

Creating Discomfort: Exploring the Use of Emotional Immersive
Experiences to Address Social Issues in Museums

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Abstract

This study investigated current design practices used to engage visitors in emotional immersive experiences to address social issues in museums, particularly focusing on why a program or exhibit developer might use this interpretive method, concerns and challenges that arise from these experiences, and the outcomes that these experiences are designed to achieve. Data were collected through one-on-one interviews with museum professionals from three different case study sites that utilize emotional immersive programming or exhibits. Study results suggest that emotional immersive programs allow visitors to engage with the material more deeply as well as make it more memorable and can lead to a better understanding and the fostering of empathy for others. Additionally, this study suggests that these programs can be too intense for the visitors and care should be taken when developing them. Several themes that emerged in this study could be useful for museums looking to utilize emotional immersive programs in their institutions.

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Table of Contents

Abstract.....	3
Acknowledgements.....	4
Table of Contents.....	5
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	6
Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	10
Chapter 3: Methods.....	25
Chapter 4: Results and Discussion.....	28
Research Question 1.....	31
<i>Why and in what circumstances do museum program/exhibit developers use immersion and emotion as a design strategy?</i>	
Research Question 2.....	37
<i>What are the issues and challenges in using emotion as an interpretive tool in museum programs/exhibits?</i>	
Research Question 3.....	49
<i>What are the outcomes designed for, and specifically what role does empathy have in these experiences?</i>	
Chapter 5: Conclusions.....	55
Implications.....	62
Future Research.....	63
References.....	65
Appendices.....	71
Appendix A.....	71
Appendix B.....	73

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

“We all of us need to be toppled off the throne of self, my dear,’ he said. ‘Perched up there the tears of others are never upon our own cheek.’”

- Elizabeth Goudge, *The White Witch*

Empathy has become an increasingly hot topic in the museological field over the past several years. Jennings (2014) has argued that museums should be more empathetic to the communities that they serve by; seeing themselves as part of the community, being interested in what the community is interested in and taking those interests into consideration when planning activities, and be timely with community needs in times of crisis. Additionally, Jennings (2014) believes that museums should have robust and trusted connections with the diverse and often neglected community groups as well as be aware of how they are perceived by all members of their community, especially those who are less likely to visit.

Mertz (2015) also believes that museums are well situated to engender empathy. She describes a hindsight bias where people of the present judge people of the past based on what we know now, like believing that emptying chamber pots out the window is unsanitary and can spread disease. Mertz talks about how The Tenement Museum, instead, focuses on the difficulties involved in trying to empty the chamber pot, in the dark, holding a kerosene lamp, wearing a billowing dress, and trying not to drop the chamber pot in the house or on yourself. Getting the visitors to think from another perspective allows visitors to understand their decisions better.

Although Mertz argues that while museums are particularly effective vehicles for fostering empathy (2015), there are arguments against the concept of empathy. Not speaking of empathy in museums but empathy in general, Bloom’s (2013) article in the *New Yorker* asserts

that empathy is “parochial, narrow-minded, and innumerate” and argues that people are only able to relate to what they already know or are familiar with rather than faceless “others.”

Additionally, Nowak (2011) stated that “Empathy denies the possibility of a comprehensive and general description of feeling and perception, and rather stresses subjective, individual experience” (p. 323).

Mertz explains empathy as “a feeling of shared emotion with another person. It is not ‘I understand what you are feeling,’ but rather, ‘I am feeling what you are feeling’” (Mertz, 2015).

She further explains:

Empathy is often the result of what history educators call ‘Perspective taking.’ Perspective taking is imagining or hypothesizing about what it would be like to be in another person’s shoes. Because they are so entwined, the phrase perspective taking is often used interchangeably with the word empathy.

Regardless of whether museums should or should not use empathy, many institutions *are*, and they are doing so by eliciting emotional responses from their visitors, and that is where attention is needed. The Women’s Museum of California did an exhibit called *Exposing Scars* that highlighted the internal damage in women done by abuse in 2014 by interviewing abuse victims and creating images to represent the lingering trauma (Women’s Museum of California, 2014). The National World War II Museum opened their *Train Car Experience* in 2013 that replicates an old Pullman sleeper so visitors can feel what it was like to go off to war (The National World War II Museum, 2013). The Tacoma Art Museum hosted *Art, Aids, America*, an exhibit that displays the impact that HIV and Aids have had on all facets of life in this country through art pieces spanning over 30 years (Tacoma Art Museum, n.d.). In the not yet open American Revolution Museum, it will have an exhibit where the visitors are put in the shoes of soldiers on the front line of the Brandywine Battlefield and be confronted by an infantry charge (American Revolution Museum, n.d.).

Many of the museums that are utilizing exhibits to elicit emotional responses, like the ones previously mentioned, deal with social issues. Interpreting social issues is a delicate matter and provoking emotional responses in visitors has the potential to be a tricky process particularly when dealing with difficult subject matter. There have been very few studies on the outcomes of these experiences as well as the impact they have on their visitors. The few studies that have been done had limitations that keep them from determining causal links in their results. In addition to the last of research on the outcomes of these experiences on their visitors, there are also few studies on the decision making behind the design practices, in particular how they balance the desire to elicit strong emotional responses with the fact that these responses can be overwhelming for some people. This study hopes to flesh out ~~the~~that gap in the literature for the latter premise.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this research was to better understand current design practices used in museums to engage visitors in highly immersive and emotional experiences. The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. Why and in what circumstances do museum program/exhibit developers use immersion and emotion as an interpretive strategy?
2. What are the issues and challenges in using emotion as an interpretive tool in museum programs/exhibits?
3. What are the outcomes these experiences are designed to achieve, and specifically what role does empathy have in these experiences?

Significance

This study provides information on current practices of eliciting emotions in the field and thus informs the design of programs or exhibits that utilize emotion as an interpretive tool to elicit empathy. Having a framework or guidelines to aid in the design of empathy-provoking programs or exhibits is important because eliciting emotional responses from visitors is a delicate matter and museums need to ensure that they are not overstimulating or overwhelming their visitors which could have negative impacts on their experience. Eliciting strong emotional responses from visitors needs to be a thoughtful and sensitive process that allows them to be receptive to the material and issues the museum is presenting. This research can aid museums planning to use emotion to elicit empathy in the future. Freeman Tilden says that “the chief aim of Interpretation is not instruction, but provocation”(Tilden, 1977). As museums look to find innovative ways to interpret their lessons, it is necessary to ensure meaning is not lost and visitors are receptive to the strategies.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this research study was to better understand current design practices used in museums to engage visitors in highly immersive and emotional experiences, particularly when interpreting social issues. To best frame this research, several bodies of literature were explored. This chapter will begin with looking at emotions; how they are defined and the difficulties in studying them. It will then examine the role of emotions and learning in museums which leads into the role of emotion and practice in the museum. The literature will then explore the use of immersive programming in the museum field and current thoughts surrounding this interpretive method. The next section will then look at interpreting social issues and the social value that museums provide to society. The chapter will end by bringing these sections together to frame this research within the current gap at the junction of these bodies of literature.

Emotions

In the past two decades, research on emotions has become an increased area of interest in the scientific community, particularly in how it relates to learning. Part of the earlier reticence behind studying emotions stemmed from the difficulty of defining emotions. Kleinginna and Kleinginna (1981) explain that there are over 100 definitions of what constitutes an emotion and that the lack of consensus of the definition makes it a difficult study. According to Hascher (2010), while there is a lack of consensus about the actual definition of emotions, most researchers agree that emotions are comprised of three characteristics. The first characteristic is that emotions are affective reactions that can be described as well as attributed to a cause or particular incident (Hascher, 2010). The second characteristic is that the experiencing of the emotion is related to situations that are important and relevant to the individual (Hascher, 2010).

The last characteristic is that as soon as an emotion is experienced, it becomes the center of awareness for that individual which can lead to an increased self-awareness (Hascher, 2010).

With the characteristics of emotions established, Ortony (1988) explains how people's emotions are impacted by external elements. He defines these as "fortunes-of-others" emotions and "reactions-to-agents" emotions. The fortunes-of-others emotions can be characterized by two different types: good-will emotions and ill-will emotions (Ortony, 1988). The good-will emotions range from happy-for to sorry-for and are understood as *empathetic emotions*, whereas the ill-will emotions range from resentment to gloating (Ortony, 1988). He further explains how the intensity of these emotions is dependent upon four variables: 1) the degree to which an event is desirable or undesirable to oneself; 2) the degree to which an event is desirable or undesirable to the other person; 3) the degree to which the person did or did not deserve the event; and 4) the degree to which the person is either liked or disliked (Ortony, 1988).

Reaction-to-agents emotions are explained on a scale from praiseworthy to blameworthy regarding the self and the other. When regarding the self, a person feels either pride or self-reproach; when regarding the other, a person feels either appreciation or reproach for the other (Ortony, 1988). Similar to the fortune-of-others, these emotions also range in intensity depending on two variables: 1) the degree of judged praiseworthy or blameworthiness; and 2) deviations of the agent's action from person/role-based expectations (Ortony, 1988). Emotions towards oneself also have an additional variable; the strength of the cognitive unit with the actual agent. Ortony (1988) gives an example of that variable by focusing on a football team; when the team is winning, people wear school colors and use "we" terminology, but when the team loses the terminology becomes "they."

An important point that comes out of Ortony's (1988) research is that people's emotions towards others is always through the lens of their standpoint which is supported by Macdonald and Leahy (2015). Nothing is a blank slate and people enter situations and react to events regarding their thoughts, beliefs, backgrounds, and opinions, which is in line with Hascher's (2010) third characteristic.

Gillespie and Falk (2009), which will be discussed in more detail in the next section, describe three separate models that can be used to define emotion. The Discrete Emotions Model, established by Paul Ekman and based on Charles Darwin's work, posits that there are six core emotions that are universal to all human beings: happiness, anger, fear, sadness, disgust, and surprise (Falk & Gillespie, 2009). James Russell's Dimensional Model focuses on two differing dimensions of emotion: valence and arousal: "Valence can be thought of as the degree to which something is pleasant or unpleasant, and arousal can be thought of as the continuum between sleepiness and alertness" (Falk & Gillespie, 2009, p. 113). The third unnamed model posits that emotions are cultural constructs and are governed by social norms, as Sharon MacDonald asserts, "there is general consensus that emotions are regulated by communities and groups, and that they are time and situation-specific" (Macdonald, 2015, p. 285).

Emotions and Learning in Museums

John M. Dirkx (2001), Professor of Higher, Adult, and Lifelong Education at Michigan State University posits that "popular notions frame teaching and learning as largely rational, cognitive processes, and understand emotions as either impediments to or motivators of learning" (p. 67). He explains that "most of these perspectives inadvertently reinforce a 'rationalist doctrine' that pervades most, if not all, formal educational efforts; one that places an emphasis on factual information and the use of reason and reflection to learn from experience"

(p. 63). Dirkx argues that emotions and learning are deeply imbedded stating that “personally significant and meaningful learning is fundamentally grounded in and is derived from the adult’s emotional, imaginative connection with the self and with the broader social world” (p. 64).

Falk and Gillespie (2009) utilized the previously mentioned Russell’s Dimensional Model to examine whether or not emotions facilitated and enhanced learning at free-choice science centers. They broke their study into three questions; whether or not Russell’s Affect Grid could be used to measure emotion in a non-laboratory setting?; do different types of experiences at science centers create measurable differences in the emotional arousal or valence of visitors?; and lastly did the emotional arousal enhance or retard the long-term cognitive science learning of the visitor? The study took place at a large scale, free admission science center in Los Angeles, CA. Falk and Gillespie studied two groups of people; those who went through the traveling *Goose Bumps* exhibit which was strategically designed to elicit emotional responses from their visitors, and visitors who did not go through this exhibit to act as the control group (Falk and Gillespie, 2009).

Falk and Gillespie’s (2009) study determined that Russell’s Affect Grid was successful in measuring the emotion in a non-laboratory setting. Their study showed that when visitors self-reported their emotions during the *Goose Bumps* exhibit, the visitors found the experience arousing and pleasurable, but when comparing that data with the self-reported emotions from the control group of visitors who did not visit the *Goose Bumps* exhibit, the visitors who did visit the exhibit reported to have a significantly higher pleasurable and arousing experience. Additionally, their research study provided evidence that an “arousing experience like the *Goose Bumps* exhibition not only can create elevated emotions amongst visitors but that this arousal might

result in long-term positive changes in visitors' cognition, attitudes and behavior" (p. 128).

During the delayed post-visit interviews,

"For the majority of the cognitive fear questions, the understandings demonstrated immediately post-visit did not show significant declines after four to six months, thus providing evidence to support the proposition that with time, much of the understandings derived from *Goose Bumps* about the science of fear were consolidated into memory and became part of visitors' working semantic memory" (p. 128).

Although their study provided evidence of the link between emotions and long-term cognition, it was unable to determine a definitive causal link between the two because of a small sample size in their control group. Although this study lacked conclusive results, it is a significant step in learning about the connection between emotions and learning. As Falk and Gillespie (2009) explain,

"We are beginning to possess some reasonable tools for measuring both emotions and cognition in free-choice learning settings we should be in a position to design the additional investigations and visitor experiences needed to tease apart the details of the important relationship between visitor emotion and cognition" (p. 128).

Bjarne Sode Funch (2006) conducted qualitative interviews with visitors at two different points after they had gone through the emotional *Journey Like No Other* exhibition at the National Museum in Copenhagen, immediately after their visit and then again 3-4 months later. The *Journey Like No Other* was a confrontational drama where visitors played the role of refugees fleeing to Denmark and then tried to acquire residence permits through the Danish Immigration Services. The participants had to deal with hostile soldiers, suspicious police, interrogations, applying and being rejected for residence permits, and then asking for an appeal (Funch, 2006). During its time at the National Museum of Copenhagen, the exhibition saw over 6,500 participants (Funch, 2011). Funch interviewed 12 of these participants immediately after leaving the exhibition, asking them to describe their experience in detail; what happened to them,

what they saw, what they heard, and how they responded to the different experiences. In his follow-up interview (which only 10 of the initial interviewees participated), he asked what and how much they remembered about their experience in the exhibition and whether or not it changed their behavior (Funch, 2006).

Funch's interviews found that people "were deeply moved by the experience and remembered it in vivid detail even months later" (Funch, 2011, p. 418). He stated that "confrontations were in some cases recalled with such vividness that emotions were often revived during the interviews" (Funch, 2006, p. 210). Funch posits that with this increased perceptual awareness, the participants created a new understanding of what it is like for refugees arriving in a new country (p. 201). Although Funch's results had positive learning results, his sample size was too small to make broad generalizations about how emotion impacts learning.

Even though people may remember their experiences better and in more detail when they are emotionally invested, are they learning factual knowledge? Myrna Goldenburg (2007), while discussing people's experiences during a visit to Auschwitz, points out that "formulating a personal response to [an exhibit] will not necessarily mean that the visitor knows a great deal more at the end of the visit. In fact, the experience may only serve to underscore misperceptions, calcify myths, and reinforce held stereotypes" (p. 273). She explains that people visit sites and exhibitions with their already formed perceptions in mind, and the experience of going to these sites might overwhelm and move the visitors but, at the same time, can superficially confirm what the visitor thinks they already know. Funch's (2006) study also looked at whether or not visitors learned factual knowledge during their experience of *A Journey Like No Other* and found that those visitors did learn about the lives of the refugees in their native countries as well as the

complexity involved in the asylum application procedure. But as mentioned before, the small sample size does not allow us to generalize this finding.

Emotion and Practice in Museums

Before the Scientific Revolution, the concept of ‘knowing’ something was based on a person’s emotional connections to nature; “a person ‘knew’ something by being deeply and intimately connected to it, a knowing that was somatic and emotional” (Clark, 2001, p.84). After the rise of the Scientific Revolution, emotion gave way to reason which preferenced cognitive forms of knowing rather than emotional or somatic forms (Clark, 2001). Museums followed suit and approached their interpretive methods and displays as didactic, fact-driven, and analytical; shying away from any emotional components (Clark, 2001; Watson, 2015). While many museums still adopt this didactic and hegemonic approach, many museums are working to bring emotion back into their institution.

In 2001, the Museums, Libraries, and Archives Council (now MLA) developed a Learning Impact Research Project that was focused on creating more effective learning environments in museums, libraries, and other cultural institutions (University of Leicester, n.d.). The MLA brought on the Research Center for Museums and Galleries (RCMP) to facilitate this research project as part as a larger *Learning for All* initiative. Eilean Hooper-Greenhill, the director of RCMG, was the primary investigator for this research which ran from 2001-2003 (Hooper-Greenhill, 2004). The outcome of this research was the development of the Generic Learning Outcomes (GLOs) which measure different types of impacts on the visitor: knowledge and understanding; skills; attitudes and values; enjoyment, inspiration and creativity; and action,

behavior and progression (Brown, 2012). The GLOs draw from the idea that learning is a life-long activity and does not only include intellect but emotion as well (Vavoula, 2009).

The reintegration of emotion back into the museum as an outcome of learning is important because, as Watson (2015) explains, “thinking and feeling are so intertwined that we think emotionally and cognitively at the same time and can thus experience emotion through reason without being necessarily aware of the emotional influence on our apparently dispassionate thoughts” (p. 284). Not only are cognition and emotion intertwined in how people think, but also the museums themselves are emotional. David Fleming, Director of National Museums Liverpool, while giving his AAM presentation about “Museums for Social Justice,” stated that museums try to be dispassionate and neutral in their interpretation, but museums are inherently emotional spaces, and they should embrace that emotionality, particularly in museums about people (Fleming, 2014).

According to Kirchberg and Trondle (2012), most museum visitors come with their own perspectives and memories, and it is in their own personal context that they react and relate emotionally to the objects and materials they encounter. Visitors react emotionally to the aesthetics of the exhibitions. For example, *Nature’s Jewels: A Living Exhibition of Orchids and Butterflies* at the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History caused visitors to feel refreshed, free, or that they were escaping to a peaceful place (Pekarik, 2002). The objects, sights, sounds, and smells all have the capability to elicit emotional responses from visitors as well as allow them to create emotional connections to the material being presented (Whitcomb, 2013). Whitcomb (2013) discusses how museums and other cultural institutions can employ interpretive strategies that encourage the visitor to have “in-depth engagement with the design of the display, the content, and the physical qualities of the objects/installations,” using both their intellect and

emotions (Whitcomb, 2013, p.267). She explains it is “a process through which the museum visitor undergoes a change from unknowing to knowing, from partial to holistic comprehension. Importantly, this process occurs when there is an opportunity to experience what it is to be other” (Whitcomb, 2013). In order for this to happen, it is important that the exhibit or program not close off the narrative for the visitors, and the visitors must “engage imaginatively in the space between themselves and the object or the spatial and esthetic structure of the displays” (p. 267).

Emotion in museums can be a way to connect visitors to the materials; it can be considered a “tool that is as important as text, lighting, or narrative” (Watson, 2015, p. 286). Emotions are universal; a part of human life that every person regularly experiences. For museums, they are an “avenue that cut across the rich and poor divide, providing a point of connection between the variously located human experiences presented in the exhibition, and between these and museum visitors” (Bonnell and Simon, 2007, p.71). People can relate to another’s excitement, grief, or anger and it is what a person feels after a visit that they remember (Watson, 2015).

Immersive Programming in Museums

An avenue for engaging museum visitors emotionally is immersive programming. The Center for the Future of Museums’ *Museums & Society 2034: Trends and Potential Futures*, predicted that immersive and interactive programs would become the norm as museums continue to deviate away from the pedagogical fact-driven interpretation (Center for the Future of Museums, 2008). The Cambridge Dictionary defines ‘immersive’ as “seeming to surround the audience, player, etc. so that they feel completely involved in something” (Cambridge University Dictionary, n.d.). Immersive programming in museums puts the visitor in another place or time or gives them the ability to feel like they are walking in somebody else’s shoes. The program or

exhibit affects multiple senses of the visitor allowing them to feel what it may be like to be someone else or in another place. For example, *Dialogue in the Dark* (Simon, 2010), a traveling exhibition held at multiple museums, leads visitors throughout the museum without any light so they might gain an understanding of what it feels like to be blind. Similarly, the Titanic Museum in Pigeon Forge Tennessee simulates the sinking of the Titanic by having visitors stand at the bottom of a staircase while they release a wall of water down the stairs so the visitors can experience what it would have felt like to have water rushing them during the sinking (“Titanic Pigeon Forge | Unbiased Review, Information, & Photos,” n.d.).

Scott Magelssen (2014) explains that immersive programs, primarily simulations,

“Can be profound and generative in their ability to witness another's experience through physical embodiment and even discomfort. They promise three-dimensional sandbox spaces in which to experiment and play, allowing for details, contingencies, and variables that cannot be imagined on paper” (p. 183).

Immersive programs and simulations allow the visitor to experience the material rather than read about or observe it; they are able to experiment with their actions and feelings. Stogner (2011) believes that these immersive storytelling techniques will allow visitors to connect with each other and the material being presented in a more meaningful manner.

Multiple museums have already embraced this method of interpreting information to their visitors (Magelssen, 2014). The Ronald Reagan Presidential Library offers a simulation of the events surrounding the military action taken on Grenada in October of 1983. Students play the roles of the president, his advisors, the press, and military officials to play out the scenario and see if they make the same decisions that President Reagan did (Reagan Foundation, n.d.). The Museum of Flight in Seattle, WA has a Challenger Learning Center where visitors can perform simulation missions to the moon or mars (Museum of Flight, n.d.). The United States Holocaust

and Memorial Museum, as well as the traveling Titanic exhibit give their visitors identity cards of a survivor or victim from those events who the visitor learns their fate along the way.

While immersive programming has plenty of supporters, there are those who believe those programs, can do injustice to the causes or people about whom they are trying to educate. Holocaust simulations, for example, though primarily used in classrooms, can never truly give the participants an idea of what the victims went through. Totten (2000) asserts that “to think that one can approximate even a scintilla of what its victims went through is sheer folly” (p. 165). William Nesbitt, the author of *Simulation Games for the Social Studies Classroom*, elaborates “the reality represented [in a simulation] is reduced in size so that it is manageable. Only selected aspects of the real situation are included in a simulation. Developers of simulations reduce and simplify reality so students can focus on selected aspects of reality” (p. 165). By simplifying reality, Nesbitt continues, when applied to studies of the Holocaust or any other genocidal study, will “lead to a facile understanding of complex issues, and worse still, a trivialization of the Holocaust” (p. 165). Patraha (1999) points out that “in simulation there is no link to the referent anymore, the copy passes itself off as real, thereby covering over the historical trauma of the incommensurable absence of the genocidal referent” (p. 130) which further goes to echo Totten’s concern about trivialization.

Despite the warranted concern of the potential trivialization of victims, many see immersive programming as an exciting new way to engage new audiences. Stogner (2011) advocates for immersive programming, but she too addresses some concerns:

“New immersive and participatory storytelling techniques are a welcome catalyst for engaging a broader range of people in deeper and richer ways. But, a note of caution. The success of these new techniques depends very much on the authenticity and profundity of the content. Best practices, particularly regarding representation, comprehensive research, and veracity of data, are absolutely essential to providing meaningful experiences rather than simply joy rides” (p. 197).

Interpreting Social Justice and Difficult History

Tilden (1977), whose book, *Interpreting Our Heritage*, was written in the 1950's, still acts primary source when it comes to discussing interpretation. Tilden asserts that the chief aim of interpretation should be provocation and not instruction; that it should stimulate, bring people to action, and be socially meaningful. But exhibiting and interpreting social justice issues can be a difficult and delicate topic that needs to be done sensitively. Bonnell and Simon (2007)

describe difficult exhibitions or programs as

“eliciting the burden of ‘negative emotions’, those unpleasant and troublesome feelings of grief, anger, shame, or horror that histories can produce, particularly if they raise the possibility of complicity of one’s country, culture, or family in systemic violence such as the seizure of aboriginal land, the slave trade, or the perpetration of genocide” (p. 67).

Burdening visitors with these negative emotions can cause anxiety and discomfort in the visitor which is historically avoided in museums who actively work to ensure the visitor is comfortable (Tyson, 2008). Lennon and Foley (2000) explain that most interpretation surrounding these difficult issues, or “dark tourism,” is focused on hard facts rather than ethics and morals. But many believe that it is this discomfort that allows for meaningful dialogue and more personal ways of making meaning (Bonnell & Simon, 2007; Fleming, 2014; Magelssen, 2014; Tyson, 2008). Roth (1998) says that many living history museums are beginning to address slavery, bigotry, religious dissent, and politics which would have normally been avoided in their interpretation, and posits that “the freedom to discuss just about any subject with a visitor is one of the greatest pedagogical advances of the past decade” (p. 161).

Bonnell and Simon (2007) explain that interpreting and exhibiting these difficult issues and histories is an affective experience that involves ethical and political considerations; that visitors not only need to learn about these dark histories but also from them:

“Exhibitions that grapple with ‘the dark side’ of human existence must function as more than ‘post-it’ notes reminding us of our commitment to prevent such histories from being repeated. Nor should they be justified only in terms of offering experiences that might stimulate feelings comparable to those held by others, assuming that this will encourage efforts to relieve existing pain and suffering while preventing their re-occurrence. Exhibitions that offer the possibility of intimacy solicit visitors into a ‘difficult’ engagement with the experiences of others that radically calls into question the adequacy of one’s concepts to tie down the significance of lessons of the past. When this occurs, a transformative moment of learning is possible” (p. 81).

Museums are actively seeking opportunities to advocate and educate their audiences about social justice issues around the world and in their communities. Nieves (2009) explained that,

“Museums and organizations, motivated by community groups, have recently been formed to coordinate and share their "best practices" between "sites of conscience" around the world. Organizations now link together such diverse sites such as former slave housing, death camps, tenements, work prisons, and torture chambers in order to jointly institute a global space of "human rights" and "citizenship" through "critical dialogue with the past” (p. 206).

Social Value in the Museum

Society has been continually changing for thousands of years; communities, nations, and cities are fluid as people immigrate, die, and are born. New issues arise as others are resolved. As Elaine Gurian (2004) states “the world is always changing, it follows that there is a need for citizens (and the institutions they build) to mindfully create evolving guidelines for living honorably together in our culturally, politically, and religiously diverse democracy” (p. 474). The role of museums has constantly been evolving as society has changed; initially collecting and preserving artifacts, then transitioning to focus on their audiences and ensuring their collections are accessible to the common person, focusing on popular education as a way to better relate the collections to their audience, and now a push towards addressing social issues (Fleming, 2014; Low, 1942).

Anderson (2012), in her book *Reinventing the Museum*, states that civic engagement and social responsibility should be institutional values of the museum (p. 3). She further says that museums should serve as “gathering places for building community and dialogue around contemporary issues” (p. 9). There is still much discussion as to how museums should go about addressing social issues, whether they should be active, or passive, or even address social issues at all. Many museums believe their main purpose should be to collect, preserve, and interpret their collections (Cuno, 2004; Lowry, 2004; de Montebello, 2004; Rose, 2002), but according to Sandell and Nightingale (2012) visitors seek social value and believe that museums have a place in allowing dialogue for contested social issues. In Fleming’s (2014) presentation on *Museums and Social Justice* at the 2014 American Alliance of Museums’ Conference, he explained how socially responsible museums emphasize the importance of their collections, but they utilize them on ways to achieve and teach social lessons. Ultimately, as Howard Straughn and Celka Gardner (2011) put it, “the value of museums is in direct proportion to the service they render the intellection and emotional life of the people” (p. 41).

Tying It All Together; Emotions, Immersion, and Social Issues

While there is substantial literature in these different areas- emotions, learning, museums, immersion, and social issues - there is little that bridges these disparate subjects. As museums are looking for new and creative ways to reach new audiences and make an impact in society and within their communities, some are beginning to utilize immersive museums programs to address social issues at their institutions, such as the traveling *Dialogue in the Dark* program, or *Cry Witch* and *To Hang a Pirate* at Colonial Williamsburg. These immersive programs are attractive because they leverage the emotions of their visitors; creating connections and empathy for others and their struggles. But this method of interpreting social issues through immersive

programming such as simulations is a challenge because creating them run the risk of trivializing the fights of marginalized groups and issues and could potentially further stigmatize them. By examining three museums that have chosen to address social issues in this manner, this study provides insight on the decisions behind why museums chose to interpret a social issue in this manner as well as good design practice for their exhibitions and programs in order to provide guidance to other museums who are considering immersive programming in their institutions.

CHAPTER 3: METHODS

The purpose of this research was to better understand current design practices used in museums to engage visitors in highly immersive and emotional experiences. The following research questions guided this study:

1. Why and in what circumstances do museum program/exhibit developers use emotional immersion as an interpretive strategy?
2. What are the issues and challenges in using emotion as an interpretive tool in museum programs/exhibits?
3. What are the outcomes these experiences are designed to achieve, and specifically what role does empathy have in these experiences?

To address the research questions, this study used a case study approach with semi-structured interviews of museum professionals at each of the case study sites.

Sampling: Case Sites

In order to choose the sites for this study, the following criteria were used: an institution that has a program/exhibit that a) simulates an emotional situation that addresses a social issue with social issue defined as a condition that influences the well-being of a number of individuals in society and is opposed by or considered problematic by a segment of society (McCreery, 2015); b) puts the visitor in the shoes of another or in an alternate context; and c) and is geared towards adults and individual museum goers.

The case study sites and programs chosen were: *Follow the North Star* at Conner Prairie Historical Park, an immersive program where participants play the role of fugitive slaves trying to escape to freedom in 1860s Indiana; the *Lunch Counter Simulation* at the National Center for Civil and Human Rights, an exhibit interactive where visitors sit at a lunch counter and play the

role of sit-in demonstrators in the 1960s while an audio track plays verbal assaults in the visitors' ears; and the *Immigration Simulation* at the Canadian Immigration Museum at Pier 21, where participants play the role of immigrants trying to immigrate to Canada in the early 1910s.

Sampling: Professional Participants

The participants in this study were drawn from the three case study sites. The participants consisted of museum professionals who were involved in the interpretation, education, and program/exhibit planning activities. Each site had 2-3 participants that were interviewed for this study. To be eligible for the study the participants must have been working for the case study institution at the time of the interview, and be involved with the site's immersive program or exhibit.

Data Collection: Semi-Structured Interviews

The in-depth interviews were conducted over the phone and lasted anywhere from 40-60 minutes. The interviews collected qualitative data regarding the decision making of the use of emotional immersive programs and exhibits as well as current designs practices of these exhibits and programs (see Appendix A for the interview guide). All interviews were audio-recorded with permission from the interviewees.

Data Analysis

The researcher transcribed all the interviews. Once transcribed, the researcher analyzed across all the interviews looking for themes and trends in the responses. The researcher specifically utilized Robert Yin's (2009) arc of pattern matching, explanation building, and cross-case synthesis.

The researcher used emergent coding methods to analyze the qualitative interview data.

Each of the case studies was assessed individually, and the researcher identified key themes and quotes according to each research question. Once this was completed for each case study, the researcher developed thematic groupings and created emergent codes. Once the themes and codes were established the researcher created a coding rubric organized by themes and supporting quotes by each case study institution (See Appendix B for the coding matrix). Once the coding rubric was completed, it was reviewed by the committee chair to verify the validity of the findings.

Limitations

This research design is a case study approach and only looked at three institutions which makes it difficult for field-wide generalizations. The research describes and analyzes these three sites in great detail but does not speak to all emotional immersive programs and exhibits field-wide. The research does provide a good starting point for discussions on good practices behind creating and implementing these programs and exhibits as well as potentially creating a basic good practices framework for this interpretive method. Additionally, the interviewees from the Canadian Immigration Museum at Pier 21 work predominately with school groups so a lot of their responses catered to that age group and the researcher would have to follow up to see if they knew more about how the adult programs would run and the answers did not come organically.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents study findings. It starts by describing the case study sites and then describes key themes that emerged in response to each of the core research questions.

Description of Case Study Sites

Three immersive museum experiences served as case studies for this research: 1) the simulated lunch counter at the National Center for Civil and Human Rights, Atlanta, GA; 2) the Follow the North Star Program at Conner Prairie Interactive History Park, Fishers, IN; and 3) the Immigration Simulation at the Canadian Immigration Museum at Pier 21, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Simulated Lunch Counter

The simulated lunch counter at the National Center for Civil and Human Rights (NCCHR) in Atlanta, GA is an immersive, exhibit interactive that recreates the sit-in protests that occurred at Woolworth's in Greensboro, NC in the 1960s. The aim of the lunch counter is to give visitors a sense of what it might have been like to be a demonstrator during that time who was participating in a non-violent protest. The lunch counter interactive is part of the larger Civil Rights exhibit at the NCCHR, designed by Broadway and Hollywood director George C. Wolfe, who created the narrative that weaves through the larger exhibit.

The experience begins with a visitor approaching the counter and sitting at one of the four stations. As the visitor looks forward, there is a reflective surface that back projects a series of historical images of the lunch counter protests. The images scroll slowly so in between each of the images the visitor sees him/herself in the reflective surface as well. The visitor puts on headphones and places their hands on the lunch counter. A clock appears on the reflective surface that begins counting up from zero. Through the headphones, the visitor hears continued verbal assaults aimed at him/her, similar to what a protestor would have heard during while

sitting there. Two times during the simulation, the seat jostles to coincide with the audio track yelling at the protestor to “get up!” In total, the experience lasts for 1 minute and 45 seconds.

Follow the North Star

Follow the North Star (FTNS) is a 90-minute program at Conner Prairie Interactive History Park, Fishers, IN, that puts visitors in the shoes of fugitive slaves trying to escape. The visitors are in groups of 12 to 15 for the program, and it begins with an orientation in the Visitor’s Center where they are shown a video about the Triangular Trade Route. The experience begins in the woods, where visitors are sold to new slave owners. During the sale, the interpreters treat the participants as though they are property with no self-control; separating them by “breeders” and “bucks,” yelling at them to get their heads down, to not look around, and establish themselves as their masters. Once sold, the participants follow their new owners to the next station where they are forced to do a menial labor activity, stacking and restacking wood. During this activity, the new owners leave the group alone for a few minutes, and it’s at this point that the fugitive slaves decide to run to freedom.

During their escape, the group encounters a multitude of different characters; some try to help them while others try to stop them. The participants meet ambivalent characters who do not necessarily believe slavery is okay, but they want nothing to do with ending it so they can stay out of trouble. They run into Quakers, who give them food, water, and shelter while giving them tips to get out of the state. And they also meet a character who blames the slaves for all the troubles in his life and tries to capture them to resell them back into slavery. The participants navigate their way through each of these different interactions on during their escape and learn about the enemies and resources that fugitive slaves in Indiana had during this time. At the end of the program, the participants sit through a 20-30 minute debrief to discuss their experiences.

Immigration Simulation

The Immigration Simulation at the Canadian Immigration Museum at Pier 21 (CIMP21), Halifax, Nova Scotia, recreates the process of immigrating to Canada during the early 1900s. The program was developed to help participants understand the process of immigration as well gain insight into the emotional impact that immigration can have on people and families. While this particular simulation is done mostly with school-aged groups, the CIMP21 does do this program for adult groups as well.

The simulation starts with interpreters distributing different colored bracelets to all the participants at random. These colored bracelets each represent a different ethnicity or geographical origin point. Once all the participants have received their bracelets, they begin the simulation by trying to purchase a ticket to Canada. Depending on their colored bracelet, the participant is either treated warmly and is helped or is treated poorly and has hurdles placed in their way. The different treatment of the participants lasts throughout the whole program and if/when the participant can secure their ticket to Canada, the Canadian Immigration Officer on the other side will also treat them either warmly or suspiciously. Once in Canada, the participants must go through the immigration and interview process before they are allowed to stay in the country. Participants must think on their feet about how to answer the questions because their residency depends on their answers. Often the Immigration Officers speak in another language to add another layer of confusion and complication to the process for the participants. The participants who successfully immigrate are given a certain amount of starting off money (tokens) with the amount representing their colored bracelet and how well their chances are of providing for themselves in Canada. Once the participants complete the simulation they go through a debriefing to discuss their experiences.

1) Why and in what circumstances do museum program/exhibit developers use emotional immersion as a design strategy?

One of the questions that the heart of this study was *why and in what circumstances to museum program/exhibit developers use emotional immersion as a design strategy?* To answer this question, the researcher interviewed study participants regarding the impetus behind the creation of these experiences, as well as the use of emotional immersion within the development of the experiences. One of the questions that the researcher asked was if there was ever a time or condition where the sites would not want to make something emotional. Participants at all sites agreed that emotions are necessary in interpretation. As CPHP explained,

“I think it's more a question of how emotional do you make it? On a daily basis, I think that's a key point of good storytelling, that you've got an emotional response of some kind. So even if we're talking about going out to milk the cow, whether it's a funny story about it or talking about the time the cow stepped on your foot, you're still bringing emotion into it. So I think as a first person interpreter it's something we do every day. It's just deciding, not whether you are going to bring emotion into, but how far you are going to go into it.”

Across the three sites, six key themes emerged from this line of questioning, explaining why case study sites use emotional immersion and why emotion is critical including: a) making content relevant or “sticky;” b) engaging people in rich, contextual learning; c) humanizing or de-fictionalizing historic persons; d) experiencing the past; and e) using dark emotions to create discomfort.

a) *Making content relevant or “sticky”*

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, study participants were asked if there was ever a time or condition where the sites would not want to make their subject material emotional. Participants at all sites insisted that emotion should always be present within their programs or exhibits but to different extents and in different ways. Besides the above quote from CPHP, the

reasoning behind the level of emotion in a program is elaborated on by the NCCHR, explaining that “we want emotional involvement and engagement, but one needs to be very careful in the way they go about making that emotional involvement or engagement, or else it could be seen as gratuitous in a way that is not respectful of the story the history and the people who live through, went through it.” Taking emotion completely out of the equation can limit the ability for the visitors to connect with the material and as mentioned earlier, takes away learning opportunities.

CIMP21 and NCCHR both indicated that emotion allows for a better connection to some types of material and concepts. Staff at CIMP21 explained that “for more abstract concepts, emotion can be helpful in trying to link the whole thing together. Or if you're talking about something that is, that perhaps not action packed.” To further elaborate, “Being able to participate in this sort of experience tends to create longer lasting memories.” “It tends to hit people on more of an emotional level and therefore creates a more lasting impact.”

Similarly, staff at the NCCHR stated that “sometimes I think when you are learning something, and it's a life lesson, emotions play a big part of that. And whatever it is, if it's the lunch counter experience, if it's a life lesson on economy or health, you want some kind of emotion to be attached to that so that that life lesson sticks with you.”

b) Engaging people in rich, contextual learning

Participants at all three sites discussed how using emotional immersive programs are more effective than reading text labels or listening to lectures in engaging their audiences with the material they are trying to relay. Study participants at CIMP21 explained how the use of emotional immersion in their Immigration Simulation addresses different learning styles which allow all of their participants to engage in the program. “I'd say the key benefits are that it appeals to different learning styles, that and it becomes a bit more about a tactile physical

activity you have to walk around, going to the ticket counter and the Canadian border and so forth and so on.” To elaborate,

“Someone that might not do very well listening to a lecture or reading exhibit panels, when they're being told that they suddenly have to come up with a story about who they are and why they are immigrating to Canada and answer these sort of questions on the fly, now all of a sudden they are much more engaged, they are much more interested.”

Additionally, this same person added “trying to just talk about how people are treated as opposed to showing them how they were being treated at the time, I find is a much more affective technique.” By allowing people to participate in the content, visitors are able to engage more with the material as well as think more in-depth about the people affected.

Similarly, CPHP staff described how the physicality of emotional immersive programs allows participants to learn on a whole different level: “If I'm learning how to spin, I can watch all the YouTube videos I want, [but] until I get my hands on that wool, I'm not really going to know how to do it.” Another staff person said, “I can talk about history but when you're hearing gunshots in the dark, and you're hearing the coyotes, and not knowing what's coming next, you're thinking about what it was really like.” According to Conner Prairie staff, this deeper engagement with the material opens up the visitor to the mindset and the experience of the people that these programs or exhibits portray. “It's a whole other level of education and internalization to our visitors. They just have to internalize it. You can't go through the program and be unaffected.”

While CIMP21 and CPHP use participatory programs, the NCCHR utilizes emotional immersion through an interactive in an exhibit. Staff explained,

“It really engages by using sensory engagement of the emotions, and with emotional engagement, people are into the exhibit, they've forgotten other things,

and they're focused on it, and that'll bring them up to learning. That pedagogy, there's enormous pedagogical possibilities with exhibitions if they're done correctly and interactives' ability like this, and in the world of interactives.”

c) *Humanizing or de-fictionalizing historic persons*

When discussing why an institution would decide to utilize an emotional immersive program as a method to interpret subject matter, participants at each of the sites independently brought up the idea of humanizing the people about whom they are teaching. A staff member at Conner Prairie explained that often people read history books and forget that the people they are reading about were real people and not characters in a novel:

“I think one of the things that it does is help people remember that those were real people... ‘they didn't really live did they?’ or ‘it wasn't that bad,’ but when you got this kind of immersive experience it just helps you understand a little bit more about what it would have been like for that person.”

Staff at the CIMP21 explained how many of their participants are relatively young or have never lived outside of Nova Scotia so “it'd be difficult for them to grasp what it feels like to just pack up and leave. Leave everything you've know and go to someplace completely new and hopefully in the immigration simulation, they can start to understand a little bit of that feeling. Which can make them a bit more sympathetic to the experience of immigrants.” Staff at the NCCHR brought up the topic of humanizing or “de-fictionalizing” people during a broader discussion about the center as a whole which is designed as a timeline through human rights. The final exhibit addresses contemporary human rights issues and it is there that they explained many visitors have a “it doesn't bother me because it's not affecting me because it's happening on the other side of the world’ attitude,” but through the exhibit and the Center the visitors can “begin to see ‘wow,’ this does affect me because I just ate that Hershey Bar and there was some 7-year-old kid on a plantation in Africa picking the cocoa beans living in a hut. So it does kind of connect everything, and that's the whole idea behind the center.”

d) Experiencing the past

When study participants at each of the sites were asked what the impetus was for developing these emotional immersive programs, a theme that they all brought up was experience; they wanted their visitors not just to learn about the past, but to experience it. Staff at Conner Prairie explained that even before the Follow the North Star program, they worked to “get people to experience history on that physical level, whether it's really milking a cow or churning butter, or walking through the dark not knowing who you're going to encounter next, it makes you think about things in a different way.”

The NCCHR, not being a living history museum, did not set out with the plan to have their visitors experience anything, rather their storyteller, George Wolfe, when creating the narrative of the Center believed that the lunch counter protests and the experience of the demonstrators lent themselves to being told through an emotional immersive simulation:

“He knew that what those protestors went through was a way to give visitors a sense of what it might have been like...The whole idea behind our exhibit here at the museum is to not just have you read something or not to have you look at pictures, but for you to experience what the demonstrators or activists actually went through.”

Staff at the NCCHR state “it's really a profound experience for them [the visitors], and that they recommend it to their friends and family, and we get great word of mouth so on that level I think it has had that impact.”

Staff from CIMP21 were unable to give insight on the impetus for their program's development since they were relatively new to the institution, but they did believe,

“The intent was to give the kids the experience of immigrating themselves because for a lot of the participants, they've never personally immigrated, so trying to get them to understand the processes of immigration as well as a little bit of the emotional impact that immigration can have; the stress, the uncertainty, and so on, frustration at times with the immigration system.”

In summary, while all three sites had different reasons for using emotional immersion, they all emphasized the importance of experiencing the past through this interpretive strategy.

e) Using “dark” emotions to create discomfort

In talking about their use of emotional immersion, study participants at all three sites emphasized the importance not just of emotions in general, but of emotions on the darker side of the emotional spectrum. Staff at the NCCHR explained that “the whole exhibit is trying to bring about awareness, and it can take people to a very dark place as part of that awareness. But it has to take you there in order to become aware of what these demonstrators went through and the sacrifices that they made.” As for particular emotions the NCCHR is trying to elicit, “there's a shock, a shock, there's a little bit of fear, a little bit of scared. You know, the way the script was scripted there's a drama to it, there's an intensity. There are hateful people that are in your ear telling things pretty offensively.”

Participants at the CIMP21 said they are focused on wanting their participants to feel frustrated with the experience:

“We do want them getting feeling kind of frustrated about how this is working and especially how some people are being treated better than others. Also, feelings of stress as well. I'm asking them some questions and they're trying to immigrate to Canada and they've got to think on their feet and they're going ‘well if I get the wrong answer and I won't get in’ and all of a sudden they realize how important these questions are and these answers are to the questions.”

An interviewee from CIMP21 explained further:

“We want kids to get out of their comfort zone and depending on the age level that will be shown in different ways. With older kids, the idea, especially junior high and that level, getting kids out of their comfort zone is having kids feel singled out or isolated or attention drawn to them can be very uncomfortable.”

While the answer was mostly regarding children, the researcher followed up by asking if that answer would be similar for adults. It was explained that adults can react similarly to

the older kids but “adult groups are harder to embarrass, unfortunately. But yea, it is mostly, and some adults will be a bit reserved and getting them out of their comfort zone can have benefits.”

Between the three institutions, only staff from CPHP explained how they also wanted their participants to feel a lighter emotion as well as the darker ones: “We wanted the fear, the uncertainty. Also, you have hopefulness. We purposely put the free black family at the end of the program. We purposefully alternate, and some guests figure this out, we have a good guy/bad guy rotation.” It was further explained, “If you're going downhill all the time, that doesn't work. You've got to go uphill sometimes too to make it all work. And I think that alternating of feeling hopeful then being scared again and then feeling hopeful, kind of keeps things moving.”

2) What are the issues and challenges in using emotional immersion as an interpretive tool in museum programs/exhibits?

In talking with case study sites about potential issues and challenges in using emotional immersion, six themes emerged around this topic, including: a) managing intense reactions from visitors; b) facilitating levels of emotion; c) ensuring the material is historically accurate; d) using visitor data to inform program/exhibit design; e) debriefing or providing an emotional outlet; and f) preparing staff.

a) Managing intense reactions from visitors

One of the questions that each interviewee was asked was “What challenges or issues did you anticipate your visitors might have with this experience.” Responses suggested that each case study institution was concerned about the reaction/overreaction of their visitors in some capacity. Each of the institutions knew they were dealing with inherently emotional material and

recognized that they were then creating immersive emotional experiences on top of that which can lead to a difficult time for the visitor.

Staff from CIMP21 explained that “there's always the danger that they might get too emotionally invested into it.” To further elaborate, it was explained that sometimes participants are not “able to do the activity because they get so upset. Occasionally I will have children that will be refused a ticket to get across the ocean, and they'll go and sit down. Either they're frustrated or disengaged.”

Study participants at NCCHR also reported careful consideration of the emotions of their visitors: “We kind of anticipated the fact that visitors that would show a lot of emotions. We anticipated that there would be tears because that was the purpose, not to make people cry, but just to make people aware. And [in] making people aware, we have some very high emotions.” At the same time, staff at the NCCHR expressed concern about inappropriate reactions: “We also have on the other side of that spectrum, the fact because young people...there is such a disconnect, you may get a giggle.”

Conner Prairie staff's concerns were about the extreme, over-reactions of their visitors. As one staff member explained, “we've had people that react poorly, and certain of us have been attacked by visitors. Again, we are pushing psychological buttons; everybody reacts, and some people lose control.” This intensity and the pushing of psychological buttons can cause the visitor to forget where they are and let the adrenaline take over. Staff described situations in which interpreters had to pull people from the group and get them to “come back into the present, and say ‘I need you to remember that it's 2016’ and ‘We are in a program, this is where you are, I need you to get a grip of what's going on and try to take the time you need to take.’”

These reactions by visitors are a very real concern for the staff at CPHP and a challenge that they prepare to deal with each season.

Even with concern about the intense emotional reaction from their visitors, both CPHP and the NCCHR had visitors complain that they thought the experience was too mild or not intense enough. NCCHR said “we did have a couple gentlemen who were actually part of the sit-ins who thought it was a little too mild because the experience, their experience was so much more than that, it was a lot worse than what we actually have there,” but they also knew they were trying to reach as broad an audience as possible, so it was designed that way. CPHP said that complaints have “primarily been African Americans that it's not intense enough,” and “there are some people that want it more intense, some of it's the 8th graders that want it to be the downhill rollercoaster all the time.”

b) Facilitating levels of emotion

One of the questions asked by the researcher to study participants at all the institutions was “How do you ensure that the program/exhibit isn't too emotional?” Through those responses, four key themes appeared across all three organizations.

i) Provide an escape. Staff at all three institutions provide an outlet or the ability to walk away from or stop the program if visitors are reaching the point where they are unable to take it. While each institution has an “escape” mechanism in place, each does it a little bit differently. The CIMP21 gives their participants an out at the beginning of the simulations by explaining, “During this you may become overly emotional or might be overwhelmed, and that's fine, that's expected. If you want to take a moment and walk around and cool your head or go get a drink of water or that sort of thing, that's fine.” The CIMP21 lets the visitor know they can walk away from the simulation if they need to.

The NCCHR's lunch counter simulation is built so that the simulation does not start until the visitor puts their palms on the counter. Similarly, if the visitor takes their hands off of the sensors during the simulation, it stops. This provides the visitors an out if they are unable to take the verbal assaults playing in their ears.

CPHP provides participants with a white headband as their escape mechanism. These white headbands allow the participants to go "invisible," so they are no longer part of the program if it becomes too much for them. A staff member explained,

"They can put them around their heads when they are out going through the experience, so the interpreter or actor at that point does not see them. And so there is no direct conversation with them, it promises they are not even there so they can stand aside and observe rather than participate. And that it is an escape for them."

The benefit of this is that the participant can still observe the program: "They're kind of on the outside looking in, but they still get to participate from that perspective."

ii) Read the audience. Study participants at all three institutions indicated that staff/interpreters work hard to "read" the audience involved in their respective exhibits/programs. At the NCCHR, while the exhibit does not have a designated staff facilitator, there is a staff member stationed at the simulation at all times. That staff member is there as a resource for the visitors that go through the simulation but additionally, that individual is there to observe the visitors going through the simulation. They can read the visitors that are approaching the simulation and can address needs as they arise:

"A lot of times we have young people who have heard about the lunch counter and are eager to sit there but only because their friends told them something like 'Oh, you better go sit at the lunch counter because they're going to start fighting and blah blah blah.' And then you say, 'Before you sit down, let me explain what this was about and watch this video because this video is what's going to happen.' And then their emotions change, and you see that 12-year-old suddenly become a little bit more mature so they can actually sit there and handle what they are about to hear and experience."

Staff at CPHP talked about how they are constantly reading their participants throughout the entire duration of their 90-minute program:

“One of the things that happens at the first site is we're doing a lot of reading there, you know, ‘What are these people?’, ‘What's their problem?’, ‘Why are they not doing what we need them to do?’, ‘Wow, can we address that?’...And we talk, while we're walking between people we're dealing with, we're talking to each other and kind of point things out. We also have radios; we radio to the people who are down the line from us, and we suggest, ‘Hey, this thing's going on,’ ‘This person will try to describe people and say they're having a problem’, or you know whatever. Whatever we can tell.”

Reading their audiences allows them to notice when a participant is having a hard time or if they need to adjust how they are interpreting the subject matter to the group.

Study participants at CIMP21 explained how each participant and each group is different and that by reading their audience, they adjust their interpretation style to the group or that individual:

“You always have to be cognizant of who's sitting on the other side of the table from you, and to make decisions along the way, as too are they, do they understand this is a game? Are they taking this personally? And so you can cater your responses a little bit more.”

iii) Limit the age of the participants. Staff at all sites recommended ages for the participants going through their programs or exhibits. For the NCCHR’s lunch counter simulation, “it's not recommended for anybody under the age of 10,” although they do get younger participants when a parent is with them. An interviewee explained that “you will see that parent having a discussion with them before they sit at the lunch counter and you will see that parent stand next to them during their experience and then talking to them after their experience,” to ensure they are alright and understanding what they just experienced.

CPHP’s follow the North Star Program has daytime programs for school groups but their more intense evening program is geared mainly for adults: “We try to discourage any body under

the age of 12 for that. We really leave that up to the parent's for that, there's even some 12-year-olds that are older that probably shouldn't come to that.”

The CIMP21’s Immigration Simulation is mostly done by school groups, but they do also do simulations for adults as well. Regarding an age limit, “this program is really designed for grade 7, the youngest participants we sort of get for this are in grade 6, maybe in some cases in grade 5, but not much younger than that. So this is not a program that someone would want to do with a kindergarten class or a grade 3 class.”

iv) The use of language. Study participants at all three sites talked about their decisions regarding the language used in their exhibits/programs to ensure their program was not too emotional but also to ensure they are not trivializing the experiences of the people being represented. For example, the NCCHR opted to not use the n-word even though it was used all the time during that period, especially in reference to the protestors. Their reasoning was two-fold: “One reason we didn't want to use it is it’s an incendiary. And that's important but also equally important is it causes people to shut down.” A second reason is that it is alienating to some visitors: “People sitting at the counter aren't often African American so once you start using that word you also make it...if I'm a white person, and I just sit there, and I hear that word used, on one level I'm going to sit there and think ‘This wasn't meant for me, I'm not part of this.’” The NCCHR does not use profanity in their audio track either which “takes it down to a level that the 13 year old can sit there and feel something as well as that 75 year old sit there and recall something.”

CPHP also reportedly avoids the use of the n-word in their program. They opted to not use it because of feedback they received from their advisory group and focus groups with visitors during the planning and design phases of this program. One staff member noted, “There are

some people that say that was part of history and if you're going to talk about history, you should use the language. Yea well so were beatings, and we're not going to do that. We kind of put that in the same category.” CPHP does use profanity in their program but they explain that “damn” and “hell” are as strong as they get: “You know we're talking about big-time stuff, it's not the 4th grade book about the Underground Railroad where it's scary, and everybody's out in the woods, and then you get to Canada, and everyone lives happily ever after. This is life or death, and so some of the bad guys cuss a little bit.”

The staff at CIMP21 discussed how they utilize the language that the Immigration Officers in Canada would have used during that period when addressing their participants during the simulation. As one staff member explained,

“I mean one classic example, one reason why many potential black immigrants were refused entry into Canada was that they were not suited to the climate of Canada. It's too cold and that they wouldn't do well here. So physiologically they weren't suited for life in Canada, and that's an excuse that we give during the simulation and the reaction from most of the participants is along the lines of ‘What on earth are you talking about? That's ridiculous.’ But that is the line that was used 100 years ago, so we do use it as well. We do try to stick with the rationale of the time of why some people should allowed in and why some people shouldn't be allowed in. Obviously keeping it within the bounds of politeness as well.”

c) *Ensuring the material is historically accurate*

Staff at all three case study sites talked about the importance of making sure that their programs or exhibits are grounded in historical accuracy and respectful to the people who went through the trials they are teaching about. CPHP explained that when they were developing their program, they did not want to have just a generic Underground Railroad story. The program that Follow the North Star was adapted from was just a generic narrative and as a staff member explained,

“You really want it to be well founded in Indiana history and not just in a loosey goosy Underground Railroad history which is what the camp was doing. Their main point was to talk about prejudice with 4th graders, you know. We wanted it to have deeper research and really tell an Indiana story like a lot of other programs at Conner Prairie.”

By keeping the story historically accurate and basing it on historical documents of the time, it leaves less room for interpretive creativity which could lead to trivialization: “We take our history seriously, we're constantly reading and updating our information, and we're getting training.”

Staff at the NCCHR explained that in order to keep from trivializing the experience of the demonstrations, they need to be “doing it in a non-gratuitous matter, making sure it's historically accurate, you know if we do this right we need to make sure that visitors don't feel that we're treating the material and the experience of those people who went through that or participated in the movement would be disrespected.” Additionally it was mentioned that being able to ground the simulation experience in history allows the visitors to understand the seriousness of what was happening: “You take that young person, and we have a video that goes along with this that actually shows real footage, of the sit-ins, and once they see that video and read a couple of paragraphs, the understanding is there.”

Study participants at the CIMP21 explained how they would bring real world materials and documents into their discussion of the simulation after the fact: “Where we reveal what the different bracelet colors represent, we can show real examples, we have copies of the Chinese head tax and things like that in our exhibit so we often give students a chance to try and figure out on their own and look using the exhibit material, using real world examples who these people are.” Additionally, as was mentioned previously, they based the responses and interactions of the

participants with the interpreters on what the history of the time would dictate: “Our responses as immigration agents and ticket agents are being shaped by the historical facts.”

d) Using visitor data to inform program/exhibit design

Another avenue that CPHP and NCCHR used to mitigate trivialization was to get feedback about the programs or the exhibits prior to opening them up to the public. The interviewees from the CIMP21 were not part of the design team and did not have knowledge of this process.

CPHP conducted focus groups to help with the planning and design of the program. As one staff member explained they had an initial advisory group that

“consisted of an African American historian, a Quaker historian, and a psychologist who was also one of our board members at the time, so we did a lot of talking about ‘Okay, how far do we go with being physical with people?’, ‘how far do we go with language and all that?’ because we didn't want to push anybody over the edge. That's not the point, you know to upset anybody that much.”

This initial advisory group had the discussions about “can we push them [participants] to some physical limits? Take them to the edge but not over, can we invade their personal space? Can we stress them out to a certain point psychologically?” and once that script was initially developed they brought in other advisory and community groups:

“After we'd worked with them on the scripts for a little while, we brought in an African American advisory group; not completely African American but they have kind of their focus as far of the program. It was church leaders, educators, business people, community leaders, that we walked through the program several different times. And then started bringing in other people in the community to get their feedback and see what they thought.”

The advisory groups were useful because they would each bring their own perspectives as well as their perspectives on how the community would respond to the program.

The NCCHR, because of the timeline they were on, were unable to collect data from visitors to inform their simulation but they did an in-house review of it prior to opening the

exhibit: “There was a review in-house amongst the diversity of colleagues as to how this registered with them and yea, it worked.” The NCCHR’s hiring of George Wolfe as the exhibit’s storyteller put them more in a client role and since “George had done plays and got Tony awards, he knows what audiences can...he has an idea of what audiences can and can't take, or what they should and shouldn't take.” But since NCCHR was in that client role, the script was reviewed in-house by staff members there: “It was reviewed completely within the team, within the center, the script; the rough cut, and it was like ‘Hey there's something in the feedback that to those two members seems wrong,’” so adjustments could be made that way.

e) *Debriefing or providing an emotional outlet*

Engendering emotional experiences with visitors can leave those visitors with unresolved feelings, thoughts, or questions that they want to be addressed. Staff at all three case study sites said they had some outlet for the visitors, but they were varied on the formality of the outlet. Staff at the NCCHR said that while they do not have a formal or designated place for visitors to express themselves after participating in the simulation, there are feedback cards and surveys that they can fill out if they so choose. Additionally, the NCCHR has a staff member present at the lunch counter at all times as a resource for the visitors:

“There is someone at the lunch counter at all times just so that, you know, you can hand someone that box of tissue or you can get that 15-year-old who starts giggling up before someone's feeling get hurt because they're laughing, so you can comfort that 75-year-old lady who was there. Someone to listen because a lot of times all they want you to do is hear their story. Or you can explain to that child what they just heard and show them the video. So there's someone at the lunch counter at all times.”

CPHP and the CIMP21 have more formal outlets for their participants in the form of debriefings that all the participants go through once the program is over. CPHP has about a 30

minute debrief after the Follow the North Star Program where participants can express themselves and their feeling about the experience:

“They [the debriefers] may ask some leading questions just to get conversations started, but then they'll go where the group wants to. They've had questions about the history, they have questions about how we developed the program, why did we develop the program, discussions about what it's like for the interpreters, to be out there, to be, being the bad guys. How do they feel about that?”

Another CPHP staffer explained why they believe the debriefing is an essential part of the program:

“They're going to hear different comments from other people in their group, and their group may have not been a homogenous group, they may have been a collection of different people from all over the place, and that just continues the whole, ‘wow, I never thought of that’ approach to this experience. You get to see a whole lot of different views about the same thing that everybody just went through; that's got to be good.”

Whereas the CPHP debriefing focuses on what the group wants to talk about and lets the group steer the discussion, the CIMP21 has certain points they want to reach during their debrief. They too will ask leading questions to get the participants talking about their experience, but they are “helping them get to where we're trying to get.” So rather than following the group, the CIMP21 has clear points they want to address during their debrief. They will lead a discussion about the colored bracelets and have the participants hypothesize what colored bracelet represents what geographic or ethnic background. This allows them to discuss the unfairness in the historic immigration system when then leads into a discussion about immigration today: “How does this compare to the immigration system today? Do you think that the system was fair 100 years ago? Why was it not fair? Do you think it's like this today? And that will lead to a bit of a discussion, relatively short compare and contrast with the point system we use today.”

f) Preparing staff

Study participants at each of the three case study institutions explained that all of their staff that are involved in their simulations or programs go through the experience themselves. NCCHR staff explained that before a staff member works at the lunch counter, they have to go through it themselves. That way “we can have our own emotions about the lunch counter and then that somewhat prepares you for what you're going to experience when you're standing there with visitors, to know what they're going to hear. It also helps because we can prepare that visitor for what they're about to hear, what they're about to experience.”

A staff member at CPHP said,

“We train and we retrain every year. Every season, we have two seasons a year, and before we start, we get together and retrain. Not only going through what we do, what presentation we do, we actually see what everybody else does. If you haven't done it before, they make you go through the program as though you're a visitor, with groups of visitors, and that goes all the way back. I went through as a participant before I ever worked the program. So you are seeing it from the other side, what might be going through these people's heads. So you can kind of prepare for what somebody might think or say or do, or how they perceive it.”

Staff at CIMP21 described a similar training process:

“During our training, we did do the immigration simulation amongst the staff members, so we've all experienced being on the other side of the desk as well. Now, of course, we're coming in and doing it as employees here, so we have a little bit more background knowledge than most participants. But you still experience many of the same feelings of frustration and so on, you just have a better understanding of what we're trying to do. I found that it can be very helpful that I can share stories like ‘Well, I remember when I was this colored bracelet and what it was like’ and the more you deliver the program, the more, the more proficient you get at being able to see potential trouble spots.”

3) What are the outcomes these experiences are designed to achieve, and specifically what role does empathy have in these experiences?

Study participants were asked to articulate the outcomes that their program/exhibit was designed to achieve, specifically whether or not they believed empathy is an outcome and how they view empathy. Outside of the discussion around empathy, two key themes emerged across the case study institutions: a) understanding; and b) personal insight.

Empathy as an outcome

Empathy is a broad topic that has many different meanings in different contexts. The researcher, To gain a better understanding of the role of empathy in the case studies' exhibits and programs, the researcher asked each of the interviewees how they would "*define empathy within this experience?*" While each site and interviewee had different answers, each alluded back to the concept of understanding. Additionally, the researcher asked whether or not it was important that the exhibit or program foster empathy? The NCCHR staff said that "to show empathy means you're walking a mile in my shoes." It was also mentioned that looking at empathy is more like looking at "how do you make people care?"

CPHP's staff members also defined empathy as "putting yourself in someone else's shoes. Thinking about what it was like for them and trying to experience what they experienced." Another staff member said simply "a better understanding of another group of people or another situation." Another definition that was put forth by CPHP staff was,

"Feeling of the person next to you, it's not what you feel, you have to feel what they're feeling which may not be what you're feeling. Again, you might not know what they've been through, but if you listen to them, and you watch them, and you pay attention, you can get an idea of that, and you need to internalize that. You need to have their feeling inside of you."

The CIMP21 staff defined empathy as “being an appreciation of the challenges and pitfalls of trying to immigrate to another country, regardless of where in the world you're coming from, or even necessarily which country you're going to.” Additionally, empathy was defined as “the understanding of the unfairness or the unfair ways certain groups were treated coming into Canada historically and the idea of this isolating or distinguishing a group based on a color of skin tone, or country of origin, or religious group and how that was unfair, unjust, it could be.”

While the definitions varied slightly, the undertone of understanding was present in all the definitions and it was important to each of these institutions that they were fostering empathy in their respective programs or exhibits. The NCCHR explained that “the people who experience this are almost all moved by it and have come to care or have a respect for the people in the protests back then, what the people in the 50s, 40s, 50, early 60s, who sat at the lunch counter, what they would have experienced.” It’s this care and respect of the experience, and the affect that this simulation had on a person that, according to one staff member, “hopefully, maybe somewhere down the line, one of these 16, 17, even these 10 or 12 year olds will say ‘wow, I remember the lunch counter and I am going to stand up for this cause because it's the right cause and I not going to let this go on again.’”

CPHP hit on the same point when discussing why empathy is important in their program: “I think that you can look back and say ‘if they did it, I can do it,’ you know, ‘if they found their freedom, then what do I need freedom from,’ ‘if they changed somebody else's life for the better, then I can do the same thing.’” One staff member explained further that unless you have empathy,

“You're not worried or feeling what the person next to you is feeling. You don't care. There's just not caring without empathy. And if you don't empathize, you don't even think about the fact that something you did, without even thinking about it, might have negatively impacted that person or hurt them or whatever. And again, we're going to

continue to repeat abuse of other people for all kinds of reasons unless we start feeling, realizing, what they feel.”

The CIMP21 also similarly explained the importance of generating empathy within their program:

“I think bringing it back again to current events in this increasingly diverse country of ours, empathy for different groups and the experiences of different groups is invaluable to understanding different people with different views. The increasing tolerance of different views. We're all in this together sort of thing; we're all in this country together, so we've all got to learn to get along, and part of that is understanding where different groups have come from, historically or in terms of contemporary, issues of circumstance or setting.”

Each of these sites deems that it is important for their programs and exhibits to generate empathy for people of the past and their experiences so that they will be more inclined to be empathetic and caring for people today.

a) Understanding

While each of the case study sites explained empathy as a type of understanding, they each also verbalized that understanding itself was an important outcome of these programs or exhibits. When asked about the outcomes that the *Follow the North Star Program* is designed to achieve, staff responded that their focus is on trying to dispel the historical myths of the time, and also to “help people understand more of that time period and to walk a mile in somebody else's shoes.” In addition, staff said they “wanted people to have those feelings, to think about what it was like for those people.”

Through their program, CPHP staff members have seen this kind of understanding in action; people relating to others on that deeper level:

“I remember one woman get in there, almost in tears, and she looked across the room to the group of black visitors that had attended, and she said ‘I am so sorry, I had no idea.’ Because people who are probably up into their 60's really haven't experienced a lot of that [racism] unless they have lived in the south.... We've had people come in, because we do the debriefing at the end, and have people come in and say ‘You know, I've read about slavery, but I didn't really know what it was

like,' and we can remind them that they still don't really know what it's like, but we know more about it. It's not when they read books or watch Roots or something like that. Because you've had a little more of that experience than you've had up to that point. They are able to think a little bit more about what it was really like for that person."

The NCCHR's intended outcomes are similar:

"Being true to the historical material, you know it's manufactured past, you're not back in that period, you're here in 2016, not 1965, so with all those things granted, it's supposed to give a small sense of what it would have been like back in that period [which can] help develop appreciation, a small appreciation for what those protestors would have done, would have put themselves through, of course with none real physical risk...We get lots of students, which is great, lots of kids, and you hear them say afterwards, they say 'You know, I've read about it in books, but now I really get it.' So it's like that 'Now I really get it' experience that's unique to an exhibition or an environment like ours or other exhibitions like it for sure."

This "I get it experience" and deeper understanding for the protestors is important because "in order to understand the civil rights movement or any movement that makes huge change in society, it's important that you understand what the people went through and have the same emotions that people went through." One of the NCCHR staff explained,

And because you do experience that, you do experience exactly what they experienced, or so closely experience what they experienced, that you have to get up realizing how brave those young people were. How they did it just for the future and for what was happening then, and you don't get up saying 'wow, they was crazy for doing that!' No, you get up and say 'wow, they were real heroes! They were very brave. They took a lot to sit there and be abused like that.' So even if you never knew anything about the sit-ins, because you're sharing the emotions that people had, they're now your emotions. There's a lot of empathy formed."

The CIMP21's outcomes, have an education component, but additionally they "are hoping for some sort of emotional response" because it's that emotional response that can "lead to empathy and understanding of the different ways certain ethnic groups were treated coming into Canada. That everyone did not have a fantastic time trying to get here and there were many

groups that were discriminated against.” To expand, one of the interviewees stated that they wanted to participants to gain

“...understanding of the unfairness or the unfair ways certain groups were treated coming into Canada historically and the idea of this isolating or distinguishing a group based on a color of skin tone, or country of origin, or religious group and how that was unfair, unjust, it could be. And emotional impact, how it could be absolutely hurtful or devastating. You could be ruining people's lives; the decisions that immigration officers made for not particularly great reasons.”

This understanding is important because, as one staff member explained, not everyone can relate to the immigration process being unfair or being discriminated against based on skin tone: “Not everyone had those problems. So this idea of immersive, putting you in the shoes of someone's who's experienced it, I think is incredibly useful.”

b) Personal Insight

A theme that emerged from interviews with study participants without any prompting was the notion of personal insight as an important outcome. Interviewees reported that not only do visitors learn and gain an understanding for the experiences of people in the past, but they also learn about themselves and their families as well. A staff member at the NCCHR explained,

“A lot of times when people get up, they say ‘I would have never done that. I would have fought back. I could have never let somebody throw dishes at me, or pour hot coffee on me,’ and they'll start to talk about it. We'll tell them ‘You know, that's not true, because if you went to a lunch counter, if you were part of that demonstration, if you were going there to sit in at Woolworth's, you were already in the mindset that you were going to sit there until you got served, regardless of what happened, and they would have done the same thing those demonstrators would have done.’ And many of them say ‘Yeah, I guess you're right,’ and then some say, ‘Okay, well I guess I just wouldn't have gone because I would have fought back.’

A staff member at the CIMP21 explained, “[I] think it's very important that kids get that sort of feeling; what it's like to feel alienated and singled out because they probably haven't had much experience with those kind of feelings before.” These new feelings and emotions can lead

to a better understanding of the participants' past: "Pretty much anyone that comes to our museum has an immigration story of their own, and if not their own, it's going back many generations, and this also helps give them a certain amount of empathy for ancestors and family members as well, who've gone through this experience."

Staff from CPHP gave the most examples of outcomes relating to personal insight. As one staff member explained,

"They [the participants] come in here thinking 'I'm a tough independent person. I can stand up for myself,' and yet we turn them into groveling... they put their eyes down; they won't look up. And inside of minutes, we beat that independence, kind of tough process out of them and people are surprised to learn that they do that. That they give in. That they think they're above that and yet they are put in that position and there they are. So I don't think you can get that from a program that's not an immersion type program. I think you learn a lot about yourself."

Two additional examples were given of this personal insight. In a previous iteration of the program, CPHP had a character that would choose one female from the group to keep behind as his own while letting the rest of the group go. One staff member described a time when "we had a girl that looked older, but it turned out was only 13 whose mother refused to leave her, 'If you're keeping her, you're keeping me.' They talked about it in debriefing but then sent a note after the experience. The girl said 'Mom, I didn't know how much you loved me until you weren't going to leave me.'" Staff also talked about another group that a similar moment of insight:

"We had a group of police cadets that came through the program once, and there was one woman in the group and so they guys walked out and left her. That was a big part of their debriefing, talking about how all their training is how you never leave a partner behind and they just walked out and left her. You know, I think that was a reminder for, that it's one thing to talk about things and act in a fake setting, but what happens in real life."

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS & IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this study was to better understand current design practices used in museums to engage visitors in highly immersive and emotional experiences, particularly when interpreting social issues. Three research questions guided this study: 1) Why and in what circumstances do museum program/exhibit developers use emotional immersion as a design strategy? 2) What are the issues and challenges in using emotional immersion as an interpretive tool in museum programs/exhibits? And 3) What are the outcomes these experiences are designed to achieve, and specifically what role does empathy have in these experiences? Data were collected through interviews with museum professionals at three case study sites.

Conclusions

1) Why and in what circumstances do museum program/exhibit developers use emotional immersion as a design strategy?

Five themes emerged from this study in answer to this question, including a) making content relevant or “sticky”; b) engaging people in rich, contextual learning; c) humanizing or de-fictionalizing historic persons; d) experiencing the past; and e) using “dark” emotions to create discomfort.

Across the three case study sites, it was important that the program or exhibit use emotion because it gives the visitor the ability to connect to the experience and to the people of the past which allow the material being presented to make an impact on the individual, to make it relevant. The three sites felt that emotion particularly makes the material “sticky” to the visitors or participants by giving them an additional context to make meaning with and by not having emotion there is a loss of learning opportunities. By allowing the participant/visitor to connect emotionally to the historic persons, they are learning in a more meaningful way as Stogner

(2011) suggests in her article, *Communicating Culture in the 21st Century*. She explains that the emotional or affective connection can allow visitors to experience “ineffable but inescapable qualities of lived experience including emotions, spirituality, social communion, and creative inspiration” (p. 196).

Utilizing emotional immersive experiences allow visitors to become more deeply engaged with the material. All three sites implied that this immersive emotional experience allows visitors to have a richer learning experience that stays with the visitors longer. Falk and Gillespie’s (2009) study supports this notion, which found evidence of a link between long-term cognition and emotions. Falk and Gillespie’s (2009) study found that visitors who attended the strategically emotional *Goosebumps* exhibit had more heightened pleasurable and arousing emotions than the non-visiting control group, and this heightened emotion may result in long-term cognition. The study included delayed post-visit interviews where they found that their visitors were able to still show cognitive understanding of the exhibit 4-6 months later with no significant decline from their responses immediately following their visit. Additionally, Funch’s (2011) study also supports this notion of emotional immersive experiences creating longer lasting memories. Funch (2011) completed qualitative interviews after visitors visited the National Museum of Copenhagen’s *Journey like No Other* exhibition. His follow-up interview 3-4 months after visiting found that visitors remembered their experience in vivid detail and found that sometimes the memories were so vivid that emotions were revived in some interviews.

All three case study sites reported that emotionally immersive experiences can humanize or de-fictionalize historic persons; the experience makes the historic persons real to the participants and not just characters in a history book or novel. Each site independently brought up the idea that often people feel like people of the past are nothing more than characters in the

story but going through these experiences that put the visitors in the historic persons' shoes both physically and emotionally makes these individuals come to life. Visitors or participants feeling the same emotions these people may have been feeling in a particular contextual situation can spark a connection to that past that humanizes these individuals which allow the participants to care for them which is supported by Barton and Levstik (2004). In their book, *Teaching History for the Common Good*, Barton and Levstik (2004) explain how emotional connections to the material leads to caring; caring *about*, caring *that*, caring *for*, and caring *to*. Caring *about* a topic or situation that may be relevant to participants or visitors that they are interesting in learning more about (Barton and Levstik, 2004). Caring *that* people of the past were mistreated, discriminated against, and even killed. Caring *for* the individual people who were harmed in the past and want to do something to care for the victims of injustice in the past. Caring *to* take action in the present to prevent future injustices (Barton and Levstik, 2004).

Experiencing the past was an important theme between all three case study sites and was one of the main impetuses for each as to why they created an emotional immersive program. Each site believed that by experiencing the past and emotionally engaging their visitors would lead to a different way of knowing and be able to gain a better understanding of history. Each site had different reasons for creating their programs, but each one highlighted the importance of having their visitors experience the past.

All three of these sites have designed their programs or exhibits using “dark” emotions to create discomfort with their visitors. Chytry (2012), in his study of the emotional impact of Walt Disney World, suggested that we can create emotional environments or spaces where a particular emotion is promoted, in the case of Walt Disney World: happiness. These sites elicited darker or negative emotions rather than those of joy or happiness, which Bonnell and Simon

(2007) would describe as a ‘difficult’ exhibition or program. But the thoughtful techniques of burdening these darker emotions on the visitors that people of the past may have felt can lead to a more in-depth and nuanced understanding of the past as suggested by Leahy and MacDonald (2015).

2) What are the issues and challenges in using emotional immersion as an interpretive tool in museum programs/exhibits?

Six themes emerged in answer to this research question: a) managing intense reactions from visitors; b) facilitating levels of emotion; c) ensuring the material is historically accurate; d) using visitor data to inform program/exhibit design; e) debriefing or providing an emotional outlet; and f) preparing staff.

Being able to manage the intense reactions from their visitors was a concern across all three case study sites. Data from case studies suggested that these sites knew and understood that each of their visitors are unique and will respond to the material in different ways which could potentially result in a loss control or a belittling of the experience as Funch (2011) and Bonnell and Simon (2007) suggest can happen. Willis (2014) put forth the idea that when reenacting a life, its loss is more keenly felt. Visitors are all different, and each bring their backgrounds, experiences, and beliefs into these programs or exhibits with them, and each of these case studies understand that can lead to intense reactions from their visitors.

Each of the case study sites discussed the importance of having varying levels of emotion and being able to facilitate these programs or exhibits, so they are not too emotional. The sites all had strategies and design practices in place that helped to facilitate these levels of emotion;

- i. *Provide an escape.* Each site had an outlet where they could disengage from the material or discontinue a program if it became too overwhelming.

- ii. *Read the audience.* The sites all discussed how it was importance to be aware of and be able to read their audience to notice when if it's becoming too much or are disengaging so they can be there to support and help the visitor or participant.
- iii. *Limit the age of the participants.* All the sites had age restrictions on their programs to ensure that the participants are mature enough to handle the experiences they are presenting.
- iv. *The use of language.* The sites all had discussions surround what language to use and what to avoid, ensuring that it is not too incendiary while also maintaining the historical accuracy of the time.

The sites also emphasized the importance of having different levels of emotions when it comes to interpreting material to ensure that it is relevant to their participants and is not too overwhelming to the point where it could cause terror or on the other side, offers no emotional engagement at all and it's the intensity of the emotions that can cause the visitors to overreact or not at all, which is supported by Ortony (1988).

To prevent a trivialization of the material the three case studies ensured their programs/exhibits were grounded in historical fact and not made up histories. Each site did extensive research when it came to designing their programs and exhibits ensuring that there was historical documents, oral histories, and other historical material to back it up. Stogner (2011) supports this by explaining that “best practices, particularly regarding representation, comprehensive research, and veracity of data, are absolutely essential to providing meaningful experiences rather than simply joy rides” (p. 196).

Two of the sites (CIMP21 study participants did not have insight into their program's design decisions) utilized visitor or staff feedback in designing and piloting these programs. By drawing on the knowledge, opinions, and experiences of visitors, staff members, community groups, and advisory committees, these programs were able to gain insight into what may be too offensive or off-putting in the program or what may not be resonating well with the visitors. By going through these processes, the sites were able to adjust their programs as necessary to ensure they had the desired impact they were hoping to achieve while remaining respectful to their visitors and the groups of people they are portraying.

It was important to all three sites that they had an emotional outlet for their visitors after they participated in these experiences. Whether it was a formal group debriefing like with CPHP and the CIMP21 or just a staff member that was present and available to talk to the visitors if they wanted at NCCHR, these emotional outlets allow visitors to have their unresolved feelings, thoughts, or questions addressed. By having a debriefing, these programs fall in line with the "educational imperatives" that Magelssen (2014) puts forth. He explains that often, educational programming in museums have orientations, debriefings, rules for safety, and respect for visitor emotions as kind of guidelines for responsible programs (Magelssen, 2004).

For these case study sites that are utilizing emotional immersive experiences, it was important for the staff members to all experience these programs or exhibits during their training. By participating themselves, it gives the staff members a way to relate to the visitors and participants and have a better understanding of what they are going through. This allows them to help guide the visitors through the programs better as well as allow them to better connect to the visitor and what the visitor is experiencing at that moment.

3) What are the outcomes these experiences are designed to achieve, and specifically what role does empathy have in these experiences?

These research questions looked at the role of empathy as an outcome and through that two themes emerged: a) understanding; and b) personal insight. All three case study sites wanted their visitors or participants to leave with a better and deeper understanding of the people they embodied and the trials they went through, and it is through this emotional immersive experience fosters that understanding. Each of the research sites thought of empathy as a type of understanding and that appeared to be their primary goal for each of their programs. Each of the institutions alluded to the fact that getting their visitors and participants to feel empathy for the historical persons of the past and to care about them, would allow for their participants and visitors to better feel empathy and care for people today. Witcomb (2013), Magelssen (2014), and Bonnell and Simon (2007) all support this notion that feeling empathy and caring about trials of marginalized people in the past, allows people to care more about the social wrongs of the present and be more inclined to try to prevent them or to take action in some manner.

All three sites include information about modern day social issues to potentially provide their visitors and participants with an understanding that what they felt in those emotional immersive experiences are still be felt by people around the world, and it is not just a part of history, it is still in the present. Barton and Levstik (2004) posit that empathy's importance lies in that it is treated as a tool rather than end goal; as an avenue to encourage people to take action in the present.

Additionally, the visitors/participants not only gained an understanding of the people being embodied, but they also gained personal insight and learned about themselves as well which Sachetello (2002) marks as part of a good adult program. Visitors and participants of these

emotional immersive programs gained insight about what they may or may not have done during that period, how they may have reacted, and how they might react to emotionally charged situations in the present. Not only did they learn about the people of the past, they learned about themselves.

Implications

Practice

Looking to the future, according to Stogner (2011) and the Museums 2035 report, there will be rising demand for immersive interactive programming and while immersive interactive programming itself does not do any harm when applying that interpretive method to the social wrongs of the past and present great care must be taken. The risk of trivializing the experiences of those who suffered in the past is great, so careful consideration and planning must be taken to ensure that these programs are done respectfully and do not become thrill rides. As Vivian Patraka (1999) explained, “there is an overpowering sense of desire to create an utterly convincing spectacle that will say it all, stop time and space, prevent denial, and make suffering known. No representation can do that” (pg. 115).

With thoughtful design, museums can use emotional immersive experiences to reach audiences in new and engaging ways that connect them deeply with the material being presented while still being respectful to the people being portrayed. But these experiences are not quickly thrown together just to create an engaging experience. These programs are grounded in history and designed with respect for the visitors and the experiences of the people being portrayed. When designing these experiences, it is important to acknowledge also that every single person is not going to have the same experience and institution should be aware of that and prepared to deal with that.

These case studies' emotional immersive experiences worked so well because the stories they were trying to tell lent themselves to being told through this method. They were not trying to fit a square peg into a round hole by creating an emotional immersive program for the sake of making one. There are some experiences and events that, if unable to be done respectfully, should probably not be made into an emotional immersive experience. Something should not be forced to fit into this interpretive mold, but if there is a story or material that lends itself interpretively in this manner, the institution can consider developing it into an emotional immersive experience.

These emotional immersive experience have the ability to impact their visitors and participants on levels that cannot be achieved through text panels, lectures, guided tours. These deeply memorable experiences have the potential to have a lasting impact on the visitor and the potential for engendering empathetic responses to both people of the past, and the present is an incredible asset to these programs. They have the potential to be enriching, moving, and insightful experiences for visitors and museums that choose to develop these programs should make sure to put the time and resources into fully developing and implementing it to ensure its success.

Future Research

While this study looked primarily at the museological decisions behind why an institution would choose to interpret material through an emotional immersive experience, little attention ~~was~~is paid to how exactly the visitors feels about these experiences. Future studies ~~might~~should look at the impact of these programs or exhibits on the visitor regarding what they learned, how they felt, do they feel empathy for the people being represented, or whether or not they feel they would take action today if something similar would arise. By researching and evaluating the

visitor outcomes, the field can examine whether or not museum professionals' designed outcomes align with what the visitors actually get out of these experiences. Focusing on the impact on visitors is needed to continue to fill the gap in literature on these emotional immersive experiences. Visitor focused research on these experiences could give incredible insight to the institutions utilizing these methods to interpret social issues.

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Appendix A

Creating Discomfort: Exploring the Use of Emotional Immersive Experiences to Address Social Issues in Museums

Interview Guide

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Consent Script

I am asking you to participate in a one-on-one interview that is part of my Master's Thesis Work at the University of Washington in Seattle. The purpose of this research is to better understand current design practices used in museums to engage visitors in highly immersive and emotional experiences. I am audio recording this interview, but only I will listen to the recording. Your institution may be identified in my published report.

Your participation in this interview is voluntary, refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits, and you may discontinue participation at any time. If you have any questions now or in the future, you may contact me or my advisor with the contact information I provided.

Do you have any questions? Do you agree to be interviewed?

Interview Guide

Thank you for agreeing to speak with me today. Before we start the interview, I'd like to clarify some terminology to ensure we are on the same page. For the purpose of this interview, an "immersive experience" is a program or an exhibit that utilizes multiple senses and puts a person theoretically in another's shoes or in an alternate context. "Interpretation" is the methods and tools used to help visitors understand the material being presented. "Social issue" is a condition that influences the well-being of a number of individuals in society and is opposed by or considered problematic by a segment of society. Lastly, "emotion" is a strong agitation of feelings caused by an experience. Do you have any questions about the vocabulary we will be using in the interview? Do you have any suggestions for changes to this vocabulary?

Wonderful. Let's get started:

My first few questions are about the [insert name of experience] itself.

1. When was it initially developed?
2. What was the impetus for developing it?
3. Imagine that I've never experienced this [thing]. How would you describe it to me?
4. What outcomes is it designed to achieve for visitors?
5. Have you done any evaluation to assess these outcomes? If so, what kind and what were the results?

Questions relating to research question 1: Why and in what circumstances do program developers use immersion and emotion as a design strategy?

These next few questions are about immersive programming specifically...

1. What made you decide to design this as an immersive experience?
2. How important is it that the experience is immersive in nature?
3. What are the benefits to making this an immersive experience? What were your concerns?
4. How, by being immersive, does this program/exhibit interpret the subject matter in ways that other methods cannot?

Regarding emotion...

5. What role does emotion play in this experience?
6. What emotions are you trying to elicit, and why?
7. How do you decide when to use emotion as an interpretive strategy? Under what conditions? Are there times you wouldn't use it? Why?
8. Did you strategically design elements of the program to be emotional? If yes, how did you do that?
9. Which elements are intended to elicit emotion?

Questions relating to research question 2: What are the issues and challenges in using emotion as an interpretive tool?

Now I'd like to talk a little about what it means to design for an emotional response.

1. What challenges or issues did you anticipate visitors might have with the experience?
2. How do you ensure that the program isn't too emotional?
3. How do you consider the backgrounds/biases/opinions a visitor may bring in with them?
4. What have been the biggest complaints given by visitors after the program?
5. What considerations did you take to make sure to mitigate any potential trivialization or insensitivity that may occur?
6. Is there an avenue for visitors to express themselves after participating in these programs? If yes, what is it? If no, why not?
7. How do you prepare staff to deal with the emotions of the visitors?

Questions relating to research question 3: What outcomes are you designing for, and specifically what role does empathy have?

To finish up, I'd like to revisit the outcomes of this experience...

1. Does the museum relate the immersive experiences back to contemporary social issues? In what ways?
2. Were there any discussions about empathy when designing this experience? If so, what were they about?
3. Does this exhibit foster empathy? Why do you think that is important or not?
4. How would you define empathy within this experience?

Appendix B

Why and in what circumstances do program developers use immersion and emotion as a design strategy?

Theme	Description	Examples		
Experience	Mentions or discusses how immersion allows visitors to experience the past. Often used as a comparison to other methods.	<p><i>National Center for Civil and Human Rights</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The whole idea behind our exhibit here at the museum is to not just have you read something or not to have you look at pictures but for you to experience what the demonstrators or activists actually went through. You know yourself, being a student, you can sit and read all day long about something but if you can't take that experience or that knowledge that you have and associate it with what you're going through today or make it worthwhile to you today or to mean something to you, then it's just what I consider to be empty knowledge sitting around in your head. Not to say that's a bad thing, it's a very good thing, but the learning process, 	<p><i>Conner Prairie Historic Park</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It's just the whole visceral experience. You know we can talk about what it was like, but you know when you're standing out there in the dark, smelling the wood smoke, and hearing the coyotes, and hearing the gunshots, and you know then feeling safe when the Quakers, they you're among friends, you can lift your eyes, you can pick your head up when your neck's getting sore from everybody else saying "get your eyes down." That gives you a chance to experience it on a different level than what you learned in a book. To think more about what it was really like, I think as a living history museum, we felt that even before we were doing Follow the North Star, if we 	<p><i>Canadian Immigration Museum at Pier 21</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The intent was to give the kids the experience of immigrating themselves because for a lot of the participants, they've never personally immigrated, so trying to get them to understand the processes of immigration as well as a little bit of the emotional impact that immigration can have; the stress, the uncertainty, and so on, frustration at times with the immigration system.

		<p>to me, is more than just reading and understanding, it's also experiencing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He knew that what those protestors went through was a way to get visitors a sense of what it might have been like. 	<p>could get people to experience history on that physical level, you know of whether it's really milking a cow or churning butter or walking through the dark not knowing who you're going to encounter next, it's, it makes you think about things in a different way.</p>	
Humanize/"de-fictionalize"	<p>Statements about how immersion and emotion humanizes the people of the past; makes the people more real rather than characters in a story.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We're all you know "it doesn't bother me because it's not affecting me because it's happening on the other side of the world" attitude. You know, suddenly you begin to see "wow" this does affect me because I just ate that Hershey Bar and there was some 7 year old kid on a plantation in Africa picking the cocoa beans so, living in a hut, so it does kind of connect everything, and um, that's the whole idea behind the center. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's a visceral connection to the past, that real people had these horrible experiences that most people happily never have now. • They are able to think a little bit more about what it was really like for that person and I think one of the things that it does is help people remember that those were real people. I think sometimes when you read a history book, it, for some people it's like reading a novel, it's made up people you know. "Yea, they didn't really live did they? or "it wasn't that bad". Um, but when you got this kind of immersive experience that just helps you understand a little bit more about what it would have been like for that person. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It helps to I would say it helps to humanize the immigration experience, I said a lot of our participants have never immigrated. Often times they are quite young, they've never really left home so it'd be difficult for them to grasp what it feels like to just pack up and leave. Leave everything you've know and go to someplace completely new and hopefully in the immigration simulation they can start to understand a little bit of that feeling. Which can make them a bit more sympathetic to the experience of immigrants.
Greater Impact	<p>Statements about how immersion has a stronger</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's really a profound experience for them, and that they recommend it to their friends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's a whole other level of education and internalization to our visitors.... They just have 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being able to participate in this sort of experience tends

	<p>impact on the visitor.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience stays with the visitor longer. 	<p>and family and we get great word of mouth so on that level I think it has had that impact.</p>	<p>to internalize it. You can't go through the program and be unaffected.</p>	<p>to create longer lasting memories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immersive programs tend to stick better with our visitors. • It tends to hit people on more of an emotional level and therefore creates a more lasting impact.
Personal Insight	<p>Mentions or discussions of how immersion or emotion allows the visitor to learn something about themselves.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He made this young man sit at the lunch counter and the young man sat there and put his hands on the counter, and the conversation went on with his peers, I can see him take one hand and slowly form a fist which meant that what was going on what he was feeling had an effect on him and hopefully you know, maybe somewhere down the line, one of these 16, 17, even these 10 or 12 year olds will say "wow, I remember the lunch counter and I am going to stand up for this cause because it's the right cause and I not going to let this go on again" sort of thing. • A lot of times when people get up, they say "I would have never done that, I would have fought back, I could have never let somebody throw dishes at 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think it made a person look at themselves differently and their reactions to other people. When you watch a movie, you don't have that feeling of fear, or that feeling or the smells of the fall air or the spring rain. And you don't [unintelligible] and you never get that feeling of what should I do "oh my gosh, should I go back, or should I go forward? And then they remember. That strong emotional impact. • They come in here thinking I'm a tough independent person, you know, I can stand up for myself, and yet we turn them in to groveling, you know they put their eyes down, they won't look up, you know. And inside of minutes you know, we beat that independence kind of tough process out of them and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think it's very important that kids get that sort of feeling; what it's like to feel alienated and singled out because they probably haven't had much experience with those kind of feelings before.

		<p>me, or pour hot coffee on me" and you know, they'll start to talk about it and you know we'll tell them "you know, that's not true, because if you went to a lunch counter, if you were part of that demonstration, if you were going there to sit in at Woolworth's, you were already in the mindset that you were going to sit there until you got served, regardless of what happened." And they would have done the same thing those demonstrators would have done. And many of them say "yea, I guess you're right". And then some say, "okay, well I guess I just wouldn't have gone because I would have fought back."</p>	<p>people I think are surprised to learn that they do that. That they give in, that they think they're above that and yet they are put in that position and there they are. So I don't think you can get that from a program that's not an immersion type program. I think you learn a lot about yourself.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We had a girl that looked older, but it turned out was only 13 whose mother refused to leave her, "if you're keeping her, you're keeping me", and later on they sent a note, they talked about it in debriefing, but then sent a note after the experience, you know the girl said "mom, I didn't know how much you loved me until you weren't going to leave me." Yea, we had a group of police cadets that came through the program once, and there was one woman in the group and so they guys walked out and left her and that was a big part of their debriefing, talking about how you know they had been talking and all their training is how you never leave a partner behind and they just walked 	
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			<p>out and left her. You know, I think that was a reminder for the, that it's one thing to talk about things and act in a fake setting, but what happens in real life.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • And so, what we're doing is exposing and again, I think this is really good for people to go through it and learn "I never thought I would do that, I never thought I was like that" because we do always almost always, it's an us and them dynamic somewhere in our lives. And that's what we have to control and not fall victim to. You can't control it if you don't understand it. 	
More Effective Teaching	Discussions and statements around how immersive experiences allow for better learning opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is one very colorful way to get that emotional engagement and that's why this was successful because it really engages by using sensory engagement of the emotions, and with emotional engagement people are into the exhibit, they've forgotten other things and they're focused on it and that'll bring them up to learning. That pedagogy, there's enormous pedagogical possibilities with exhibitions if their done correctly and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some people are more empathetic than others but there is a, I think a, our emotion and our cognition work together and this is an example where, for the most part, of our emotional learning is not really considered in school or learning in general but it is an important part of our learning and I think this takes that into account • I think you learn some things on a whole different level when you're really physical about it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trying to just talk about how people are treated as opposed to showing them how they were being treated at the time, I find is a much more affective technique. Talking about immigration in the same time period and it's because I try to cover a lot in just the time allotted for that program that I find it very hard to get across how very differently people would be treated at the time whereas

		<p>interactives ability like this, and in the world of interactives</p>	<p>It's like learning a skill. If I'm learning how to spin, I can watch all the YouTube videos I want, until I get my hands on that wool, they're not really going to know how to do it. I can talk about history but you know, when you're hearing gunshots in the dark and you're hearing the coyotes that you know, we can't control, uh and not knowing what's coming next, you're thinking about what it was really like.</p>	<p>this activity really drives home the differences not only just in class but also in gender and ethnicity at the time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It appeals to different learning styles as well, someone that might not do very well listening to a lecture or reading exhibit panels, when they're being told that they suddenly told that they have to come up with a story about who they are and why they are immigrating to Canada and answer these sort of questions on the fly, now all of a sudden they are much more engaged, they are much more interested • I'd say the key benefits are that it appeals to different learning styles, that and it becomes a bit more about a tactile physical activity you have to walk around, going to the ticket counter and the Canadian border and so forth and so on, so you get people up and out of their chairs.
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<p>Better Understanding</p>	<p>Statements about how the visitors gains a better understanding of the experiences or feelings of different groups of people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There's such a disconnect between a 17 year old today and something that happened 50 or 60 years ago. There's teenagers that are like "yea, that was too long ago, that doesn't affect me" attitude, and but when you actually sit there and notice what's going and when you finish with the experience, your teacher or your mentor or whoever your with even if it's with another gallery assistant says to you "you know, they went through is the reason you can walk anywhere in the United State and get a Big Mac", you know, suddenly it hit home. • It's on events, not so much on people, but on events that were um, turning points in the civil rights movement, events that shook the nation, events that opened eyes of the world, and the lunch counter, the sit ins were one of those events that just kind of opened up everybody's eyes and the treatment that the protestors had, to encounter just kind of makes everybody stand up and go "wow, really?" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We've had people come in because we do the debriefing at the end and have people come in and say "you know, I've read about slavery but I didn't really know what it was like" you know, and we can remind them that they still don't really know what it's like. Uh, but we know more about it, you know, it's not when they read books or watched roots or something like that. Because you've had a little more of that experience than you've had up to that point.: They are able to think a little bit more about what it was really like for that person. • We've had several of those people that said you know, "yea I was in tears, but I'm glad I did it". So you know everybody experiences those kind of semi-traumatic things in different ways and I think it's a good way to have more empathy, like you mentioned in your questions and ways to think about things differently. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certainly not everyone will be able to relate to the idea of unfairness with immigration or bias based on skin tone. Or, you know political affiliation or sexual orientation or things like that. Not everyone had those problems. So this idea of immersive, putting you in the shoes of someone's who's experienced it, I think is incredibly useful. • And it's all very easy to talk about that but that doesn't necessarily stick with the visitor. Whereas in this program, you really do feel those emotions, you might be stuck waiting in line for several minutes before you get the chance to go speak with the immigration agents, you might be getting frustrated with how slow the system is, you might get frustrated when the person ahead of you is being treated much better than you are and you don't know the reason why. And we found that very helpful when we have groups that doing both the immigration
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Dark Emotions	<p>Responses to the question "what kind of emotions are you trying to elicit?" in regards to each case study program or exhibit. The responses reference the darker emotions such as anger and fear as opposed to lighter happier emotions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There's a shock, a shock, um there's a little bit of fear, a little bit of scared. You know, the way the script was scripted there's a drama to it, there's an intensity, they're are hateful people that are in your ear telling things pretty offensively. • I think the whole exhibit is trying to bring about awareness, um, and it can take people to a very dark place, um as part of that awareness. But it has to take you there in order to become aware of what these demonstrators went through and the sacrifices that they made 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well, I think we wanted the fear, the uncertainty, also you have hopefulness. I have compared it before to being on a roller coaster. If you're going downhill all the time, that doesn't work. You've got to go uphill sometimes too to make it all work. And I think that alternating of you know feeling hopeful then being scared again and then feeling hopeful, kind of keeps things moving. • The "I get to decide" the control over even your family members. I mean, we look at the groups and we're looking for husbands, wives, boyfriends, girlfriends, kids, and more, and we're going over that immediate separation because you pull them apart and that automatically creates tension and then when they try 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frustration is one of them, we do want some of them getting feeling kind of frustrated about how this is working and especially how some people are being treated better than other. Also, feelings of stress as well, just sometimes they're, I'm asking them some questions and they're trying to immigrate to Canada and they've got to think on their feet and they're going "well if I get the wrong answer and I won't get in" and all of a sudden they realize how important these questions are and these answers are to the questions. • Anger, frustration, fear, uncertainty, it's, we want kids to get out of their comfort zone and depending

			<p>to look around to see the person you separated from because they're concerned, they're worried about them, but we jump them and start screaming at them that it's none of their business.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • And we want them, we want them conflicted about what they, we put them in positions intentionally where some of the choices are between themselves and somebody else. Uh, even themselves and a family member. 	<p>on the age level that will be shown in different ways. With older kids, the idea, especially junior high and that level, getting kids out of their comfort zone is having kids feel singled out or isolated or attention drawn to them can be very uncomfortable.</p>
Emotion is Necessary	<p>Responses to the question "is there ever a time something shouldn't be emotional?" that state that emotion should always be present in exhibits or programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I guess fundamentally I would say no. I mean my experience in, I mean you want emotional, like I mentioned, you really want emotional engagement with the material. If you don't figure out creative ways to get emotionally engagement with your visitors, you're probably not going to succeed in having that mean something to them, especially after they leave there. So yea, we want emotional involvement and engagement, but one needs to be very careful in the way they go about making that emotional involvement or engagement, or else it could be 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well I think it's more a question of how emotional do you make it? But I think on a daily basis, I think that's a key point of good story telling, that you've got an emotional response of some kind. Uh, so even if we're talking about, you know, going out to milk the cow, you know whether it's a funny story about it or talking about the time the cow stepped on your foot, you're still bringing emotion into it. So I think as a first person interpreter is something we do every day. It's just deciding, not whether you are going to bring emotion in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lot of it will depend upon the participants themselves, whether they're students or adults or so on. For in some cases for more abstract concepts emotion can be helpful in trying to link the whole thing together. Or if you're talking about something that is, that perhaps not action packed.

		<p>seen as gratuitous or [unintelligible] in a way that is not respectful of the story the history and the people who live through, went through it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sometimes I think when you are learning something and it's a life lesson and emotions play a big part of that. And whatever it is, if it's the lunch counter experience, it it's a life lesson on economy or health. You want some kind of emotion to be attached to that so that that life lesson sticks with you. 	<p>to, but how far you are going to go in to it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You try to find the interest of the person who is coming into the door and you try and make connections based on the what you see they are looking at and what they are talking about and what they are asking about and although it's not that intense emotional feeling that you get from fear or um, excitement. It is an emotional connection of interests. So I think you probably always have some emotional content or want some type of emotional content or connection. Um, it's just the difference would be one that is less low key. This one is extremely intense. 	
Strategic Design	Discussions of the processes or techniques used to elicit emotional responses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The thing that is really the most engrossing part is the audio, um and all of it matters but the use of three-dimensional audio in this way is what made it most unique. • Then you hear somebody say "get up" you know, and they're all male voices, and it's loud, and it's in your ear, and you hear dishes slamming and falling and crashing, and then somebody says "I'm going to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We separate the men and the women and you know, when you first out there in the woods, there's a bunch of big scary guys and their telling spouses or parents and children, "no you can't stand next to each other and hang on to each other, you have to stand apart from each other. We're going to put the women over here and the men over here" and you don't necessarily 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I would say that the differing levels of treatment afforded to the potential "immigrants" does tend to create an emotional experience. So, some people are being treated with a great deal of suspicion, that being told in no uncertain terms "we don't want your kind here", and being given excuses as to why we shouldn't let them in that to

		<p>stab you in the neck with a fork if you don't get up" you know, and then your chair moves again, so the WHOLE exhibit is about emotions, you know. Getting those emotions really high. You have people turning around like "who's standing behind me?" and there's no one there. It's just that dramatic.</p>	<p>you can't see real well what's going on so that's stressful.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We used to grab some of them and take them back and separate them from the groups, again very much designed to that doubt. We took somebody from your group, nobody stood up and tried to save them and they may never be coming back you know. So those are the ones I think of the most, I think. • When they talk about the one character, I call him the "everyman" character who complains that everything in his life that went bad is their fault you know, it's like "do we do that today" and "who do we do that to today" and we get different examples and we look to the visitors to give us those examples. • The evening program is a little more intense just because of being out there in the dark and we've switched up a couple of characters from the daytime to the night time. 	<p>modern ears sound blatantly absurd.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • And again, they'll ask, welcome them, ask the color of their bracelet, and treat them in various ways depending on the color of the bracelet. Some will get into Canada, some will be sent back, and some will be held in a detention area off to the side, that case might be revisited or you might be deported back across our ocean as it were.
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What are the issues and challenges in using emotion as an interpretive tool?

Theme	Description	Examples		
Historically Accurate	<p>Discussions or statements about how the programs/exhibits are historically accurate or grounded in history. Found mostly in responses regarding the mitigation of trivialization.</p>	<p><i>National Center for Civil and Human Rights</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To doing it in a non-gratuitous matter, making sure it's historically accurate, you know if we do this right we need to make sure that visitors don't feel that we're treating the material and the experience of those people who went through that or participated in the movement would be disrespected. • But at the same time, you know if you take that young person and we have a video that goes along with this that actually shows real footage, of the sit ins and once they see that video and read a couple of paragraphs, the understanding is there. 	<p><i>Conner Prairie Historic Park</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We take our history seriously, we're constantly reading and updating our information, and we're getting training. • Because you really want it to be well founded in Indiana history and not just in a loopy goosy Underground Railroad history which is what the camp was doing. Their main point was to talk about prejudice with 4th graders, you know. We wanted it to have deeper research and really tell an Indiana story like a lot of other programs at Conner Prairie. 	<p><i>Canadian Immigration Museum at Pier 21</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because they're, at a certain point you do also have to and they have to realize that this is a simulation it's a game and that we're not, it's not that we don't like them, it's just that we're playing a role as are the students. And our responses as immigration agents and ticket agents are being shaped by the historical facts. Sometime students have difficulty grasping that and they start taking it personally that they are not being allowed into Canada. • Nova Scotia have become increasingly diverse as the years go by so certainly being aware of who the students in your group are, who might potentially be recent immigrants or not, and if you're discussing a cultural group that they belong to, being mindful of that and in those

				<p>cases, or in any description of the immigration policy you have to be very, factual and clinical in your explanation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We can show real examples, we have copies of the Chinese head tax and things like that in our exhibit so we often give students a chance to try and figure out on their own and look using the exhibit material, using real world examples who these people are.
Visitor Reactions	<p>Discussions about issues involves with visitor reactions during the exhibits or programs particularly related to challenges of the sites.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well we kind of anticipated the fact that visitors that would show a lot of emotions. We anticipated that um, there would be tears because that was the purpose, not to make people cry, but just to make people aware. And making people aware we have some very high emotions. We also have on the other side of that spectrum the fact because young people, there is such a disconnect, you may get a giggle. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • And it probably would go back to the extreme where a guest is extremely agitated then they're kind of pulled aside because mostly it becomes intimidating there are at least two people. And one person can pull them out and keep them from the group and come back into the present, and say "I need you to remember that it's 2015, or 2016 at this point" and um "we are in a program, this is where you are, I need you to get a grip of what's going on and try to take the time you need to take" and offer you an opportunity to be pulled out and go back to the front and wait for the rest of the group. • We've had people that react poorly with certain of us have 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well there's always the danger that they might get too emotionally invested into it. • With, also the emotional reaction would be the other thing to look for. I have not witnessed it personally, of kids not being able to do the activity because they get so upset, occasionally I will have children that will be refused a ticket to get across the ocean and they'll go and sit down. Either their frustrated or disengaged. That can happen sometimes.

			<p>been attacked by visitors. Again, we are pushing psychological buttons, everybody reacts uh, well and I mean some people lose control.</p>	
Escape	<p>Statements or discussions about the inclusion of an escape mechanism in the exhibits or programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the 30 second mark, when you're sitting there if your hands are still down, when you lift your hands up you, the piece stops, the audio stops and you've lasted 30 seconds. But if you keep your hands down, at the 30 second mark, there is in the seat, there is a kicker which feels like your being jostled. And part of the audio is like "hey! Get up! Get up! Get up!" and then you feel the seat that you're in, the stool that you're on move. It jerks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We give the white headband so that they can pull it out and put it on their head and then we will move them outside of the group and they can watch but they don't get picked on anymore. So they're kind of on the outside looking in, but they still get to participate from that perspective. But they have to tell us, they have to put the headband on and we'll move them out. They do have what we call "white head bands" that they can put around their heads when they are out going through the experience so the interpreter or actor at that point does not see them. And so there is no direct conversation with them, it promises they are not even there so they can stand aside and observe rather than participate. And that it is an escape for them. The other possibility is that they let 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We always have sort of a built in safety valve when we explain the program, saying "during this you may become overly emotional or might be [concerned?]" and that's fine, that's expected. "If you want to take a moment and walk around and cool your head or go get a drink of water or that sort of thing, that's fine".

			<p>someone know, which would be the plant, um and there's a way the plant does without letting them know that they if they need to stop the program and head back to the front, they can take care of that. So there is an out, an escape, for them in two different ways. So I think that's what helps.</p>	
Audience Awareness	<p>Discussions or statements about being aware of your participants' emotional states or their backgrounds. Also references reading your audience and making adjustments as needed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lot of times we have young people who have heard about the lunch counter and are eager to sit there but only because their friends told them something like "oh, you better so sit at the lunch counter because you know, they going to start fighting and blah blah blah blah" and then you say, but "before you sit down, let me explain what this was or about and watching this video because this is video is what's going to happen." And then their emotions change and you see that 12 year old suddenly become a little bit more mature so they can actually sit there and handle what they are about to hear and experience. • It also helps because we can prepare that visitor for what they're about to hear, what they're about to experience. So I 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the things we do before we go on the grounds, we meet, we have a briefing. We know how many groups are coming out that night. Sometimes depending how the tickets were sold, we know where the groups are coming from. Uh, we know from experience and this is going to sound weird, but we get old order groups like German Baptists, Amish, Mennonites, those type of groups. And you know, they're very tight, cliquish organization, and when we get them on the grounds, we need to make them participate to get them to participate, our interaction with them is totally different than say a regular hodgepodge of people off the street because that's the way they're built. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • So certainly being aware of who the students in your group are, who might potentially be recent immigrants or not, and if you're discussing a cultural group that they belong to, being mindful of that and in those cases, or in any description of the immigration policy you have to be very, factual and clinical in your explanation. • I guess it's you kind of make it up as you go along because every group is different, every group of kids is different, and every child is different in a certain group or class or what have you. So as you're delivering this program you always have to be cognizant of who's sitting on the other side of the table from you, and to make decisions along the way as to are they, do they understand this is a game?

		<p>think it's the whole orientation that they have for. The fact that people there are so open and receptive that you know, if you don't understand something, or if you want to discuss and exhibit, if you have a question there's somewhere there that can answer that for you</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the things that happens at the first site, you know, is we're doing a lot of reading there, you know, what are these people, what's their problem, why are they not doing what we need them to do, how can we address that, and we usually have anywhere from 3-5 people at that first, 3-5 workers at that first stop working on it. And we talk, while we're walking between people we're dealing with, we're talking to each other and kind of point things out. We also have radios, we radio to the people who are down the line from us and we suggest, hey "this thing's going on, "this person will try to describe people and say they're having a problem, or you know whatever. Whatever we can tell. • Even on a daily basis. We're responding to guest questions, we have a training program we call "Opening Doors" and uh, so we, we're reading cues all the time and I think that's vastly important for programs like this. It's not reciting your lines of a particular character but it's 	<p>Are they taking this personally? And so you can cater your responses a little bit more.</p>
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			watching that group and responding and listening to the comments you get, you know, during the discussion that you have with them on your post and responding appropriately for the character that you are.	
Language	Discussions or mentions about how the site uses language or decisions regarding the use of language in their exhibit or program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You know, I've lived in Atlanta for a while and some of the feedback, most of the feedback, the negative feedback was that the accents didn't seem authentic. So we had to find different voice actors, I mean seriously that was true. Um, it sounded like people in Queens pretending to be from Mississippi which [unintelligible because I'm stupidly giggling] it was made in New York. There's no profanity used in it, um. I'm sure that you know the N word was used constantly, but it's not used at the lunch counter at the center. These types of things and the lack of profanity, maybe it does take away from the intensity that these gentlemen actually experienced, but at the same time it takes it down to a level that, that the 13 year old can sit there and feel something as well at that 75 year old sit there and recall something 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We chose not to use the "N" word, that was part of the discussion with the advisory group and there are some people that say that was part of history and if you're going to talk about history, you should use the language. Yea well so were beatings and we're not going to do that. We kind of put that in the same category. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tone as well, during both the shipping agent interview and the actual immigration interview, based on the color the bracelet, we'll be treating children differently. But that's, that is the line that was used 100 years ago so we do use it as well. We do try to stick with the rationale of the time of why some people should be allowed in and why some people shouldn't be allowed in. Obviously keeping it within the bounds of politeness as well.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I mean, one specific thing, George Wolfe specifically didn't want to use the word "nigger" in the course of the piece, although he felt that, that word was use ALL the time, especially on the protestors. And one reason we didn't want to use it is an incendiary. And that's important but also equally important ant is it causes people to shut down and also people sitting at the counter weren't all coming to our counter, in the exhibit, aren't often African American so once you start using that word you've also start automatically kind of made it, if I'm a white person and I just sit there and I hear that word used, on one level I'm going to sit there and think "this wasn't meant for me, I'm not part of this". 		
Complaints	<p>Statements and discussions about the most common complaints from visitors across the three sites. Most common are:</p> <p><i>Too mild/intensity</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We did have a couple gentlemen who were actually part of the sit ins who thought it was a little too mild because the experience, their experience was so much more than that, it was a lot worse than what we actually have there. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I would say if we got any complaints it would be primarily been African Americans that it's not intense enough. • I would say there are some people that want it more intense, some of it's the 8th graders that want it to be the downhill rollercoaster all the time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most of the ones I've had tend to be in the form of "we wish we had a little bit more time to do this" or sometimes "it was too long, the kids were starting to lose interest". • Other than it's horribly unfair to most of them? We've had to look at, in terms of just keeping students occupied, once they are there, they arrive in Canada

	<i>Timing</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some of them, for whatever reason, felt, they felt like we didn't get it right. And that comes in a whole variety of versions, you know. They think the people who went through this would have been more assertive, would have stood up for their rights, and would have fought back because they outnumber us. (Not a theme but interesting point!). • The biggest complaint is that they wanted it to go longer. Or they wanted it to be even harder than it was. I think oftentimes those were the high school aged students and they're wanting, they have to be crawling on the ground on their bellies and running over the hills and all the um, it seems to be the adrenaline of what's going on, I think that's been the kind of thing that they enjoy and they want it to go longer than it did. 	there's not much for kids in Canada to do. And so simply keeping students occupied so they don't get bored, you know "idle hands are the devil's playthings" and all that.
Design Feedback	Statements regarding activities and the process of getting feedback during the design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • George had done plays and got Tony awards, he knows what audiences can, he has an idea of what audiences can and can't take, or what they should and shouldn't take. And you know, and then it was reviewed by us, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well I think that was again where the advisory groups were useful. They brought their own perspectives and but also said this is what we think people in the community, how they're going to respond to it. 	N/A

	states of the program.	<p>the clients, and it was how like, you know, the clients on our side, were African American some were white, it's like you know, it was reviewed completely within the team, within the center, the script, the rough cut, and it's like "hey there's something in the" feedback that to those two members seems wrong. But yea there was a review in-house amongst the diversity of colleagues as to how this registered with them and yea it, yea you know, it worked.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No, we didn't focus group or anything like that. A, we didn't have the timeline that would afford that frankly with all the time frame. We did do a mock-up of the lunch counter that, in the exhibit world, we had a fabricator who built all the exhibits and we also had a systems integrator for our project and the fabricator was also able to provide services as the AV integrator so we did do a mock-up at their shop. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think referring back to the first time when they had the organizations go through, they wanted to have their input to have that... is it appropriate, is it inappropriate, do we need to soften, do we need to harden this? And I think doing those dry runs and figuring out how to work and how to respond to a lot of that feedback. they worked with psychologists in developing the program. I think there is a understanding of this program from some in the field that it might be, you know, an irresponsible program to invite people to think as if they are runaway slaves. Um, but I think Conner Prairie had done their homework and people can argue against the notion, certainly there a lot of black folks that don't want to do this program and I completely understand that. 	
Age	Discussions or statements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well there's an age limit on it first of all. It's not recommended for anybody under the age of 10. If you get that young person and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The evening program for adults, we try to discourage anybody under the age of 12 for that. We really leave that up to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> So you do have to be careful in some cases, especially if you do have younger students, sometimes the younger grades,

	referencing participants' ages	often we do, and the parent is with them, you will see that parent having a discussion with them, before they sit at the lunch counter and you will see that parent stand next to them during their experience and then talking to them after their experience.	the parent's for that, there's even some 12 year olds that are older that probably shouldn't come to that. But the day-time program is a little less intense and it's for schools but they both start the same way, you show up, you get in your group, you get an orientation	if they were doing this program, sometimes they might not always grasp that this is a simulation we're doing it for an hour or so on and it's over. I personally have not experience that too much because this program is really designed for grade 7s, the youngest participants we sort of get for this are in grade 6, maybe in some cases in grade 5, but not much younger than that. So this is not a program that someone would want to do with a kindergarten class or a grade 3 class. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well certainly the amount of clues we give. With younger participants we'll have many different clues to help them figure out what country their color bracelet represents with adults we might have one or two or none at all. Terms of the debriefing that follows after the simulation is done, we might get into greater detail of particular immigration policies with adults. With younger children we try and keep things a bit broader.
Debrief	Statements or discussions what resources are	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> So there's not right after the experience because it's right in the middle of the Civil Rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> they come back into the welcome center, at night we have a couple more debriefers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We'll sit the kids down and we've got a couple of different tools we use. In some cases we

	<p>available for visitors after participating in the program or exhibit.</p>	<p>exhibit but when one is done going through all the galleries there's comment cards at the information desk at the front of the museum where visitors can leave feedback, they can ask a visitor's service for e-mail address if they want to send comments to any of the staff members and periodically we do surveys.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is um someone at the lunch counter at all times. Um, just so that you know, you can hand someone that box of tissue or you can get that 15 year old who starts giggling up before someone's feeling get hurt because their laughing, so you can comfort that 75 year old lady who was there. Um, someone to listen because a lot of times, all they want you to do is hear their story. Or you can explain to that child what they just heard and show them the video. So there's someone at the lunch counter at all times. 	<p>so we can spend a little more time with each group, you know another 20 or 30 minutes with the two groups. We they may ask some leading questions just to get conversations started but then they'll go where the group wants to. Uh, and [unintelligible] they've had questions about the history, they have questions about how we developed the program, why did we develop the program, kind of the conversation that you and I have had uh, we've had discussions about what it's like for the interpreters, to be out there like, to be, being the bad guys. How do they feel about that?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think it's crucial, for the visitors themselves I think it's important. We have a few people that leave without going through that. Uh, I think they miss an opportunity. They're going to hear different comments from other people in their group, and their group may have not been a homogenous group, they may have been a collection of 	<p>get them to mark down on a chart their level of satisfaction with the immigration practice using the color of their bracelets. That way we can look and see "well the yellow bracelets, they all seem to enjoy themselves. Blue bracelets, not very much" and that serves as a spring board in the question of where people are coming from. We want to try and get the kids to talk a little bit about how they felt at the end of this. You know, did you enjoy this? Do you think this was fair? Do you think the system worked well? And then we go through color by color and pick out the relevant facts about them. What sort of questions did we ask them, for example. Because different colors got different questions. What sort of replies did the immigration officials give? And they try and guess where these people are coming from.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once we go through that then that leads into a discussion over, "well how does this compare to the immigration system today?" "Do you think that the system was fair 100 years ago?" "Why was it not fair?" "Do you think
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different people from all over the place and so that, that just continues the whole, "wow, I never thought of that" approach to this experience. You get to see a whole lot of different views about the same thing that everybody just went through and they can't, that's got to be good.

- I think it's really important for them to have the opportunity. First of all allow them some time to sit there and slow down. Um, especially if they've been angered while they are out there on the grounds. Coming and slowing down for that person it's much better than getting in their car and taking off driving.

it's like this today?" and that will lead to a bit of a discussion, relatively short compare and contrast with the point system we use today, and how today you're not being judged by the color of your skin but the content of your character, to paraphrase Martin Luther King, it's you're being judged on your education, your knowledge of languages, what work experience you have, all that sort of thing, but it doesn't take into account what color your skin is. So it's a colorblind system.

- Step by step we'll go through each color and ask, "How was your journey?" "How were you treated?" "How long was your journey?" Things like that, trying to get the kids to explain what their experience was like. Sometimes their leading questions or helping them get to where we're trying to get. And then I ask the student groups what country they think they are representing or if kids are shy at the start asking the whole group what country they think this is. And hopefully we'll get there if not, we'll have to reveal it. But

				we'll talk about, for example Britain, why those favorable conditions allowed them to come to Canada, why we saw them as the ideal immigrant during that time period, etc. etc.
Staff Preparation	Discussions about how the institutions prepare their staff to facilitate these programs. <i>-Experience it themselves</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I know that the people, people experience it - visitor services people experience it themselves and that they have conversations with our educators about ways to talk about and ways to deal with visitors after they experience it if the visitor wants something like that. Before you actually start doing things, they actually have to sit at the lunch counter, um so that we can have our own emotions about the lunch counter and then that somewhat prepares you for what you're going to experience when you're standing there with visitors to know what they're going to hear. It also helps because we can prepare that visitor for what they're about to hear, what they're about to experience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We train and we retrain every year. Every season, we have two seasons a year and before we start, we get together and retrain. Not only going through what we do, what presentation we do, and we actually see what everybody else does, uh if you haven't done it before, they make you go through the program as though you're a visitor, with groups of visitors, and that goes all the way back. I went through as a participant before I ever worked the program. So you are seeing it from the other side, what might be going through these people's heads. So you can, you can kind of prepare for what somebody might think or say or do, or how they perceive it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well during our training, we did do the immigration simulation amongst the staff members so we've all experienced being on the other side of the desk as well. Now of course we're coming in and doing at employees here so we have a little bit more background knowledge than most students. But you still experience many of the same feelings of frustration and so on, you just have a better understanding of what we're trying to do. I found that can be very helpful that I can share stories like "well I remember when I was this colored bracelet and what it was like" and the more you deliver the program, the more, the more proficient you get at being able to see potential trouble spots, that teens or students that might be having more difficulty with the emotional component of it and being able to recognize what

				<p>steps might be taken to help that situation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well as part of general staff training as interpreters we take a look at different kinds of learners, different age groups, what their needs and expectations are, how they deal with social situations and settings.
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What are the outcomes you are designing for, and specifically what role does empathy have?

Theme	Description	Examples		
		<i>National Center for Civil and Human Rights</i>	<i>Conner Prairie Historic Park</i>	<i>Canadian Immigration Museum at Pier 21</i>
Contemporary issues	Discussions or statements about relating the experience to contemporary social issues today.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No, we don't. You know it's part of an exhibit about a historical event and it is what it is for the exhibit and we don't do anything different with it. • You walk out of that room, and now you're on the level for human rights which is global, um, and you walk into a room with music and if you sit in that room, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the things that we often talk about specifically is that, you know, modern slavery and human trafficking and letting people know that there are more people enslaved in the world today than there were in 1836. Um, and that if we admire the people that fought for their freedom, that we admire the abolitionists that 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We do try to tie it into, into the current notion of immigration. Not, I mean we have to be careful because we're a Crown Museum we're a National Museum and as such we can't be overly political. So, for example, during our recent federal election, people were asking us all sorts of questions about Syrian refugees coming in

		<p>you don't just see the images on the screens as they change but you have to hear it um, it's a room where you have to use all your senses to get the message. And the 3rd floor was done by an artist so it's very artistic. So you walk out of the civil rights movement on the second floor and you climb up to the third floor and you enter an area that's global and you suddenly learn about human rights and you have people telling their stories from all over the world and you find out about how slavery laws and um, Hitler, and Mussolini, and [Yi Amin] are standing there in life size you know. You learn about LGBT and the things that are happening there and things that are happening in the Congo. Even disability act is represented up there. Um so, there's really no place. *laughter* But it is not going to have some sort of emotional reaction, Um, and you know and maybe depending on what your interest, what you're really interested in, um, we get tears coming out or people standing there with their mouths open in Human Rights because they have no idea.</p>	<p>helped them, we can do the same thing today. You know, we can help people get their freedom today because it still happens, and here's some ways to do that. Here's some organizations that are working towards that, that you can stand beside and help and they can change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We talk about the existence of slavery today. By many standards there's more slavery today than when all this was going on and so, yea. I think we do a lot to try and make people realize that it never stops. It only stops when we finally understand what we are and we control really the demons in our psyche. • So we started bring in the concept of stereotypes of groups. And with 9/11 we see all those things coming in. And we can take that back historically through the Chinese, through the Jews, and I don't even have to bring this up, I can just say "what other groups of people have had these kind of things happen to?" and they discuss that, going through this list of things 	<p>and we had to say "well we're going to have to see what happens." We couldn't really offer many opinions one way or another.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Often we will look at different groups coming from different places, we'll look at the impact of these different groups coming to Canada over time that helped shape Canada into the country it is today. We do often relate it back into the impact of immigration into Canada and the impact on immigration of these diverse groups coming. • We will often, sometimes we don't, kids often bring it up before we do, looking at refugee groups coming to Canada now. Or we do talk about modern immigration policy. We do often bring it into contemporary subject matter there. It depends of the age level of the group how in depth we get on that. It is a little tricky, we are a Crown Corporation so we operate on funds from the government but we can try and steer a little away you know from cutting edge modern decisions on policy and stuff like that. Although
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