should encourage a commitment to understanding and behavioral change" (Klobe, 2012, p. 51). This plays into the ethics of exhibits.

Exhibit Ethics

There are a multitude of things museum staff must consider during the exhibit development process. One of those things is exhibit ethics. Gazi (2014) explains "Museum and exhibition ethics are mainly about social responsiveness and honesty to the various audiences museums serve…" (p. 1). Exhibit ethics go beyond what is required by law to that which is good practice. These practices are important because for the most part, museum visitors believe what they see in exhibits to be true. As Gazi explains, "Decisions about what to include and what to exclude, what is valued and what is not, who is ascribing value, the means of presentation, space, design, language, and so on, are critical as they all lead to presentational styles which influence the public's perception in many ways" (p. 2).

Exhibit and curatorial staff must consider the impact that language and voice have (Gazi, 2014). Gazi writes, "Language is a powerful means of museum interpretation, not only because it conveys information, but mainly because it *constructs* knowledge about objects or themes" (p. 5). Historically, curators have written exhibit text from their own perspectives, despite this sometimes spreading assumptions and stereotypes to visitors. Writing styles, genres, grammatical choices and more have an impact on the reader and should be considered. Similarly, the voices an exhibit uses have an impact on how visitors will conceive of what they have

experienced. Bringing multiple perspectives into an exhibit increases inclusivity and can help visitors understand that multiple perspectives can be valid.

Space, layout, and design are also important for exhibit ethics (Gazi, 2014). Like language and voice, the ways these elements are used influence how a visitor understands the subject of an exhibit. Gazi uses the following example: "…linear, sequential placement of objects may convey a sense of progression from simple to complex societies, whereas centralized placement may be employed to give objects significance" (p. 7). Additionally, Gazi considers honesty and openness to be crucial for ethical exhibits. It is also important to include warnings and explanations for shocking content that may be used when interpreting difficult subjects (Rose, 2016).

Community Consultation

Participation from members of the public is one way that museums have tried to create more ethical exhibits. This work has many forms and names including consultation, collaboration, co-curation, co-production, community engagement, and sharing authority (Bunning, 2019). When engaging in this type of work, it is important that museums use "authentic community engagement" (Jennings and Jones-Rizzi, n.d., p. 72). Authentic community engagement acknowledges the power imbalance in the museum-community exchange and is based on trust built over time (Jennings and Jones-Rizzi, n.d.). The community must also be involved from the beginning, and there must be a reciprocal relationship between both groups (Chan, 2013; Jennings and Jones-Rizzi, n.d.). Consultation with community members is important because as Bench (2014) writes, "Can a museum accurately interpret another culture? We can share facts, opinions, events, and perspectives, but only someone from within a culture can truly know it, and even then, maybe only aspects of it" (p. VII).

Many people have written about different museum's experiences with community consultation during the exhibit development process (Anila, 2017; Fouseki and Smith, 2013; Menlove, 2014). In 2011, the Natural History Museum of Utah (NHMU) opened a new building that had a section called *Native Voices* (Menlove, 2014). For this section, composed of multiple galleries, NHMU worked with an Indian Advisory Committee (IAC) with members of multiple tribes they had consulted with for years already. However, the museum had never worked with some of the members of the committee before. Representatives from different tribes were able to give their own insights and express their desires. NHMU also consulted with scholars from a variety of disciples, including scholars who are American Indian. Later in the process, the museum also reached out to younger American Indians to get their input. However, due to the number of people participating this was a complicated process. Menlove's (2016) case study examines the suggestions different stakeholders had and how they impacted the final exhibit. NHMU's goals after *Native Voices* opened was to continue to make improvements and updates as well as maintain the relationships they had built (Menlove, 2014). Based on Menlove's writing, museums consulting with outside communities have to navigate the opinions of different stakeholders even from the same community.

Fouseki and Smith (2013) studied the experiences of people involved in community consultation about the bicentennial of the abolition of the slave trade in Britain in 2007 for five different museums. Interviews were conducted with both community members and museum staff. The study found that "While the incorporation of community voices into exhibitions can be very affective, how and why that is done will also send messages, however unintended, to museum audiences and communities" (p. 235). Community members recounted many of the struggles they faced while working with the museums. One issue was that in most cases

community members were expected to come to the museums, and this made some participants uncomfortable. A participant said, "I found very few museums that went out to community centres, art centres, places, health centres, went out to where the people are and talked to them there, on the territory that the people felt comfortable" (p. 235).

Another issue was that the museums tended to focus on objects, presenting a balanced exhibit, and completing the exhibits, while the community members were more concerned with how the public perceived their communities and the work the exhibits could do to serve their communities. Another struggle was the lack of time, especially since community consultants wanted time to speak with their communities about certain issues. A participant told interviewers, "When I came on [to the consultative group] as an individual I said these things are too big for me I have to share with the members of my community" (p. 238).

Additionally, many of the participants felt that their involvement was only so that the museums could check the inclusion box. One the community members noted, "I can't honestly [see how] people who were engaged in this programme could say that they owned this project because they were not allowed to own it" (p. 239). Community participants wanted to be consulted throughout the process, including at the very beginning and very end but felt that this did not happen. Another difficulty was that the community representatives did not understand how museums work behind the scenes and did not try to help the participants have a better understanding. Additionally, the community representatives suggested that the museum staff receive diversity training. Fouseki and Smith sum up the research saying that successful community consultation requires dialogue, negotiation, and recognizing the other parties.

Community consultation can also be a smaller undertaking. Lee (2012) writes about how the Jane Addams Hull House Museum (JAHHM) involved their visitors in thinking about how

one of their labels should be written. Jane Addams had a long relationship with Mary Rozet-Smith which has been described as anything from platonic friendship to a lesbian relationship. JAHHM has a portrait of Mary Rozet-Smith that the museum kept off display for a long time because of the difficulty over how to label it. The museum decided to display the painting with three labels and ask visitors to comment about which one they "found most meaningful" and why (p. 180). Each label described their relationship differently and provided other contexts. Generally, labels provide one-way communication from the museum to the visitors, but this allowed the visitors to communicate back. Lee (2012) explains the response, "Almost immediately, the response board began to fill with comments that revealed a hunger for information beyond the 'forensic' truth that labels often provide" (p. 181). JAHHM received both positive and negative feedback from this project, but they did not fail to engage their visitors in their exhibit.

How an Exhibit is Created

The exhibit development process is broken into different chunks depending on the practitioner. Lord and Piacente (2014) list three phases: the development phase, the design phase, and the implementation phase. During the development phase, the exhibit idea is "created, tested and refined" and the exhibit brief is created (p. 2). In the design phase "the interpretive plan and all the research conducted to date is transformed into three-dimensional reality" (p. 2). Lastly, during the implementation phase, the exhibit is built and installed.

According to Lord and Piacente, there are four types of employees needed to create an exhibit: audience specialists, content specialists, communication specialists, and installation specialists. They go on to explain "In addition to these members, a core exhibit team may have other regular players, including curators, interpretive planners (content developers), lighting

designers, graphic designers, educators, marketing or fund-raising experts, and administrative support staff" (Houtgraaf and Vitali, 2008, p. 59).

Working with different stakeholders is another part of the exhibit development process. Stakeholders are those "…who are interested in or need or wish to contribute to the exhibit development process: for example, community or special-interest groups, schoolteachers, scientists, artists, members of the board of directors, and so on" (Houtgraaf and Vitali, 2008, p. 64). Often stakeholders have competing goals and they all should be considered (Rabinowitz, 2016).

Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion in Museums

The areas of diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion (DEAI) are priorities for many museum professionals and an increasing number are working to make their museums more diverse, accessible, inclusive, and equitable (Ivy, 2018; Lott, 2018). Although different institutions may have their own understanding of what DEAI means, AAM provides definitions of each concept to guide this work. AAM (2018) defines diversity as "…all the ways that people are different and the same at the individual and group levels. Even when people appear the same, they are different. Organizational diversity requires examining and questioning the makeup of a group to ensure that multiple perspectives are represented" (p. 8).

AAM defines accessibility as "…giving equitable access to everyone along the continuum of human ability and experience. Accessibility encompasses the broader meanings of compliance and refers to how organizations make space for the characteristics that each person brings" (AAM, 2018, p. 8). They define inclusion as "…the intentional, ongoing effort to ensure that diverse individuals fully participate in all aspects of organizational work, including decision-making processes. It also refers to the ways that diverse participants are valued as respected

members of an organization and/or community" (p. 8). AAM defines equity as "…the fair and just treatment of all members of a community. Equity requires commitment to strategic priorities, resources, respect, and civility, as well as ongoing action and assessment of progress toward achieving specified goals" (AAM, 2018, p. 8). These definitions demonstrate what museums are doing or need to do to be more diverse, accessible, inclusive, and equitable. All of these values matter because they are the "right thing to do" and are necessary for museums to survive financially (AAM, 2018, p. 9).

The definitions above come from AAM's Facing Change report. The report was created by AAM's Working Group on Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion, which tries to figure out what museums can do to improve DEAI (Ivy, 2018). The report "…lays out a framework for the Alliance's next set of priorities and programs aimed toward achieving the 'beloved community' throughout our field" (Lott, 2018, p. 1). It provides 5 insights: "Every museum professional must do personal work to face unconscious bias;" "Debate on definitions must not hinder progress;" "Inclusion is central to the effectiveness and sustainability of museums;" "Systemic change is vital to long-term, genuine progress;" and "Empowered, inclusive leadership is essential at all levels of an organization" (AAM, 2018, p. 7-11).

Simon's movement OF/BY/FOR ALL is an example the emphasis on DEAI in the field. Her website explains "[OF/BY/FOR ALL] means that if you want to be FOR your whole community, you have to be representative OF them and co-created BY them. If people don't see themselves as part of your work, they won't see your work as an essential part of their lives" (n.d.). This movement in the field is important because "…museums influence identity formation of those who come in contact with the museum – and those who do not. How that identity

formation happens for visitors is fundamentally tied to the very ways museums perform their own defined attitudes and values in the public sphere" (Anila, 2017, p. 109).

People writing about DEAI sometimes point out that the field, like all the institutions and political structures in the United States, cannot ignore its history of being rooted in colonialism, whiteness, and hetero-patriarchy (Goswami, 2018; Patterson et al., 2017; Richard, 2014). This history impacts the ways museums are organized and run to this day (Bryant, Bryant-Greenwell, Catlin-Legutko, Jennings, and Jones-Rizzi, 2017; Goswami, 2018; Taylor and Kegan, 2017). It impacts the systems which museums operate through, such as how people are hired and how museums think about their collections (Bryant et al., 2017). These systems are hard to recognize because the museum field tends to see them as the way museums are supposed to be. Patternson et al. (2017) write, "Legacy-power and authority structures will remain influential unless we challenge their foundational role in the development of museums and the way these structures have adapted to contemporary contexts" (p. 14). This history is tied to the work some museums are doing around decolonization, which will be discussed below. Museums have a duty to be compassionate, respectful, and fight against our own histories of being places of inequality and oppression (Jennings and Jones-Rizzi, n.d.). Sometimes museums are places where everyone feels included, but at other times they are embodiments of power and privilege. There are museums that consider themselves to be neutral, but through this claim they are saying they are unwilling to confront difficult topics.

In some ways, museums are being pulled into this newer role by changes in society. As Adams (2017) explains, "…communities across the country are seeking spaces that allow and encourage them to have challenging conversations. Museums need to embrace this new role."

Additionally, changing demographics in urban spaces mean that museums need to appeal to a broader range of people to survive (Guntarik, 2010; Taylor and Kegan, 2017).

According to Fouseki and Smith (2013) and Taylor and Kegan (2017), some museum staff struggle with DEAI-related work. Change is hard and can be messy, which could be part of the reason that making inclusive changes is difficult for some museums (Taylor and Kegan, 2017). White fragility may also play a role in this struggle.

White fragility is "a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves" (DiAngelo, 2011, p. 54). DiAngelo (2018) explains, "…when we try to talk openly and honestly about race, white fragility quickly emerges…" (p. 8). There are many reasons why white fragility exists. In order to better understand white fragility, it is important to understand how DiAngelo defines racism. She writes that racism,

> …occurs when a racial group's prejudice is backed by legal authority and institutional control. This authority and control transforms individual prejudices into a far-reaching system that no longer depends on the good intentions of individual actors; it becomes the default of the society and is reproduced automatically. Racism is a system (p. 21).

The system of racism is reinforced through society our entire lives which leads to us internalize racism. Even if a white person is "against" racism, they still benefit from white privilege. Additionally, the United States is built on the political system of white supremacy which is, "…a sociopolitical economic system of domination based on racial categories that benefit those defined and perceived as white. This system of structural power privileges, centralizes, and elevates white people as a group" (p. 30).

Very few people in the United States say that they are racist, yet racism still exists. This is because racism is adaptive. One way that racism has adapted is "color-blind racism." This is

when white people assert that they do not see race, but as DiAngelo explains, "But of course, we do see the race of other people, and race holds deep social meaning for us" (p. 42). When we pretend to be color-blind, we cannot acknowledge or address our unconscious beliefs about race, which in turn sustains racism. This is part of white fragility. According to DiAngelo,

> Racial bias is largely unconscious, and herein lies the deepest challenge – the defensiveness that ensues upon the suggestion of racial bias. This defensiveness is classic white fragility because it protects our racial bias while simultaneously affirming our identities as open-minded. Yes, it's uncomfortable to be confronted with an aspect of ourselves that we don't like, but we can't change what we refuse to see (p. 42).

In the United States today, the cultural norm is for white people to hide racism from people of color and deny that it exists even with other white people. This racism is different from some types of racism that were more predominate in the past, but it is still racism and white people are not becoming any less racist.

There is a belief among white people that only bad people are racist. When our words or actions are said to be racist, we feel it as a character assassination, and when our character is attacked, we want to fight to defend ourselves. This plays a huge role in white fragility because we feel hurt and feel the need to defend ourselves when the honest truth about racism is brought up. DiAngelo writes,

> The good/bad frame is a false dichotomy. All people hold prejudices, especially across racial lines in a society deeply divided by race. I can be told that everyone is equal by my parents, I can have friends of color, and I may not tell racist jokes. Yet I am still affected by the forces of racism as a member of a society in which racism in the bedrock. I will still be seen as white, treated as white, and experience life as a white person…In a society in which race clearly matters, our race profoundly shapes us. If we want to challenge this construct, we must make an honest accounting of how it is manifest in our own lives and in the society around us (p. 73).

There are many other reasons that white fragility exists, including "Social taboos about talking openly about race," "Fear and resentment toward people of color," "Our delusion that we

are objective individuals," "Our guilty knowledge that there is more going on than we can or will admit to," "Deep investment in a system that benefits us and that we have been conditioned to see as fair," "Internalized superiority and sense of a right to rule," and "A deep cultural legacy of anti-black sentiment" (p. 100). When a white person's views on race are interrupted, which can happen in many ways, white fragility occurs. Our reactions are "…reflexive and seldom conscious, but that does not make them benign" (p. 106). In fact, white fragility is a form of bullying. DiAngelo explains, "White fragility keeps people of color in line and 'in their place.' In this way, it is a powerful form of white racial control" (p. 112).

However, white people can work towards ending their own white fragility. DiAngelo suggests many new assumptions we should internalize, including "Being good or bad is not relevant," "Bias is implicit and unconscious; I don't expect to be aware of mine without a lot of ongoing effort," "Giving us white people feedback on our racism is risky for people of color, so we can consider the feedback a sign of trust," "Authentic antiracism is rarely comfortable. Discomfort is key to my growth and thus desirable," "Given my socialization, it is much more likely that I am the one who doesn't understand the issue," and "Racism hurts (even kills) people of color 24-7. Interrupting it is more important than my feelings, ego, or self-image" (p. 142-143). White people also need to be responsible for our own education about racism rather than depending on people of color to do it for us. And we will never be finished learning or addressing our racism.

Diversity

Much of the conversations and research about diversity in the museum field concerns the lack of diversity in museum staff and occasionally the lack of diversity in their audiences. Some people have written about the necessity of hiring people of color for all positions in museums,

especially leadership (Farrell, 2010; Schexnider, 2017; Taylor and Kegan, 2017). In 2010, only 20 percent of museum staff were people of color (Farrell, 2010). At that time, the country was only 39.3% percent people of color (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.). The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation released their "Art Museum Staff Demographic Survey" in 2015. The research focused primarily on museums who are members of the Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD). It found that "…AAMD museum staff are 72% White Non Hispanic and 28% Minority" (Schonfeld, Westermann & Sweeney, 2015, p. 7). The ethnicities of the people of color are not even broken down. The skew is higher in certain positions. For example, 90% of registrars are White Non Hispanic. At the same time, security and facilities staff are only about half White Non Hispanic. Additionally, in 2017, 46 percent of museum boards were completely white (Museum Board Leadership, 2017). But staff diversity should not just be about having diverse employees. Jennings and Jones-Rizzi (n.d.) explain, "The ultimate goal of diverse hiring is not to bring in people of color in order for the organization to continue as usual but to bring in diverse colleagues so that the organization achieves systemic change organically and internally" (p. 71). Even the best-meaning white people are almost always uninformed or even ignorant in their understanding of racism (DiAngelo, 2018). They are not equipped to understand or address issues of race without consulting with people who actually understand. That is one reason among many that museums need to have an ethnically diverse staff who can address racism. With the right work, having more diverse employees in museums has the potential to make real change in the museum field.

Accessibility

Museums, like other businesses, are required to adhere to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The act is meant to eliminate discrimination against people with disabilities (Art

Beyond Sight, 2014). Adherence to the act is only one facet of accessibility. Accessibility can include things like making museums more useable for people with wheelchairs or who are deaf or hard of hearing, but it can also include more abstract types of accessibility. For instance, Patternson et al. (2017) point out that where a museum is located, what it looks like, how easy it is to navigate galleries, and more are all aspects that implicitly tell visitors whether or not they are welcome.

Many people have conducted studies about a variety of types of accessibility in museums. Others have written about accessibility work at specific museums or their own opinions. A study done in London found that people with the highest rates of museum attendance were white, educated, and lived near museums (Brook, 2016). Access to museums considerably increased attendance for many groups, not just educated white people. Brook determined, "…improving the access to cultural opportunities in the areas where it is worst can be an important way of addressing the reduced levels of attendance by members of ethnic minorities, especially where programming can improve the representation of histories and cultural artefacts with resonance for these groups" (p. 32).

Hartman and Hines-Bergmeier (2015) examined how one museum, the Ohio Valley Museum of Discovery (OVMoD), has increased accessibility for their economically depressed and isolated community. Their broad strategies were "…looking for creative ways to overcome monetary constraints, creating a multilayered approach to exhibit development and delivery, becoming an agent of social inclusion, fostering collaborative relationships, being educationally relevant, and becoming a destination for volunteers and service-learning opportunities" (p. 301).

Zedda (2013), a woman who is deaf, writes that museums are especially important for disabled people because they, "…experience exclusion and discrimination in many areas of life

and perhaps can find refuge consolation, and inspiration in a museum that helps them grow, learn, and feel the magic of being human" (p. 359). In this vein, Meyer, Larrivee, Veneziano-Korzec, and Stacy (2017) studied the effect of hearing assistive technology (HAT) on adults with acquired hearing loss. They found that using HAT, along with clear speech and modified presentations, during museum tours helped people with hearing loss experience increased accessibility. Goss, Reich, Stoessel, and Iacovelli (2012) wrote about their work to create universally designed museum programs that are more accessible for people with disabilities. They worked with professionals and visitors with and without disabilities to develop programming. Goss et al concluded that "When facilitating a project, it is important to include everyone in all aspects of that project…We learned that changing our initial plans and thinking through multiple options of assistive technology provided an inclusive project experience for everyone" (p. 17). They also explained that they learned, "…some of the changes we made to programs helped not only people with disabilities, but that these changes also helped people without disabilities" (p. 17).

A lot of the research about accessibility is focused on people with visual impairments. In 2012, Art Beyond Sight, the Museum of Science, Boston, San Francisco MOMA, the Seattle Art Museum, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, New York's Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and Brooklyn Museum, the National Gallery, and the Indianapolis Museum of Art organized a program that created focus groups of visitors who were blind or had low vision and then listened to suggestions from the focus groups (Levent and Reich, 2013). The museums learned that people who are blind or have low vision can still be interested in art and museum, but their experiences are not always positive. These visitors stated that often museums make them feel unwelcome or even unsafe. However, the visitors also reported that they noticed when museums

make an effort to be more accessible to people who are blind or have low vision. The resulting staff training helped employees feel more confident in working with visitors who are blind or have low vision. Levent and Reich explain, "[The staff] noted that the training experience and especially direct and candid feedback from the visitors with low vision helped them 'break stereotypes,' 'demythologize disability,' understand that 'it is okay to make a mistake in communication,' and not to be afraid to offer assistance" (p. 223). They also wrote, "Learning directly from visitors who are blind or have low vision is essential, as only they are truly aware of what their needs are, what assets they bring with them to the museum, and what they are looking for from a museum experience" (p. 219).

Mesquita and Carneiro's (2016) study about the accessibility of museums in Europe to visitors who have visual impairments concluded that there are strategies museum could use to be more accessible. For example, museums can use "…less traditional techniques…such as signposted routes" (p. 385). Mesquita and Carneiro explain, "An increase of accessible objects and information, as well as the supply of less conventional sound experiences, such as visits with audio guides in infrared version or with directional information, are important approaches in this field that should be implemented by more museums" (p. 385). Increasing tactile, olfactory, and taste experiences would also be helpful. Handa, Dairoku, and Toriyama's (2010) study about the priority needs in Japanese museums for accessibility for visitors with visual impairments found that "…accessibility to exhibitions and collections and staff assistance were regarded as the two most important factors by the respondents" (p. 229). They concluded that "…for a meaningful museum experience the quality of service is more important than the facilities for the visually impaired population" (p. 233).

The Columbia Museum of Art (CMA) in South Carolina created a 6-week program for ten children with autism spectrum disorder (Deng, 2017). Every week, the children went on a guided tour in the museum and attended an art-making workshop; both were intended to meet the needs of children with autism. The museum studied the students and found that the program "…provided a positive and exciting experience for the children, which led to increases in their knowledge and appreciation of art, as well as their confidence level in situations requiring social interactions" (p. 421). In interviews of the children's parents, they commented that the small classes and an atmosphere that was more relaxed than a school classroom helped the children open up. According to the study, "…a museum can play a key role in helping children on the autism spectrum expand their social and cultural opportunities" (p. 424).

The Museum of Science, Boston (MoS) has done work to make their exhibits more accessible to people with physical accessibility needs and people with special learning needs (Shimosaka, 2012). They started making exhibits more physically accessible around thirty years ago including adding artifacts visitors could touch, audio descriptions, and even scents. Around fifteen years ago MoS began "…actively address[ing] accessibility to learners with a wide range of disabilities, including autism, learning disabilities and cognitive disabilities" (para. 3). They try to design their exhibits so that as many visitors as possible can interact physically with the exhibit, engage cognitively with the content, and interact with other visitors. MoS does not just assume the exhibits will be accessible. As Shimosaka explains, "To accurately gauge effectiveness of proposed designs and changes to current designs, the museum publicly asked for volunteers with a variety of disabilities to come to the museum and try out new design ideas" (para. 16).

Museum websites can also be a barrier to accessibility for some people (Lisney, Bowen, Hearn, and Zedda, 2013). Hearn (2013), a woman who is blind, writes,

> People talk about all the things you can find on museum websites: interactive tours, documents to read, precious objects to look at. None of these are accessible to someone who cannot see the screen. What would happen if there was a button to click on to get a description of an image, in the same way you can enlarge an image? What would happen if you could take an audio tour? (p. 358).

Museum websites should work for people who use screen readers and voice-activated software (Zedda, 2013). Zedda elaborates, "Being able to research and rehearse the visit in advance is of paramount importance for many disabled people. If your website is not accessible, that would leave them with little confidence in your ability to be inclusive during their visit" (p. 359). Accessibility is important on its own, but increased accessibility also contributes to inclusion (Art Beyond Sight, 2014).

Inclusion

This research study focuses on inclusion because according to AAM (2018), "Inclusion is central to the effectiveness and sustainability of museums" (p. 9). Ivy (2018) explains, "Today, the country's museums are increasingly taking up the charge to be more inclusive" (p. 2).

Many people in the field have written about how museums are becoming more inclusive by inviting the previously-silenced audience to contribute to exhibits, programs, and more in big and little ways (Anila, 2017; Lonetree, 2012; Patternson et al., 2017). This was explained in more detail above. However, as Taylor and Kegan (2017) state, "When museums continue to practice inclusion through programs and exhibits, but fail to address the culture of museums, it is like treating the symptoms of a disease, rather than the disease itself" (p. 34).

Moore (2016) explains that it is important to understand that inclusivity work must be intersectional and therefore cannot be undertaken by only a few people and that racism plays a

role in every type of museum and in all positions in museums. Museums must confront their own issues of inequality, and not focus solely on educating the public. Jennings and Jones-Rizzi (n.d.) suggest that there are three reasons why museums lack diversity and inclusion: "1. We focus too much on trying to change others instead of ourselves. 2. Our leadership systems do not consistently serve as models for inclusiveness. 3. The lack of a truly diverse and inclusive leadership in our associations as a whole…contributes to a lack of vision and efficacy in leading the field to embodied diversity and inclusion" (p. 67). Kinsley and Wittman (2016) agree that there is a lack of internal focus on diversity, writing,

> A lack of introspection and visible internal change projects the idea that museums have something special others lack—that they are the "chosen" group to help those that cannot help themselves. There are some clear problems with this line of thinking. First, it assumes an exceptionalism that distances museums from other organizations and institutions trying to address social justice. Second, it obscures the fact that museums have many of their own issues to deal with (p. 40).

According to Brown (2015), when museums remain silent on difficult racial history not only does it endanger museums credibility, but it also silences the past. However, if museums are willing and able to discuss their own part in racial oppression "…truly transformative work will happen" (p. 110). As Brown explains, "While statements and conversations are an essential entry point to understanding race issues in this country, they are not a resting point…As the scholarship on race and museums has suggested, museums will need to actively engage race, rather than simply talk about it" (p. 112).

Creating inclusive museums is an ongoing process that requires work from museum staff (Bailey, 2012). Bailey explains, "We must all search out experiences that make us just a little uncomfortable. We must strive to use best practices that produce meaningful learning lessons. We must hold each other accountable in order to consistently maintain high standards in both diversity and inclusion within our museums" (para. 7). Additionally, "Acknowledging a lack of

knowledge, resistance, restraint, and/or fear regarding the subject of race and racism in museums is the only way to have an honest conversation" (Moore, 2016, p. 19). It is also important that people of color are not forced into the role of being responsible for helping their white colleagues deal with their fragility. Inclusion should not be simply a last-minute thing to check off – the work must go much deeper than that. Taking this all into consideration, increasing inclusivity in museums is a time-consuming, challenging process, but it can be done.

Equity

According to Adams (2017), an adaption of Critical Race Theory (CRT) can help museums create positive changes in their communities and push towards racial equity. CRT is a way of revealing how racism affects people in a society that thinks racism is no longer an issue (Adams, 2017). There are four tenants of CRT. According to Adams, they are "the permanence of racism," "the idea of property rights," "how civil rights legislation ultimately helped whites instead of its intended audience," and "teaching through the sharing of personal experiences or the stories of people of color" (p. 290-291). Based on these tenants, Adams has created four questions museums can ask themselves: "…how do we create experiences that dismantle racism instead of putting it on display?," "…how do we encourage diverse narratives that benefit people of color without having to keep in mind the interest of whites?," "…how do we move away from narratives told through the eyes of the oppressor?", and "…how can artists of color question the dominant narrative and remain in the conversation?" (p. 291-294). Using these questions, museums can guide their work, especially their exhibit development processes, to becoming less reliant on existing paradigms of oppression and white privilege which stand in the way of equity.

Authority sharing can also contribute to equity. Authority sharing "…requires that everyone involved in a project be valued for the unique perspectives they bring, and all are given

equal respect" (Bench, 2014, p. 35). Oral histories and personal perspectives should be considered to be equal to academic work from people outside the community the museum is working with. With authority sharing the focus should be on respect for the community the museum is working with rather than reaching an agreement. Using these techniques can help museums address equity.

Inclusion in Museum Exhibits

Part of AAM's code of ethics discusses ethics for programs including exhibits. A museum's programs should "…support its mission and public trust responsibilities" (AAM, 1993/2000). Additionally, programs should be "…accessible and encourage participation of the widest possible audience consistent with its mission and resources" (AAM, 1993/2000). Lastly, the code states that programs should "…respect pluralistic values, traditions and concerns" (AAM, 1993/2000). This means that exhibits should be inclusive in order to represent more than one culture or viewpoint. Not only is it ethical, but including diversity and inclusion in a museum's strategic plan, which ultimately affects exhibits, can improve "…effectiveness and the visitor experience" (Bailey, 2012).

Difficult History

Sometimes in order for history museums to be inclusive, they must interpret difficult history. Rose (2016) defines difficult history as "…histories of oppression, violence, and trauma" (p. 28). She goes on to explain

> Difficult histories are a category of recollections that are filled with pathos, and are surrounded with intellectual and political risks that make the telling of difficult histories, well, difficult!...[they] are not only hard to tell because of the pain and suffering experienced by the victims but also because the histories continue…to impact our lives today (p. 28).

This includes histories of slavery, the genocide of indigenous people, war, and more. Difficult histories tell, of course, of suffering, but also of resilience and point us towards a more just future. Although these stories may be difficult for audiences, pretending they did not happen or do not have an effect on the present "…leaves contemporary victims of oppression to suffer alone and to marginalize or erase the meanings of the historical individuals' and groups' suffering" (p. 100). Instead, by interpreting difficult histories, museums can commemorate and honor people and communities.

Because difficult knowledge is by its nature challenging to encounter, museum workers owe visitors "…effective strategies to engage in the learning of histories of oppression" (Rose, 2016, p. 29). Commemorative Museum Pedagogy (CMP) is a strategy to help learners engage with difficult history. Rose developed CMP based on a study she did in 2005. She interviewed tour guides at the Magnolia Mound Plantation in Louisiana throughout the process of updating their tour to include more information about slavery. Rose paid special attention to the tour guides' emotional responses to the difficult history in the updated tours. She explains, "My analysis was grounded in the educational psychoanalytic theories, especially related to mourning and melancholia and loss in learning" (p. 154).

CMP has five stages called the 5Rs, which are Receive, Resist, Repeat, Reflect, and Reconsider (Rose, 2015). These are nonlinear stages that learners use to understand difficult knowledge. In the Receive stage, visitors are most likely ready to learn when arriving at an exhibit and museum staff should create a welcoming introductory space and disclose that there is difficult knowledge in the exhibit. In the Resistance stage, visitors react in a variety of negative ways to receiving difficult knowledge. In the Repetition stage, visitors "…begin grappling with information they find disruptive and repeat particular parts of difficult knowledge

in a variety of ways" (p. 31). This process is the visitor deeply considering the information they are struggling to accept. In the Reflection stage visitors take the time to think about the difficult knowledge they encountered and talk about their thoughts. It is important to provide space onsite for visitors to sit or talk about the experience. In the Reconsideration stage visitors express "…how they reconsider difficult knowledge" (p. 32). Some signs of Reconsideration include discussion of their own connection to difficult histories, eye contact, nodding, and participation in the exhibit. When it comes to difficult history, museum workers should never believe interpretation is neutral, facts are unquestionable, and your visitors see the world in the same way they do.

Interpreting American Indian History

Specialists in a variety of historically marginalized groups have written specifically about interpreting the history of that community including case studies and instructional information. One focus is on American Indians and their representation in museums and decolonizing museums. Decolonization in terms of museums is

> …the right of colonized or formerly colonized people to self-determination as expressed through: 1) the return of cultural heritage held by museums 2) the right to be consulted in the creation of museum narratives and spaces representing them AND/OR 3) the museum itself addressing the ways in which knowledge systems of colonizing peoples dominate museum activities to the exclusion of knowledge systems of colonized peoples (MASS Action, 2017, p. 192).

This definition is very similar to AAM's (2018) definition of inclusion: "…the intentional, ongoing effort to ensure that diverse individuals fully participate in all aspects of organizational work, including decision-making processes. It also refers to the ways that diverse participants are valued as respected members of an organization and/or community" (p. 8). "The right to be consulted in the creation of museum narratives and spaces representing them" fits with "…fully participat[ing] in all aspects of organizational work, including decision-making processes." "The

return of cultural heritage held by museums" and "the museum itself addressing the ways in which knowledge systems or colonizing peoples dominate museum activities to the exclusion of knowledge systems of colonized people" fit with "…the ways that diverse participants are valued as respected members of an organization and/or community." Although Lonetree's definition of decolonization includes more specifics than AAM's definition of inclusion, the high-level ideas are the same. However, decolonization focuses specifically on colonized or formerly colonized people, while inclusion is broader and includes other historically marginalized groups like LGBTQ+ people or religious minorities.

Lonetree (2012) explains, "…one of the most important goals [of museums], I believe, is to assist communities in their efforts to address the legacies of historical unresolved grief by speaking the hard truths of colonialism and thereby creating spaces for healing and understanding" (p. 5). This truth telling is critical for decolonization. It is also important to realize that in community-collaboration "It is about building trust, developing relationships, communicating, sharing authority, and being humble" (p. 170). The process of privileging American Indian voices can cause painful experiences even for the best-meaning museum workers, but the important part is how workers respond to difficult circumstances. The challenges are all worth it though, because when museums do decolonization work they "…become places for building momentum for healing, for community, and for restoring dignity and respect" (p. 171).

American Indians have a difficult relationship with museums because museums have a history of, and often continue to, exclude, exploit, and objectify them (Bench, 2014). Because American Indian history has so often been interpreted by non-American Indians, museums often perpetrate stereotypes. Additionally, American Indians have had cultural artifacts stolen from

them and interned in museums. Rios (2018) writes, “When a non-native institution preemptively assumes Native American cultures need preservation, it ignores all the ways that Native American cultures have preserved and cared for themselves for thousands of years through social practices that preexisted the appearance of European settlers, anthropology, or natural history museums” (para. 14).

Despite a shift towards museums working with tribes to create exhibits, it is important to remember that there are still issues to be cognizant of (Lonetree, 2012). For example, authority sharing, written about in more detail above, is critical when working with American Indian advisors (Bench, 2014). Additionally, building a relationship with any community can take years, so this is not something a museum can jump into immediately.

Several people have written about the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) (Lonetree, 2012; Segall and Trofanenko, 2014). The NMAI’s interpretive strategy is described as “to transfer curatorial authority to Indigenous people and thereby enable American Indians to tell their own stories” (Lonetree, 2012, p. 83). “Partnership with Native people” is part of their mission (NMAI, n.d.). Their work with American Indian communities and the results of that work have been both applauded and critiqued.

Segall and Trofanenko (2014) explain how exhibits at NMAI show that American Indians are more than a dead culture and that they have their own histories. However, the exhibits tend to gloss over the brutality of colonialism or put that information in places where it could easily be missed. The use of multiple voices is prevalent in the museum, but “The absence of explicit pedagogical strategies to help visitors make sense of the multiplicity of voices, the open-ended quotations, and the obliqueness of the messages does little to convey the educational mission the museum hopes to transmit” (p. 63). Segall and Trofanenko note that there have been complaints

from the American Indian community that NMAI does not challenge their audience to think about the issues American Indians are currently experiencing.

Lonetree (2012) investigates and reflects on the collaborations and missed opportunities at NMAI. NMAI has worked to make their exhibits more thematic rather than object based and use first-person voices. While some believe NMAI's exhibits are nuanced and effective, others believe that the exhibits are "…confusing, negating, and lacking in historical context" (p. 107-108). Lonetree explains, "When I was at the NMAI previously, I had reviewed some of the information that the communities had shared with the museum. The depth, quality, and power of what they shared repeatedly moved me, both intellectually and personally. When I later saw what was done with this information, I felt considerable sadness: the dynamism was gone" (p. 108). NMAI does not engage in the kind of difficult truth telling necessary for decolonization (Lonetree, 2012). The museum shies away from discussing genocide and the lasting effects of colonization and "By so doing, it fails to hold those who walk through this museum accountable for the colonization of Native peoples" (p. 109).

Another critique is that visitors are often confused and frustrated by the displays in the exhibits and therefore the museum fails to challenge stereotypes of American Indians (Lonetree, 2012). The exhibits rely too heavily on postmodernist theory and can be confusing even for academics. Despite the NMAI's work with American Indian communities, they have not achieved decolonization.

Interpreting African American History

Several books and articles have been written about interpreting the African American experience, focusing especially on slavery. Slavery has been underrepresented at historic sites yet including interpretation around slavery is an obligation if museums wish to accurately tell the

story of the past (Gallas and DeWolf Perry, 2014). According to Gallas and DeWolf Perry, there are two main reasons why slavery is difficult to interpret: “contested narratives” and “racial identity” (p. 2). “Contested narratives” means that people have narratives about their identities and honest discussions around slavery can disrupt those narratives in uncomfortable ways for white Americans. “Racial identity” means that people, regardless of race, have racial baggage and honest discussions around slavery can trigger difficult emotions about race.

Gallas and DeWolf Perry (2014) write about “The Six Components of a Comprehensive and Conscientious Interpretation of Slavery” (p. 3-6). The first component is comprehensive content, which means that the museum or historic site must recognize “…that the history of slavery in the United States is broader and deeper than our public memory generally acknowledges…” and use individual stories to illustrate slavery (p. 4). The second component is race and identity awareness, which means staff must have the chance to understand their baggage around slavery and race in the Unites States before interacting with visitors about the topic. The third component is institutional investment, which means that everyone from the board to volunteers must be committed to the interpretation of slavery and that the commitment is written into institutional documents and used for planning. The fourth component is community involvement, which means that the museum or historic site not only works with outside communities but also makes working with them a “…central pillar of [the] interpretive plan” (p. 5). The fifth component is visitor experiences and expectations, which means recognizing that many visitors want museums to present difficult knowledge and completing a front-end study to understand what is currently happening at the site. The sixth component is staff training, which means addressing concerns staff may have around interpreting slavery and properly preparing staff to do interpretation about slavery.

However, there is much more to African American history than slavery. Davis (2015) writes about the Senator John Heinz History Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania creating the exhibit *Soul Soldiers: African Americans and the Vietnam Era*, which showcased a very different era of African American history. The exhibit development team wanted to use the voices of African American Vietnam veterans and work closely with the local African American community throughout the entire exhibit development process. The team worked with local veterans' groups to develop an advisory committee who they worked with throughout the process. The main research was done through oral histories with African American Vietnam veterans. The team did not take this work lightly. As Davis explains, "The exhibit team worked hard to help interview subjects feel comfortable and invested in the historical and educational goals of the project" (p. 173-174). Through the hard work of all involved with this exhibit, the History Center is still recognized "…as a trusted partner for documenting African American history and the experiences of Vietnam veterans" despite the fact the exhibit closed in 2007 (p. 174). Through thoughtful community engagement, museums can build lasting relationships and become trusted institutions in their communities.

Interpreting Community History for Other Ethnic Groups

Museums around the world are looking to tell stories that are inclusive of their communities. For example, Dickenson (2010) writes about how in 2007 the McCord Museum of Canadian History in Montreal opened the exhibit *Souvenirs of Here: the Photograph Album as Private Archive of Chinese Montrealers*. The museum had previously made a priority to be inclusive of the history and culture of all Montrealers. Through work with the Montreal Chinese community, the McCord was able to find four people who would share their stories and photos for the exhibit. The museum had a lot to consider in this process. As Dickenson, then the

Executive Director, explains, "We were concerned about how we could ensure that our initiative with the Montreal Chinese community could be developed into an ongoing relationship with the community. We also wanted to ensure the community's history and material culture were respectfully documented and preserved" (p. 153). Through programming tied to the exhibit, the McCord was able to grow their connection with more people and groups related to the Chinese-Canadian community. The exhibit received overwhelmingly positive feedback including from people who were reminded of their own families and those who saw the exhibit as a celebration of Chinese-Canadian achievement" (p. 158). One visitor wrote "…I am so glad that we have become a part of public memory" (p. 159). Based on visitor comments, *Souvenirs of Here* made an impact on many people in a variety of ways, from showing people their community is part of a larger history to changing some people's perspectives.

Mierei (2010) writes about how the National Museum of American History's exhibit *Bittersweet Harvest: The Bracero Program 1942-1964* was meant to share the experiences of Braceros. Braceros were "…the agricultural and railroad workers brought to the US from Mexico as an emergency measure to fill the labor shortage after many Americans went to serve in the armed forces during World War Two" (p. 213). The exhibit used photos taken by a photojournalist in the 1950s and excerpts from oral histories. This was a five-year project where over 600 oral histories were conducted, and museum staff traveled across the country to conduct interviews and photograph and collect relevant objects. While this single exhibit could not represent all the diverse aspects that make of the Latinx community, it did bring to light a part of American-Latinx culture that is unknown or forgotten by many. Representations of Latinx culture in the United States has often reinforced stereotypes and museums must work to break

these stereotypes and show the diversity of Latinx culture. Because of the growing number of Latinx Americans, it is important to better represent both Latinx history in museums.

Interpreting LGBTQ+ History

Some people have written about interpreting LGBTQ+ history in museums. Including LGBTQ+ history in museums is important because it increases inclusion, but also because for many LGBTQ+ people, learning their history can be healing (Ferentinos, 2015). Unlike religious or ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+ people generally do not grow up in a family who shares that identity and can connect them to their history. Additionally, some LGBTQ+ people are forced out of the communities they grew up in when they come out, leading to increased disconnection. As Ferentinos explains, “Unmoored people can find out a sense of belonging in learning about the experiences of others like them who have come before. To offer roots to those who have at one time or another found themselves without any is a powerful gift indeed” (p. 13).

Ferentinos wrote about issues museum professionals should be aware of when interpreting LGBTQ+ history, arguing that it is important to consider how different stakeholders will react to LGBTQ+ content. Because LGBTQ+ topics can be quite controversial “…it is worthwhile to do some initial consensus building among key stakeholders before project planning begins” (p. 151-152). Additionally, various topics related to LGBTQ+ culture may be more or less controversial, so it is important that stakeholders are aware of a variety of aspects of that culture. Keep in mind that LGBTQ+ people in the museum’s community are also stakeholders.

Another consideration is staffing. The people in a museum best qualified to work on LGBTQ+ interpretation are not necessarily the LGBTQ+ employees. Additionally, assigning only queer employees to work on a project about LGBTQ+ interpretation could project the idea

the LGBTQ+ history is only for LGBTQ+ people. In some cases, it makes the most sense to bring in outside help to consult about LGBTQ+ history.

Terminology is also an important concern. As Ferentinos explains, "…no single agreed-upon language exists for describing these concepts and their history" (p. 153). Certain words can be contentious in the LGBTQ+ community, and museums also have to make decisions about what words to use to describe historical experiences before certain words were used. Another consideration is whether to create special programming about LGBTQ+ history or to integrate it into other history. Museums have done both of these techniques successfully. Lastly, another possible issue is the consideration of whether to address sex in discussions around sexuality.

Austin and Brier (2015) write about the Chicago History Museum exhibit *Out in Chicago* about lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Chicago history. The exhibit opened in May 2011. While developing the exhibit, the museum staff realized that it was important to get buy-in from as many groups as possible. The curator worked with a scholar in gender and sexuality from the University of Illinois at Chicago to cocurate the exhibit. The cocurators worked with museum staff to help them understand that even if they were straight they could play a role in creating or supporting the exhibit. Part of the exhibit development process was having conversations about what the museum wanted to avoid. Austin and Brier explain the interpretive strategy they decided to use,

> …we chose to emphasize and utilize the idea that LGBT could be a method for thinking about the past. We tried to use queerness as an interpretive strategy to help us figure out what happened when the history of sexuality met urban history. How does attention to nonnormative gender expression and sexuality allow us to reinterpret objects, images, and archival materials of the city?... By contextualizing the stories of individual LGBT people with discussion on how sexuality and gender suffused the emergence of the city, we forestalled the possibly problematic representation of LGBT as always white and middle class and also gained an interpretive freedom to look to the cultural and social history

> of Chicago that has detailed how the city addressed transgressions related to gender and sexuality (p. 123).

The museum used objects from the collections that fit the themes in the exhibits, rather than focusing only on objects tied specifically to queer people or places. For instance, they used clothing from the late nineteenth century to illustrate what men and women usually wore at the time and used that to talk about gender nonconforming people.

Another strategy that the Chicago History Museum used was sustained community engagement with both LGBTQ+ and straight cis people. Working with these groups, especially an "LGBT panel," helped shape the final exhibit (Austin and Brier, 2015, p. 124). In their reflection on the struggles the museum had during the exhibit development process, Austin and Brier write, "…we found that some of the most vociferous controversy emerged when fear about backlash in the present overwhelmed our evidence from the past. This was put in the sharpest relief, not surprisingly, in the sections of the exhibition that dealt with sex" (p. 127). There were also times when they felt they needed to prioritize the queer voices over the ally voices, going against the desires of the straight cis people they were working with. Despite some struggles, the exhibit was a success and brought a wider audience than normal and repeat visitors to the museum. They also conducted an exit survey with 93 responses where 81.6% said the exhibit "met or exceeded their expectation" (p. 128). However, now that *Out in Chicago* is closed, the Chicago History Museum is questioning where they can go next to keep the museum a place where people can learn about LGBTQ+ history.

Some people have written about interpreting the history of other communities, such as the Jewish community or people who are disabled (Decter, 2017; Sandell, 2007). Although exhibit concerns vary depending on the specific groups the exhibit is about, many of the same things are

important such as including voices from that culture, maintaining relationships, and being willing to confront difficult realities.

Chapter 3: Methods

The purpose of this study was to understand how exhibit-related staff at state history museums are addressing inclusion in their exhibits. This study was guided by the following research questions:

1) How do exhibit-related staff at state history museums think about and engage with inclusion in their work?
2) What strategies do exhibit-related staff at state history museums use to make their exhibits more inclusive?

It is important to acknowledge that I am a white woman working within academia. I am coming from a colonial approach in a system of white supremacy, and this has a significant impact on this study.

This was a case study, and as such, multiple data sources were used (Yin, 2014). Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with museum professionals who had worked on one or more exhibits at a state history museum in the last five years. The study analyzed documents including strategic plans, mission statements, inclusion-related documents, and exhibit write-ups. This chapter describes the sampling, data collection and analysis procedures, and the limitations of the study.

Sampling

This study used purposive sampling to identify seven case study sites. Sites were selected based on having mission statements that emphasized being for all state residents or mentioning the diversity of their state or having exhibits about historically underrepresented communities like communities of color, religious minorities, and women. Site location was also considered in order to obtain a geographically-diverse sample. The researcher contacted 17 sites, and seven

sites agreed to participate. At each institution, the researcher contacted an exhibit or curatorial staff member using website contact information either directly or through the general museum email address.

Due to the potentially controversial nature of this study, many of the sites were concerned with confidentially. Because of this, the sites are anonymous. The museums are in a variety of regions throughout the United States. Although some of the sites are state museums rather than state history museums, the exhibit-related conversations focused primarily on history exhibits. One site, Museum 6, is a state history museum but is not a state agency.

I did not collect demographic information about the participants for three reasons. Firstly, I did not feel that my sample size was large enough to be able to draw conclusions from demographic information. Secondly, I was focusing on cases rather than individuals. Thirdly, I felt that if I were to ask for people's ethnic identity in the interest of understanding whether people who are from a historically marginalized group had a different response than other respondents then I would also have to ask for peoples' sexual orientations, religious identities, disabilities, and more. Ultimately, I did not feel these questions were appropriate for me to ask. Some participants did tell me about their ethnic identity or sexual orientation during the interview, but this information was not explicitly analyzed.

Data Collection

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and document analysis. A total of 11 museum professionals were interviewed across the case study sites, including one at Museum 1, one at Museum 2, two at Museum 3, two at Museum 4, three at Museum 5, one at Museum 6, and one at Museum 7. Interviews were conducted over the phone. All participants reported working with exhibits in some way although they held a variety of positions. Most participants

were history curators, exhibit developers, or educators and most are managers, directors, or leads.

Data Analysis

Audio recordings of interviews were transcribed, and those transcripts were analyzed both within sites and across sites (Yin, 2014). This was done to understand first what the inclusion work at each site was and what their personal perspectives were and then to compare the information with that of other institutions. The researcher then incorporated data from the document analysis from documents that were provided. The researcher identified themes through emergent coding for each research question.

Limitations

These institutions represent state history museums whose mission statements and recent exhibits showed evidence of a possible interest in inclusion. This means that there are other state history museums whose mission statements and recent exhibits did not meet this criterion who may have a different approach to inclusion in exhibits.

Another limitation was that in several cases it was not possible to speak to multiple people at a site because only one person was willing or able to be interviewed. As a result, analysis across participants at a site was not always possible. Because of this, these data could not be corroborated.

Additionally, the participants at most sites self-selected to participate in the study, which may have had an impact on the results. If staff members who were the most interested in inclusion were interviewed, the results may show the museums and their staff as being more involved in exhibit-related inclusion work than if all exhibit-related staff had been interviewed.

Chapter 4: Results and Discussion

The following chapter summarizes the results of this research, organized by research question, followed by themes and sub-themes that arose from data analysis.

Q1. How do exhibit-related staff at state history museums think about and engage with inclusion in their work?

Four themes characterized the nature of inclusion at the 7 sites studied here: a) staff agreed with the American Alliance of Museums' (AAM's) definition of inclusion; b) staff looked to a variety of resources on inclusion; c) inclusion was highly valued at the case study sites; and d) being at a state museum influenced how exhibit-related staff thought about and engaged in inclusion work. Each of these themes contained sub-themes, which will be explored in greater detail below.

a) Staff agreed with AAM's definition of inclusion

AAM (2018) defines inclusion as "the intentional, ongoing effort to ensure that diverse individuals fully participate in all aspects of organizational work including decision-making process. It also refers to the ways in which diverse respondents are valued as respected members of an organization and/or community" (p. 8). When participants were asked how this definition fit with their own thinking about inclusion and their museum's definitions of inclusion, at least one participant from five of the seven case study sites stated that the definition was the same as or very similar to their own definition of inclusion.

All respondents at four of the sites discussed inclusion work similar to AAM's definition of including multiple voices in museum work. One respondent explained,

> …I personally approach inclusion and diversity…with a strong emphasis on evaluation. Sort of looking at the process and checking in along the way to make sure that you actually are inclusive in a way that's meaningful to the people that you're trying to include…So diversity and inclusion is at its heart a collaborative

> effort and it means a certain amount of ceding authority and really not just making the place for people…sometimes it's making space at the table, but sometimes it's leaving your table and going to another table and asking if you can sit there. So, I really think it requires a lot of reflection and a lot of willingness to really check yourself and your own predisposed thoughts.

A respondent stated, "…what I would say is…that basically to me it means that people from as many diverse communities as possible should be involved in the exhibit process from the beginning to end…"

At four case study sites at least one participant discussed the importance of diverse people being valued as respected members of the community by expressing the importance of visitors having access to the museum and feeling included during their visit. A participant said, "…I want every kid who walks in the doors of this museum to find themselves somewhere…That's…the base level. That…every kid, who…walks in this museum and looks at the staff and looks at the exhibits, will say, 'Hey, I could work here.' I don't want them to feel like I did and think I don't belong in this place." Echoing this, another participant stated, "…we want as many voices to be heard throughout history and their stories be known so…that it is meaningful to all [people from the state][2], so everybody that comes to the exhibit or comes to the museum…finds their history." Similarly, another participant explained,

> So, my idea is that every child, every human has the right to experience the joy of learning in every aspect…I definitely come to inclusion in a very, very total fashion. Everyone. It doesn't matter your station, your class, your race…it doesn't matter what your abilities or disabilities are, whether they be physical or…neurological. To me it doesn't matter at all.

b) <u>Staff looked to a variety of resources about inclusion</u>

Staff at case study sites looked to a wide variety of resources to learn more about inclusion. These fell into three main categories: resources from formal museum organizations,

[2] For anonymity, the state names have been redacted in quotes.

less-formal museum resources, and non-museum resources like local organizations and communities.

At five of the sites at least one participant stated that they looked to resources from formal museum organizations, typically referring to either AAM and/or the American Association of State and Local History (AASLH). One participant explained, "…what I've been looking at recently are the AAM guidelines for diversity and inclusion…" Participants also said they looked to local museum associations.

At five of the case study sites at least one participant said that they looked to less-formal museum-related resources, for example looking to other museums and museum staff to see what they are doing. One participant said, "…We frequently look at…what are our peers in the field doing? Who can we reach out to who is in a similar position and what kind of programming are they doing?" Similarly, another participant explained, "Well, first off [city][3] has a really strong museum community…so there's a lot of opportunities whether they're…informal or sometimes more formal to…gather with other museum professionals in [city] and talk about kind of these larger issues." Participants also mentioned resources like blogs, such as Nina Simon's Museum 2.0 and the Incluseum.

Finally, all seven case study sites looked to non-museum resources for inclusion information. The primary source here was local communities and organizations. For example, a participant explained, "…I think we do a lot of tribal government to government work and so we are very intimately involved in all kinds of conversations with…many Native American tribes, very deep conversations…And there are all kinds of conversations and projects that we're having with different community groups." Some participants described how they reach out to local

[3] For anonymity, city names have been redacted in quotes.

partners like immersion and religious schools, groups that work with people who are blind, deaf, or autistic, and queer organizations. Participants also mentioned resources like social media and local PBS programming.

c) Inclusion was highly valued at case study sites

The fact that these case study sites valued inclusion was seen in two sub-themes in the data: i) inclusion is formalized at many sites as an institutional priority; and ii) exhibit-related inclusion work is increasing at many sites.

Formalization of inclusion as an institutional priority. Inclusion was reportedly formalized in some way at five of the case study sites. Four of those sites had written statements that mention the museum's commitment to inclusion or mention working with communities outside of the institution, which, as will be discussed below, the sites saw as inclusion work. For example, two museums mentioned inclusion in their value statements.[4] Both of their value statements about inclusion discussed partnering with communities. One museum mentioned inclusion in their exhibit proposal form, which asks whether staff members plan to work with community groups for the exhibit.

Three of the sites formalized inclusion not through written documents, but through systems or processes within the museum. At one museum a participant explained that the museum had a Diversity Committee while the other stated they offered free admission to all students in their state. Two museums had one or more people who focus on inclusion work and assist other staff members. A participant explained, "…there are people in the institution already who are focused on inclusion who…can help you."

[4] For anonymity and at the request of participants, documents are not quoted.

*Increase in inclusion work with exhibits***.** Staff at five of the case study sites described an increase in inclusion work with exhibits since they were hired. Only two of three participants at one museum felt there had been an increase, but the other participant mentioned having only been hired two years ago.

The ways in which exhibit-related inclusion work increased is different at different sites. At four museums there was more support for exhibit-related inclusion. One participant explained, "…definitely the emphasis on inclusion at my institution has only strengthened in four years. So, we kind of feel like there's probably more of…a support infrastructure for that, in the couple of years that I've been here." One participant, who attended diversity training for museum professionals, noted a similar increase in institutional support for inclusion, saying, "The fact that the entire museum supported me going to that education and were very supportive of me using it and applying it and letting me share that information and being very proactive about that." In some cases, the increased support for inclusion was shown through formal changes like creating a Diversity, Equity, Access, and Inclusion Committee at one museum or creating a Community Advisory Committee at another.

Staff members at three museums reported an increase in working with communities outside their institution for exhibits and telling more community stories in exhibits. A participant stated, "…I mean we've had a couple of really successful…community engaged exhibits and I think we feel a little bit…more successful in doing it…we've been able to actually...successfully put together projects with stakeholders." Another participant said, "I would say who's being represented and how we're representing them is really different."

Participants at one museum also spoke about other ways that attention to inclusion in exhibits has increased. These included internally addressing their own inclusion issues and

putting more focus on physical accessibility in exhibits. One participant explained that since being hired the museum had increased attention to accessibility, saying, “And nowadays, once we start doing something, you'll see it definitely be one of the first, like three to five topics brought up…How do we make it accessible for everybody? And then we continue on.”

At another museum, one participant described small increases in exhibit-related inclusion, like changes to terminology, and noted that even small changes take work. The participant explained, “And it was really just a fascinating process. Like the amount…to change one word on a panel, how much that meant because language matters so much…it was a major struggle and now it's just…natural here…our language institutionally has changed as a result of that exhibition.”

At another museum, the two participants said that attention to exhibit-related inclusion had not increased drastically, but that the museum was already doing a lot of inclusion work when they were hired. One participant explained,

> …I don't think it's changed too much…since I've only been here about five years. I feel like…it was kind of one of the reasons that I was hired…the last project I…worked on at my last museum, I worked with four different tribes to co-develop an exhibit. And so basically, I had kind of come in with that idea in mind that we would be working closely with different communities and trying to include more diversity in our exhibits from the beginning.

d) <u>Being at a state museum influenced how exhibit-related staff thought about and engaged in inclusion work</u>

Participants at the case study sites described two ways in which inclusion work at state history museums is affected by being a state agency: i) they are for and about everyone in their state; and ii) they are affected by state politics.

For and about everyone in their state. At six sites at least one participant talked about how it was important for their museum to tell stories about all the people in their state.

For example, one participant said, "…my job is to tell the stories of all [people from the state] and to make that story accessible to all [people from the state]." Another participant explained, "…as I'm developing the exhibition calendar, I'm looking at this through a complex set of criteria that makes sure that everybody sees themselves reflected…in the space…when they come…"

At some of the sites, participants described the importance of geographic diversity in being inclusive. They believed that to be for and about everyone in their state, they needed to tell stories from all over their state. For example, one participant said, "…we have to make sure that we're talking about everybody in the state and from every area of the state…" Another participant stated,

> So, we think basically we have to look…statewide. Obviously, communities are different depending on where you look in the state. So, we're always looking to tell the stories of [the state] as a state, which means…telling a wide diversity of stories because there are obviously many different groups around the state and trying to represent pretty much all of those groups as much as possible…

Another participant explained,

> We have to…think about inclusion in terms of…urban versus rural…making sure there's…geographic diversity…sometimes we'll be actually very, very good about…ethnic and racial diversity, but everything will be happening within a five-mile radius of the [museum]. So that is part of inclusion that we actually do try to think about…we are a statewide institution.

Two sites mentioned that the residents of their state are taxpayers who are helping fund their institution and how that had an impact. One participant stated,

> Our funding comes from the state of [state], part of it…our constituents have something to say. And so, if we are not producing exhibitions that speak to what their vision of what this museum should be, then we will hear about it. And eventually our programming I think, changes to a degree…but we also…are committed to serving the people of [state] in the way in which they want to be served…In the way in which they want to see themselves. And oftentimes that's attached to the dollar.

Another participant explained, "For a lot of folks it means…we have a duty to tell stories of all [people of the state]. And we're a big state with a lot of geography and a lot of people. So, it definitely impacts the stories that we tell, whether those stories are in our publications or exhibits or education programs…they're all taxpayers and [state]…residents."

*Affected by state politics***.** At four of the case study sites participants reported that as state museums, state politics have an effect on their inclusion work. At three of the case study sites at least one participant said that state politics kept them from going as far as they would have liked with their inclusion work or that local politicians put pressure on them. A participant explained,

> To be honest, we've had a really rough political period that we are just leaving. We had a governor who was very opinionated about…some issues and we felt that we had to be very careful and I think we didn't want to compromise ourselves as far as what we believe in…But we might not have wanted to be…as bold as we might've been. And I think that we're actually kind of relieved now that we have new leadership that we don't have to maybe tip toe around quite as much.

One participant said, "…we are a state funded institution in what would be considered a more conservative state…the analogy is, you've got to float the ship. So if we sink the ship, it doesn't help anyone. So, we have to make sure that we don't cannon ball ourselves…" The participant went on to add, "I think we're...comfy with where we are and when to push...but...not too much." A participant at the same museum said,

> Well, everything's very cautious…[other sites] can do…drag story time where a drag queen comes in and does story time. And that's something that we are confident that we wouldn't be able to do without a lot of repercussion. And it's because the state tries to stay very neutral on everything. And that's where I think we fail in diversity and inclusion…I don't think we're very LGBTQ friendly. And it's not that we've made a direct statement, but sometimes by not making the statement you are making a statement...And I definitely think that the state sometimes prevents us from doing that. It's a very red state and it's very conservative and that's just not something that they want us to jump into or even tiptoe into. So, while we could maybe have an exhibit on LGBTQ rights, we couldn't necessarily have a drag story time…we're a state agency and we're a voice for the state, which can hold us back from doing anything too extreme in any one position that's not seen as solely positive.

Another participant stated, "…being a statewide institution, there's a lot of pressure, especially from…rural legislators or others to kind of downplay the importance of…urban cities or African American's stories or other things…"

At one museum, two participants described being at a state museum in a state whose politics aligned more closely with the museum's. One participant said, "…the governor just came out…with some language around inclusion for [minority group][5]." Another participant from that site expanded on this, explaining, "…we got the governor's guidelines for dealing with all these things…I was like, well, we've already had these policies in place [at the museum][6]…But [state] is a pretty progressive state. And so I think we're fortunate in that regard." However, the same participant made it clear that the museum still had to remain apolitical saying,

> We do have to…be mindful when we are doing exhibitions. Also…this is part of being a good historian, not just to being a state agency, we do have to be thoughtful about…representing multiple sides and perspectives. And…not being seen as being political. And that can sometimes be difficult with certain exhibitions…So I guess if anything, that's where it gets a little difficult is that the public often expects as the state that you will not be…overly…left wing or right wing and need to be kind of honest.

Q2. What strategies do exhibit-related staff at state history museums use to make their exhibits more inclusive?

Two themes characterized the ways in which case study sites were actively working to make their exhibits inclusive: a) collaboration was a key strategy for making exhibits inclusive and b) strategies for working with communities included balancing competing needs, equipping communities with museum tools, and having respectful dialogue. Each of these themes contained

---

[5] For anonymity, the guideline details have been redacted.
[6] For anonymity, museum names have been redacted in quotes.

sub-themes, which will be explored in greater detail below. Working to make exhibits inclusive meant integrating AAM's definition of inclusion or the site's own definition of inclusion into the exhibit development process. This may have meant allowing diverse individuals to be involved in decision-making around exhibits or ensuring that diverse individuals felt valued in the exhibit develop process or while visiting the exhibit.

a) Collaboration was a key strategy for making exhibits more inclusive

Staff at case study sites described a variety of strategies they have used to make exhibits more inclusive, many of which were about collaboration, either internally amongst staff or externally with communities and partners.

Conversations about inclusion strategies. Exhibit-related staff and volunteers at these sites reported having conversations with each other about inclusion in exhibits. These conversations fell into two main categories: conversations about how the site could make their exhibits more inclusive and training other staff and volunteers about exhibit-related inclusion.

At five case study sites at least one participant talked about one or more specific conversations they had with other people at the museum about inclusion relative to exhibits. Four participants mentioned conversations regarding telling stories about people who have historically been under-recognized in museums or might be overlooked in an exhibit. For example, one participant said, "And so that's another conversation we're always having…'Okay…who is voiceless in this subject traditionally? And how can we reach those individuals? And if we cannot reach them, how can we represent their experience?'" Another participant from the same museum echoed a similar idea, explaining,

> But then it also comes down to…, 'Hey, are we touching on enough stories where people can come in and…see themselves kind of reflected here?'…maybe stepping back and looking at exhibit content and saying…is there an opportunity

> to tell…a woman's story here as opposed to this story. So those are the types of conversations I think we're frequently having.

Two participants mentioned having conversations about language choice during the exhibit development process. For example, one participant explained, "…our permanent exhibition, which we're in the middle of slowly redoing…was done 20 years ago. So, a lot of that language, while it was progressive for the time, we now look back at it and we say, well, this is really passive and it's kind of colonialist and…how do we address this now?" A participant explained that at their museum the staff had a conversation about what word to use to refer to a minority community they had an exhibit about.

Participants also referred to other types of conversations they had with people at their museum. For example, a participant explained,

> But one of the things…that I've always made sure…to discuss with our team is the inclusion of languages other than English…Especially when we're planning and developing exhibitions that deal with people, which they almost always do, who are bilingual and sometimes trilingual speakers. For me it's important to include some of the language…of everybody else in our state…Not just to make it a monolingual exhibition.

Another participant stated,

> What was unique is that recently we've had two exhibits that directly dealt with race…And I think what it did was cause some of…our white coworkers to really think about what they didn't have to think about on a daily basis…it kind of opened their eyes to, 'Oh, this is stuff that you guys actually have to deal with.' …it opened up a forum for us to actually speak to each other on a very real level. I'm Hispanic. They got to hear stories about me as a little kid in Texas and how people would throw bottles at me and my dad and tell us to get out of the country…they got to hear stories from different coworkers that have…been pulled over for no reason…those exhibits themselves opened up the conversation for us…

Other conversations were about how to make exhibits more physically accessible, how history looks different to different groups of people, and how to deal with difficult history and white guilt.

At four sites participants either discussed inclusion-related training for staff or volunteers related to exhibits or shared relevant inclusion-related documents from the exhibit development process. A participant said, "…in support of that exhibit, I did do an entire week of…diversity training for museum professionals…And then we brought that back and used it here at the museum. And I've talked to our docents on several occasions." One participant whose museum was changing a term related to difficult history a community had experienced, explained, "And then we're also having a conversation with our volunteers about, 'Okay, these are the conversations that we're having with the community and this is why we're going to move forward and…use this terminology.'" A participant whose museum did an exhibit on a topic that touched on some controversial issues, stated, "We know that for example, [topic][7] is a controversial topic…for people in general. So…how are we going to address these things if they came up? We did have staff training that we put together so that we could maybe learn how to talk about these things."

One of the museums has a document to train volunteers on how to respond to visitors about inclusion-related topics in exhibits and covers appropriate terms to use when referring to certain communities. For example, the document explains the difference between the terms Hispanic, Latino/a, and Chicano/a. The document also tells volunteers to avoid the words "parents," "mom," and "dad" and instead use "grownup," "caregiver," or "adult" to avoid making assumptions.

Collaboration with external stakeholders. When asked about what strategies the sites used to make their exhibits more inclusive every site described working with people outside the

[7] For anonymity, exhibit topics have been redacted in quotes.

museum in some capacity. This was the primary way they saw themselves working to make their exhibits more inclusive.

At one museum, the decision community outside the museum was up to the curator, but most curators tried to communicate with community members for sensitive subjects. The participant said,

> [Working with community members] has been kind of on a case by case basis depending on the curator and the exhibition. I certainly [include community members]. As I said…I think most people here are aware of sensitive issues that could come about depending on the exhibition. So, I think most people here like to communicate with the community as far in advance as possible and either have them collaborate or at least serve as an advisory member…somebody that they can contact and be in communication with.

The participant added, "There's a lot of history here that is contested to this day. So, to have more diversity in those opinions and those perspectives I think only helps to heal…some historic wounds…that are still open."

Another museum has worked with community members and partners for exhibits in different ways. For example, they worked with tribal representatives who gave them feedback about an older permanent exhibit. The participant explained,

> …we've just met with two representatives from two of the tribes and…we just did a walkthrough through the exhibit and talked to them about how people are using it…what we hate about it, what we like about it. And they were giving us amazing feedback about how we can incorporate…different languages…Also hearing from them that there are things…that are actually offensive that weren't very obvious to us, and now that I've heard them say it, of course it is very obvious.

This museum also used an advisory board for a recent exhibit and this helped the museum get more voices into the exhibit. The participant stated, "…I think also we have learned over time the value of partners."

Another museum has worked with a variety of individuals as well as committees and organizations for exhibits. One participant explained,

> …sometimes we set up different committees depending on the exhibit coming in and we bring different people in from the community to be advisors on those committees. And their job is to help us go through and kind of be the voice for different organizations and different people…and to kind of look at those exhibits and say, well this is good, this is not good. What about this? What about that? So, I think that's probably the main way we do it is working with local organizations and community leaders.

The other participant from the museum stated, "…I would rather help that community do it, than do it for that community. If that makes sense. It's not my job to tell their story. I'd rather help them tell their story…"

Another museum has partnered with different communities and used their advice to guide their work. They've worked with teachers, professors, organizations, researchers who specialize in certain communities, local tribes, and more. One participant expanded on the work they do, saying, "Just listening to people. Bringing as many voices to the table and then listening to what they have to say and honoring what they have to say" as well as, "...it's listening. We can't ask for their voice…And then for us to say no." The museum's commitment to partner with local communities who have historically been ignored by museums is also made clear in their public-facing documents.

Another museum has worked with community groups and partners and has a community advisory committee. Like one of the other museums, they have had people come to the museum to review language in their permanent exhibits. One participant explained, "…I…am trying to do a language audit in our permanent exhibits that have been there for 20 years and…ask people to come in and read things and give feedback." The museum has also used evaluation to help them understand the community that is their visitors. The participant also stated, "It's really important to get...out from your four walls." Another participant from the museum echoed this idea, saying,

> …part of what goes along with that…learning about these communities and…finding…the backstory, is being ready to meet them where they're at.

> Sometimes that might mean you have to go to…a committee meeting for…a year and a half. Sometimes you're joining a Facebook group. Sometimes you're looking at their Pinterest pages…

This participant also explained that the staff think, "…how can we bring individuals forward so that they are the ones telling the story and…we are interpreting rather than providing that authoritative voice." The idea of working with community groups or partners is also included on the museum's exhibit proposal form.

Another museum has also worked with community members and conducted audience testing and surveys around the city for a recent exhibit. The participant from the museum also brought up that working with community members is more than just listening to them, saying, "…we are trying to be…very mindful that a lot of the people we wanted to talk to may not want…to talk to us…in any exhibit, there's people who trust the institution and there's people who don't trust the institution."

The final museum has worked with advisors on exhibits. The participant from the museum explained, "Well…we figure out who are the folks who are invested in telling that story and we get 'em in the room making the exhibit with us." For example, the museum worked extensively with local tribes for a different museum under the same umbrella and a new exhibit at an existing museum. The participant explained the process for working with advisors, saying, "…it's lots and lots of conversations…it's giving them…that red editing pen and the post-its and saying what should we be doing differently."

b) Strategies for working with communities included balancing competing needs, equipping communities with museum tools, and having respectful dialogue

Balancing competing needs. At four sites a participant described the challenge of balancing community needs within communities, between communities, and between the

museum and communities. One participant summed this idea up, saying, "Well, you can't make everyone happy, right? So, it seems like every time you take a step to be more inclusive, it almost takes a step away and makes someone unhappy."

Speaking about balancing needs within a community, a participant said, "…no community is homogenous" and later added,

> …generational perspectives of how things should be interpreted is something that I've dealt with a lot actually recently and am still dealing with is some generations have…one idea of history and then some have another…And so navigating those divides is, it's difficult. It's tricky…you have to try to find that middle ground and sometimes you're…trying to find that middle ground for a community you aren't part of. And so that requires a lot of conversation…

Another participant speaking about balancing needs within a community, recounted a situation in which different organizations representing the same broad community disagreed about language and finished saying,

> And as an organization, I think that ultimately your goal is to make sure that everyone is feeling welcome, but there really is no way to not be controversial in some shape, way or fashion. So, you find the most positive outcome you possibly can. And for us, that meant contacting every local organization that I could, polling as many people as I could, and then coming up with the least controversial thing…

Two participants recounted how there can be disagreements between communities or that different communities can have different needs. One participant said, "We often work with multiple groups and multiple groups often have relationships with each other that are conflicted. And so sometimes you have to navigate those relationships and different group's perspectives of how something should be interpreted…" In some cases, visitors viewed an increase in inclusive stories as taking attention away from traditional museum stories. One participant from Museum 4 stated, "…one person blamed us for marginalizing white people…By bringing in more diversity we're marginalizing white people…But I would say…now that it's open, it has been

interesting…to see people come through and say…we've politicized history." A participant recounted a similar experience, saying, "People…accuse you of being too inclusive…there are people who are like…we want the traditional Eurocentric stories…that's what we expect out of this subject. And that's what we want to see. It does happen to us sometimes that people make comments like that…"

There was also the issue of balancing museum resources with multiple communities' needs. A participant explained that their museum had to balance many stories in a single exhibit with limited space. Meanwhile, another participant said, "...we get so much pressure from everybody across the state to do their exhibit…I get three ideas a day, at least, of somebody who wants this exhibit done, or this exhibit done…and we can't do it all."

Equipping communities with museum tools. Four sites explained that when they worked with community members it was helpful to explain why some strategies work better than others for exhibits. One participant stated,

> Well, one of the things that helps is to kind of outline the…projects at the beginning, explain…what you're doing and specifically what you're able to do and what your limitations are, because a lot of people simply don't understand…the intricacies of putting together an exhibition…people think you can display anything and sometimes we can't…you almost start training the person to [curate an exhibit]…so that they understand…our visitors are typically younger. We have a lot of school kids, so we have to think about that when we write things, or what we put on display and…if you put this on display, will people understand it or do you need to explain it a little more? …so, I guess a lot of it…has to do with…educating people about...museum ways.

Another participant echoed this saying,

> Sometimes, because when you're working with that community they are so close to the story, it's hard for them to step back…It helps that you a have of voice of authority. And not in a mean way, but in a...let me tell you what works from the museum world. And when you explain things very well and say, well, this is why we can't put 500 words on a panel because we want people to read it. And just explaining and being honest with them…I think in my experience, people, when

> you're just honest, you explain why something might not work, most people are pretty, oh, okay, you know what you're talking about.

Respectful dialogue. Three sites believed having a respectful dialogue was important for working with communities. This meant having an open dialogue and truly listening. A participant described talked about having an open dialogue with community members, saying

> …what has worked for me is just keeping an open dialogue…among as many people and…between groups if possible because that way, as long as people know what's happening there's little left…to be surprised about in the end…and that way people can feel like [they] have an investment, that it's not an exhibition that was…made without anybody's input…that people feel like…they've been part of it and they've been part of the decision making process.

While working on a recent exhibit, one museum used an open dialogue and true listening to work with multiple communities. One participant from that museum stated,

> …we only have 7,000 square feet and we put in as much as we can, but there is always something that needs to get…left behind. So, we really approached all the groups with…what do you want to see in this exhibit? …we're going to do our very best to get everything in there that you want…And so because we have limited space, we do have restrictions on how many stories we can pull out. So…they might've had a different priority about what needed to be said at all points, but having that open dialogue to say, Hey, here's what we can fit in…here's why we can't fit this in. And just working throughout the whole process helps to navigate…any type of differences.

The participant added that listening to the answers the group gave was an important part of the process. One participant explained, "…you also need to educate yourself and be a better listener than a talker."

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Implications

The purpose of this study was to understand how exhibit-related staff at state history museums are addressing inclusion in their exhibits. More specifically, the study investigated (1) how exhibit-related staff at state history museums think about and engage with inclusion in their work, and (2) what strategies exhibit-related staff at state history museums use to make their exhibits more inclusive.

Using a case study design, data were collected through multiple sources including semi-structured interviews with 11 museum professionals at seven state history museums and documents collected from the sites. This chapter highlights conclusions from the study, situates these findings within the literature, and suggests implications for researchers and practitioners.

Conclusions

It should be noted that these conclusions are only based on the perceptions of the participants. Based on this study alone, we cannot know whether visitors felt the exhibits were inclusive and whether community members working with the museum felt the museum was inclusive. As explained below, this could be the basis for another study. Additionally, based on this study, we cannot know to what degree the exhibits discussed in this thesis are inclusive or inclusion has increased at these sites. Lastly, for every question I asked which created the boundaries of this study, there were a multitude of other questions or word choices that may have produced different results. I will explore some of the bounds of the study below.

How do exhibit-related staff at state history museums think about and engage with inclusion in their work?

The sites studied here generally agree with AAM's definition of inclusion, which is "…the intentional, ongoing effort to ensure that diverse individuals fully participate in all aspects

of organizational work, including decision-making processes. It also refers to the ways that diverse participants are valued as respected members of an organization and/or community" (AAM, p. 8). When describing their understanding of inclusion, the sites discussed work similar to AAM's definition. They talked about working towards including diverse individuals, in the form of community members, in the exhibit development process. The sites also expressed the importance of visitors having access to the museum and feeling included during their visit, which ties to diverse respondents being valued as respected members of the community. People in the field have written about how museums are becoming more inclusive by inviting previously-silenced audiences to contribute to exhibits, programs, and more in big and little ways, which is similar to AAM's definition of inclusion (Anila, 2017; Lonetree, 2012; Patternson et al., 2017). According to Chan (2013) and Jennings and Jones-Rizzi (n.d), the community must also be involved from the beginning, and there must be a reciprocal relationship between both groups, which is also keeping with AAM's definition. When asking staff about their definition of inclusion, I opened with AAM's definition. Therefore, this conclusion is necessarily bounded by that definition. For example, if I had asked participants about a definition that focused more on the disruption of dominant white culture, my findings might have been different.

Staff members at the sites are actively learning more about inclusion and look to a wide variety of resources for information, including non-museum resources like local communities and organizations. A lot of research and writing in the field about working with communities outside museums focuses on long-term relationships and the importance of building trust over an extended period of time, which is the case at many of these sites (Jennings and Jones-Rizzi, n.d.). Interestingly, the outcomes described in the literature are usually completed projects. For example, Menlove (2014) describes how the Natural History Museum of Utah worked with a

variety of people from outside the museum, like tribal representatives and scholars who are American Indian, to develop a series of galleries call *Native Voices*. However, in some of the cases studied here, the museums already have long-term relationships with communities or organizations but consult with them on smaller issues like word choice for exhibit labels as well as larger projects. I asked participants about what resources they use to learn more about inclusion. If I had not asked this question directly, this information may not have come out. I also did not ask how often participants look to these resources. Additionally, I did not ask participants how long their museums had relationships with various communities and organizations, so this information is missing. All of these limitations bound my study.

These case study sites highly value inclusion and, at many sites, inclusion is formalized, and exhibit-related inclusion work is increasing. Some of the sites have written statements that mention the museum's commitment to inclusion or mention working with communities outside of the institution, which the sites see as inclusion work. At some sites, inclusion is formalized through systems or processes within the museum like Diversity Committees, employees whose positions focus on DEAI work, and offering free admission to state students. According to the literature, DEAI work is becoming a priority for more museum professionals (Ivy, 2018). As more museum professionals think about and prioritize DEAI issues, they will likely be more supportive of their colleagues' work in this area. This is especially true when upper-level staff, who have the ability to formalize inclusion through museum documents and/or museum systems and process, prioritize DEAI related-work. For these findings, I asked participants how important inclusion was at their museum and in what ways. I also asked whether their museum had any policies or procedures related to inclusion. Therefore, the findings are bounded by these questions. Some participants may not have felt comfortable saying that their museum did not

value inclusion as highly as other priorities. Additionally, if I had not asked specifically about policies or procedures, these documents may not have come up.

Findings from this study suggest that exhibit-related inclusion work at these sites is affected by them being state museums. Because they are state museums, part of their inclusion work focuses on being for and about everyone in their state, and participants explained that it was very important that they tell the stories of all the people in the state and make sure visitors had access to their museums and would see themselves reflected in the museums' content. In the literature, inclusion is often looked at as including people from historically marginalized groups like people of color and LGBTQ+ people. However, geographic inclusion was clearly important for these sites. Some sites are affected by state politics and are working within a delicate balancing act of staying true to their morals while also trying not to rouse ire from local politicians. Additionally, regardless of the politics of the state, state history museums have to work within the confines of being a state agency, which means being mostly apolitical.

Anila (2017) writes, "…museums influence identity formation of those who come in contact with the museum – and those who do not. How that identity formation happens for visitors is fundamentally tied to the very ways museums perform their own defined attitudes and values in the public sphere" (p. 109). Because these sites believe they are for the people of their state and try to tell stories about many different groups of people in order to reflect the diversity of the state, this could have an impact of the identity formation of visitors. If visitors see themselves reflected in the museum's exhibits, they may feel that part of their identity is being a person from that state. For example, if I as a white woman go to the state history museum in Washington where I am from and see information about white women in Washington, I may feel

proud to be from Washington and connected the my state's history, which would have an effect on how I see myself. However, if visitors do not see themselves reflected, they may not develop this part of their identity or may even form an identity about being unseen by their state's government. Because politics can have an effect on exhibit-related inclusion work, this may keep the museums from showcasing certain stories which could affect visitors' identity formation. It is important to remember that this is only applicable to people who visit. There are many people in these states who will never visit these museums for a variety of reasons. The boundary to this conclusion is that although the participants expressed that they wanted all visitors to feel like their story was being told or that they would see themselves represented in the museum, there is little clarity on exactly what this means because the methodology was such that I did not ask detailed follow-up questions. Is the goal for visitors to see some aspect of themselves (gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, etc.) reflected on every visit? Is it that the museum will at some time have an exhibit about a community that every visitor will be part of? Additionally, this study did not look at who does and does not visit these museums and what staff are doing specifically to bring in new visitors. Therefore, based on this study we do not know whether people are seeing themselves in these museums.

What strategies do exhibit-related staff at state history museums use to make their exhibits more inclusive?

The sites studied here described internal and external collaboration as a key strategy for making exhibits inclusive. Exhibit-related staff and volunteers at these sites reported having conversations with each other about how they can make their exhibits more inclusive and training other staff and volunteers about exhibit-related inclusion. According to Jennings and Jones-Rizzi (n.d.), museums have a duty to be compassionate, respectful, and fight against their

histories of being places of inequality and oppression. Having internal conversations and doing training to help all staff members understand exhibit-related inclusion could contribute to bringing all staff members on board with inclusion work. In turn, it will be easier for the museums to be compassionate, respectful, and fight against their own history. A boundary for this conclusion is that I did not ask participants how often these conversations or training happen, so I cannot draw a conclusion about whether this type of collaboration happens often.

Findings from this study suggest that working with external stakeholders is an important way these sites see themselves making their exhibits inclusive. This fits with the trend Adair, Filene & Koloski (2011) described of a growing number of history museums involving local communities in exhibits and moving away from using an authoritative voice. Additionally, Anila (2017) writes about identifying gaps by determining whose stories the museum is telling and whose they are not and filling those gaps by working with community consultants. Bench (2014) questions whether a museum can even interpret another culture accurately. In many cases, the sites described collaborating with external stakeholders – truly working together rather than quick questions or surveys. This is also described in the literature. For example, Chan (2013) explains that when museums work with community members the relationship should be reciprocal and community members need to be involved from the beginning of the process. As expressed above, because this study did not look at the perspectives of external stakeholders, we cannot know how these people felt about their interactions with the museums and whether they thought the resulting exhibits were inclusive. Additionally, since I did not ask about strategies participants might be using to disrupt dominant white culture in their museums, my results do not speak to that.

When working with communities, the sites described three strategies they use: 1) balancing competing needs, 2) equipping communities with museum tools; and 3) having respectful dialogue. They described the importance of balancing community needs within communities, between communities, and between the museum and communities. Rabinowitz (2016) mentions that stakeholders have competing goals and that the museum should consider all of their goals. Austin and Brier (2015) described a similar situation that happened when they developed the *Out in Chicago* exhibit about the LGBTQ+ community at the Chicago History Museum. The Chicago History Museum used sustained community engagement with both LGBTQ+ and straight cis people. There were times when they felt they needed to prioritize the queer voices over the ally voices, going against the desires of the straight cis people they were working with. Additionally, some participants spoke about some visitors being upset about the museums making their exhibits more inclusive. These quotes are indicators that some white visitors experience white fragility when confronted with exhibits that are more inclusive than they may have been previously. These visitors become defensive because their views about race have been disrupted (DiAngelo, 2018). This conclusion is bounded by the fact that I did not ask participants to expand on all the ways they balance competing needs as well as times when they do not feel it is appropriate to balance needs.

The sites studied here explained that when they work with community members it is helpful to explain why some strategies work better than others for exhibits. When Fouseki and Smith (2013) studied the experiences of people involved in community consultation about the bicentennial of the abolition of the slave trade in Britain, they realized that there were things the community members thought that the museums could have done better. Community representatives reported that they did not understand how museums work behind the scenes and

that the museum staff members they worked with did not try to help the participants have a better understanding. As this was a point of frustration for community members, it makes sense that these sites found equipping communities with museum tools helped the process. Teaching community members about curation and exhibit development goes against the traditional way museums have operated. Adair, Filene, and Koloski (2011) explain that when this happens "What the museum 'lets go' of is not expertise but the assumption that the museum has the last word on historical interpretation" (p. 13). Because I did not interview any of the community members involved with these museums, I do not know whether these people thought they had been equipped with museum tools and if they did whether they found that helpful. My study is necessarily bounded by this lack of information.

Findings from this study suggest that these sites believe having a respectful dialogue is important for working with communities. This means having an open dialogue and truly listening. Lonetree (2012) explains that community collaboration "…is about building trust, developing relationships, communicating, sharing authority, and being humble" (p. 170). Having an open dialogue and truly listening may have helped the sites and the communities they worked with collaborate in the way Lonetree described. This study is bounded by the fact that I did not interview any of the community members involved with these museums, so I do not know whether they felt that the staff was having an open dialogue with them and truly listening to them which is a boundary for this study.

Implications

Implications for Research

The results of this study contribute to the literature about DEAI in museums. However, there is a need for more studies related to DEAI and exhibits. For example, a study about how

other types of history museums like small heritage organizations, topic-based museums, and city museums think about inclusion in exhibits could be conducted and compared to the results presented here. This could shed light on how other types of history museums and their employees are approaching exhibit-related inclusion. There is also a need for studies looking at visitors' experiences in exhibits that were intentionally created to be inclusive.

The literature says that there is not much focus in the field on museums confronting their lack of internal diversity and inclusion (Kinsley and Wittman, 2016; Jennings and Jones-Rizzi, n.d.). For example, Jennings and Jones-Rizzi (n.d.) write, "1. We focus too much on trying to change others instead of ourselves. 2. Our leadership systems do not consistently serve as models for inclusiveness. 3. The lack of a truly diverse and inclusive leadership in our associations as a whole…contributes to a lack of vision and efficacy in leading the field to embodied diversity and inclusion" (p. 67). Therefore, it might be interesting to conduct a study on what museums are doing to increase internal inclusion. This could be conducted focusing specifically on state history museums or a different type of museum.

This study also fills a gap in the literature about state museums. The sites studied here felt that being a state museum had an effect on their exhibit-related inclusion work and this has potential for many related studies. For example, a study could be conducted on how being a state museum affects inclusion work in other areas of the museum like public programs, education, or marketing. Additionally, one could look at whether being a state museum has an effect on other types of DEAI work like physical and financial accessibility.

Implications for Practice

The conclusions shared here offer museum professionals an idea of how some of their colleagues are thinking about inclusion and how they are reacting to the push for the field to be

more inclusive. Museum professionals who do exhibit-related work or who are concerned with inclusion work may be interested in the results. This study may be of particular interest to museum professionals at any type of state museum who may be able to make more direct comparison between their institution and the ones studied here.

Additionally, this study could give museum professionals ideas about approaching inclusion, especially in the context of exhibits. For example, museums who are not doing so already could consider developing long-term relationships with communities who they can collaborate with for long-term projects or consult with for smaller concerns. Additionally, they could consider using the strategies presented here when working with community partners. The strategy of equipping communities with museum tools stands out as particularly useful as it is underrepresented in the literature could help community partners feel like they are respected.

References

AAM. (2017). *Museum Board Leadership 2017: A National Report*. Retrieved from https://www.aam-us.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/eyizzp-download-the-report.pdf

AAM. (2018). *Facing Change: Insights from the American Alliance of Museums' Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion Working Group*. Retrieved from https://www.aam-us.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/AAM-DEAI-Working-Group-Full-Report-2018.pdf

AAM Code of Ethics for Museums. (1993, 2000). Retrieved February 12, 2019, from American Alliance of Museums website: https://www.aam-us.org/programs/ethics-standards-and-professional-practices/code-of-ethics-for-museums/

Adair, B., Filene, B., & Koloski, L. (2011). *Letting go?: sharing historical authority in a user-generated world*. Retrieved from http://public.eblib.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=767292

Adams, M. A. (2017). Deconstructing Systems of Bias in the Museum Field Using Critical Race Theory. *Journal of Museum Education*, *42*(3), 290–295. https://doi.org/10.1080/10598650.2017.1339172

Anderson, A., Rogers, A., Potter, E., Cook, E., Gardner, K., Murawski, M., … Machida, A. (2017). *MASS Action Toolkit: Interpretation: Liberating the Narrative*. Retrieved from https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58fa685dff7c50f78be5f2b2/t/59dcdd27e5dd5b5a1b51d9d8/1507646780650/TOOLKIT_10_2017.pdf

Andromache Gazi. (2014). Exhibition Ethics - An Overview of Major Issues. *Journal of Conservation and Museum Studies*, *12*(1). https://doi.org/10.5334/jcms.1021213

Anila, S. (2017). Inclusion Requires Fracturing. *Journal of Museum Education*, *42*(2), 108–119. https://doi.org/10.1080/10598650.2017.1306996

Austin, J., & Brier, J. (2015). Case Study Displaying Queer History at the Chicago History Museum: Lessons from the Curators of Out in Chicago. In *Interpreting History. Interpreting LGBT history at museums and historic sites* (pp. 119–130). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Bailey, D. (2012, September 26). Diversity & Inclusion. Retrieved February 12, 2019, from AASLH website: https://aaslh.org/diversity-inclusion/

Beier-de Haan, R. (2006). Re-staging Histories and Identities. In *A Companion to Museum Studies* (pp. 186–197). Malden, MA: John Wiley and Sons.

Bench, R. (2014). *Interpreting Native American History and Culture at Museums and Historic Sites*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.

Bond, S. E. (2018, April 25). Can Art Museums Help Illuminate Early American Connections To Slavery? Retrieved April 29, 2019, from Hyperallergic website: https://hyperallergic.com/439716/can-art-museums-help-illuminate-early-american-connections-to-slavery/

Brook, O. (2016). Spatial equity and cultural participation: how access influences attendance at museums and galleries in London. *Cultural Trends*, *25*(1), 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1080/09548963.2015.1134098

Brown, A. (2015). On Race and Museums: Starting Conversations, Embracing Action. *Museums & Social Issues*, *10*(2), 109–112. https://doi.org/10.1179/1559689315Z.00000000037

Bryant, J., Bryant-Greenwell, K., Catlin-Legutko, C., Jennings, G., & Jones-Rizzi, J. (2017). *MASS Action Toolkit: Moving Toward Internal Transformation: Awareness, Acceptance, Action*. Retrieved from

https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58fa685dff7c50f78be5f2b2/t/59dcdd27e5dd5b5a1b51d9d8/1507646780650/TOOLKIT_10_2017.pdf

Bunning, K. (2019). Introduction to Part V. In *A museum studies approach to heritage*. New York, NY: Taylor and Francis.

Burgard, K. L. B., & Boucher, M. L. (2016). Same Story; Different History: Students' Racialized Understanding of Historic Sites. *The Urban Review*, *48*(5), 696–717. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11256-016-0374-9

Chan, A. E. (2013). incorporating quliaqtuavut (our stories): Bering Strait Voices in Recent Exhibitions.(Report). *Museum Anthropology*, *36*(1), 18–32.

Davis, R. (2015). Soul Soldiers: Giving Voice to Vietnam's Veterans. In *Interpreting History. Interpreting African American History and Culture at Museums and Historic Sites* (pp. 171–174). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Decter, A. Y. (2017). *Interpreting American Jewish history at museums and historic sites*. Lanham ; Boulder ; New York ; London: Rowman & Littlefield.

Deng, L. (2017). Equity of Access to Cultural Heritage: Museum Experience as a Facilitator of Learning and Socialization in Children with Autism. *Curator*, *60*(4), 411–426. https://doi.org/10.1111/cura.12219

DiAngelo, R. (2011). White Fragility. *International Journal of Critical Pedagogy*, *3*(3), 54–70.

DiAngelo, R. J. (2018). *White fragility: why it's so hard for white people to talk about racism*. Retrieved from http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=1608136

Dickenson, V. (2010). Old Forms, New Purposes. In *Narratives of community: museums and ethnicity*. Edinburgh: Museumsetc.

Disability and Inclusion – State of the Field: Museum Accessibility. (2014). Retrieved February 12, 2019, from Art Beyond Sight website: http://www.artbeyondsight.org/dic/module-1-state-of-the-field-museum-accessibility/state-of-the-field-museum-accessibility/

Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion – American Alliance of Museums. (n.d.). Retrieved April 29, 2019, from https://www.aam-us.org/programs/diversity-equity-accessibility-and-inclusion/

Farrell, B., & Medvedeva, M. (2010). *Demographic Transformation and the Future of Museums*. Retrieved from https://www.aam-us.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Demographic-Change-and-the-Future-of-Museums.pdf

Ferentinos, S. (2015). *Interpreting LGBT history at museums and historic sites*. Retrieved from http://public.eblib.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=1911706

Fouseki, K., & Smith, L. (2013). Community Consultation in the Museum: The 2007 Bicentenary of Britain's Abolition of the Slave Trade. In *Museums and communities: curators, collections, and collaboration* (pp. 232–245). Retrieved from http://www.dawsonera.com/depp/reader/protected/external/AbstractView/S9780857851321

Gallas, K. L., & Dewolf Perry, J. (2014). Developing Comprehensive and Conscientious Interpretation of Slavery at Historic Sites and Museums. *History News*, *69*(2), 1–8.

Gallas, K. L., & Dewolf Perry, J. (2015). Developing a Comprehensive and Conscientious Interpretation of Slavery at Historic Sites and Museums. In *Interpreting History*.

Interpreting African American History and Culture at Museums and Historic Sites (pp. 13–25). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Goss, J., Reich, C., Stoessel, S., & Iacovelli, S. (2012). *Universally Designed Museum Programming*. Retrieved from Informal Science website: https://www.informalscience.org/sites/default/files/Universally_Designed_Museum_Programming

Goswami, J. (2018). The Museum as Unreliable Narrator: What We Can Learn from Nick Carraway. *The International Journal of the Inclusive Museum*, *11*(1), 1–11. https://doi.org/10.18848/1835-2014/CGP/v11i01/1-11

Guntarik, O. (2010). Prologue: The New Revolution. In *Narratives of community: museums and ethnicity*. Edinburgh: Museumsetc.

Handa, K., Dairoku, H., & Toriyama, Y. (2010). Investigation of priority needs in terms of museum service accessibility for visually impaired visitors. *British Journal of Visual Impairment*, *28*(3), 221–234. https://doi.org/10.1177/0264619610374680

Hartman, S., & Hines - Bergmeier, J. (2015). Building Connections: Strategies to Address Rurality and Accessibility Challenges. *Journal of Museum Education*, *40*(3), 288–303. https://doi.org/10.1179/1059865015Z.000000000105

Hearn, K. (2013). Museums and Technology: Being Inclusive Helps Accessibility for All. *Curator: The Museum Journal*, *56*(3), 357–358. https://doi.org/10.1111/cura.12034

Houtgraaf, D., & Vitali, V. (2008). *Mastering a museum plan: strategies for exhibit development*. Leiden : Lanham, MD: Naturalis ; Distributed by AltaMira Press.

Ivy, N. (2017, February 2). American Alliance of Museums Names Dr. Nicole Ivy as Director of Inclusion. Retrieved May 16, 2019, from American Alliance of Museums website:

https://www.aam-us.org/2017/02/02/american-alliance-of-museums-names-dr-nicole-ivy-as-director-of-inclusion/

Jennings, G., & Jones-Rizzi, J. (n.d.). *Museums, White Privilege, and Diversity: A Systemic Perspective*. Retrieved from https://nemanet.org/files/9615/0228/7672/Dimensions-Diversity-Special-Edition_JenningsJonesRizzi.pdf

Johnnetta Cole: Museums, Diversity, & Social Value. (n.d.). Retrieved April 29, 2019, from Association of Art Museum Directors website: https://aamd.org/our-members/from-the-field/johnnetta-cole-museums-diversity-social-value

Justice, K. (2016, June 1). MOSH offers gender-neutral bathroom. Retrieved May 16, 2019, from WJXT website: https://www.news4jax.com/news/local/jacksonville/mosh-offers-gender-neutral-bathroom

Kinsley, R. P., & Wittman, A. (2016). Bringing self-examination to the center of social justice work in museums. *Museum*, *95*(1), 40–44.

Klobe, T. (2012). *Exhibitions: concept, planning, and design*. Washington, DC: The AAM Press.

Lee, L. Y. (2012). Peering into the bedroom: Restoring justice at the Jane Addams Hull House Museum. In *The Routledge Companion to Museum Ethics: Redefining Ethics for the Twenty-First Century Museum* (pp. 174–187). Taylor and Francis.

Levent, N., & Reich, C. (2013). Museum Accessibility: Combining Audience Research and Staff Training. *Journal of Museum Education*, *38*(2), 218–226. https://doi.org/10.1080/10598650.2013.11510772

Lisney, E., Bowen, J. P., Hearn, K., & Zedda, M. (2013). Museums and Technology: Being Inclusive Helps Accessibility for All. *Curator: The Museum Journal*, *56*(3), 353–361. https://doi.org/10.1111/cura.12034

Litt, S. (2018, August 12). Cleveland Museum of Art unveils first "Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan." Retrieved April 29, 2019, from AP NEWS website: https://apnews.com/2fb9ec262898430db25cf923f202d22b

Lonetree, A. (2012). *Decolonizing museums: representing native America in national and tribal museums*. Retrieved from http://public.eblib.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=1076066

Lord, B., & Piacente, M. (2014). *Manual of museum exhibitions* (Second edition.). Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield.

MASS Action Toolkit: Key Terms Or What We Mean When We Say What We Say. (2017). Retrieved from https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58fa685dff7c50f78be5f2b2/t/59dcdd27e5dd5b5a1b51d9d8/1507646780650/TOOLKIT_10_2017.pdf

McLean, K. (2011). Whose Questions, Whose Conversations? In *Letting go?: sharing historical authority in a user-generated world* (pp. 70–79). Retrieved from http://public.eblib.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=767292

Menlove, B. (2014). Case Study: Native Voices: A Permanent Gallery at the Natural History Museum of Utah. In *Interpreting History*. *Interpreting Native American History and Culture at Museums and Historic Sites* (pp. 43–55). Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.

Mesquita, S., & Carneiro, M. J. (2016). Accessibility of European museums to visitors with visual impairments. *Disability & Society*, *31*(3), 373–388. https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2016.1167671

Meyer, S., Larrivee, L., Veneziano-Korzec, A., & Stacy, K. (2017). Improving art museum accessibility for adults with acquired hearing loss. *American Journal of Audiology*, *26*(1), 10–17. https://doi.org/10.1044/2016_AJA-15-0084

Mieri, M. (2010). Are We There Yet? In *Narratives of community: museums and ethnicity*. Edinburgh: Museumsetc.

Mission Statement. (n.d.). Retrieved February 12, 2019, from National Museum of the American Indian website: https://americanindian.si.edu/about/mission/

Moore, P. A. (2016). The inclusive museum movement. *Museum*, *95*(6), 18–19.

Museum Visitors, And Employees, Are Mostly White. The MFA Is Trying To Change That. (n.d.). Retrieved April 29, 2019, from https://www.wbur.org/artery/2017/06/06/mfa-strategic-plan-diversity

New York State Museum. (n.d.). *About the Museum.* Retrieved May 6, 2019, from http://www.nysm.nysed.gov/about

North Carolina Museum of History. (n.d.). *Accessibility*. Retrieved May 6, 2019, from https://www.ncmuseumofhistory.org/plan-your-visit/accessibility

North Carolina Museum of History. (n.d.). *QuiltSpeak: Uncovering Women's Voices Through Quilts*. Retrieved May 6, 2019, from https://www.ncmuseumofhistory.org/exhibits/quiltspeak

Patterson, A., Wittman, A., Phillips, C., Guillotte, G., Quinn, T., & Russell, A. (2017). *MASS Action Toolkit: Getting Started: What We Need to Change and Why*. Retrieved from https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58fa685dff7c50f78be5f2b2/t/59dcdd27e5dd5b5a1b51d9d8/1507646780650/TOOLKIT_10_2017.pdf

Pogrebin, R. (2018, August 9). With New Urgency, Museums Cultivate Curators of Color. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/08/arts/design/museums-curators-diversity-employment.html

Rabinowitz, R. (2016). *Curating America: journeys through storyscapes of the American past*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.

Richard, M. A. (2014). The Colonial Past as “Usable History”: Presenting Critical History in Museums. In *Beyond pedagogy: reconsidering the public purpose of museums* (pp. 37–56). Rotterdam, Netherlands: Sense Publishers.

Rios, J. (2018, December 7). The Field Museum’s Native North American Hall starts to ask who it represents. Retrieved February 12, 2019, from Chicago Reader website: https://www.chicagoreader.com/chicago/field-museum-native-north-american-hall/Content?oid=64792888

Rose, J. (2015). Interpreting Difficult Knowledge. In *Interpreting History*. *Interpreting African American History and Culture at Museums and Historic Sites* (pp. 27–36). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Rose, J. (2016). *Interpreting difficult history at museums and historic sites*. Retrieved from http://public.eblib.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=4509161

Sandell, R. (2007). *Museums, prejudice, and the reframing of difference*. London ; New York, NY: Routledge.

Schexnider, A. (2017, August 31). Operationalizing Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion in your Nonprofit. Retrieved February 12, 2019, from Medium website:

https://medium.com/greater-good-studio/tips-to-operationalize-diversity-equity-inclusion-practices-in-your-non-profit-organization-ed2c7c09a7cf

Schonfeld, R., Westermann, M., & Sweeney, L. (2015). *The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Art Museum Staff Demographic Survey*. Retrieved from https://mellon.org/media/filer_public/ba/99/ba99e53a-48d5-4038-80e1-66f9ba1c020e/awmf_museum_diversity_report_aamd_7-28-15.pdf

Shimosakai, R. (2012, August 31). Boston Museum of Science incorporates unique accessibility experiment. Retrieved February 12, 2019, from Turismo Adaptado website: https://turismoadaptado.com.br/boston-museum-of-science-incorporates-unique-accessibility-experiment/

Simon, N. (n.d.). OF/BY/FOR ALL. Retrieved February 12, 2019, from OF/BY/FOR ALL website: https://www.ofbyforall.org/

Taylor, C., & Kegan, M. (2017). *MASS Action Toolkit: Organizational Culture and Change: Making the Case for Inclusion*. Retrieved from https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58fa685dff7c50f78be5f2b2/t/59dcdd27e5dd5b5a1b51d9d8/1507646780650/TOOLKIT_10_2017.pdf

Tennessee State Museum. (n.d.). *Permanent Exhibits*. Retrieved May 6, 2019, from https://tnmuseum.org/permanent-exhibits/exhibits/civilwarandreconstruction

The Cleveland Museum of Art. (2018). *For the Benefit of All: The CMA's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan*. Retrieved from http://www.clevelandart.org/sites/default/files/documents/other/Diversity%2C%20Equity%20and%20Inclusion%20Plan.pdf

Trofanenko, B., & Segall, A. (2014). *Beyond pedagogy: reconsidering the public purpose of museums*. Rotterdam, Netherlands: Sense Publishers.

U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: UNITED STATES. (n.d.). Retrieved February 12, 2019, from United States Census Bureau website: https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/PST045217

What is Decolonization? (2015, September 4). Retrieved April 29, 2019, from Abbe Museum Strategic Plan website: https://abbemuseum.wordpress.com/about-us/decolonization/

Where Do State and Local Governments Get Their Revenue? (n.d.). Retrieved April 29, 2019, from Tax Foundation website: https://taxfoundation.org/press-release/where-do-state-and-local-governments-get-their-revenue/

Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* (Fifth). SAGE Publications, Inc.

Zedda, M. (2013). Museums and Technology: Being Inclusive Helps Accessibility for All. *Curator: The Museum Journal*, *56*(3), 358–360. https://doi.org/10.1111/cura.12034

Appendix A

Consent Talking Points for Interviews

Consent talking points will include the following:

- Data collector's name and affiliation
- Purpose of the study
- Voluntary nature of participation, and that there are no consequences for choosing to not participate
- Participation involves an in-person interview that will be recorded; only the research team will hear the recordings
- Subject's name will remain confidential
- Name and phone number of a study contact person

Appendix B

Thesis Instrument for Exhibit and Curatorial Staff

Introductory Questions
I'm going to start with a few basic questions to gain an understanding of your position at [this museum] and in the field.

1. What is your job title?

2. How long have you worked at [this museum]?

3. How long have you done exhibit or curatorial work?

General Questions
Now I'm going to ask you about inclusion and what it means to you and [your museum]. There are no right or wrong answers. I'm just interested in how you are thinking and talking about this concept.

1. AAM explains inclusion as "the intentional, ongoing effort to ensure that diverse individuals fully participate in all aspects of organizational work including decision-making processes. It also refers to the ways in which diverse participants are valued as respected members of an organization and/or community."
    a. How does this definition fit with your own thinking about inclusion?
    b. How does this definition fit with your museum's thinking about inclusion?

2. What conversations and/or resources about inclusion in the museum field do you pay attention to or participate in? What about in [your state]?

3. How important is inclusion at [your museum]? Why is it or is it not important and in what ways?

4. Does your museum have any policies or procedures related to inclusion?

5. How does being a state museum affect how your museum thinks about inclusion?

Exhibit Questions
Now I'm going to ask you about inclusion in exhibits at [this museum].

1. Think about the exhibits you've worked on developing in the last two years. What kinds of conversations did your team have about inclusion during the development of these exhibits?

2. Think about your exhibit development process. What are the major points at which inclusion tends to be discussed and/or addressed?

3. What specific strategies does your team use to make your exhibits more inclusive?

4. What challenges do you face when it comes to integrating inclusivity into your exhibits?

5. How do you navigate the process of working with stakeholders who may have different priorities from you and your team when it comes to inclusion?

6. In what ways has your museum's attention to inclusion in the exhibit development process changed since you started working here?

7. Is there anything that I did not ask that you feel is important for me to understand about inclusion in [this museum] or your exhibit development process?

Appendix C

Thesis Instrument for Non-Exhibit and Curatorial Staff

Introductory Questions
I'm going to start with a few basic questions to gain an understanding of your position at [this museum] and in the field.

4. What is your job title?

5. How long have you worked at [this museum]?

6. In what ways is the work you do involved with the exhibit development process or exhibits in general?

General Questions
Now I'm going to ask you about inclusion and what it means to you and [your museum]. There are no right or wrong answers. I'm just interested in how you are thinking and talking about this concept.

6. AAM explains inclusion as "the intentional, ongoing effort to ensure that diverse individuals fully participate in all aspects of organizational work including decision-making processes. It also refers to the ways in which diverse participants are valued as respected members of an organization and/or community."
   a. How does this definition fit with your own thinking about inclusion?
   b. How does this definition fit with your museum's thinking about inclusion?

7. What conversations and/or resources about inclusion in the museum field do you pay attention to or participate in? What about in [your state]?

8. How important is inclusion at [your museum]? Why is it or is it not important and in what ways?

9. Does your museum have any policies or procedures related to inclusion?

10. How does being a state museum affect how your museum thinks about inclusion?

Exhibit-Related Questions
Now I'm going to ask you about inclusion in exhibits at [this museum].

8. Think about the exhibits you've worked with in your position in the last two years. What kinds of conversations did you have with other staff members about inclusion?

9. What specific strategies do you use to make your work more inclusive when it comes to exhibits?

10. What challenges do you face when it comes to integrating inclusivity into your work around exhibits?

11. In what ways has your museum's attention to inclusion in your exhibit-related work changed since you started working here?

12. Is there anything that I did not ask that you feel is important for me to understand about inclusion in [this museum]?