

Place in Space: What Moving Means for a Museum's Identity

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Abstract

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The purpose of this study was to describe how staff perceived and understood their museum's institutional identity as their museum constructed a new building and moved to a new location. The research focused on how staff described their museum's identity, their role in the museum, and the impact of the change in architecture and location before, during and after the move. There was precedent to understand how these new facilities and moves were impacting these institutions. Current literature suggested that the co-creation of identity of institutions by staff was difficult to define. Literature also suggested that museums were finding that they needed to evaluate their identity to remain relevant. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with Executive Directors and focus group discussions at three museum sites. The results of this study suggested that staff understood the identity of their museum was connected to changes in physical visibility, changes in community connections, and changes related to mission and vision. This study also suggested that staff perceived that, during a move, their museum's identity was not stagnant, and even after the move, their museum's identity continued to change and shift. The limitations of this study included the small sample size and the geographic location of the sample museums.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Problem

In recent years, numerous museums have been changing their facilities and locations through large renovations and new construction. According to the Mid-Atlantic Association of Museums, who have held the Annual Building Museums Conference for the past several years, there has been precedent to pay attention to how museums have moved, why museums have moved, and how such moves impacted these museums.¹ One example of a museum that moved was the Nordic Museum in Seattle, Washington, relocated from its original home in the Daniel Webster Elementary School building. The new building was designed by architect Ralph Appelbaum, founder of Ralph Appelbaum Associates (RAA), one of the biggest museum design firms in the world. The Nordic Museum's new building was designed to be a community gathering space, useful for the whole Seattle community and a broader audience than they were previously serving. Their original name and space, the Nordic Heritage Museum in the Daniel Webster Elementary School building, provided the museum limited opportunities to engage with the whole Seattle community and beyond. For many museums like the Nordic, moving coincided with a reevaluation of mission and vision, and subsequently how the museum's staff viewed their museum's identity and role in the community during and after the period of transition into a new building and location. There has been limited research on the phenomenon of internal identity in museums and how staff understood their institution's identity and relevancy during periods of physical transformation.

¹ "Building Museums 2019," Mid-Atlantic Association of Museums, 2018, http://midatlanticmuseums.org/building-museums/registration_schedule/.

Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to describe how staff perceived and understood their museum's institutional identity as their museum constructed a new building and moved to a new location. There were three core research questions:

1. How do staff describe their museum's identity before the move, during the move, and now?
2. How do staff describe their role in the museum before the move, during the move, and now?
3. How does the museum's old and new building and location affect how staff describe it before the move, during the move, and now?

For the purposes of this study, "during the move" is characterized as the time in which direct planning, physically moving, and settling into the space was happening.

Significance

This study may be significant for any museum or cultural institution planning to design and construct a new building or move to a new location. It should help museums looking to relocate understand the ramifications of moving. This research will also add to an area of study that is quite limited, as little research had described the phenomena of museums who relocate into new facilities and how that process impacts the identity of the institution.

Literature

This research study drew on literature from four primary areas and was supplemented by literature on museum architecture. The three main literature areas were institutional identity,

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museum identity, and place identity. The literature on institutional identity and place identity was used most to guide the analysis.

Methodology

Two methods were used for this study: semi-structured interviews with Executive Directors, and focus group discussions with museum staff. Study participants came from a sample group of museums in Seattle that had moved into a new building in the last several years. These participants were the Nordic Museum (the Nordic), which moved into a new building in the spring of 2018, the Museum of History and Industry (MOHAI), which moved into a new building in 2012, and the Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture (the Burke), which moved into a new building in 2019. These three institutions were chosen because they are located in the same city and are in various stages of the moving process.

Specifically, sample participants included staff at the Nordic Museum, the Burke Museum, and MOHAI who currently worked at these museums and were also on staff during the time the museum moved. To develop the broadest sense of institutional identity based on staff's social construction, focus groups included staff from a breadth of departments in each institution. All three Executive Directors who were interviewed were also on staff when the museums moved to new buildings.

Background of Study Sites

The Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture is Washington State's natural and cultural history museum and is part of the University of Washington, meaning it is governed by the University's Board of Regents. The museum was founded in 1899 and moved to the northwest corner of the University of Washington's campus in 1964. The museum moved into a new purpose-designed museum building in January 2019 and will open to the public in October

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2019. The museum's mission is "The Burke Museum cares for and shares natural and cultural collections so all people can learn, be inspired, generate knowledge, feel joy, and heal." The museum's vision is "The Burke Museum inspires people to value their connection with all life – and act accordingly."²

The Nordic Museum was founded in Seattle, Washington's Ballard neighborhood in 1980 with the intention to "honor the legacy of immigrants from the five Nordic countries."³ The museum was housed in the Seattle School District's old Daniel Webster Elementary School building, which was nestled in a residential area of the Ballard neighborhood. In May of 2018, the museum moved into a purpose-built facility located on Market Street, a main thoroughfare in Ballard. With the move, the museum changed their name from the Nordic Heritage Museum to the Nordic Museum. The mission of the Nordic Museum is "The Nordic Museum shares Nordic culture with people of all ages and backgrounds by exhibiting art and objects, preserving collections, providing educational and cultural experiences, and serving as a community gathering place."⁴

The Museum of History and Industry, often referred to by its acronym MOHAI, was founded in 1952 and was Seattle's first history museum. The original museum was in the Montlake neighborhood in a mid-century designed building. In 2012, MOHAI moved into the newly renovated Naval Armory overlooking the waterfront in Seattle's South Lake Union neighborhood. MOHAI's mission is "By collecting and preserving artifacts and stories of the Puget Sound region's diverse history, MOHAI highlights our traditions of innovation and

² "About the Burke." 2015. Burke Museum. July 27, 2015. <http://www.burkemuseum.org/about>.

³ "About Us." Nordic Museum. 2019. <https://nordicmuseum.org/about>.

⁴ [Nordicmuseum.org](http://nordicmuseum.org)

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imagination. Through compelling exhibits, scholarship, education, public programs, and community engagement, MOHAI bridges the past, present, and future.”⁵

⁵ “MOHAI — Museum of History and Industry,” 2019. <https://mohai.org/>.

Chapter 2: Literature

The purpose of this study was to describe how staff perceived and understood their museum's institutional identity as their museum constructed a new building and moved to a new location. Four sections of literature were examined: 1) institutional identities, 2) museum identities, 3) place identities, and 4) museum architecture. The first section explored the frameworks for understanding how institutions built institutional identity through collective negotiation. The second section described the ways in which museums confirmed or developed their institutional identities. Section three analyzed the ways in which people and communities connected with, defined, and created places and assigned them identity and meaning. The final section discussed how the architecture of museums impacted how such institutions were experienced.

Institutional Identity

Institutional identity, also called organizational identity, was described as the collective understanding by staff and stakeholders of the aspects of an institution that make it unique or distinct.⁶ In "Forging an Identity: An Insider-Outsider Study of Processes Involved in the Formation of Organizational Identity," Dennis Gioia, Kristin Price, Aimee Hamilton, and James Thomas, described that "organization identity [can be conceptualized] as a potentially precarious and unstable notion, frequently up for redefinition and revision by organization members."⁷ Relatedly, in "Organizational Identity and Identification: Charting New Waters and Building New Bridges," Stuart Albert, Blake Ashforth and Jane Dutton Albert, et al. indicated that the

⁶Dennis Gioia, Kristin N Price, Aimee L Hamilton, and James B Thomas, "Forging an Identity: An Insider-outsider Study of Processes Involved in the Formation of Organizational Identity," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 55, no.1 (2010); Mary Jo Hatch and Majken Schultz, "The Dynamics of Organizational Identity," *Human Relations* 55, no.8 (2002); Stuart Albert, Blake E. Ashforth, and Jane E. Dutton. "Organizational Identity and Identification: Charting New Waters and Building New Bridges," *The Academy of Management Review* 25, no. 1 (2000): 13-17.

⁷ Gioia et al., 2010, 64.

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concept of institutional identity was amorphous, and it was often difficult to nail down a definition.⁸ Because identity was related to an institution's understanding of its place and how it interacted with the world, identity necessarily shifted as organizational structures shifted.⁹ Thus they acknowledged that an organization's identity was socially constructed, and particularly constructed by staff and stakeholders.¹⁰

In "The Dynamics of Organizational Identity," Mary Jo Hatch and Maiken Schultz articulated that organizations form their identities based on not only internal and staff forces, but also on external cultural forces that reflected back to the institution what the public saw.¹¹ They wrote, "Organizational members not only develop their identity in relation to what others say about them, but also in relation to who they perceive they are."¹² Gioia et al. came to a similar conclusion, indicating that organizations realized whom they were internally by also comparing their understanding of self to outside perceptions, which created a framework by which institutions in turn created their identity.¹³ As described by their earlier article, "Organizational Identity, Image, and Adaptive Instability," Dennis Gioia, Maiken Schultz, and Kevin Corley advanced that such identity creation through perceptions of others' views was called organizational image. Identity was formed through the image of self, i.e. perception, as opposed to physical reality or previously documented institutional intent.¹⁴

⁸ Albert et al., "Organizational Identity and Identification," 13-17.

⁹ Albert et al., 13.

¹⁰ Andrew Brown and Michael Humphreys, "Organizational Identity and Place: A Discursive Exploration of Hegemony and Resistance" *Journal of Management Studies* 43, no. 2 (2006): 231-57; Hatch and Schultz 2002; Gioia et al., 2010

¹¹ Hatch and Schultz, "The Dynamics of Organizational Identity," 997.

¹² Hatch and Schultz, 1000.

¹³ Gioia, et al., 2010, 23.

¹⁴ Dennis Gioia, Maiken Schultz, and Kevin Corley, "Organizational Identity, Image, and Adaptive Instability," *The Academy of Management Review* 25, no. 1 (2000): 63-81.

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According to Gioia et al. and Albert et al., institutions existed in a changing social and cultural landscape.¹⁵ New media sources and broader public dissemination of information meant that staff in institutions were more aware of the external perceptions of their institutions.¹⁶

Reflecting further on the way institutional identities were shaped, Hatch and Schultz wrote:

We claim that once organizational images are mirrored in identity they will be interpreted in relation to existing organizational self-definitions that are embedded in cultural understanding. When this happens, identity is reinforced or changed through the process of reflecting on identity in relation to deep cultural values and assumptions that are activated by the reflection process.¹⁷

Hatch and Schultz asserted that the creation of institutional identity was more than just the understanding and articulation of institutional image, or the outside views of the institution in conjunction with internal views.¹⁸ Rather, it was the continued consideration of both internal and external perceptions in conjunction with an understanding of values based on cultural norms.¹⁹

That made significant Michael Humphreys' and Andrew Brown's point in their article "Organizational Identity and Place: A Discursive Exploration of Hegemony and Resistance" when they said there were inconsistencies between what an organization hoped to be, their values, versus how external forces viewed them.²⁰ To put it all together, there could be significant conflict in the way internal staff viewed their institution, external views of this institution, and the goals an institution had for the way it was understood.²¹

Humphreys and Brown went on to narrow their scope from a broad analysis of institutional identity and develop a four-pathed way of understanding how individuals in

¹⁵ Gioia et al. 2010; Albert et al.

¹⁶ Hatch and Schultz, "The Dynamics of Organizational Identity," 990.

¹⁷ Hatch and Schultz, 1000.

¹⁸ Hatch and Schultz, 1003-1005.

¹⁹ Hatch and Schultz, 1005.

²⁰ Brown and Humphreys, "Organizational Identity and Place," 232.

²¹ Brown and Humphreys, 232.

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organizations, such as staff, related to their institutional identity.²² The four identified relationships between staff and institution included a positive impression of the relationship, a negative impression of the relationship, a “schizo-identification” or dichotomous impression of the relationship, and a neutral or indifferent impression of the relationship.²³

Like Humphreys and Brown, Gioia et al. also created a framework for how organizations developed their identity.²⁴ This framework focused on how new institutions formed identity, and suggested that organizations began with the lack of shared identity and the lack of understanding of how to get to where they wanted to be. Institutions then moved to trying, experimenting and relying on external feedback to inform identity.²⁵

Relatedly, internal crisis might have also played a role in the process through which institutions created their identity because, as mentioned by Robert Janes in his book *Museums and the Paradox of Change*, crisis, or upheaval, necessitated a reevaluation of identity.²⁶ Related to the concept of crisis as leading new institutional identities, Hatch and Schultz noted that external events “...motivate organizational members to get involved in issues that have the power to reduce public opinion of their organization.”²⁷ This idea related back to the concept that institutions understood pieces of their identity through external reflections.²⁸

Museums and Institutional Identity

Maria Laura Di Domenico's study, “Evolving Museum Identities and Paradoxical Response Strategies to Identity Challenges and Ambiguities: Changing Ethical Understandings

²² Brown and Humphreys, “Organizational Identity and Place,” 239.

²³ Brown and Humphreys

²⁴ Gioia et al, “Forging an Identity”, 2010.

²⁵ Gioia et al, 2010.

²⁶ Robert R. Janes, *Museums and the Paradox of Change*, (New York: Taylor and Francis, 2013)

²⁷ Hatch and Schultz, “The Dynamics of Organizational Identity, 999.

²⁸ Gioia et al., 2010.

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in the Handling of Human Remains,” focused on the changing internal identities of museums.²⁹ It related well to the concept of “schizo-identification” as described by Brown and Humphreys.³⁰ She indicated that many museums in the United Kingdom were facing an identity crisis because they held juxtaposing views about their role as institutions. Di Domenico indicated that such identity schisms happened broadly across a museum because of changing external expectations rather than at the individual staff level.³¹ This meant that museums felt they were both educators and purveyors of knowledge, and at the same time needed to respect all beliefs, which she suggested rather understatedly could sometimes be in opposition.³²

Di Domenico articulated that museums needed to respond to change in order to develop appropriately. Encompassed in this was the necessity to continue to evaluate their viability over time.³³ This confirmed what Gioia et al. have indicated, that institutional identity changed and was redefined by staff and internal organizational structures.³⁴ Such evaluation of viability also related to new practices in the museum field where museums worked to be more culturally relevant, and through which museums' relationship to the community were redefined.. This is described by Vikki McCall and Clive Gray in their article “Museums and the ‘New Museology’: Theory, Practice and Organizational Change.”³⁵

Adding to the concept that museums must respond and change, Stephen Weil in his article “From Being about Something to Being for Somebody: The Ongoing Transformation of

²⁹ Maria Laura Di Domenico, "Evolving Museum Identities and Paradoxical Response Strategies to Identity Challenges and Ambiguities: Changing Ethical Understandings in the Handling of Human Remains," *Journal of Management Inquiry* 24, no. 3 (2015): 300-17.

³⁰ Di Domenico, 2015; Humphreys and Brown, 2002

³¹ Di Domenico, “Evolving Museum Identities,” 300-17.

³² Di Domenico, 307.

³³ Di Domenico, .309

³⁴ Gioia et al., 2000.

³⁵ Vikki McCall and Clive Gray, "Museums and the ‘new Museology’: Theory, Practice and Organizational Change," *Museum Management and Curatorship* 29, no. 1 (2014): 4.

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the American Museum” described that Museums were expected to “...make a positive difference in the quality of individual and communal lives.”³⁶ This connected to Hatch and Schultz as well as Gioia et al. when they articulated that institutions created identity based on internal and external reflections.³⁷ In essence, new museological strategies were being practiced so that museum people felt better about their reflections in the community.³⁸ In his introduction to Janes book, museum scholar Michael Ames wrote, “The future of successful museums will be one of constant repositioning to adapt to, or outwit, the forces of change.”³⁹

Place Identity

Institutions were grounded in place because they had physical locations and materiality, and people formed individual and emotional attachments to them.⁴⁰ Tim Cresswell’s book, *Place: An Introduction*, synthesized the ways in which place was conceptualized in geography and multidisciplinary literature, and from this synthesis, indicated the multifaceted way place has been conceptualized.⁴¹ Cresswell described that the concept of place could range from something small like a fireplace... to an entire region.⁴² Closely aligned with Cresswell’s ideas, in her introduction to *Place Attachment: Advances in Theory, Methods, and Application*, Lynne Manzo suggested that people turned space into place and gave it meaning. Place had more meaning than location or space.⁴³

³⁶ Stephen Weil, "From Being about Something to Being for Somebody: The Ongoing Transformation of the American Museum," *Daedalus* 128, no. 3 (1999): 180.

³⁷ Hatch and Schults, 2002; Gioia et al., 2010

³⁸ Weil; McCall and Gray.

³⁹ Janes, *Museums and the Paradox of Change*, Taylor and Francis, 4.

⁴⁰ Tim Cresswell, *Place : An Introduction* (Malden: J. Wiley & Sons, 2015),12-14.

⁴¹ Cresswell, *Place: An Introduction*.

⁴² David Seamon, “Place Attachment and Phenomenology: The Synergistic Dynamism of Place,” in *Place Attachment: Advances in Theory, Methods and Applications*, ed. Lynne Manzo and Patrick Devine-Wright (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge) 2014.p.11

⁴³. Lynne Manzo and Patrick Devine-Wright, *Place Attachment : Advances in Theory, Methods and Applications*, (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2014) 7-8.

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Cresswell described that places were in process, stating, “Places are never finished, but are produced through the reiteration of practices – the repetition of seemingly mundane activities on a daily basis.”⁴⁴ Maria Lewicka, in her book chapter titled “In Search of Roots: Memory as Enabler of Place Attachment,” called this concept of repetition “procedural memory,” as she described that routines connected people to place.⁴⁵ Building on this idea in his book chapter “Place Attachment and Phenomenology: The Synergistic Dynamism of Place,” David Seamon suggested that place contained inner and outer worlds, meaning that our conception of place and what specific places meant to us and what our relationship to that place was, happened in the context of the world we live in. These ideas, our inner and outer relationship to place, existed at the same time, and sometimes could even exist in opposition.⁴⁶

Seamon further described that there were six processes of place that helped define an otherwise difficult to characterize concept. The first was place interaction, which was how people used and connected to others in a specific place.⁴⁷ To describe the second process, place identity, he wrote, “Place identity and place interaction are reciprocal processes in the sense that, through place interaction, participants actively engage with place. They come to feel a part of place and associate their personal and group identity with the identity of that place.”⁴⁸ Seamon appeared to suggest that identity was built through interaction with that place.⁴⁹ The third process, place release, was when one found the unexpected. Fourth, place realization, was the understanding of what made a place unique. Fifth, place intensification, was the

⁴⁴ Cresswell, *Place: An Introduction*, 116.

⁴⁵ Maria Lewicka, “In Search of Roots: Memory as Enabler of Place Attachment” in *Place Attachment: Advances in Theory, Methods and Applications*, ed. Lynne Manzo and Patrick Devine-Wright, (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2014), 52.

⁴⁶ Seamon, “Place Attachment and Phenomenology”, 15.

⁴⁷ Seamon, 16.

⁴⁸ Seamon, 17.

⁴⁹ Seamon, 17.

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acknowledgement that the design or physical nature of a place could in fact have an impact on how it was experienced.⁵⁰ Finally, place creation, came from the intentional, whereby place was changed to improve or update it. According to Seamon, all six existed in a place and related to one another, but the relationships in different places looked different.⁵¹ Ultimately, Creswell wrote "...place is also a way of seeing, knowing, and understanding the world."⁵²

Delving further into how meaning was made in a place, Maricela Sepe and Michael Pitt wrote in their book chapter, *The Characters of Place in Urban Design*, "[Places] assume a specific meaning in the moment in which we infuse them with a value."⁵³ In other words, when a place was used and connections were associated or made, that place began to mean something to those who had interacted with it. Lewicka suggested that this meaning making from use were emotional bonds with place and could be described as "place attachment."⁵⁴ Two of the ways people built these bonds were routines, called (again) procedural memory, as well as nostalgia and memories.⁵⁵ She said, "To sum up, it appears that people may seek to establish personal connections with new places through various forms of memory: procedural, autobiographic, genealogical, and place memory."⁵⁶ As described by Helmut Anheier and Yudhishtir Raj Isar in their introduction to the book *Heritage, Memory, and Identity*, collective memories were invariably linked to identity.⁵⁷

⁵⁰ Seamon, "Place Attachment and Phenomenology,"18.

⁵¹ Seamon,15-19.

⁵² Creswell, *Place: An Introduction*,18

⁵³ Marichela Sepe and Michael Pitt, "The Characters of Place in Urban Design." *Urban Design International* 19, no. 3 (2014), 216

⁵⁴ Lewicka, "In Search of Roots," 49.

⁵⁵ Lewicka, 52-53.

⁵⁶ Lewicka, 54.

⁵⁷ Helmut Anheier and Yudhishtir Raj Isar, *Heritage, Memory & Identity*, (London: Sage Publications, 2011), 9.

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In "Finding Common Ground: The Importance of Place Attachment to Community Participation and Planning," Lynne Manzo and Douglas Perkins described that attachment to place affected individual behavior and group behavior, meaning it impacted communities as a whole.⁵⁸ In their book chapter "Place Attachment as Discursive Practice," Andres Di Masso, John Dixon, and Kevin Durrheim wrote, "The discursive perspective treats place attachment as a social practice that cannot be understood outside of the interactional, cultural, and institutional contexts in which it emerges."⁵⁹ Essentially, place identity was the thing that emerged from one's relationship to a place and from relationships to people in that place. Place identity was then the components of identity that were formed from our experiences and connections to a place.⁶⁰ Because places were imbued with meaning, Leila Scannel and Robert Gifford noted in their book chapter "Comparing the Theories of Interpersonal and Place" that people developed place bonds to specific places and subsequently when moving, it was important to learn to develop a bond to a new place.⁶¹

Manzo and Perkins further explained that development projects, such as when a specific place updated, changed or moved, could influence the relationship people had or thought they had to place.⁶² Creswell described that buildings were both places in and of themselves and part of larger places such as neighborhoods, communities, and cities.⁶³ Sepe and Pitt considered that the identity of place was complicated because it stemmed from the histories, relationships and

⁵⁸Lynne Manzo Douglas D. Perkins, "Finding Common Ground: The Importance of Place Attachment to Community Participation and Planning," *Journal of Planning Literature* 20, no. 4 (2006): 337.

⁵⁹ Andres Di Masso, John Dixon, and Kevin Durrheim, "Place Attachment as Discursive Practice," in *Place Attachment: Advances in Theory, Methods and Applications*, ed. Lynne Manzo and Patrick Devine-Wright, (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2014) 81.

⁶⁰ Manzo and Perkins, "Finding Common Ground," 337.

⁶¹Leila Scannell and Robert Gifford, "Comparing the Theories of Interpersonal and Place Attachment," in *Place Attachment: Advances in Theory, Methods and Applications*, ed. Lynne Manzo and Patrick Devine-Wright, (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2014). 28.

⁶² Manzo and Perkins, 337.

⁶³ Creswell, *Place: An Introduction*, 128.

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focal points from which it was viewed, understood, and used.⁶⁴ As described by Manzo and Perkins, attachment to place influenced individual behavior and group behavior, meaning it inherently impacted communities as a whole. Masso, Dixon, and Durrheim wrote, “The discursive perspective treats place attachment as a social practice that cannot be understood outside of the interactional, cultural, and institutional contexts in which it emerges.”⁶⁵

Essentially, place identity was the thing that emerged from each individual’s relationship to a place and from relationships to and between people in that place. Place identity was then the component of identity that was formed from our experiences and connections to a place.⁶⁶

Another aspect of understanding place identity was described by Manzo and Perkins who suggested that a sense of community in a neighborhood could come from identity being shared and expressed spatially, and attachment to place could help bring cohesion because people spent time and invested energy in places to which they had an attachment.⁶⁷ There was also evidence that people built emotional bonds to place through community participation, such as through participating in planning processes. Therefore, attachment to place could come from a sense of community.⁶⁸ Diverging from this idea, in the book chapter “Community Place Attachment and its Role in Social Capital Development,” Nikolay Mihaylov and Douglas Perkins suggested that place and community were not the same thing, but were interrelated.⁶⁹ Place identity and place attachment literature such as the writings of Creswell, Seamon, and Scannel and Gifford noted earlier focused on the individual. However, Manzo and Perkins suggested that place identity was

⁶⁴ Sepe and Pitt, 22.

⁶⁵ Di Masso, Dixon, and Durrheim, “Place Attachment as Discursive Practice,” 81.

⁶⁶ Di Masso, Dixon, and Durrheim; Creswell; Sepe and Pitt

⁶⁷ Manzo and Perkins, “Finding Common Ground,” 338.

⁶⁸ Manzo and Perkins, 339.

⁶⁹ Nikolay Mihaylov and Douglas Perkins “Community Place Attachment and its Role in Social Capital Development,” in *Place Attachment: Advances in Theory, Methods and Applications*, ed. Lynne Manzo and Patrick Devine-Wright, (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2014).

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connected to community planning because communities comprised individuals with relationships and histories to place both individually and collectively.⁷⁰

When evaluating institutions that moved from one place to another, Seamon asserted, “One of the primary ways in which memories are constituted is through the production of place.” In other words, creating place out of memory resulted in memory becoming public.⁷¹ Cresswell similarly wrote, “People with differing interests have to make their case for preservation and what is to be included or excluded and thus a new kind of place is born out of a contested process of interpretation.”⁷² These concepts were also broadly outlined by Masso, Dixon, and Durrheim who described that there was a discursive negotiation of space and use in everyday life that reproduced and challenged social order and spatial order.⁷³ Connected to these points, Anheier and Isar in *Heritage Memory, Identity* wrote:

But neither identities nor memories are things. Rather, they are constructions or representations, and as such they are embedded in power and class relations that determine what is remembered (or forgotten), what is valued or deemed valueless – what is defined as heritage and what isn't – by whom and for what end.⁷⁴

Museums and heritage sites have negotiated the memories and meanings they have carried forward as institutions and thus to some degree negotiated how they could, would, and will be interpreted by all who found meaning in the institution.⁷⁵ The identity of a place can be considered to be negotiated in the conversations, dialogues, and interactions that happened and will happen in and outside of the institution.⁷⁶

⁷⁰ Manzo and Perkins, 344.

⁷¹ Cresswell, *Place: An Introduction*, 119.

⁷² Cresswell, 125.

⁷³ Di Masso, Dixon, and Durrheim.

⁷⁴ Anheier and Isar, 10.

⁷⁵ Anheier and Isar, 10.

⁷⁶ Cresswell; Masso, Dixon and Durrheim

Museum Architecture and Design

The architecture and design of a museum were an important part of understanding the identity of that institution. In their article "Museum Architecture Matters," Paul Jones and Suzanne MacLeod articulated that architecture added meaning to objects and experiences and could give believability to a museum.⁷⁷ Similarly, in her article, "Formed and Forming: Contemporary Museum Architecture," Susanna Sirefman described, "Architecture represents the institution's public image, defines the institution's relationship to its setting, and constructs the framework of the visitor's experience."⁷⁸

Architecture also happened in a social context.⁷⁹ In *Reshaping Museum Space Architecture, Design, Exhibitions*, Suzanne MacLeod suggested that architecture was a socio-cultural product shaped by use and not just by the design of the architect.⁸⁰ Jones and MacLeod later described that "Museum architecture is then a social process; it is in a constant state of production through the actions of a whole network of interdependent actors who are the authors of its meanings."⁸¹ Essentially, architecture gave people what they needed at a certain place, time, and location, meaning architecture made spaces meaningful.⁸² Sirefman comparatively suggested that museum architecture was public, meaning the social and political inherently must be taken into consideration.⁸³ She expanded, "Museum architecture is both formed by culture and culturally formative."⁸⁴ This concept was echoed again by Suzanne McLeod in her other

⁷⁷ Paul Jones and Suzanne Macleod, "Museum Architecture Matters." *Museum & Society* 14, no. 1 (2016): 207.

⁷⁸ Susanna Sirefman, "Formed and Forming: Contemporary Museum Architecture," *Daedalus* 128, no. 3 (1999): 297.

⁷⁹ Jones and MacLeod, 208-208.

⁸⁰ Suzanne Macleod, *Reshaping Museum Space Architecture, Design, Exhibitions*, (New York: Routledge, 2005),10.

⁸¹ Jones and MacLeod, 208.

⁸² MacLeod, 2005, 13.

⁸³ Sirefman, "Formed and Forming." 297.

⁸⁴ Sirefman, 318.

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work titled “Rethinking Museum Architecture: Towards a Site-specific History of Production and Use,” in which she described that architecture of the museum was created by the context in which it existed – and this was key to how a museum was used, which also helped define and redefine it.⁸⁵

Sirefman additionally articulated that the architecture of museums could be described as containers in that they held objects and existed so as to share the contents within. Yet beyond this, she also described that architecture could and should be culturally and contextually significant, and in some ways, the architecture then had a two-fold role as both a container and a contextual space.⁸⁶ Furthermore, Sirefman expressed that museums were both the physical collections and the physical space – one was not a museum without the other.⁸⁷ The idea of museums as container was also described by Michaela Giebelhausen in her book chapter “Museum Architecture: A Brief History.” She wrote, “The intricate relationship between content and container defines the architecture of the museum.”⁸⁸ Giebelhausen also suggested “The museum’s architectural articulation is here seen to oscillate between two paradigms: monument and instrument.”⁸⁹

Giebelhausen described that museum architecture once functioned as both a container and monument, meaning the museum stood with prominence and the architecture itself was viewed as a monument-like structure.⁹⁰ When museums opened their doors originally, they were making what was once for the privileged class public. Artworks and antiquities were considered

⁸⁵ Suzanne MacLeod, Suzanne. "Rethinking Museum Architecture: Towards a Site-specific History of Production and Use." In *Reshaping Museum Space: Architecture, Design, Exhibitions*, 9-25. Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2005.

⁸⁶ Sirefman, 298.

⁸⁷ Sirefman, 318.

⁸⁸ Michaela Giebelhausen, "Museum Architecture: A Brief History." In *A Companion to Museum Studies*, (John Wiley and Sons, 2007), 223.

⁸⁹ Giebelhausen, "Museum Architecture," 223.

⁹⁰ Giebelhausen, 230.

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to be for the public.⁹¹ In the wake of the modern era, Giebelhausen noted that museums' architectural structures began to take on new modality, whereby she suggested they were considered instruments, used solely to be adaptable but not hinder the viewing of objects.⁹² In his book chapter "The Space of History: Modern museums from Patrick Geddes to le Corbusier," Anthony Vidler also emphasized that modernism meant museum architecture changed museums as monument into something more reflexive.⁹³ Then, with the beginning of postmodernism, Giebelhausen discussed that lines were blurred between museum as monument and museum as instrument.⁹⁴ Ultimately, Giebelhausen articulated that modern museums were new, interesting, and hard to describe in traditional architectural terms, but still fell within the constraints of monument and instrument.⁹⁵

The museum space was used in different ways by staff who also shaped and added meaning to it.⁹⁶ In his book chapter "Changing Space," David Fleming described, "The fact is that museum architecture is capable of achieving all sorts of impacts. It can inspire or confuse; dominate or complement; welcome or forbid; include or exclude. It can assist day-to-day running operations, or hinder them in an exceedingly frustrating fashion. It can look like an organic part of a cityscape, or like it has landed from another planet."⁹⁷ Fleming suggested that currently, museum design had been enmeshed in the purveying goals of inclusiveness, diversity, and accessibility, which were in line with the values of the people who were inside these institutions,

⁹¹ Giebelhausen, 224.

⁹² Giebelhausen, 231-233.

⁹³ Anthony Vidler, "The Space of History: Modern Museums from Patrick Geddes to Le Corbusier," in *The Architecture of the Museum*, ed. Michaela Giebelhausen (New York: Manchester University Press, 2003), 166.

⁹⁴ Giebelhausen, "Museum Architecture," 243.

⁹⁵ Giebelhausen, 242.

⁹⁶ Jones and MacLeod, 207.

⁹⁷ David Fleming "Creative Space," in *Reshaping Museum Space: Architecture, Design, Exhibitions* (Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2005), 54.

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and such values had changed over the years.⁹⁸ Of modern museums, Giebelhausen asserted, “[They] are replete with symbolic and emotive resonances that actively contribute to the visitor experience. The architecture interprets and frames the exhibition narratives, eliciting both intellectual and physical responses from the visitor.”⁹⁹

Significant to the implications of museums moving, Jones and MacLeod wrote “...there are numerous examples of museums where their organizational values and ambitions have changed, and where they may be limited or restricted in some way by their physical, built forms.”¹⁰⁰ Changes in physical space often came with the intent to change organizational culture – which might or might not happen.¹⁰¹ In his book chapter titled, "Towards a New Museum Architecture: Narrative and Representation," Lee Skolnick echoed the previous idea shared by Jones and MacLeod as well as Sirefman when he suggested that the architecture of a museum helped embody the meaning of the museum. About this topic, he wrote, “If architects, designers and museum professionals rally together towards these ideals, museums may continue to become more engaging, more meaningful and ever more well attended”¹⁰²

Jones and MacLeod ultimately suggested that there was much to understand from the way architecture reflexively shared a museum’s mission.¹⁰³ Yet, they also asserted that museums could not be reduced to just their architecture.¹⁰⁴ Relatedly, Sirefman noted that the architecture of a museum existed so contextually that it did not make sense to define it in simple terms, because things like scale, content, and whether an institution was private, affected its

⁹⁸ Fleming, 55-56.

⁹⁹ Giebelhausen, 242.

¹⁰⁰ Jones and MacLeod, 213.

¹⁰¹ Jones and MacLeod, 213.

¹⁰² Lee Skolnick, "Towards a New Museum Architecture: Narrative and Representation," in *Reshaping Museum Space: Architecture, Design, Exhibitions* (Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2005) 30.

¹⁰³ Jones and MacLeod, "Museum Architecture Matters," 208.

¹⁰⁴ Jones and MacLeod, 211.

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context and therefore, what was needed in its architecture.¹⁰⁵ Importantly, Fleming pointed out that much of the literature on museum architecture focused on art, which missed some of the contexts of other kinds of museums. He then articulated there was no right way to design a museum because the contexts were so different and there was not going to be agreement about what works.¹⁰⁶

Summary

There was literature that described the ways in which institutions negotiated their identity through collective reflection and creation. The literature also described how museums specifically had evaluated their identity based on reflections from the public. Additionally, there had been studies exploring how identity was formed through connection to place, and how architecture impacted the experience of the museum as place. Ultimately, there was limited literature connecting institutions to place identity and there was limited literature that described how the identity of museums were understood by staff who were involved in a move to a new location.

¹⁰⁵ Sirefman, 316.

¹⁰⁶ Fleming, 58-59.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The purpose of this study was to describe how staff perceived and understood their museum's institutional identity as their museum constructed a new building and moved to a new location. As such, this was a phenomenological study. According to Manzo and Devine-Wright, "In phenomenological research, one approach for gaining explicit accounts of place attachment is narratives of individuals and groups who have come to realize firsthand the importance of place attachment in their lives because they have experienced loss of or dramatic shifts in place."¹⁰⁷ Three research questions, which focused on narratives of individuals and groups around institutional identity, guided the study:

1. How do staff describe their museum's identity before the move, during the move, and now?
2. How do staff describe their role in the museum before the move, during the move, and now?
3. How does the museum's old and new building and location affect how staff describe it before the move, during the move, and now?

Based on the purpose and research questions guiding this study, two methods were used: semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. The first method was in-person interviews with Executive Directors of each of the selected institutions: MOHAI, the Burke Museum, and the Nordic Museum. Each interview lasted between 30 and 45 minutes. The interviews covered questions relating to the identity of the institution before, during, and after the move, the impacts of the move on staff and personnel, and perceptions of the new and old building.

¹⁰⁷ Manzo and Devine-Wright, *Place Attachment: Advances in Theory, Methods and Applications*, 14.

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The second method was focus group discussions at each of the institutions with a small selection of museum staff who were part of the move and were still employees at the museum. Between four and five staff members participated in each focus group, with fifteen total staff members participating in the three focus group discussions. Executive Directors were not included in these focus groups because their leadership role in the institution had the potential to inhibit or otherwise influence staff discussion. Focus group discussions were also semi-structured and lasted approximately one hour. Discussions covered questions relating to the identity of the institution before, during, and after the move, the impacts of the move on staff and personnel, and perceptions of the new and old building. To build trust, staff and Executive Directors were informed that they would have the opportunity to read, vet, and remove their quotes that would be included in this research study. Several participants made minor word choice edits, but quote meanings were left intact.

Research Sites

Data was collected at three research sites, chosen because of the recency of their moves into new buildings. All three sites had a cultural focus to some or all of their collections and exhibits and all resided within the Seattle city limits. The Burke Museum was in the process of moving during the research phase of this thesis, with a planned opening date of October 2019. The Nordic Museum moved into a new building in May of 2018. The Museum of History and Industry moved into a refurbished building at a new location in 2012. Except for thesis variables, such as the year when each institution moved, the fact that the Burke was not yet open to the public when this research took place, and the fact the MOHAI's building was refurbished and not built new, these institutions were very similar in terms of the purpose and parameters for the

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study. They all moved from buildings that lacked what each of the institutions needed to be successful in fulfilling their missions.

Data Analysis

The semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions were analyzed using emergent coding stemming from a dialogue-based discursive approach. Codes were organized by emergent themes, which were then ordered in an excel spreadsheet. Quotes were separated by institution (See appendix D for *Coding Matrix*). Coding focused on the language and descriptions that emerged in both of the methodologies and followed the research questions to guide the emerging themes.

Limitations

This study had three limitations of note, each driven by practical matters. The first was the duration of interviews and focus group discussions. The length of each limited the number of questions that could be asked and the amount of discussion that could be completed about each topic. The second limitation was that different numbers of staff from various departments at each institution were involved due to staff availability. The third limitation was the small sample size of the study, as only three institutions were study participants. All three limitations meant that the generalizability of this study was similarly limited.

Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion

Findings

The purpose of this study was to describe how staff perceived and understood their museum's institutional identity as their museum constructed a new building and moved to a new location. The findings were categorized by research questions and then analyzed by the descriptions of before the move, during the move, and after the move.

How do staff describe their museum's identity before the move, during the move, and now?

Before the move

The Executive Directors and staff at all three institutions affirmed that community was an important part of their institution's identity before the move, but that the community they served was smaller. There was some community buy-in, meaning certain portions of the community used and/or were affiliated with the institutions when they were in the old buildings, but staff indicated that the institutions lacked broad community appeal. The Executive Director of the Nordic Museum said, "There was a sense that the overemphasis on heritage limited the audience to people of Scandinavian or Nordic Heritage." The Nordic's Program Manager suggested, "I think there was a...little bit of a clubhouse perception of the museum." The Executive Director of MOHAI said "I think we were a legacy brand before, where many people knew of us, but not as many visited us or considered us as something top of mind." The Burke's IT Manager shared, "I think there'd been the perception that it [the community we served] was more of a smaller region."

Relatedly, staff at MOHAI and the Nordic indicated that their institutions had informal community participation that worked because the institutions were of a smaller scale. The Events Manager at MOHAI noted, "I don't think that MOHAI had as much stature as a respected

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historical organization or history museum. We were sort of something else. We were kind of a hybrid, you know, kind of a museum, kind of a community center.” Similarly, the Executive Director at the Nordic mentioned, “The museum has always been both a community center and museum.” The Nordic was the only institution that indicated there was not cohesiveness throughout the old exhibits, which impacted the institution’s identity.

During the Move

At all three institutions, staff told that the move helped the museum better execute their mission, goals and values. The Executive Director of MOHAI suggested this concept in broad terms. He said, “The move really became the attempt to take those goals and actually manifest [them] in a way that reaches a larger audience,” and “our mindset was, we didn’t want to be that insular and the move was actually our way of being less insular.” The Chief of Staff at the Nordic supposed, “I think this facility provides an unparalleled opportunity for us to really execute our mission.” Staff at the Burke gave specific examples of executing goals better. The IT Manager described, “I think during the process, one of the things I hear is kind of the shift was just a reinforcement that it is all of Washington.” Here he was suggesting that the move helped emphasize that the Burke was the State’s natural and cultural history museum and representing not just the university, but the whole state was one of its goals.

Staff and Executive Directors at all three museums described ways in which their move allowed their institutions to shift in organizational focus. MOHAI’s Executive Director noted “The move itself, in a lot of tactical ways having to do with marketing and programming and audience development, allowed us to reposition ourselves.” He also said, “I think where [mission and goals] changed as we moved was that we had a much greater focus on the sense that history is evolving, that history is today as well as yesterday.” The Executive Director of the Burke

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suggested, “Well, the biggest change, and this is going to be a cultural change, is the fact that we are inviting the public to see into the collections and all of our laboratories. And nobody else has done this.” Speaking of the Burke’s mission, the Genetic Resources Collections Manager said, “The spark joy thing was a new thing.” The Executive Assistant followed up saying, “From the people that are actually in the community...we’d like to feel joy too.” The Executive Director at the Nordic described “There was also a desire to make sure that [while] we expanded our mission [we also needed] to make sure that we weren’t leaving folks behind.” He also noted “...we’ve broadened our mission.”

Related to their organizational shift in focus, staff at all three institutions shared that their museum’s move helped expand both community involvement and community awareness of their institutions. The Executive Director of MOHAI noted: “During the transition, I think there was a curiosity about, well, what is MOHAI?” MOHAI’s Executive Director also suggested, “Both the physical move, because it repositioned us in a more prominent location, and the nature of the move, allowing us to leverage a broader public presence, changed the perception of MOHAI as being a more active and more engaged part of the community.” The Executive Director of the Nordic said, “We wanted to make sure that the museum was open and welcoming to all people no matter what their ethnic or cultural heritage was.” The Executive Director at the Burke noted, “I think to get the money to build a new museum, we went throughout the community, beyond stakeholders I mentioned before. We went throughout this neighborhood, city, state, and made promises, and the promise we made is that you’re going to be able to see what we do.” Also, the Burke IT Manager remarked, “I think the UW community has been reminded that we’re here.” The Genetics Resources Collection Manager followed up with “And the wider community. I

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mean I went to the grocery store on the Ave recently...some random person in the store said, oh, when is the Burke opening? I had never been asked about the Burke before.”

There was also a sense among staff that the move encouraged nostalgia related to people's experience at the old institution. The Executive Director of the Burke said "...there was a lot of nostalgia when we moved out. There was sadness and saying goodbye.” The Burke's Paleontology and Geology Collections Manager noted “We had kind of this community down in the [old museum] basement, which I now miss.” The Development Manager at the Nordic noted “I don't know how many times I hear, like some people miss the old place because it was homey.”

Now

Executive Directors at MOHAI and the Nordic indicated that their original focuses, such as vision, had stayed more or less the same in the new institution. MOHAI's Executive Director noted, “I think in our minds institutionally, we had the same values before and after, but now we're able to act on those values.” The Nordic's Executive Director suggested, "We've not walked away from that [original statement] as our mission and vision."

Staff at all three institutions described an important component of their work now as facilitating and maintaining strong relationships with the community. The Burke's Executive director contemplated, “I think it's inviting people in to come and see the things that they own and what we do with them and have a say. Asking them for their opinion about what we do. We may not follow their opinion or their advice, but we need to give them a vehicle to give it.” The Executive Director at MOHAI noted, “Our role in the community is much broader" and "With every exhibit we do, we have many community partners. With every program we hold, usually it's done by community members with us." He also suggested that, "I think all of our institutions

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need to continue to work really hard on being good community partners and engaging the community rather than just, you know, expecting the community to show up." MOHAI's Exhibits Manager also said, "We try really hard to appeal to the broadest possible audience through our exhibits and programs." The Community Engagement Executive at the Nordic suggested that "the new building provided newer opportunity to really reach out and engage much broader community than we'd had, and to do that by expanding our membership, inviting people to be part of the new museum, and also inviting community organizations broadly across the state...to be advocates for the museum and encourage participation."

The lasting impact of the move was that staff indicated the institutions all had an increased caliber, a higher quality. The Executive Director of the Nordic suggested, "I think the perception is that we are one of the, kind of, core cultural institutions in the region." He elaborated saying, "So whereas we might have 50-60K visitors a year at the old place, we have nearly 200,000 visitors at this place." MOHAI's Events Manager said, "I think we're one of the main, you know, top 10 attractions in Seattle." In line with this, the Visitor Services Manager noted, "[Leadership] consider us in the tier with aquariums, science centers, SAM, like the big players. Instead of Wing Luke, Nordic, NAAM, which I think we were kind of more in line with before the move." Staff at the Nordic had similar thoughts. The Nordic's Development Manager suggested, "If you were a tourist coming to the city, would you go to like one of the six really cool, big MOHAI, Burke, SAM museums? And now I think like with this new facility, we're up there with everybody else." The Executive Director described, "our membership has now quadrupled...and so there's more members, there's broader community and with that bigger community it becomes more diffuse." The Nordic recently received designation as the National Nordic Museum and so he also suggested, "There's also the sense that there was something in the

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story that we're telling is of national significance." Caliber was not described as thoroughly from Burke staff, but the Executive Assistant recalled, "Smithsonian Magazine named us one of the top 10 or top 20 most exciting museums that are going to be open."

MOHAI and Nordic staff also indicated that the new space had increased the level of exhibitions they were able to produce. MOHAI's Events Manager suggested, "I feel like we're also competing on a different level nationally. Like we're looking at different exhibits than we would have at Montlake." At the Nordic, the Community Engagement Executive noted, "People are expecting more out of this. How do we rise to those new levels?" The Development Manager said, "I also think just the fact that we can host these world class exhibitions now is huge." Building on all of this, the Chief of Staff suggested, "I think our ability to share Nordic Culture now is greatly augmented with the new facility."

Staff at all three museums indicated the public was more aware of their institution and they now had more public impact in the new location because of more visibility. The Nordic's Executive Director offered:

Visibility has increased dramatically. I think we've always been relevant to the community. I think our shift in mission and our shift in programs that we started a few years ago continues to be relevant. I think now, with the visibility of the new museum and the national designation and other accolades we've been receiving, it's being perceived as more relevant as well.

The Community Engagement Executive said, "[We] ultimately expanded the membership over a couple of years from just under 2000 to now over 6000...creating this increased visibility." The Executive Director at MOHAI stated, "We simply have more of everything and therefore our role in the community is greater." MOHAI's Exhibits Manager noted, "we've been able to leverage our location...raise the profile of the institution in the community." He also stated, "I think the community is beginning to see us as a resource." The Executive Director of the Burke

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described the increased visibility through a more personal anecdote. She said, "...people know that that person who lives in that house is the head of the Burke Museum because everybody knows the Burke Museum. It's not about me, that's about the success of increasing the presence of the museum."

Staff at all three institutions acknowledged that they were developing their sense of relevancy and examining their identity. MOHAI's Executive Director noted, "You know, for most people, the end of the project is you cut the ribbon and you open. You know what, that's day one, that's when it really starts," and "It's always different than you think it's going to be." Relatedly, the Visitor Services Manager suggested, "Maybe the trajectory of this kind of place is always evolving, but I think that we have been in such a period of transition, that within the next five years, we might establish a more permanent sense of self." The Nordic's Chief of Staff said, "I mean, I think a modern museum has to constantly be...re-visioning what it's doing to remain relevant, fresh." The Executive Director of the Nordic described, "It's kind of a continued evolution of identity. I mean, we are now the National Nordic Museum, which is a great honor and a nice tribute to the hard work that has been done, and also I think indicates some relevance in the Nordic region...[in Europe.] So, part of our identity is how do we live up to that designation." Describing the Nordic's identity, the Chief of Staff said, "We are still giving shape to the new operation, but we're planning for a future in which the museum is going to be long term sustainable." The Paleontology and Geology Collections Manager at the Burke suggested, "Until we get the public into this new building, I don't think we're really going to feel any difference in how we identify." Speaking of a specific aspect of relevancy, the Executive Assistant noted, "Focus on decolonization I think is giving us a relevancy in the community that we don't know the impact of yet."

How do staff describe their role in the museum before the move, during the move, and now?

Before the Move

The staff of the three institutions indicated they felt somewhat insular before the move, which manifested itself in the outward or public-facing relationships at their museum. Additionally, there was also some insularity among or between staff at both the Burke and the Nordic. Staff insularity related to the work culture before the move, as well as how the institution's buildings were physically laid out. Of the Burke before the move, the Executive Director shared, "I think people were more specifically oriented towards themselves...their work and their exhibit." The Genetic Resources Collections Manager indicated "I do feel like the Burke before the move was more inward looking." The Nordic's Development Manager said, "At our old place, we were all on different levels," describing the ways in which staff were not closely connected at the old building. The Executive Director of MOHAI said "I think previous to the move...we were much more insular both in practice but also in perception."

In contrast, MOHAI staff described the experience at the old institution as more familial and collaborative because of staff proximity. The Visitor Services Manager at MOHAI shared, "[at the old site] everyone did what needed to be done...we all pulled together and make it happen." MOHAI's Exhibits Manager elaborated, "I think it was something that [the Visitor Services Manager] was alluding to before, [...] that at the old site there was more a familial relationship."

During the Move

Staff at all the participating institutions shared that the move was challenging because there was variation in how staff embraced the change. The Executive Director at MOHAI said, "I

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don't think we had a whole lot of strategies in place for keeping everybody together on the same page." Further, he described, "everybody was totally anxious about, how are we going to figure this out?" The Executive Director at the Nordic noted, "...no matter how much time you have or how much money you have, it's still stressful." The Burke's Executive Director said, "There were people who were all packed up...[on] the first move date. And there were some people who delayed all the way until the last possible day."

The Executive Directors at both MOHAI and the Nordic indicated that they lost staff because of the stress of the move. At MOHAI, The Executive Director noted, "A transition of that scale and that scope and that duration, that takes that long, people burn out and they leave." The Nordic's Executive Director noted the attrition, but also called out staff adaptability. He said "We lost a couple of key folks...but I do think staff for the most part has embraced the change of identity in a positive way. I think some of the staff members had a much easier time of that than some of the others." The Nordic's director elaborated, "There's kind of this post-traumatic stress that happens with staff, not immediately after, but about six months after."

There was also a sense that the move helped foster staff comradery at both the Burke and the Nordic as compared to the insularity staff felt before the move. Speaking of staff relationships, the Genetic Resources Collections Manager at the Burke said of staff culture, "The barriers are becoming more permeable...Now there's just more news flowing. It's more of a feeling of inclusiveness." The Burke's Executive Director described, "There is an overwhelming sense of helping each other." In a similar vein, the Development Manager at the Nordic described that the move "was like kind of one of the first times, all of a sudden, we just started really working together from top to bottom in that old place."

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Staff also indicated the move meant that their roles shifted and were flexible as the staff moved into the new building. These shifts were described differently by staff at each of the three institutions. The Executive Director at the Nordic suggested, "My role in the museum has always been to provide leadership to the staff and to the board and be a face for the museum. And those aspects haven't changed...different focuses or emphases have changed." The Chief of Staff at the Nordic declared, "Position titles and roles did not change much, but in terms of any staff member's daily focus the work activity changed dramatically for a period." The Visitor Services manager at MOHAI described the shift in staff roles differently, suggesting, "It feels like at that time the attitude kind of shifted from everyone-does-everything to just make it work, to, like, I've got to focus on my job...a silo-ing, departmentally." The Executive Director at the Burke focused on the changes to her role specifically shifting during the move. She confided, "Since January 1st with the move, I've become a mother. I'm the mother and the person who says to the kids, it's going to be okay."

Now

Executive Directors at all of the institutions seemed to agree that once settled into the new institutions, staff roles were more or less the same as what they were at the old museum. MOHAI's Executive Director suggested, "the before and the after are not really so much different in terms of what people do." Speaking about himself specifically, the Executive Director of the Nordic noted, "My relationship to the institution hasn't changed in the last 10 years, but the perception has changed with the new facility." Because the Burke museum just moved into its new location, The Executive Director of the Burke expected that "...once people are in their little places and they're all settled down and they figure out how the building works, they will go back to doing their jobs and I'll do mine."

How does the museum's old and new building and location affect how staff describe it before the move, during the move, and now?

Before the Move

Staff at each of the three institutions described that the old building was inhibitive and confining both physically and conceptually. Of the physical space, staff at the Burke recounted that it was “cramped,” “warren-y,” and “over congested.” The Executive Director elaborated, “The heat was terrible, there was no air conditioning. The spaces were little and chocked up. The elevator didn’t work very well and there weren’t enough bathrooms.” The Genetics Resources Collection Manager stated succinctly that the museum was “not optimally designed for the functions it was carrying out, to put it mildly.” The staff at MOHAI described their institution in a similar way. Of the old building, the MOHAI Collections Manager said, “It was very unique, but by the time I started [...] it was really worn out. The storage was horrible, there wasn’t good workspace.” Staff at the Nordic used milder language, but they also indicated the inadequacy of the old building. The Chief of Staff noted, “The last facility did not have adequate climate controls, or sufficient permanent exhibition or program space.” The Nordic’s Executive Director said, “It was an old school that was built and designed to be a school, not a museum, so it lacked many of the basic requirements of a museum.”

Staff at the three institutions also seemed to agree that the location of the old museum meant that it was not easily visible to the public. The Executive Director of the Burke noted, “I think you couldn’t see anything in the old Burke. You couldn’t even see the Burke. Nobody knew we were there. We were just behind bushes.” Similarly, the Executive Director of MOHAI said “[The old building was] sort of nestled into the landscape, so visually, couldn’t see it.” MOHAI’s Events Manager echoed, “People didn’t know where we were,” and the Exhibits

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Manager also shared, “It continued to, as the city developed, become more and more obscure... [the] location difficult to get to.” The Executive Director of the Nordic also said, “And the other real issue was the location of the building. It was perfect for a school because it was in a residential neighborhood but was not very good for visibility.”

Yet, in conversation, staff at all three institutions felt that there was a sense of familiarity or attachment to the building before the move. Staff at the Burke and MOHAI confided that they themselves held some attachment to the old facility. The Burke’s Paleontology and Geology Collections Manager stated “I was quite fond of the Burke. Sad to see it go.” The IT Manager echoed, “I mean I’m fond of the old building, mainly because I went to elementary school [nearby] and so we used to go on field trips.” The Genetics Resources Collection Manager said, “For me, it held memories that I was really fond of. But it wasn’t because of the structure; it was because of the people and things that happened in it.” The Collections Manager at MOHAI noted “[The old MOHAI] was kind of homier.”

Staff at the Nordic expressed that factions of the community held some attachments to the old building. The Executive Director described, “It was perceived by the community to be a warm and inviting facility that, you know, thousands of community members put blood, sweat, and tears in to creating.” The Chief of Staff at the Nordic also mentioned, “The core exhibition that was featured in our old museum was built by passionate stakeholders and volunteers—so many people absolutely loved that exhibition.”

During the Move

The Executive Directors at all three institutions expressed that during the move the new buildings were impactful because of their visibility and prominence. The Executive Director of MOHAI suggested that the building “just seemed to be where we wanted to be in a historic

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building, in the center of an emerging part of, really the future of Seattle. A very visual, prominent landmark.” The Executive Director of the Nordic said, “There’s always a sense that Market Street or being highly visible in a commercial corridor was important...this in the burgeoning, up and coming neighborhood of Ballard has also been nice.” The Burke’s Executive Director also had similar descriptions, including, “We feel much more exposed, much closer to the Ave [...] It’s much easier to see the building.”

The Genetic Resources Collection Manager at the Burke described how the building took time to get used to, “When we first moved in, it definitely felt cold and sterile to me...But it’s starting to feel less so as old furniture gets moved in and, you know, collections come out and get put on display.” Yet, she also shared that “There are some amazingly beautiful views” and “From the outside of the building I really like the new building a lot. I love that it was wood. When it’s landscaped, it’s going to be really pretty.”

Staff at the three subject institutions described that the move impacted relationships among staff and with the institution and the community because the building layout and access had changed. The Executive Director at the Nordic expounded,

Just the personnel move...they were all kind of with trepidation going from a system where everybody was kind of clustered in their own little space and we had the educators in one office and the development team in the other office, et cetera, to having an open office system, was also something some of the staff weren’t comfortable with. But everyone’s made the jump nicely.

The Community Engagement Executive at the Nordic described the positives of this new change in layout, suggesting, “I think since with the open plan and everybody being on the same floor, there’s much interaction between and among staff.” The Chief of Staff echoed, “We now work in an open office space, I think the closer physical proximity makes you more appreciative of what someone else’s day is like.” The new layout at both MOHAI and the Burke impacted staff differently than it did at the Nordic. MOHAI’s Executive Director noted:

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I mean from a corporate culture standpoint, it was very different because we were at one space, and then we got larger, quite a bit larger, and we started working in two spaces. And it wasn't quite as problematic as I thought it would be. I thought there would be a real division, but we spend a lot of time traveling back and forth.

The Exhibits Manager at MOHAI also noted that the move “did kind of split the big exhibits and collections part of the family into two different buildings.” Expanding on this, the Visitor Services Manager suggested, “The work culture in the two different locations has become different.” The Executive Director of the Burke described, “...in an article we all read about Boston's Children's Museums...they described how people's relationships were disrupted because they no longer sat next to somebody or they no longer met them at the bathroom or water fountain....That's happening, they [staff] can't find each other.” The Assistant Director of School and Teacher Programs at the Burke noted, “I think we're still figuring out how to have a collaborative spirit...when we're separate from each other.”

Now

Staff at all institutions indicated that the visibility of the new building was positive because the public were excited about the new space. Relatedly, staff described their new space as more functionally useful as a museum because of necessary amenities. The Executive Director of the Burke suggested, “...the building is beautiful. And even though people haven't been in it for over a year, it has been sitting there, this beautiful thing and people who love architecture just can't wait to get inside.” She also exclaimed, “It's clean!”

The Executive Director of MOHAI said:

The perception of this [new] facility, even though it wasn't at all designed to be a museum and in that sense [it] is much less adequate for what we need than the old place, but it was viewed as, This is where a history museum belongs, and this is the kind of community where a growing institution needs to be located. So, the perception of this space was much, much stronger.

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MOHAI's exhibits manager noted, "People can see us when you drive by...This is a beautiful building. This is a spectacular location." The Visitor Services Manager echoed, "From the visitor perspective, we are much more visible here"

The Nordic's Community Engagement Executive said, "I think the museum is also much more welcoming to everyone. And I think that's partially because of its location, partially because of its architecture and design. It's much more visible." He also shared, "Definitely it's a clear new identity for the museum, of being this contemporary Nordic looking space." The Collections Manager at the Nordic declared, "In terms of our preservation mission, we have now created a facility which has climate control, security, more public accessibility in terms of technology in space."

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to describe how staff perceived and understood their museum's institutional identity as their museum constructed a new building and moved to a new location. This was done by exploring how staff described their museum's identity, their role in the museum, and the museum's building and location before, during and after the move. In the literature, Janes explained, upheaval necessitates that institutions reevaluate their identity.¹⁰⁸ Therefore, as moving is upheaval, the museums in this study necessarily reevaluated their identity.

Memories of a place, both collective and individual, create a place's identity and help people build connections and make meaning in that place.¹⁰⁹ A museum too is made up of the procedural, individual, and collective memories associated with it, and a new museum requires

¹⁰⁸ Janes, *Museums and the Paradox of Change*

¹⁰⁹ Anheier and Isar, *Heritage, memory, identity*

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people to create new connections. Ultimately, the findings of this study suggest that visibility, connection to community, and focus on mission and vision impacted how staff described their institution's identity during various stages in the move.

Before the Move

Before the move, all three institutions, the Burke, the Nordic, and MOHAI, described their identity as situated in the fact that they had some local community support, but lacked broad community interest. This manifested in the perceptions that each institution had a well-liked facility for certain factions of the community but wasn't functioning to draw in a wider audience. Additionally, before the move, staff felt that the institution was insular in some way. At the Nordic and the Burke, this was demonstrated as staff described feeling they were insular from each other, and at MOHAI and the Burke staff felt they were insulated from the outside world as well. Staff also felt that the old building impacted the institution and subsequently its identity because it was not seen well by the community due to its physical location. Hatch and Schultz indicated that institutional identity was partially understood by staff and internal stakeholders reflecting the opinions and views of the public about their institution.¹¹⁰ For all three of these institutions in their old buildings, the public reflected back that the institution better served some community members than others and was not a visible part of the community.

Additionally, the old building was inhibitive because of space and facilities limitations. However, staff indicated that there was some attachment to it. The use of space gave it meaning, and that was based on individual connections and interactions with a space and the social and context-driven ways a space was used.¹¹¹ A museum was also given meaning as place based on

¹¹⁰ Hatch and Schultz, 2002

¹¹¹ Manzo and Perkins; Cresswell; Seamon

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the individual's connections and cultural contexts that happen both inside and outside its walls. By describing their attachment to the old institution, staff were reflecting that before the move, some of the institution's identity was connected to the building.

During the Move

During the move, staff at all three institutions felt that they would be better able to execute their goal and values and mission in the new building. Staff described that their institution's focus shifted during the move, which depended on the institutions mission and goals set in place before the move. Additionally, staff recognized that the museum move allowed them to expand community involvement and awareness of the institutions. This confirmed what McCall and Gray suggested, which was that museums work to be more culturally relevant and were doing so by redefining their relationship to the community.¹¹² What did not come up for any of the institutions was the concept of "schizo-identification" that was described by Brown and Humphreys. Brown and Humphreys suggested that there could be conflict between the internal views and goals of the institution versus the external views and wants of the public.¹¹³ This was not apparent in any of the three study institutions, perhaps because the moves necessitated that these institutions orient themselves publicly and pay particular attention to the needs and wants of their greater communities.

At the Burke and the Nordic, staff also recognized that the move caused nostalgia for the time when the institution was in the old building. Staff at each of the institutions described variation at the rate in which staff embraced the changes that came with moving to a new building. For the Burke and the Nordic, moving built a sense of comradery among staff. In the

¹¹² McCall and Gray, 4.

¹¹³ Brown and Humphreys, 232-239.

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literature, Lewicka articulated that people build connections with a place by repeated action in that place.¹¹⁴ Staff at these institutions were building connections to the new building at different rates.

For staff at all three institutions during the move, roles shifted and were flexible. Part of this included that changes in the building layout meant that staff felt their relationship to each other shifted as they moved. For the Burke and MOHAI, staff were more spread apart in the new building. For the Nordic, staff workspaces were clustered closer together meaning staff had a better understanding of colleagues' work. Finally, during the move, staff articulated that the new buildings had an impact because of their visibility and location. This was important because Cresswell asserted that buildings are both places in and of themselves and are part of places like neighborhoods and communities.¹¹⁵ The visibility because of the move connected to the fact that staff articulated having an expanding community, or sense of community, as the building was more visible in the community. Additionally, architecture happened in a social context.¹¹⁶ For the museums in this study, the architecture of the museum existed in a different social context during the move, and this change in context impacted both internal and external relationships in the institutions. Interestingly, when staff discussed the architecture of the new building, they focused mainly on the context, impact, and internal experience of the new building rather than the outside physical appearance of the architecture.

Now

¹¹⁴ Lewicka

¹¹⁵ Cresswell, 128.

¹¹⁶ MacLeod 2005; Sirefman

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When describing the museum as it became, the Executive Directors of both the Nordic and MOHAI indicated that the museums' focus kept the key guiding tenets that were used at the old institution. Staff at MOHAI and the Nordic indicated that they had broader community involvement, and the Burke anticipated that community involvement would shift once the new museum opened. The staff at the Burke for obvious reasons did not have a concrete answer as to what that change would look like once the museum opened its doors. Staff at all three institutions felt that they had an increased quality and status stemming from increased community recognition. For MOHAI and the Nordic, increased caliber also meant their levels of visitors and members increased and that they could produce and display higher quality exhibitions.

Staff at all three institutions perceived that the public was more aware of them and they had more of a public impact. This was an example of three institutions building their sense of identity based on how they were perceived by the public, tying back into the concepts articulated by Hatch and Schultz about the formation of institutional identity.¹¹⁷ This additionally related to Gioia et al.'s articulation that institutions understood pieces of their identity through reflections back from external sources.¹¹⁸ Essentially, for all three institutions in this study, the museum's relationship to the public impacted how the institutions understood their identity now.

The staff at all three institutions said they were continuing to explore their relevancy as institutions and to figure out their identity. It was difficult for staff to describe their institution's identity in specific terms; rather many suggested that, to remain relevant, museums must constantly be evolving. This reflected the literature on institutional identity, which suggested that identity for institutions was amorphous and evolving.¹¹⁹ Embedded in this was the complicated

¹¹⁷ Hatch and Schultz, 2002

¹¹⁸ Gioia et al., 2010

¹¹⁹ Gioia, et al, 2010; Albert et al.

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nature by which staff and stakeholders understood museum identity because of its fluidity, and which might be further amorphous because of an intentional move. This conceptually was consistent with Ames' statement that museums need to continue to reposition themselves for long-term viability.¹²⁰

The Executive Directors of both MOHAI and the Nordic indicated that staff positions were now not so different from what they were before the move. The Executive Director of the Burke anticipated that staff duties would go back to normal once staff were settled in the new institution. Staff at all three institutions recognized that a new building was still an impactful part of the institution's identity. Reasons for this impact included the visibility of the facility, the functionality of the space, and the perception that the institution was well suited for the new building. This related to Sirefman's point that museum architecture was about public image and added meaning to the space.¹²¹ Staff reflections on the architectural impact of their new buildings also demonstrated that these new buildings could be understood through Giebelhausen's assertion that modern museums, although hard to define architecturally, were considered both monuments and instruments. They were there to display works and be significant in their physical, contextual, and public presence, but the architecture was also flexible and adaptable.¹²²

Implications

This study suggested that, as museums contemplated or began the process of constructing and moving into a new building, there were several factors worth consideration. Firstly, a move had the potential to redefine a museum's relationship to the community, as it did for the three institutions in this study. This meant museums who planned to move would also want to think

¹²⁰ Janes, *Museums and the Paradox of Change*

¹²¹ Sirefman, "Formed and Forming," 297.

¹²² Giebelhausen, "Museum Architecture," 242-243.

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about the ways in which they would involve the community during and after the process. During the process of the move, there might also be nostalgia for the old institution, and staff might adapt and settle into the new space at different rates based on attachments to the old space. A new building and layout might also mean staff relationships were impacted. Heading into a move, museums might carefully consider and plan for variation in staff adjustment to the new space, particularly if the new space might impact the internal office layout and subsequently affect staff interactions. Additionally, museums that were planning to move might consider that a move could help facilitate more public awareness and had the potential to increase the caliber of the museum. Finally, as museums contemplate the architecture of the potential new building, the context of the new space, such as visibility, location, and potential architectural role as instrument and monument, should be reflected upon and considered in the planning process.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Implications

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to describe how staff perceived and understood their museum's institutional identity as their museum constructed a new building and moved to a new location. The guiding questions focused on how staff described their museum's identity, their role in the museum, and the impact of the change in architecture and location before, during and after the move. There were three main conclusions that have been drawn, and a fourth emerging conclusion overall. Conclusion one was that staff understood the identity of the museum as being related to how visible they were in the community. Conclusion two was that staff saw that changes in how the museum connected to the community impacted the museum identity when the museum moved into its new building. Conclusion three was that staff understood that as the museum moved, the institution's identity was more closely aligning with mission and vision, although institutional focus didn't stay the same. The emerging conclusion was that during a move, a museum's identity was not stagnant, and that as museum staff settled into their new institution, they realized that their institution's identity would continue to shift and change.

Recommendations for Future Research

This research paved the way for further research on the phenomena of museums moving into new buildings and the ways in which the identity of museums change. The following recommendations are made in consideration of the results of this study. First, more research should be done on the topic of museums moving into new facilities, with data from more museums and from museums outside of the Seattle area. Second, further research should make a comparison between how Executive Directors and other staff describe the identities of their institutions to see if similarities and differences between these two groups emerge. Thirdly,

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research should be done on public perspectives because public perceptions also impact staff and the creation of institutional identity.

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Appendix A: Consent Form

Consent Form

Place and Space: What Moving Means for a Museum's Identity

University of Washington

Researcher's Name: Elizabeth Wiley

Phone:

Email:

Thesis Chair: Wilson O'Donnell, Associate Director of the Museology Graduate Program

Phone:

Email:

I am asking you to participate in an interview/focus group that is part of my Master's Thesis work at the University of Washington. The purpose of this research is to describe how staff perceive and understand their museum's institutional identity when the museum moves physical locations. Your participation is voluntary, refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits, and you may discontinue participation at any time. This interview will be audio taped for my note taking only. I may use your title and name of your institution in my final paper. If I directly quote you, I will send the quote to you before publication. If you have any questions now or in the future, you may contact me through the information on this document. Do you have any questions? Do you agree to participate in this interview/focus group?

Signature: _____

Date: _____

On document left with interviewee:

Place and Space: What Moving Means for a Museum's Identity

University of Washington

Researcher's Name: Elizabeth Wiley

Phone: (360) 989-4907

Email: ewiley94@uw.edu

Thesis Chair: Wilson O'Donnell, Associate Director of the Museology Graduate Program

Phone:

Email:

Appendix B: Executive Director Interview Protocol and Questions

Interview Protocol

Researchers Statement:

I am asking you to participate in an interview that is part of my Master's Thesis work at the University of Washington. The purpose of this research is to describe how staff perceive and understand their museum's institutional identity when the museum moves physical locations. Your participation is voluntary, refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits, and you may discontinue participation at any time. This interview will be audio taped for my note taking only. I may use your title and name of your institution in my final. If I directly quote you, I will send the quote to you before publication. If you have any questions now or in the future, you may contact me through the information on this document. Do you have any questions? Do you agree to participate in this interview?

Interview Procedures:

The purpose of these research questions is to describe how staff perceive and understand their museum's institutional identity when the museum moves physical locations.

This will be a semi-structured interview that will last approximately 1 hour.

Interview Instrument:

The purpose of this study is to describe how staff perceive and understand their museum's institutional identity when the museum moves physical locations.

For the purposes of this study institutional identity is described as the collective understanding by staff and stakeholders of the aspects of an institution that make it unique or distinct. Basically, a museum's identity is who it is as an institution.

Instrument Questions

Sections 1: Identity

How do staff describe their museum's identity before the move, during the move, and now?

1. In your own words what are the mission and goals of your museum right now?
 - a. What did the mission and goals of your institution look like before the move?
 - b. What did the mission and goals of your institution look like during the move?
2. Now that you've described the mission and goals, how would you characterize the identity of your institution?
 - a. How would you describe your museum identity before the move?
 - b. What did the identity look like during the move?
3. What does your museum's relationship to the community look like right now?
 - a. What did the relationship to the community look like during the move?
 - b. What did that relationship to community look like before the move?

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- c. Are there specific changes that you've seen in your museum's relationship to the community?
4. What other aspects of the museum do you think affect its identity?
 - a. How do you think the move has impacted these aspects?

Section 2: Personnel and Staff Roles

How do staff describe their role in the museum before the move, during the move, and now?

1. What is your role in the museum now? What do you do in your job and what are some tasks that you have?
 - a. What did your role look like during the move? How is it similar and different to what you do now?
 - b. What did your role look like before the move? How is that similar and different to what you do now?
2. How did the move affect your department (for focus groups only)?
 - a. What did your department look like before the move?
 - b. What did your department look like during the move?
 - c. What does your department look like now?
3. How has the move impacted your interactions with other staff?
 - a. What do staff relationships look like now?
 - b. What were they like during the move?
 - c. What were they like before the move?
4. How has the move impacted your interactions and your department interactions with the community?
 - a. What do these community interactions look like now?
 - b. What did they look like during the move?
 - c. What did they look like before the move?

Section 3: Building and Location

How does the museum's old and new building and location affect how staff describe it before the move, during the move, and now?

1. How would you describe the museum's building before the move?
 - a. How did you as staff use the old museum and its space?
 - b. How did the community use the old museum and its space?
2. How would you describe the building or buildings as you transitioned from the old to the new?
3. How would you describe the new building?
4. How would you describe the new museum's location in the city?
 - a. How would you compare it to the previous location?
5. What do you think your museum's role in the community is now?
 - a. What do you think your museum's role in the community was during the move?
 - b. What do you think your museum's role in the community was before the move?

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6. Do you think your museum's relevance to the community has changed or is changing? In what ways?

Confidentiality and Research Information:

I want to thank you for taking the time to have this conversation with me. Do you have any questions? If you have any questions, please contact me through the information on this document. Thank you very much for your time.

Appendix C: Focus Group Protocol and Questions

Focus Group Protocol

Researchers Statement:

I am asking you to participate in a focus group that is part of my Master's Thesis work at the University of Washington. The purpose of this research is to describe how staff perceive and understand their museum's institutional identity when the museum moves physical locations. Your participation is voluntary, refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits, and you may discontinue participation at any time. This focus group will be audio taped for my note taking only. I may use your title and name of your institution in my final paper. If I directly quote you, I will send the quote to you before publication. If you have any questions now or in the future, you may contact me through the information on this document. Do you have any questions? Do you agree to participate in this interview?

Focus Group Procedures:

The purpose of these research questions is to describe how staff perceive and understand their museum's institutional identity when the museum moves physical locations.

This focus group will be semi-structured and will last approximately 1 hour.

Interview Instrument:

For the purposes of this study institutional identity is described as the collective understanding by staff and stakeholders of the aspects of an institution that make it unique or distinct. Basically, a museum's identity is who it is as an institution.

Instrument Questions

Sections 1: Identity

How do staff describe their museum's identity before the move, during the move, and now?

2. In your own words what are the mission and goals of your museum right now?
 - b. What did the mission and goals of your institution look like before the move?
 - c. What did the mission and goals of your institution look like during the move?
5. Now that you've described the mission and goals, how would you characterize the identity of your institution?
 - a. How would you describe your museum identity before the move?
 - b. What did the identity look like during the move?
6. What does your museum's relationship to the community look like right now?
 - a. What did the relationship to the community look like during the move?
 - b. What did that relationship to community look like before the move?
 - c. Are there specific changes that you've seen in your museum's relationship to the community?
7. What other aspects of the museum do you think affect its identity?
 - a. How do you think the move has impacted these aspects?

Section 2: Personnel and Staff Roles

How do staff describe their role in the museum before the move, during the move, and now?

5. What is your role in the museum now? What do you do in your job and what are some tasks that you have?
 - a. What did your role look like during the move? How is it similar and different to what you do now?
 - b. What did your role look like before the move? How is that similar and different to what you do now?
6. How did the move effect your department (for focus groups only)?
 - a. What did your department look like before the move?
 - b. What did your department look like during the move?
 - c. What does your department look like now?
7. How has the move impacted your interactions with other staff?
 - a. What do staff relationships look like now?
 - b. What were they like during the move?
 - c. What were they like before the move?
8. How has the move impacted your interactions and your department interactions with the community?
 - a. What do these community interactions look like now?
 - b. What did they look like during the move?
 - c. What did they look like before the move?

Section 3: Building and Location

How does the museum's old and new building and location affect how staff describe it before the move, during the move, and now?

7. How would you describe the museums building before the move?
 - a. How did you as staff use the old museum and its space?
 - b. How did the community use the old museum and its space?
8. How would you describe the building or buildings as you transitioned from the old to the new?
9. How would you describe the new building?
10. How would you describe the new museum's location in the city?
 - a. How would you compare it to the previous location?
11. What do you think your museums role in the community is now?
 - a. What do you think your museums role in the community was during the move?
 - b. What do you think your museums role in the community was before the move?
12. Do you think your museum's relevance to the community has changed or is changing? In what ways?

Confidentiality and Research Information:

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I want to thank you for taking the time to have this conversation with me. Do you have any questions? If you have any questions, please contact me through the information on this document. Thank you very much for your time.

Appendix D: Coding Matrix

BEFORE			
Theme	The Burke	MOHAI	The Nordic
Institutional Identity			
Some community buy-in, but lack of broader interest.	E.D. "[There were a] couple thousand people who knew about what we did behind the scenes...they loved us." E.D. "I think there were certain division that were known. I mean anybody who wanted information about Northwest Native art came to the Burke." IT Manager " I think there'd been the perception that it was more of like a smaller region that we were part of."	E.D. "I think we were a legacy brand before. Where many people know of us, but not as many visited us or considered us as something that was currently doing things that are top of minds." E.D. "There's always been a pretty close relationship between MOHAI and sort of the community, community media, community organizations." Exhibit Manager "There are a couple of jokes. When I first started here...you could get a bumper sticker from the museum of hysteria and indecision. Another one was this is a collection of rich, old white lady sweaters." Exhibit Manager "We were kind of dying on the vine in the old place."	E.D. "There was a sense that the overemphasis on heritage limited the audience to people of Scandinavian and Nordic Heritage" Chief of Staff "...the prior museum had a mission that was certainly more immigration focused." E.D. ""[The museum] was really very grassroots and grew up out of a communities commitment to preserving and celebrating their heritage." Chief of Staff "I think programmatically we were doing fantastic work in the old facility." Jonathan "I think there was a little bit of a...clubhouse perception of the museum."
Part community center/ worked for certain portions of the community	CM Pal/Geo"Various part of, various portions of what you call community would have used the building. I mentioned the amateur group. They had their meetings at the Burke in the Burke room and they really love it because it was at the museum.	Events Manager " I don't think that MOHAI had as much of, as much stature as a respected historical organization or history museum. We were sort of something else. We were kind of a hybrid, you know, kind of a	E.D. "The museum has always been both a community center and museum." E.D. "In the old facility were able to provide the facility to other community groups at a much, much, much deeper discount, and we were able to allow community groups to

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		<p>museum, kind of a community center."</p>	<p>use the kitchen and do those sorts of things."</p>
<p>Staff and Personnel</p>			
<p>Staff insulated from what others were doing</p>	<p>E.D. "I think people were more specifically oriented to themselves...Their work and their exhibit." CM Gen. Res. "I do feel like the burke before the move was slightly more inward looking."</p>	<p>E.D. "I think previous to the move...we were much more insular both in practice but also in perception."</p>	<p>Dev. Manager "In our old place, we were all on different levels."</p>
	<p>Exec. Assist. "before I had to go and find the collections and to go and find people."</p>	<p>Vis. Serv. Manager "everyone did what needed to be done and there was kind of a, you know, we all pulled together and make it happen." Exhibits Manager "I think it was something that [the visitors services manager] was alluding to before is that at the old site there was more a familial relationship and the staff."</p>	
<p>Building and Location</p>			
<p>Not well seen</p>	<p>E.D. "I think you couldn't see anything in the old Burke. You couldn't even see the Burke. Nobody knew we were there. We were just behind these bushes." E.D. "We'd come from a place of darkness."</p>	<p>E.D. "[The old building] sort of nestled into the landscape, so visually you couldn't see it." E.D. "Before the move we were viewed generally as stayed...more of the past tense. People knew MOHAI, but oftentimes that was from their childhood." E.D. "So the physical location of the old</p>	<p>E.D. "And the other real issue was the location of the building. It was perfect for a school because it was in a residential neighborhood, but was not very good for visibility."</p>

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		<p>place...[was] pretty much hidden, even though it was relatively accessible" Events Manager "MOHAI was I think undervalued at the time. Certainly partly because of our location." Events Manager "People didn't know where we were." Events Manager "Kind of smaller and not as well attended, a little bit farther off the beaten path." Exhibit Manager "And it continued to, a the city developed, become more and more obscure...[the] location difficult to get to."</p>	
<p>Old building was inhibitive/confining - physically and conceptually</p>	<p>E.D. "The heat was terrible. There was no air-conditioning. The spaces were little and chocked up. The elevator didn't work very well and there weren't enough bathrooms. The lighting was terrible. Nobody had any windows...the exhibit space hadn't been changed in 20 years and nobody who came there knew that there was anything else but those exhibits. Exec. Assist. "We used to have one classroom and then there was the Burke room that people would have classes...but there was a lot of jockeying, a lot of people couldn't do it." CM Gen. Res. "Not optimally designed for the functions it was</p>	<p>E.D. "...it was very small." E.D. "So the physical location of the old place...I think it was perceived as being woefully out of date. Pretty much hidden, even though it was relatively accessible" Exhibit Manager "At the old site, we could pretty much do whatever exhibits we could A.) afford and B.) fit in the space without having to do much else. Exhibit Manager "We only had limited storage onsite and had to rent..." Collections Manager "Two offsite facilities." Exhibit Manager "There was this constant shuffle. It was very difficult to manage all of those</p>	<p>E.N. "Even though we changed our name, explored beta testing, and came out with new magazines, new programmatic, new programmatic initiatives, that were a little bit more contemporary, it was very, very difficult for any of that to pick up steam in the old facilities." E.D. "It was and old school that was build and designed to be a school, not a museum, so it lacked many of the basic requirements of a museum. Climate control and security and special allocations were not very effective or efficient." Chief of</p>

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	<p>carrying out to put it mildly." A.D. School/Teach Programs "cramped" Exec. Assist. "Warren-y" CM Gen. Res. "Sort of disgusting in a lot of places...over congested."</p>	<p>storage spaces." Exhibit Manager "Sinking into the swamp." Collections Manager "Kind of run down." Collections Manager "It was very unique, but by the time I started [...] it was really worn out. The storage was horrible...There wasn't good workspace."</p>	<p>Staff " The last facility, did not have adequate climate controls, or sufficient permanent exhibition or program space."</p>
<p>Some familiarity and attachment</p>	<p>CM Gen. Res. "I think the public were more fond of it than the staff who worked in it." CM Pal/Geo "I was quite fond of the building. Sad to see it go." IT Manager " I mean I'm fond of the old building mainly because I went to elementary school here and so we used to go on field trips." CM Gen. Res. "For me, it held memories that I was really fond of. But it wasn't because of the structure, like it was because of the people and things that happened in it." IT Manager "I think people are really going to miss the cafe."</p>	<p>Collections Manager "[The old MOHAI] was kind of homier." Events Manager "There was 160 parking spots, which I would give my left arm for today."</p>	<p>E.D. "Quant and cozy are two really nice things to say about it." E.D.. "It was perceived by the community to be a warm and inviting facility that, you know, thousands of community members put blood, sweat, and tears into creating." Chief of Staff "The core exhibition that was featured in our old museum was built by passionate stakeholders and volunteers—so many people absolutely loved that exhibition." Chief of Staff "Cozy, snug, historic. It was an old schoolhouse." Comm. Engage. Dir. "Could even say tired and dusty...there were those who loved it and those who felt it was old school."</p>
<p>DURING</p>			
<p>Theme</p>	<p>The Burke</p>	<p>MOHAI</p>	<p>The Nordic</p>
<p>Institutional Identity</p>			

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<p>Better executing goals & values</p>	<p>IT Manager "I think during the processes, one of the things I hear anyway, is kind of the shift was just a reinforcement that it's all of Washington." Exec. Assist. "decolonization isn't in our mission, but that's a big part of what that healing is." Exec. Assist. "the goals really haven't changed."</p>	<p>E.D. " The move really becomes the attempt to take those goals and actually manifest it in a way that reaches a larger audience." E.D. "Our mindset was we didn't want to be that insular and the move was actually our way of being less insular."</p>	<p>E.D. "Changing our name and coming into the new building has allowed us to shake some of the dust off the organization." E.D. "It's been a very strategic and concerted effort to make sure we're not pivoting so dramatically away from the mission." Chief of Staff "I think this facility provides an unparalleled opportunity for us to really execute our mission."</p>
<p>Shifting Focus</p>	<p>CM Gen. Res. "the spark joy thing was a new thing." Exec. Assist. "From the people that are actually in the community...we'd like to feel joy too." CM Gen. Res. "The spark joy thing was new."</p>	<p>E.D. "I think whether it changes as we moved was that we had a much greater focus on the sense that history is evolving, that history is today as well as yesterday." E.D. "The move itself in a lot of tactical ways having to do with marketing and programming and audience development allowed us to really reposition ourselves."</p>	<p>E.D. "We expanded mission shortly after I arrived and we developed the vision of creating this world class facility...and we've broadened our mission." Chief of Staff "We just kind of found that we really needed to fine tune it and really think about, you know, how our audience might be different and how we can expand our audience" Program Manager "My responsibility is in the last four and a half years or so in focusing a little bit more on the contemporary aspects of Nordic Arts and Culture."</p>

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<p>Expanding community involvement and awareness</p>	<p>E.D. "I think to get the money to build a new museum, we went throughout the community beyond those stakeholders I mentioned before. We went throughout this neighborhood, city, state, and made promises, and the promise we made is that you're going to be able to see what we do." A.D. School/Teach Programs "We have goals for serving more students." Exec. Assist. "Our relationship to indigenous communities has grown exponentially in the last year." A.D. School/Teach Programs "I think there's some excitement and anticipation I hope." A.D. School/Teach Programs "One partner we've worked with...reached out to us to ask if we could provide them with a meeting space...it's indicative of something, a perception, a bigger perception change about the Burke." IT Manager "I think the UW community has been reminded that we're here." CM Gen. Res. "And the wider community. I mean I went to a grocery store on the Ave recently...Some random person in the store said, oh when is the Burke opening? I had never been asked about the Burke before." IT Manager "If I have the</p>	<p>E.D. "During the transition, I think there was a curiosity about, well, what is MOHAI?" E.D. "Both the physical move, because it repositioned us in a more prominent location, and the nature of the move, allowing us to leverage a broader public presence, changed the perception of MOHAI as being a more active and more engaged part of the community."</p>	<p>E.D. " We wanted to make sure that the museum was open and welcoming to all people no matter what their ethnic or cultural heritage was." "There was also a desire to make sure that we expanded our mission to make sure that we weren't leaving folks behind." Chief of Staff "I think something that we can build here has created more opportunity for more touch points with that broad audience." Jonathan "It's about respecting and continuing to engage traditional programming while also doing more in the way of contemporary programming as well." Collections Manager "We tried to involve the community in the process. Everything from feedback to I believe design input."</p>
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	badge, people were asking when things are going to open."		
Nostalgia	E.D. "...there was a lot of nostalgia when we, when we moved out. There was sadness and saying goodbye." CM Pal/Geo "We had kind of this community down in the [old museum] basement, which I now miss. We've all been shuffled."		Dev. Manager "I don't know how many times I hear, like some people miss the old place because it was so homey."
Staff and Personnel			
Challenge and variation in how staff embrace change	E.D. (in reference to moving) "...there were people who were all packed up...[on] the first move date." "And there were some people who delayed all the way until the last possible day"	E.D. "I don't think we had a whole lot of strategies in place for keeping everybody together on the same page." E.D. "everybody was totally anxious about how are we going to figure this out?" E.D. "A transition of that scale and that scope and that duration, that takes that long, people burn out and they leave." Vis. Serv. Manager "I feel like when we opened we were so overwhelmed with the volume of it all."	E.D. "...no matter how much time you have or how much money you have, it's still stressful." E.D. "There's kind of this post-traumatic stress thing that happen with staff, not immediately after, but about six months after." E.D. "We lost a couple of key folks...but I do think staff for the most part has embraced the change of identity in a positive way. I think some of the staff members had a much easier time of that than some of the others." Chief of Staff "But there has been impacts, I mean just to be transparent. I think for some people it was extremely stressful."

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Comradery	CM Gen. Res. "The barriers are becoming more permeable...Now there's just more news flowing. It's just more of a feeling of inclusiveness."		Dev. Manager "And so it was like king of one of the first times, all of a sudden, we just all started really working together from top to bottom in that old place."
Staff roles shift and are flexible	E.D. "Since January 1 st with the move, I've become a mother. I'm the mother and the person who says to the, to the kids, it's going to be okay." E.D. "There is an overwhelming sense of helping each other."	E.D. "most organization are running two projects at once." Vis. Serv. Manager "It feels like at that time the attitude kind of shifted from a, everyone does everything to just make it work to like a, I've got to focus on my job...a siloing departmentally at that time."	E.N. "My role in the museum has always been provide leadership to the staff and to the board and be a face for the museum. And those aspects haven't changed...different focuses or emphases have changed." Collections Manager "There is more concerted effort to draw on the strengths of all of those [various departments] to make this omniscient realized vision" Chief of Staff "Position titles and roles did not change much, but in terms of any staff member's daily focus the work activity changed dramatically for a period."
Building and Location			
The building and location itself	CM Gen. Res. "When we first moved in it definitely felt cold a sterile to me at least to me. But it's starting to feel less so as old furniture gets moved in and you know, collections come out and get put on display." CM Gen. Res. "There are some amazingly beautiful views." CM	E.D. "It just seems to be where we wanted to be in a historic building, in the center of an emerging part of, really, the future of Seattle. A very visual, prominent landmark." Collections Manager "...there were high...expectations that it was going to just be fabulous."	E.N. "There's always a sense that Market Street or being highly visible in a commercial corridor was important...this in of burgeoning, up and coming neighborhood of Ballard has also been very nice."

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	Gen. Res. "From the outside of the building, I really liked the new building a lot. I love that it was wood. When it's landscaped, it's going to be really pretty."		
Change in layout means change in relationships (staff and community)	E.D. "...in an article we all read about Boston's Children's museum...they described how people's relationships were disrupted because they no longer sat next to somebody or they no longer met them at the bathroom or the water foundation...That's happening, they can't find each other." CM Pal/Geo "We used to get a lot of people with inquiries. They would bring specimens in to show us, and that's completely shut off now because of the construction." Exec. Assist. "What I've been hearing is that there are a lot of people...who feel like they don't see people anymore. They're much more isolated." A.D. School/Teach Programs "I think we're still figuring out how to have a collaborative spiritwhen we're separate from each other."	E.D. "I mean from a corporate culture standpoint, it was very different because we were at on space and then we went, we got larger, quite a bit larger, and we started working in two spaces. And it wasn't quite as problematic as I thought it would be, I thought there would be a real division, but we spend a lot of time traveling back and forth." Exhibit Manager "And it did kind of split the big exhibits and collections part of the family into two different building." Vis. Serv. Manager "The work culture in the two different locations has become different."	E.N. "Just the personnel move...They were all kind of with trepidation, going from a system where everybody was king of clustered in their own little space and we had the educators in one office and the development team in the another office, et cetera, to having an open office system, was also something that some of the staff weren't comfortable with. But everyone's made the jump nicely." Comm. Engage. Dir. "I think since with the open plan and everybody being on the same floor, there's much more interaction between and among staff." Chief of Staff "We now work in an open office space, I think the closer physical proximity makes you more appreciative of what someone else's day is like."
NOW			
Theme	The Burke	MOHAI	The Nordic
Institutional Identity			

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<p>Focus has stayed more or less the same</p>		<p>E.D. "I think in our minds institutionally we had the same values before and after, but now we're able to act on those values."</p>	<p>E.N. "We've not waked away from that [the original statement] as our mission and vision."</p>
<p>Keeping Community Relationships</p>	<p>E.D. "I think it's inviting people in to come and see the things that they own and what we do with them and have a say. Asking them for their opinion about what we do. We may not follow their opinion or their advice, but we need to give them a vehicle to give it." E.D. "Well, the biggest change, and this is going to be a cultural change, is the fact that we are inviting the public to see into the collections and all of our laboratories. And nobody else has done this. CM Pal/Geo "Until we get the public into this new building, I don't think we're really going to feel any difference in how we identify."</p>	<p>E.D. "Our role in the community is much broader." E.D. "With every exhibit we do we have many community partners. With every program we hold, usually it's done by community members with us." E.D. "I think all of our institutions need to continue to work really hard on being good community partners and engaging the community rather than just, you know, expecting the community to show up." Exhibit Manager "We try really hard to appeal to the broadest possible audience through our exhibits and programs."</p>	<p>Comm. Engage. Dir. "the new building provided newer opportunity to really reach out and engage much broader community than we'd had, and to do that by expanding our membership, inviting people to be part of the new museum, and also inviting community organizations broadly across the state...to be advocates for the museum and encourage participation."</p>
<p>Increase the caliber of institution</p>	<p>Exec. Assist. "Smithsonian Magazine names us one of the top 10 or top 20 most exiting museums that are going to be opening."</p>	<p>E.D. "And I think the perception is that we are one of the kind of core cultural institutions in the region." E.D. "So whereas we might have 50-60K visitors a year at the old place, we have 200,000 visitors at this place." Events Manager "I think we're one of the main, you know, top 10 attractions in Seattle." Vis. Serv.</p>	<p>E.D. "our membership has now quadrupled...and so there's more members, there's broader community and with that bigger community it become more diffuse." E.D. "There's also the sense that there was something in the story that we're telling is of national significance." Dev. Manager "If you were</p>

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		<p>Manager "[Leadership] consider us in the tier with aquariums, science centers, SAM, like the big players. Instead of Wing Luke, Nordic, NAAM, which I think we were kind of more in line with before the move."</p>	<p>a tourist coming to the city, would you go to like one of the six really cool, big MOHAI, Burke, SAM museums? And now I think like with this new facility, we're up there with everybody else."</p>
<p>More public awareness and impact</p>	<p>E.D. "...people know that that person who lives in that house is the head of the Burke Museums because everybody knows the Burke Museum. It's not about me, that's about the success of increasing the presence of the museum."</p>	<p>E.D. "We simply have more of everything and therefore our role in the community is greater." Exhibit Manager "we've been able to leverage our location...raise the profile of the institution in the community."</p>	<p>E.N. "Visibility has increased dramatically. I think we've always been relevant to the community. I think our shift in mission and our shift in programs that we started a few years ago continues to be relevant. I think now with the visibility of the new museum and the national designation and other accolades we've been receiving, it's being perceived as more relevant as well." Comm. Engage. Dir. "[We] ultimately expanded the membership over a couple of year from just under 2000 to now over 6000...creating this increased visibility."</p>

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<p>Relevancy and identity continue to be redefined</p>	<p>Exec. Assist. "the museum is focused on decolonization. Focus on decolonization I think is giving us a relevancy in the community that we don't know the impact of yet."</p>	<p>E.D. "You know, for most people, the end of the project is you cut the ribbon and you open. You know what, that's day one, that's when it really starts." E.D. "And it's always different than you think it's going to be." Exhibit Manager "I think the community is beginning to see us as a resource." Vis. Serv. Manager "Maybe the trajectory of this kind of place is always evolving, but I think that we have been in such a period of transition, that within the next five years, we might establish a more permanent sense of self."</p>	<p>Chief of Staff "I mean I think a modern museum has to constantly be....re-visioning what it's doing to remain relevant, fresh" E.N " We've accomplished our vision of building a world class facility and now are on the other side of the mirror and we are defining what the new big vision is." E.N "So it's kind of a continued evolution of identity. I mean we are now the National Nordic Museum, which is a great honor and a nice tribute, to the hard work that has been done, and also I think indicates some relevance in the Nordic region...So part of our identity is how do we live up to that designation." Chief of Staff "We are still definitely knee deep in putting together what the strategic vision is." Program Manager "Culture continues to redefine itself on a daily basis." Chief of Staff "We are still giving shape to the new operation, but we're planning for a future in which the museum is going to be long term sustainable."</p>
<p>Staff and Personnel</p>			

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Staff Roles	E.D. "...once people are in their little places and they're all settled down and they figure out how the building works, they will go back to doing their jobs and I'll do mine."	E.D."the before and the after are not really so much different in terms of what people do."	E.D. "My relationship to the institution hasn't changed in the last 10 years, but the perception has changed with the new facility."
Building and Location			
Impact & visibility of new building & location	E.D. "...the building is beautiful. And even though people haven't been in it for over a year, it has been sitting there, this beautiful thing and people who love architecture just can't wait to get inside." E.D. "It's clean!"	E.D. "The perception of this [new] facility, even though it wasn't at all designed to be a museum and in that sense is much less adequate from what we need than the old place. But it was viewed as this is where history museum belongs and this is the kind of community where a growing institution needs to be located. So the perception of this space was much, much stronger." Exhibits Manager "People can see us when you drive by." "This is a beautiful building. This is a spectacular location." Vis. Serv. Manager "From the visitor perspective, we are much more visible here"	E.D. "I think this place function very well as a museum and allows us to serve as a community center in addition." Collections Manager "In terms of our preservation mission, we have now created a facility which has climate control, security, more public accessibility in terms of technology in space." Comm. Engage. Dir. "I think the museum is also much more welcoming to everyone. And I think that's partially because of its location, partially because of its architecture and design. It's much more visible." Comm. Engage. Dir. "Definitely it's a clear new identity for the museum, of being this contemporary Nordic looking space."
Level of exhibitions		Events Manager "And I feel like we're also competing on a different level nationally. Like we're looking at different	Comm. Engage. Dir. "People are expecting more out of this. How do we rise to those new levels?" Dev. Manager "I also think

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		exhibits than we would have at Montlake."	just the fact that we can host these world class exhibitions now, which is huge." Chief of Staff "I think our ability to share Nordic Culture now is greatly augmented with the new facility."
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