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Introduction

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This project had a name before it had a plan. Museum As Site for Social Action: MASS Action. The acronym came to me before I knew what it would become.

In December 2014, a group of museum bloggers wrote a joint statement urging museums to respond to the crisis happening in Ferguson and across the country. Very few did. Many of us, particularly those in predominately white-led organizations, just talked about it. *Should we respond? I mean, is it really our role as a museum?*

#museumsrespondtoFerguson was born. They began holding weekly conversations about the role and responsibility of museums in confronting social injustices.

Months later, at a museum conference in Atlanta, Baltimore was rising up but many of us stayed seated. Presenting on projects as if nothing was happening. *What could we really do?*

#MuseumWorkersSpeak held a meeting in an overflowing gallery and demanded museums turn the social justice lens inward to address inequitable internal practices.

The juxtaposition between those doing "the work"—both creating and calling for justice and greater equity in the field—and those who were not questioning the status quo, seemed like an immense chasm.

There was another group of colleagues out there, though. Those for whom the refrain of "Should we respond?" had shifted to "We should respond. But in what way and how?" I frequently heard colleagues say they wanted to do this work, but did not know how or where to begin.

That's where I saw an opportunity. If our museums are only held back because we lack the tools to do the work and the roadmap to move forward, then let's give people the tools and the roadmap! There are many colleagues out there doing good work, so this project could aggregate what they are doing; we could put that all together in a toolkit, share it widely with field, then everyone will have what they need to get to work.

This seems naïve looking back. But I wouldn't know that at the time.

* * *

I was brand new, only a few months on the job here at the Minneapolis Institute of Art when I shared the seedling of an idea with Karleen Gardner, Director of Learning Innovation, and we presented it to our director and president Kaywin Feldman. I remember being nervous. In my experience, there are not many directors that, when presented with an emergent project that has promise (and a price tag) but no guarantees, will so immediately say yes. But she did so without hesitation.

I then reached out to a handful of colleagues across the country—people who were asking questions and challenging the field—to discuss the idea. They may not have known then exactly what was ahead, but they saw a possibility of what this could become. This group of inspiring individuals would become our advisors, and they have been unwaveringly supportive of and committed to this project for the past two years. We first met in Minneapolis in the fall of 2015 and, with their vision and insight, created a three-year roadmap, a plan for collaborative action that would be a call for greater equity and social justice in museums.

From there, we reached out to more colleagues, change-makers and thought-leaders, from institutions small and large, from art museums and science centers and historical sites, universities, a children's museum. In this group there were educators, curators, facilitators, interpreters, researchers, writers, scholars, artists, activists, and agitators. We connected online over the summer of 2016, animatedly discussing what we thought were the most urgent issues in the field to address.

I thought, initially, that we would be focusing on our external outputs, programming, community engagement, but quickly realized through our conversations that we couldn't address those, the metaphorical leaves on a tree, before we looked at the roots: the structures and internal workings and systems of museums. If we can change those, then everything else will follow more naturally.

This group gathered in person in Minneapolis in the fall of 2016. For three days, we discussed the issues of institutional transformation, creating an inclusive culture, widening interpretation, sharing authority, decolonizing collections and the museum. We formed small working groups around these topics and began outlining our vision for a "toolkit", which would be a group of essays, tools, and resources. On the last day, we stood in a circle and shared reflections on our experience together and our commitment to the work ahead, and I realized that what we were creating was actually more than a product, it was a community.

We have been working together within this community the past year, piecing together time when we could. As many of you know, we are often overcommitted in the museum field, and these contributors are no less so. Yet, they somehow made space and time to connect and to build—whether it was to share an article or a word of support to one another, or to sit down and write what you will read within these pages.

And so, what we have written here is not so much a toolkit as it is a documentation of our thinking, our process, which is shared in hopes that it will spark your thinking and be a catalyst

for change within your own institutions. It turns out the real tool is this: continued work. Everyone will have to do the work.

MASS Action is not a project anymore. It is a network of people, individuals committed to seeing the museum field change, connecting in solidarity, recognizing there is strength in numbers. That, like fractals, if we all individually commit to do our part on a small scale, we will start to see change on a large scale. That with enough voices, we can make change.

This book is the product of that commitment. And the vision, the passion, and the energy of this network of people. It is imperfect and incomplete. As it should be, because it is has been waiting for you. It has been waiting for others to take it, to read it, to use it, to figure out how to apply it.

This is a journey. And we are not at the beginning. It was started by people before us, and—as much as I like to think that will end at some point in the future—it will continue after us. Museums hold the stories, the discoveries, the treasures of human history, creativity, culture, and knowledge. So as long as museums are around (and I hope it's a long time), then we—the people who work inside of them—will continually have to challenge whose stories are being told and by whom. We will always have work to do.

So let's keep working.

Elisabeth Callihan
September 2017

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Section I: Theory

CHAPTER 1

Getting Started:
What We Need to Change and Why

AUTHORS: Adam Patterson, Aletheia Wittman, Chieko Phillips, Gamynne Guillotte, Therese Quinn, Adrianne Russell

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Setting Our Intention

It is our intention, as a collective of contributors, to provide irresistible clarity around why this work—preparing museums to become "sites for social action"—matters. We could provide many reasons, including our shifting demographic landscape, the "business case" for diversity, and the threat our current federal executive leadership poses to the rights and safety of our friends, families and communities. However, we are unified in our belief that there is also, and above all, a moral imperative for this work. It is the *right* thing to do, because it makes our field and our world more just and sets an uncompromising, high standard for conduct in our field. We are radical optimists, and as such, we approach this work with radical hope and wish to instill in others this same radical hope for the future.

Who Is This For?

This tool is for people working in the museum community, those working from the inside as well as those working tactically at the margins of the field. This tool is for all those concerned with the health of the field. We know that our work is a continuation of many years of hard, isolating, often frustrating or traumatic work by many. We humbly acknowledge those who have come before us and who have paved the way for us to be in this moment; producing this tool as a gesture of solidarity for those doing the work, or wanting to do the work in our field. If you are a newcomer to this work, thank you and welcome.

Housekeeping

In this toolkit you will find a glossary of terms as well as sections which will describe different tracks of museum work. These sections are intended to present ways of thinking and working that can prepare your museum to become a site for social action. Each section moves beyond identifying problems, instead describing the high dream, a

vision for the future, and what success might look like. Some concepts will repeat throughout the toolkit, which will unify our approach. However some terms and concepts will be unique to specific sections.

What is a museum?

Defining what a museum is should be relatively straightforward but under a small bit of pressure it becomes more complex. Does a museum need a building? Nomadic institutions would say no. But it must need a collection, right? Non-collecting institutions would disagree. Does it need an audience? Well-known and cited private collections abound. What then connects the disparate places and practices that we call museums?

The modern museum can be said to have developed in the 150 years between the birth of the Enlightenment and the end of the Colonial period. This matters, because the values and narratives of this period have structured what museums are and how they work. The modern museum has its roots in Western systems of encyclopedic knowledge creation. The notion that the world can be known and categorized to tell a definitive narrative can be found in the earliest Wunderkammers (cabinets of wonders) as well as the contemporary encyclopedic collection. Museums do not just describe or collect cultural knowledge; they create it.

The modern notion of the collection has its roots in the Colonial period when all resources—natural, cultural, and human—were being mobilized to create wealth for a handful of nations. The pattern of expedition, appropriation, and export is embedded in the collecting histories of many of our institutions. In assembling disparate objects removed from their original context, museums then needed to create a taxonomy for them. Objects are tagged by date, material, dimensions, place of origin, provenance. They are grouped by time (Medieval, Contemporary, etc.) or through space (African, Asian, etc.). The system makes claims on rationality but its biases and limitations are readily apparent. In the attempt to dispassionately contain and class objects, their social history and that of their original makers and users, are often lost. Any system of taxonomy contains a narrative. The narrative that emerges from traditional museum taxonomy privileges dominant Western ideals of race, class, and gender. This should come as no surprise—that is precisely what it was originally designed to do.

In order to truly transform the museum space, we must first recognize how and why it has come to be and for whom. We must pay attention to what its physical presence tells us, what its adjacencies are saying. We must see that the arrangement of its collection is a means of producing knowledge and we must ask what knowledge it is making. Finally, we must recognize that the changes that we and our audiences wish to see will structurally shift how museums function.

When we speak of the museum structure, we are not merely speaking metaphorically; the physical space and siting of the museum matters, in terms of what it communicates to visitors. There is no such thing as neutral space. All spaces function as a social construction and all spaces have an intended audience, an ideal subject. Through affordances and constraints—what is easy and what is difficult to do—spaces strongly suggest how users should behave and, in doing so, seek to construct that ideal subject for whom they were ostensibly designed.

How a museum is sited in a given city—its proximity to pedestrian spaces, its access to mass transit, its long views and visual presence—are all signals of who is and is not welcome in the museum space. Likewise, the accessibility of its entrances, the architectural style of its facade, the scale and navigability of its galleries all contain information about the type of visitor the institution expects to receive and, by extension, the type of visitor who is not explicitly made welcome.

Historical and social context informs the conditions under which museums, historic sites and houses are created and within which their roles and purposes are defined. These sites cannot separate themselves from the collective memories that link their development with white supremacy, hetero-patriarchy, abuse of labor, colonization, imperialist theft of art and artifacts, destruction or absencing of alternative ways of interpreting and representing art and artifacts, structural racism and other oppressions.

A range of emotions necessarily arises for the diverse cultural communities and geographies negatively impacted by this history. The cycle goes from denial, to acceptance, to grief, to anger, and, hopefully, at some point to mutually transformative action within museums. Given the complexity of emotions within museums that embark on the journey to decolonizing, equity and inclusion, it is important to take responsibility

for how they embody a decolonizing approach while moving toward accepting the responsibility to take transformative action.

Moving from denial to processes of acceptance and grieving are critical milestones on the journey to transformation. However, it is the institutional blocking and repression of anger that often generates a reversal of any gains made by an expressed commitment to "being on the journey" of diversity, equity and inclusion, particularly if the commitment goes beyond including people in an assumed universality without acknowledging difference.

Anger is a reasonable response to these societal injustices and the ways they have been replicated and entrenched through the work of our field. We choose to harness righteous anger as energy to motivate our collective work to build power and effect change. Legacy-power and authority structures will remain influential unless we challenge their foundational role in the development of museums and the way these structures have adapted to contemporary contexts. What are the contemporary contexts within which we find oppressive structures intact? And what strategies can we use to dismantle them as a means to interrupt the inequity they produce? These contemporary contexts include hiring, staffing, organizational culture, management, fundraising, collections policies, pedagogy, interpretation, transparency, and paradigms for engagement.

Historically museums have been places where collections and exhibitions were presented. The process of exhibition making and collection management happened away from the public view. The public was only invited in at the end of the process, expected to absorb the exhibition, and then go away. Exhibitions and collections were treated as cultural products that were created to be consumed in the museum's pristine and timeless spaces.

Increasingly, museums are shifting to become discursive spaces, places where audiences can discuss and debate the ideas presented in exhibitions and collections. Across commercial, technology, and cultural sectors, audiences are demanding a dialogue with institutions. In our highly networked and connected culture, audiences expect institutions to make room for their voices and narratives. In the case of art

museums, artists themselves are creating works that challenge the traditional relationship between artwork and audience, opting for participatory, open-ended research-based projects, over displays of static objects. Museums, long undergoing a crisis of relevance as the donor class that created and maintained them ages, are increasingly under pressure to share power with their audiences in new ways.

Traditional models of philanthropy flow from the top down: as such, standard philanthropic models tend to reinforce dominant cultural paradigms. The model of largesse and noblesse oblige, begun in feudal Europe, has never really been challenged or dismantled, only modified and, to some limited extent, regulated. The system, as it is currently constituted, disadvantages organizations run by and for those who experience the biggest disparities in health, education, and economic standing – those most impacted by systemic oppressions.

What might an alternate, more distributed, funding model look like? What might a crowdsourced museum be able to do that it cannot under the traditional model and how differently might it be held accountable? How might it be more transparent? This is a thought experiment to consider, when thinking of how funding is traditionally sought and distributed in museums.

Radical hope is a necessary response based on the energy and courage needed to transform entrenched legacies. We have made the decision to express our radical hope through collective action—taking constructive steps toward healing for the field. This tool is premised on our choice to be held accountable to create the change we want for the field. Our number-one priority is action. To honor this, we must agree to move past guilt for any role we have played in upholding harmful structures. This guilt often creates a wall of defensiveness, a direct counterforce to progress. So, we commit ourselves to compassionate dialogue in service of, and as a means to, strategic action.

Our Radical Optimism

Galleries, libraries, archives, and museums (GLAM) are still vitally important. GLAM sector institutions are generators of discourse that can either uphold or disrupt the dominant social narratives that exist within their communities and societies. As such,

"they are vitally important for a free and just civil society, and are positioned to move the conversation beyond the abstract discussions of politics and power focusing the conversation on the lives of the individual people museums serve".[1]

The MASS Action Project (Museums as a Site for Social Action) is rooted in the belief that GLAM institutions are responsible for serving as sites for social engagement and action. Core to that success are empathetic institutions that are deeply engaged with their local and regional communities. The Mass Action Toolkit demands that GLAM institutions be active in the pursuit of social justice.

We are offered additional momentum in this work as "[GLAM] centers "encourage the innate curiosity that resides in all of us, providing opportunities for education, awareness of social and global issues."[2] As trusted community members, we have the opportunity to catalyze movements. "New laws and policies will help, but any movement toward greater cultural and racial understanding and communication must be supported by our country's cultural and educational infrastructure."[3]

Invested in the work, we can rebrand GLAM institutions as sites of community healing. With this belief we have the opportunity to launch this effort from a place of radical hope. "Museums are community healers. Now more than ever we must deliver inspired learning experiences that empower learners with science understanding and critical thinking skills. We must actively grow and practice our values of equity and diversity, and seek out and welcome different ideas and perspectives. We must be compassionate with each other and create a safe and supportive organizational culture. We must remember we are powerful, not powerless."[4]

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[1] Nicole Ivy, "Advancing Equity Through Arts and Culture: A Call to Accountability", Center for Future of Museums. http://futureofmuseums.blogspot.com/2016/10/advancing-equity-through-arts-and.html

[2] Tegan Kehoe, "What is a Museum? On re-branding the museum as an institution of inspiration", http://createquity.com/2013/05/what-is-a-museum

[3] "Joint Statement from Museum Bloggers and Colleagues on Ferguson and Related Events", https://incluseum.com/2014/12/22/joint-statement-from-museum-bloggers-colleagues-on-ferguson-related-events

[4] Nancy Stueber, President of OMSI, staff-wide response to 2016 election result, "Subject: The morning after....." Date: 11/9/2016 from nstueber@omsi.edu to #Allstaff

CHAPTER 2

Moving Toward Internal Transformation: Awareness, Acceptance, Action

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When thinking about organizational change, we may conjure images of snails, turtles, or glaciers. Nonprofits, and especially museums, have traditionally been slow to change at operational and programmatic levels. Recent financial pressures, which hit a crescendo with the Great Recession of 2008–09, have forced museums to make organizational change. But changes that focus on the financial bottom line may not fully address what our audiences need from us and what our non-audiences are rejecting about us.

How can the education team develop programming that invites discourse about racial inequity if there are internal exclusionary hiring practices? How can the president/CEO make a public presentation advocating for decolonizing museums while there is little to no collaboration between the museum staff and tribal communities? Believe it or not, these questions remain relevant for 21st-century museums.

Before external change can be inspired and initiated, internal organizational changes are necessary. Getting our own house in order is essential if there is to be lasting and effective change in our relations with our communities. Top leadership and all staff levels must turn inward and consider systems that do not support equity and inclusion by:
—Adopting a structured approach that includes all staff, volunteers, and board members;
—Assessing the individual and organizational biases that may exist in the museum's work culture;
—Reviewing policy and practice for inclusion;
—Exploring the opportunities for racial bias training and workshops on social inequity and inclusive practices.

This chapter concentrates on attitudes and frames of mind necessary for institutional change. It explores three steps for internal, institutional transformation: awareness, acceptance, and action.

AWARENESS

What do we mean by awareness? We propose that museums must come to recognize and understand the multiple strands of traditional white, male, Western, Judeo-Christian heteronormative ideals that permeate the institutional fabric of most museums. Threaded together, these strands form a tightly woven, change-resistant fabric of institutional racism and a monolithic worldview. Developing an awareness of this systemic phenomenon requires listening, an interrogation of experience, the examination of historical legacies, and distinguishing between impact vs. intent.

Listening

Every organization listens, whether in the design of a needed product or program or in the navigation of critical decisions that form its strategic long-term vision. Running an organization depends upon the willingness to listen and respond to audience need. Listening is much more complicated than simply "hearing" the communication of one individual to another. It is an activity made more problematic because so many people assume that they know and understand how to listen.

Interrogating staff experience and organizational culture

As our institutions listen, they must also actively reflect. Institutional awareness begins with willingness to inquire into the experiences of volunteers, staff, administration, and board members with regard to issues of inequity and injustice within the organizational culture. We must be ready to interrogate our experience in order to unpack conflict and explore ways and strategies to grow, learn, and challenge paradigms.

First, we must fully understand the complex and varied ways that inequity and injustice create problematic work environments for professionals. The history of systemic racism, white supremacy, and monolithic practices in museums is an inward-facing experience as much as it is outward. Since their inception museums have expected their professionals to think a certain way and act a certain way, which has created the monolithic culture we now aim to rectify.

Examining historical legacies

In addition to listening to and to interrogating our organizational culture, we in museums must examine fearlessly historical legacies that continue to resonate in our institutions.

The Legacy of Colonialism

As we know, museums have their origins generally in Western culture, and specifically in Western colonialism. The spoils of colonialism are the basis of collections in art, history, and natural science museums that are on display to this day. Generally, we do not refer to the origins of our collections when we display them, concentrating instead on the exhibition story that we want to tell through objects. However, as many have affirmed, the characteristics of colonial acquisition are part of the history of our collections, and these characteristics persist in the minds of many of our visitors, especially those whose current lives, or those of their ancestors, were affected by colonialism. These colonial legacies include acquisition by violence, conquest, and occupation; cultural, economic, and political domination; cultural oppression and appropriation. (Clifford, 1988; trivedi, 2015).

How might a museum go about examining this history?

- Reach out to local communities with members affected by these practices; ask for their help in researching their history and for their advice in working to acknowledge and somehow address rifts caused by this history.
- Create programs that bring in scholars, artists, and community members to explore, discuss, and help reinterpret or redisplay objects.

The Legacy of Racism

Although institutional practices of racism such as slavery, segregated public spaces, Jim Crow customs, or red lining have been illegal since the 1960s, the historical effects of these racist practices are part of the history of most museums, especially those that are 50 or more years old. As such this history must be examined and acknowledged. Many people of color living today, especially African Americans, were alive during the era of segregation and Jim Crow, and their memories of this period may affect their visitation and travel to certain areas of cities and towns. Museums must investigate historical legacies, such as:

- Their physical location in town or city; are they in an area previously affected by racial segregation or redlining? Was their community a "sundown town?" Did the museum acquiesce in these practices?
- Was slave labor involved in building the museum?
- What is the origin of funds used to found the museum? Plantation wealth? The slave trade?

- What were their policies toward audiences during eras of slavery, segregation and Jim Crow, the Civil Rights movement, up to the present?
- Cities such as Tulsa, Detroit, Chicago, and Washington, D.C., experienced severe racial violence in the 20th century (1920s–60s), with entire black communities being attacked and obliterated. Was the museum in existence then? What was its stance?

The Legacy of White Privilege

As institutions built on the pattern of our larger culture, museums are typically places of white privilege. White privilege has less to do with wealth or prosperity than with a common, accepted way of looking at the world that pervades U.S. society.

"White privilege is like a weightless knapsack of special provisions, maps, passports, codebooks, visas, clothes, tools, and blank checks . . . ; an invisible package of unearned assets that I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was "meant" to remain oblivious . . . I had been taught about racism as something that puts others at a disadvantage, but had been taught not to see one of its corollary aspects, white privilege, which puts me at an advantage . . . Whites are taught to think of their lives as morally neutral, normative, and average, and also ideal, so that when we work to benefit others, this is seen as work that will allow them to be more like us" (McIntosh, 1989).

All aspects of museum organizational culture—from the mission statement through board, administration and staff to collections, exhibition themes, educational programs, advertising and social media—must be evaluated in terms of their reinforcement of white privilege.

Examine the difference between impact and intent

Since systemic racism is often presented coded, one strategy for decoding, understanding, addressing and challenging racist frameworks is to consider the importance of *impact* as opposed to *intent*. As museum professionals we pride ourselves on our *intent* towards inclusion and diversity. Regardless of how well-intended our practices may be, we must always consider the actual and perceived *impact* of said practices.

In the simplest terms, while an individual or institution may *intend* to do good, the *impact* of their actions may be harmful. For example, concerned for his daughter's safety a father tells his daughter that she's not allowed to use power tools. The daughter, honoring her father's wishes, does not develop an interest in building and later in life, does not pursue courses or a career in

engineering. The father's *intent* was to protect his daughter, but his *impact* was to dissuade her from her potential to learn and create.

No one in this field ***intends*** to be racist, but there can still be racist impact.

One of the most common examples of problematic *intent* vs. *impact* in museums is the idea of the Museum Voice: the goal of having the entire museum be on the same page regarding mission and purpose. While the *intent* in the creation of the Museum Voice is to provide structure and consistency in all Museum projects, publications, etc., the *impact* is often the creation of a monolithic culture which prevents diversity of perspectives.

Examples of monolithic vs. empathetic frames in museum organizational culture

Monolithic Voice Frame: An underrepresentation of workers of color in the Museum Voice is accepted as an unfortunate casualty because the museum's identity needs to be clear, concise and consistent throughout.

Racial Justice/Empathetic Frame: Racial segregation is not natural; rather, it is a result of biased museum practices and is the ultimate form of whitewashing—the complete exclusion of workers of color from the museum. Proactive policies and enforcement that ensure access to the identity of the museum are critical to creating an empathetic environment. The inclusive museum, empathetic to all people who work within it, values diverse perspectives and multiple streams of input throughout all its practices.

Understanding how systemic racism and monolithic practices are actively enabled in everyday experiences requires empathy and self-assessment. **Use the Museum Voice scenario in the workbook to explore ways to interrogate experience, unpack the conflict and find ways to challenge paradigms.**

Identifying and unpacking conflict
Consider:
- In thinking and acting empathetically, in what ways does this interaction support a monolithic environment, stemmed from systemic racism?
- Is anyone in this interaction imposing dominance? In what ways?
    - Are they excluding the input or perspective of others?

- ○ Are they enacting a supreme approach?
- ○ Are they—intentionally or not—exhibiting privilege to the discouragement of others?
- Is there evidence of coding, bias or complacency with status quo?
    - ○ Do any of these issues support a legitimate identity and negate another?

Consider:

- What are the implicit biases?
- What do these biases indicate?
- How do these biases contribute to the organizational culture?
- What is the potential impact of an empathic workplace?
- How does this contribute to the "bigger picture?"

ACCEPTANCE

As a museum comes to understand the depth and breadth of its culture of white privilege and oppression, it will (we hope) come to accept that this legacy is real and that it no doubt has an impact on patterns of visitorship and engagement, especially from communities of color. This is an area that is ripe for further research and investigation by the field.

The following principles can aid the process of acceptance:

Acknowledge that Words Really Matter. Terminologies that describe social and racial justice in museums are as complex as the work itself. The words we use in museums to talk about race, equity, and inclusion are often markers of experience, action, and nuanced understanding of where our institutions are in their process. The power of words to engage, alienate, excite, or caution, and how these words are used, can be defining tools for activating organizational awareness and staff/visitor/board engagement. They define both internally and externally the institutional value of this work.

For practitioners, we know that terms change frequently. Much like technology and social media, the new terms reflect dynamic cultural shifts and trace the evolution of the ways we think about and articulate these complex topics. Awareness about the social construction of race and the role of cultural institutions in affirming and perpetuating systems of privilege is a powerful subtext that informs museum board, staff and visitor perceptions.

When people use terms that are no longer relevant, or use words that don't accurately describe the complex subtleties of this work, there is greater opportunity for misinterpretation, polarization and alienation. Let's assume people enter into this work with the best of intentions. Even so, when someone uses an outdated term, it can change the conversation. If two colleagues are in discussion and one uses a term that is antiquated, the conversation shifts. They are no longer speaking the same language or understanding things from a similar perspective. We are not suggesting that concepts of equity and inclusion are linked solely to terms, however terminology often reflects the level of awareness of an individual or an institution. Be sure to check to glossary of terms.

Gather and share resources.

During this time of prolific political and cultural change there are many groups focusing their efforts on reflecting the socio-political climate and socio-political events not being addressed within majority museum culture. Pop-up exhibits, blogs, museum actions, and programs are being organized to acknowledge and address these shifts. Numerous social media sites are designed to engage and support museum staff and visitors by sharing resources.

Amplify your work.

Amplify your work through collaboration and involvement in one or more of the above initiatives for social justice in museums. Increasing the capacities for cultural transformation in our institutions, transformations that mirror the social and political climate of events taking place all around us, is vital. Large and small disruptions are increasingly ubiquitous. Now, more than ever, it is essential that we use these disruptions as opportunities to catalyze, build upon, and amplify our work. This can occur through work within our institutions and through collaborations, initiatives, blog posts, articles, conference presentations, etc. that connect us. Amplification holds the potential to be reciprocally beneficial, illuminating our combined efforts and commitments, supporting courageous acts of honesty, and attracting more people to actively engage in and inform the process.

Engage in curious inquiry.

Adopt a posture of curiosity or a pedagogy of inquiry—in other words, you learn from asking questions. This posture is directly opposite to the role of expert.

ACTION

Practice active listening.

Active and equitable listening requires the action of engagement and focus on all perspectives impacted. The role of the listener is to allow space for information to influence action. Listening is a skill that can be nurtured regardless of the identity, background or status of the listener. It is perhaps the most fundamental skill necessary in decentralizing what Chimamanda Adichie calls, "The Single Story," i.e. the monolithic pattern of ideas discussed above. The one story unconsciously affirms this pattern. The behavior of listening requires a capacity for ambiguity and objectivity. For the purposes of moving towards organizational change, it demands a willingness to subsequently change upon hearing new information..

 The main reason that listening fails is that it is not a consistently valued leadership tactic. To inspire change, increase effectiveness and develop organizational capacity the orientation of most organizations will follow the "great man theory." Thus listening to the words and directions of one strong and forceful leader will propel success and sustainable development in an organization. As a strategy, this eliminates the need for multiple perspectives or community engagement as a tactic to direct developing processes.

However, in the pursuit of organizations aligned to social justice orientation the practice of listening creates the strongest mechanism of change.

In terms of measuring the success of listening the competency of the listener is key. Here listed are the most notable skills of a listener:
- Posture
- Engagement/Focus
- Questions
- Openness
- Reciprocity
- Silence
- Reflection

Of course, listening posited in this way can elicit discomfort as it greatly deviates from established patterns of communication at so many museums, theatres, sites and galleries. This is an action grounded in our shared humanity and orientation towards dignity. This straightforward approach to naming an issue and listening to responses without judgment or distraction demonstrates a commitment to exchanging ideas as fundamental to our collective practice.

Consider:
- Using modes of conversation that avoid **absolute statements**
  - What **absolutes** have come to define the work that we do?
- Developing **seed conversations** that move issues forward
  - Actively and regularly talking about our enacted systemic racism to **increase awareness** and activate an inclusive environment
- Regularly self-assessing the organizational culture through the interrogation of specific experiences

Challenge paradigms, enact systemic change.

Conceptualizing a New Museum:

The Museum, empathetic to all people who work within it as well as the community outside, values diverse perspectives and multiple streams of input throughout all its practices.
Action and advocacy: What are ways to operationalize social justice in the internal organization?

How do our mission statement, inclusive design, strategic development, board development, staff onboarding process reflect inclusion and equity?

How do our external communications, marketing materials, the way we approach partnerships, all reflect our values of inclusion and equity?

The challenges of a systemic shift

As we work to address and challenge systemic racism in our museum workforce, we invest in a **systemic shift** throughout our practice. A systemic shift is realized when "systemic solutions move beyond prescriptions for one-time 'sensitivity' or 'diversity' trainings" and move towards considering the museum institution at large.

While a systemic shift purposefully defies stereotypes and bias, its progress is not measured in the changes of individuals, but within the institution as a whole.

Systemic shift occurs when:
- We shift our efforts and attention from **intent** to **impact and outcomes.**
- We interrupt policies, practices, and ideas that are seemingly "race-neutral" but are in fact discriminatory.
- We involve the conscious consideration of all people across all museum practices.

We create a workforce culture that does not expect **assimilation** but **actively and consciously** welcomes multi-streamed inclusion of ideas.

Museums must absorb, understand, and accept both the existence and the long-term impact of their multiple legacies in order to transform themselves internally. This is so for a number of reasons:

In the words of Faulkner, "The past isn't dead; it isn't even past." We can see that much of the turmoil in the world today has its origins in the legacies of 15th–19th-century colonialism, in the continuing impact of centuries of slavery and racism in the U.S., and in the political and social tremors begun in the two world wars of the 20th century, which reverberate in the 21st. Museums, as part of the cultural infrastructure, are not immune from these historic social forces.

—These legacies live on in specific decisions about hiring, collections, programs, etc., but more importantly they abide in the **systems** by which museums operate and through which they view the world and their mission in it.

—These systemic legacies are very difficult to recognize; as a part of the general culture in which we live and breathe, the assumptions that underlie these legacies are mostly unquestioned; they seem to be simply "the way things are."

—Stepping back and examining the legacies and assumptions on which our institutions are based is difficult because:
- It takes time and effort to research and peel back the layers of history.
- It will require admitting to some ugly beliefs and actions.
- It will involve a redistribution of power, policy, and procedure in our institutions.

- It will take time to analyze and connect to current practice how both general legacies of injustice for your museum, e.g., how Western colonial practice might have shaped your collection, as well as specific aspects of your museum that might affect how your community responds to it (where it is located, how it advertises, etc.).
- Self-examination is often a painful process, even when done privately; this type of institutional self-examination will be more public and will require great transparency; it is this transparency that can help affect the disappointing dynamic that museums have with many communities.

Identifying and accepting these historic social forces, analyzing and understanding how they affect our institutions' relationships with communities that are outside the realm of white privilege, and taking steps to implement them are all difficult and long-range challenges.

Sustaining the Change

How to make this last? With staff turnover, the players will always change. Developing recruitment and interview strategies is critical. And it's equally important to design policies and practices to ensure that organizational change will last beyond the players' (trustees, staff, ED) involved at the time of first approval and implementation.

Beyond structural change, the museum's budget needs to annually support the cost of change. Training, research, and consultation needs to be current and relevant to organizational needs and strategic directions.

Ensuring that you're making lasting change, regular management and review of new systems is critical. When staff, board, and volunteers are recognizing this new system as regular operating practice, you have a metric.

CASE STUDY

Sustaining Systemic Change at the Abbe Museum, Bar Harbor, Maine
By Cinnamon Caitlin-Leguto, President/CEO

Founded in 1928, the Abbe Museum's mission is to inspire new learning about the Wabanaki Nations with every visit. A historic confederacy of tribes, the Wabanaki are the Micmac, Maliseet, Abenaki, Passamaquoddy and Penobscot. At the Abbe their stories are showcased through changing exhibitions, special events, teacher workshops, archaeology field schools and craft workshops for children and adults. Native community members are actively engaged in all aspects of the Museum, including policymaking as members of our Board. The Museums greets 30,000 visitors each year with seven year-round staff members and around a dozen seasonal staff. In recent years, with broad community support, we have grown from a small trailside museum, privately operated within Acadia National Park, to include an exciting contemporary museum, opened in 2001 in the heart of downtown Bar Harbor, Maine.

This transition to a two-location museum was not without difficulties. After a succession of leadership gaps and challenges at the board and staff level and financial pressures, the Museum's relationship with the tribal communities began to fray at the edges. A new president/CEO joined the museum in 2009. She focused on the financial challenges while putting a plan in place for greater tribal collaboration by creating a standing Native Advisory Council (NAC). The NAC members are appointed by tribal leadership, two members from each community in Maine.
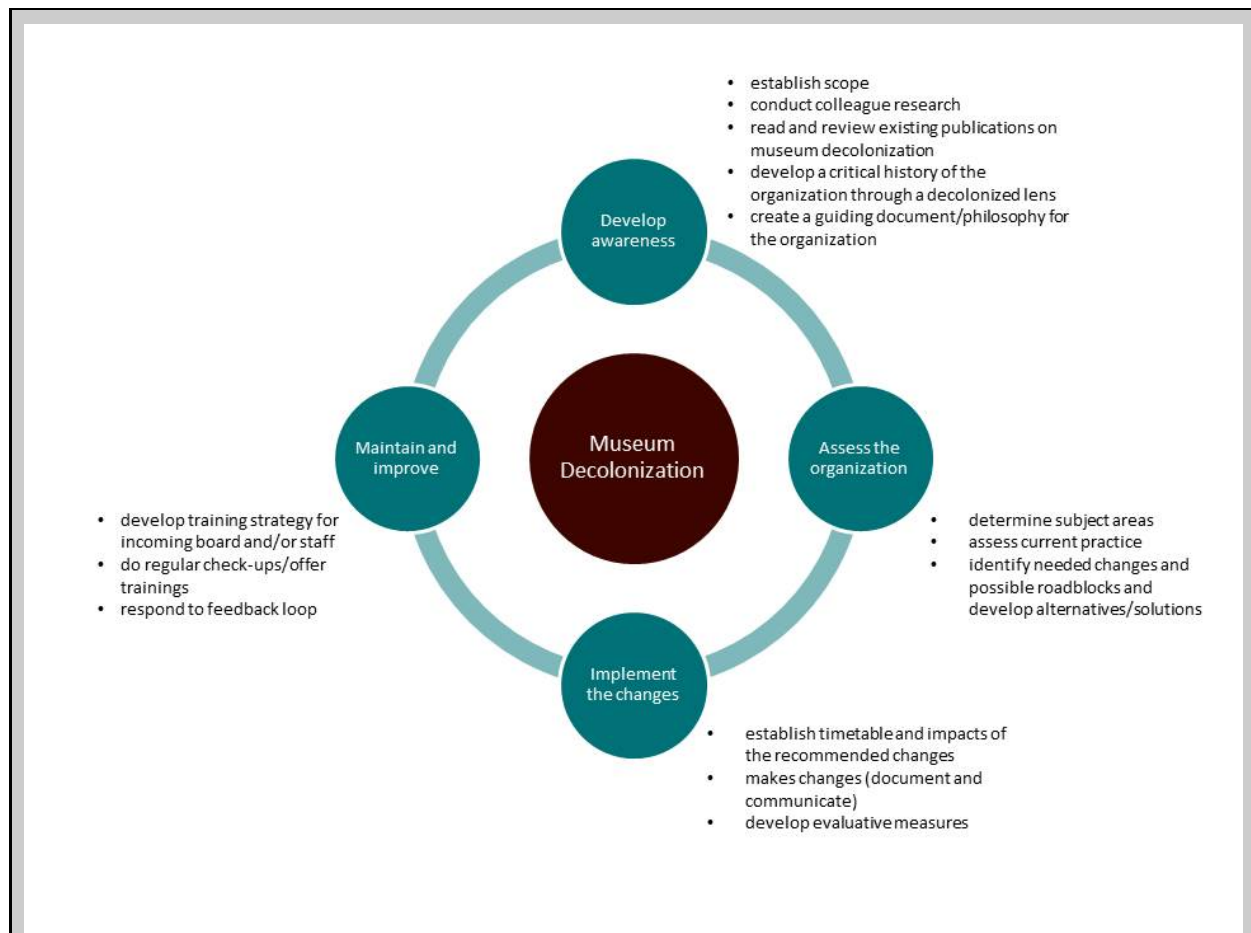
Meeting annually, the NAC works closely with Abbe leaders to craft policy and practice and consult on projects as they are developed and implemented. While the NAC was forming in 2011, the Abbe's governance committee was working to recruit trustees who were supportive of collaborative work. All seemed well until the first recommendation for change came from the NAC to the Trustees. During a regular board meeting, the recommendation was presented to increase Native representation on the board by having each tribal chief appoint a representative to the board. Division quickly developed with a significant contingent of the board having serious concerns about this recommendation. After this meeting, we hit pause. There was clearly more work to be done, and we needed to take some time and back up, making sure that everyone involved was working with similar understandings and frameworks.

In late 2012, the Abbe Museum Board of Trustees established a Decolonization Initiative (DCI) and Task Force. The Initiative was an outgrowth of the 2012 Board Annual Retreat, facilitated by Jamie Bissonette Lewey, Abenaki[1]. During this retreat, trustees and staff studied cultural and political sovereignty and developed a deeper cultural understanding of its importance—sovereignty defined means the ability for a cultural community to be responsible for its people and sovereignty cannot be given or taken away.

An outcome of the retreat was a commitment from trustees and staff to better understand Wabanaki culture, history, and values; examine the Abbe's museum practices at every level to see whether, in what ways and to what extent, they reflect those values; and, take steps toward practices that embody this commitment. In our discussions following the retreat, terms like "colonialism," "colonization," and "decolonization" surfaced, suggesting a framework for engaging this commitment.

During its initial convening, the Task Force considered the scope of its work and identified key concepts that underpin the discussions board and staff are having. The DCI Task Force identified sectors of museum operations that must be considered in the decolonization process: collections, operations, governance, strategic planning, exhibits, advocacy, educational programming, and events.

As we developed our decolonizing strategies, we realized that we had developed a pathway, and one that other museums could follow. While it was initially linear in design, decolonizing practice develops in phases. As we moved through the phases, we found ourselves doubling back, skipping ahead, and using the pathway in much more flexible and organic ways. The following graphic demonstrates the work more accurately.

Develop awareness
- establish scope
- conduct colleague research
- read and review existing publications on museum decolonization
- develop a critical history of the organization through a decolonized lens
- create a guiding document/philosophy for the organization

Assess the organization
- determine subject areas
- assess current practice
- identify needed changes and possible roadblocks and develop alternatives/solutions

Implement the changes
- establish timetable and impacts of the recommended changes
- makes changes (document and communicate)
- develop evaluative measures

Maintain and improve
- develop training strategy for incoming board and/or staff
- do regular check-ups/offer trainings
- respond to feedback loop

Museum Decolonization

Abbe board and staff find the scholarly work of Amy Lonetree, Ho-Chunk, especially useful in helping us understand what it means to decolonize a museum. From her academic writings, the Task Force identified three decolonizing practices to guide board and staff:

- Decolonizing practices at the Abbe are collaborative with tribal communities. This means that when an idea for a project or initiative is first conceived, we have a conversation with Native advisors and make sure it's an activity that we have the right to share or pursue. We don't get halfway down the planning timeline and then check with Native advisors about how we're doing and if we're getting it right. Native collaboration needs to be at the beginning and threaded throughout the life of the project.
- The second characteristic of decolonizing museum practices is to privilege Native perspective and voice. The vast writings on the human experience are, without little exception, written by white academics and observers. When we begin to prioritize the

accounts and observations of indigenous scholars and informants, the story broadens, expands, shifts, and brings clearer and non-oppressed perspectives of Native history and culture.

- Decolonizing museum practice includes the full measure of history, ensuring truth-telling and the inclusion of difficult stories. Histories of Wabanaki people connect to today's challenges. Issues around water quality, hunting and fishing rights, and mascots are connected to the past and the present. When we present this full history we have a better opportunity to identify harmful statements and practices.

Abbe Working Definition: Decolonization means, at a minimum, sharing governance and authority for the documentation and interpretation of Native culture. Decolonizing practices at the Abbe are collaborative with tribal communities, privilege Native perspective and voice, and include the full measure of history, ensuring truth-telling.

The Abbe Museum is committed to developing decolonizing museum practice that is informed by Wabanaki people and enforced by policies, managed by protocols, and overseen by inclusive governance structures. We will have structures in place that maintain this commitment to decolonization, regardless of the players involved – meaning the staff, trustees, and advisors.

The work of the Task Force evolved into our strategic planning process. Approved in 2015, the plan makes a clear commitment to decolonization by adopting it as our vision statement, "The Abbe Museum will reflect and realize the values of decolonization in all of its practices, working with the Wabanaki Nations to share their stories, history, and culture with a broader audience."

Moving forward, the board converted the Task Force to a standing committee that relies on work groups to develop policy and protocols. In addition to our internal work to create museum decolonization practice, the plan identifies three goals with specific strategies for sharing the work we're doing with the museum and history field. The plan defines our operating budget priorities, resulting in an annual financial investment in decolonizing work.

The board and staff continue to be committed to learning and we invest in this as well. Each year we offer racial bias training for all seasonal staff, new staff, and trustees. To help us conduct difficult conversations with each other and our audiences, the museum staff have completed two rounds of dialogue facilitation training with the International Coalition for the Sites of Conscience. And, at nearly every board meeting, we invite guest speakers to teach us about new research or to consider a new decolonizing strategy. Most recently, Amy Lonetree visited the museum to share her observations and expertise. To follow our work, you can visit our strategic plan and blog at abbemuseum.wordpress.com.

[1] Jamie Bissonette Lewey, Abenaki, coordinates the Healing Justice Program for the American Friends Service Committee in New England and she is the chair of the Maine Indian Tribal State Commission. She is one of the founders of the Healing and Transformative Justice Center that gathers, supports, and shares essential healing methodologies. She also sits on the board of the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute, which focuses on the needs of families who have lost their children to the gun violence in Boston. Since this training, Jamie has joined the Abbe's board of trustees and continues as a key resource for developing decolonizing museum practice.

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CHAPTER 3

Organizational Culture and Change: Making the Case for Inclusion

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Introduction

Museums in the United States were founded by the elite of society to create legacies for themselves and their families and to provide culture to those less fortunate.[5] The accessibility of museums depended on your ability to pay for entry and your ability to understand and appreciate high culture. Whiteness, in our society, goes without saying. "We (whites) will speak of, say, the blackness or Chineseness of friends, neighbours [sic], colleagues, customers or clients, but we don't mention the whiteness of the white people we know."[6] Other norms about being heterosexual, gender "appropriate" and able-bodied also permeate societal norms.

The very foundations of American museums are as exclusive organizations. For decades, museum literature has reflected the need to incorporate more diversity within our work.[7] Museum staff have struggled to incorporate the ideals of inclusion within the work of museums. Typically, this has happened via programs and community outreach. While the focus on including more diversity within the content we produce has resulted in incredible programming, the common denominator in all of our work is the organizational culture of museums. The 2015 survey by the Andrew W. Mellon foundation cited a lack of diversity within professional staff of museums.[8] The homogeneity of staff and the foundational purpose of museums have led to a culture based on whiteness and heterosexual gender norms from which museums operate to produce diversity within programs, exhibits and other external offerings.

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[5] Levin, Miriam R. 2002. "Museums and the Democratic Order." *Wilson Quarterly*, Winter: 52-65.

[6] Dyer, Richard. 2002. "The Matter of Whiteness." In *White Privilege: Essential Readings for the Other Side of Racism*, by Paula S. Rothenberg. New York: Worth Publishers, 10.

[7] American Alliance of Museums. 1984. *Museums for a New Century.* Washington DC: American Alliance of Museums; American Association of Museum. 1992. *Excellence and Equity.* Washington DC: American Association of Museums; American Alliance of Museums. 1996. *Museums for the New Millenium: A Symposium for the Museum Community.* Washington DC: American Alliance of Museums .American Association of Museums. 2002. *Mastering Civic Engagement: A Challenge to Museums.* Washington DC: American Association of Museums.

[8] Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. 2016. *Art Museums Staff Demographic Survey.* https://mellon.org/programs/arts-and-cultural-heritage/art-history-conservation-museums/demographic-survey.

The same can be said within museums. We profess to want to hire people of color, or reach out to the queer community, or people with disabilities, but actions speak louder than words. When museums continue to practice inclusion through programs and exhibits, but fail to address the culture of museums, it is like treating the symptoms of a disease, rather than the disease itself. Challenging the status quo by increasing the intercultural competence of staff and creating inclusive work environments will lead new cultures that shape the strategies, mission, values and purpose of museums.

Organizational Culture

Organizational culture "refers to the learned and shared values, beliefs, and behaviors of a community interacting people. In other words, members of a culture are likely to influence an individual's behavior when that person spends enough time interacting with them." [9] Culture belongs to the group. It includes tacit behaviors that are not questioned, but just taken for granted as normal. Culture is often dictated by those with the power to create norms and acceptable behaviors. For museums, this is those in leadership positions. Historically, these positions have overwhelmingly been filled with straight, white people. The impact on museum culture is that the norms strongly reflect the norms of white, straight culture, able-bodied people.

> Organizational culture expert Edgar Schein writes:
> Culture matters because it is a powerful, tacit, and often unconscious set of forces that determine both our individual and collective behavior, ways of perceiving, thought patterns, and values. Organizational culture in particular matters because cultural elements determine strategy, goals, and modes of operating.[10]

When museum cultures are based on the norms of dominant society, all diversity work, whether programs or services, are filtered through that cultural lens. The core strategy of museums and what is often referred to as "best practices" or the modes of operation that have been identified as the best way to accomplish our work. These "best practices" are all determined through the organizational cultural norms. Museums norms have dictated that we collect, interpret and preserve what is determined as valuable, but the criteria for determination is based on internalized norms of museums. This has centered the culture of white, straight, male-

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[9] Bennett, Janet M. 2014. "Intercultural Competence: Vital Perspectives for Diversity and Inclusion." In *Diversity at Work: The Practice of Inclusion*, by Bernardo M. Ferdman and Barbara R. Deane. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

[10] Schein, Edgar H. 2009. *The Corporate Culture Survival Guide.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 19.

dominated society as the pinnacle of culture and when we collect, interpret or preserve the cultures of marginalized or oppressed peoples, they are labeled, or "othered" as different than the norm.

As mentioned above, museum literature has called for more inclusion within museum work. Simply creating a call for more inclusion addresses the "what," but does not address the how. These writings have failed to address organizational culture. "Culture is deep, extensive, and stable. It cannot be taken lightly. If you do not manage culture, it will manage you – and you may not even be aware of the extent to which this is happening."[11]

Often, the intentions of museum staff are to be inclusive, but results in unintended impacts that harm those that were to be included. "After all, in the end, what does the intent of our action really matter if our actions have the impact of furthering the marginalization or oppression of those around us."[12] Museums have spent two centuries as cultural gatekeepers in the United States. Practices embedded in museums are based on a culture of whiteness, straightness, and maleness. Norms of curator generated narratives and high culture defined by museums permeate the bedrock of best practices. Regardless of intentions, often the impact of these practices is oppressive to marginalized groups. Until museums can define and create inclusive museum cultures that foster inclusive museum practices, the best efforts of museum staff may not be good enough.

The Challenge of Inclusion

One of the major points of emphasis for diversity and inclusion efforts centers on diversity of staff within the museum field. The current culture of museums is a barrier to increased staff diversity. "Inclusion in work organizations is about creating work environments and processes that 'work' for everyone, across all types of differences, rather than ones that emphasize assimilation."[13] Several reasons can be cited for the lack of diversity within the museum field: absence of a culture of visiting museums among many marginalized groups and a lack of being represented in the work of museums.[14] Museums are quite particular in regards to the requirements of various professional positions. For example, prospective employees are

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[11] Schein, Edgar H. 2009. *The Corporate Culture Survival Guide.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 215

[12] Utt, Jamie. 2013. *Intent vs. Impact: Why Your Intentions Don't Really Matter.* July 30. Accessed February 5, 2017. https://changefromwithin.org/2013/07/30/intent-vs-impact-why-your-intentions-dont-really-matter/.

[13] Ferdman, Bernardo M. 2014. "The Practice of Inclusion in Diverse Organizations." In *Diversity at Work: The Practice of Inclusion*, by Bernardo M. Ferdman and Barbara R. Deane, 3-54. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

[14] Center for the Future of Museums. 2010. *Demographic Transformation and the Future of Museums.* Washington D.C.: American Alliance of Museums.

often required to have an advanced degree in history, art, art history, or other highly specialized fields and have experience within the museum field. The culture of museums is rigid, relying on tradition and best practices. When seeking to increase diversity within the museum field, employees from diverse backgrounds are expected to assimilate into a culture that has actively marginalized the history and culture of diverse people. Hegemony…describes the way that people learn to accept as natural and in their own best interest an unjust order.[15] When museums seek to increase levels of diversity within staff, they are asking museum professionals typically labeled as diverse to continue to participate in their own oppression.

Merely increasing staff diversity is not creating inclusion. The words diversity and inclusion are often used almost as a single entity, but the words need to be separated and defined individually of the other. Diversity and Inclusion consultant Bernardo Ferdman provides this distinction:

> ...diversity is a fact of life in work groups and organizations. Inclusion is grounded in what we do with that diversity when we value and appreciate people because of and not in spite of their differences, as well as their similarities. More important, it involves creating work contexts in which people are valued and appreciated as themselves and as integrated and complex - with their full range of differences and similarities from and with each other. Essentially, inclusion is a way of working with diversity: it is the process and practice through with groups and organizations can reap the benefits of their diversity.[16]

Inclusion is focused on how organizations leverage the diversity of their staff and eliminate marginalization and exclusion of staff within the organization. "An organization is not inclusive if only the members of select groups are fortunate enough to experience social belongingness."[17] Museums that can practice inclusion can evaluate negative and problematic "best practices" currently in place that support the continued marginalization of communities that museums profess to want to include within staff and audience. Inclusion creates opportunities for

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[15] Brookfield, Stephen D. 2004. *The Power of Critical Theory.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 43.

[16] Ferdman, Bernardo M. 2014. "The Practice of Inclusion in Diverse Organizations." In *Diversity at Work: The Practice of Inclusion*, by Bernardo M. Ferdman and Barbara R. Deane, 3-54. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 5.

[17] Nishii, Lisa H., and Robert E. Rich. 2014. "Creating Inclusive Climates in Diverse Organizations." In *Diversity At Work: The Practice of Inclusion*, by Bernardo M. Ferdman and Barbara R. Deane, 330-363. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 331.

museums to develop a positive vision of what might replace these practices with practices that incorporate multiple dimensions of diversity.

Typical barriers to inclusive workplace environments fall into three main areas. First, structural challenges include the roots of the field and the nature of the work. The roots of museums in the United States come from the social elite.[18] The paternalistic nature of museums keeping culture and dictating cultural standards is a holdover from this foundation. Second, process challenges related to systems in place that may be exclusive, including talent acquisition and management and program and exhibition development. Hiring practices, professional development practices, program development, and community engagement are all processes that support the benefit of the museum. These practices have led to homogenous staff and museum offerings that often serve to suppress the perspectives of marginalized groups. Third, the human challenges, including leadership, are about the human dynamics of working across difference.[19] The human dynamics norms favor the dominant culture patterns of human interaction. These are often task oriented and based on individualized standards of success. Museums must be willing to reexamine these practices and test tacit assumptions within current cultures. Integrating different perspectives and ways of practicing museum work can help to create a new reality within the organization that accepts diversity as a vital part of the organization.

A Note on Best Practices

The very fact that there is so much conversation about inclusion in museums is an indicator that best practices have largely failed the museum field thus far. The American Association of Museums differentiated between a standard and best practice.

> *Standards* are generally accepted levels of attainment that all museums are expected to achieve. *Best Practices* are commendable actions and philosophies that demonstrate an awareness of standards, successfully solve problems, can be replicated and that museums may choose to emulate if appropriate to their circumstances.[20]

The practices widely seen thus far in museums have been far from "best." If this is the best museums can do, we need to stop talking about inclusion. Current accepted "best" practices employed by museums have not solved the problem of low levels of diverse representation

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[18] Levin, Miriam R. 2002. "Museums and the Democratic Order." *Wilson Quarterly*, Winter: 52-65.

[19] Kaplan, Mark, and Mason Donovan. 2013. *The Inclusion Dividend: Why Investing in Diversity and Inclusion Pays Off*. Brookline: Bibliomotion, Inc.

[20] Merritt, Elizabeth. 2008. *National Standards and Best Practices for U.S. Museums*. Washington D.C: American Association of Museums, 6.

within most museum staff or audiences. Absent a standard for inclusion, museums cannot demonstrate an awareness of inclusion. A standard for inclusion must be set in order to ensure the sustainability of museums into the future. Standards reflect areas of broad agreement, reflect areas where things actually go wrong, change over time, and come from broad dialogue.[21] Inclusion meets all of these criteria. Diversity is discussed in relation to three standards: Public Trust and Accountability, Leadership and Organizational Structure, and Education and Interpretation, but what is missing is the accepted levels of attainment that all museums are expected to achieve. While diversity can be interpreted quite broadly, it should be a focus of all museums moving forward.

The Business Case for Inclusion

While the moral imperative of "doing good work" and meeting the needs of a broader segment of society should be enough motivation for our work, there is also a practical side to inclusion. Research in the corporate sector has proved "it is now clear that the ability to create an inclusive organization is directly tied to an organization's success, whether looking from the inside, as an employee trying to build a successful career, or from the outside as a potential employee, customer, or stakeholder." [22] Inclusive work cultures can help museums achieve success in talent acquisition and retention, increase employee engagement, which, in turn, increases innovation and creativity within work groups and individuals. Inclusion is necessary to leverage the benefits of diversity within a work culture; it facilitates a positive relationship between diversity and performance.[23] There are also real impacts for individuals within the organization. Diversity and Inclusion practitioners, Nishii and Rich, write,

> we see that individuals who work in units with inclusive climates report higher levels of
> personal inclusion or belongingness within the group, commitment, satisfaction,
> perceived organizational support, and willingness to engage in citizenship behaviors,
> and are less likely to leave the organization, compared to individuals working in less

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[21] Merritt, Elizabeth. 2008. *National Standards and Best Practices for U.S. Museums.* Washington D.C: American Association of Museums, 5-6.

[22] Kaplan, Mark, and Mason Donovan. 2013. *The Inclusion Dividend: Why Investing in Diversity and Inclusion Pays Off.* Brookline: Bibliomotion, Inc, 34-35

[23] Hayles, V. Robert. 2014. "Communicating About Diversity and Inclusion." In *Diversity at Work: The Practice of Inclusion*, by Bernardo M. Ferdman and Barbara R. Deane, 55-90. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 57.

inclusive units (Nishii & Langevin, 2009). We have also found that in inclusive climates members of traditionally marginalized groups enjoy much better outcomes.[24]

The real business case for museums is relevance. With the reality of changing demographics, the change is not reflected in who museums serve. The traditional audience for museums has been white. As that segments declines in relation to other segments, museums must provide value to a much broader segment of society, those that have been traditionally marginalized by museums. If museums fail to reflect changes in society, the relevance of museums to society will decline with the traditional audience. With relevance comes sustainability in the form of admission fees, new member and donor bases and potential partnerships with other organizations.

Naming Your Culture

In order to change organizational culture, characteristics of the culture must be explicitly understood. Edgar Schein provides a model of organizational culture that consists of three levels: Artifacts, Espoused Beliefs, and Values and Basic Assumptions. "The easiest level [of culture] to observe when you go into an organization is that of artifacts - what you see, hear, and feel as you hang around" an organization.[25] Artifacts can include architecture, internal organization of work spaces, location of leadership and the proximity of various departments to leadership, language, staff interactions, myths and stories told about the organization, products and services, marketing materials, and observable rituals and ceremonies.[26] Understanding and assessing artifacts can be done through observation and are at a very surface level of the organization. "At the level of artifacts, culture is very clear and has immediate emotional impact. But you don't really know why the members of the organization are behaving as they do and why each organization is constructed as it is."[27]

Espoused Beliefs and Values are supposed to create an image of the organization. This level of culture is often seen in various statements, such as mission, vision and values. It is evident in the communications within an organization, particularly annual reports and similar documents. Museums often espouse to serve all sectors of society or to be inclusive organizations, but often times there is a gap between the espoused values and how an

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[24] Nishii, Lisa H., and Robert E. Rich. 2014. "Creating Inclusive Climates in Diverse Organizations." In *Diversity At Work: The Practice of Inclusion*, by Bernardo M. Ferdman and Barbara R. Deane, 330-363. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 339.

[25] Schein, Edgar H. 2009. *The Corporate Culture Survival Guide.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 22.

[26] Schein, Edgar H. 2010. *Organizational Culture and Leadership.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 23.

[27] Schein, Edgar H. 2009. *The Corporate Culture Survival Guide.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 22.

organization actually lives the stated values. Espoused values and beliefs tend to be aspirational, in that this is what the organization strives to accomplish, or how members of the organization perceive the institution.

To create a greater understanding of the disconnect between espoused values and beliefs and actual behavior, Schein's third level of culture, basic assumptions, must be examined. Basic assumptions are actions and behaviors that "have become so taken for granted that you find little variation within the social unit."[28] These assumptions are hard to challenge within the culture. Often, basic assumptions are identified as "the way we do things here," or "the way we have always done things." These behaviors are not challenged, but are taught to incoming employees as part of the behavioral expectations of the organization.

Diversity educators Kenneth Jones and Tema Okun identify 13 facets of a culture based on white supremacy: perfectionism, sense of urgency, defensiveness, quantity over quality, worship of the written word, paternalism, either/or thinking, power hoarding, fear of open conflict, individualism, progress is bigger/more, objectivity, and the right to comfort. Of these, several pertain to the culture of many museums. A sense of urgency often makes it "difficult to take time to be inclusive, encourage democratic and/or thoughtful decision-making, to think long-term, to consider consequences."[29] Patterns of behavior, as tacit or basic assumptions, have inertia. Inserting the idea of inclusion into already formed work practices creates situations where new patterns of behavior have to be learned. Also, inclusion creates a situation where a wider circle of people are consulted to make decisions. This takes time. The sense of urgency in museums often creates a situation where inclusion seems to slow down the process. The focus is on the process, not the product that is enhanced by inclusion. Ways to combat this are: realistic workplans; leadership which understands that things take longer than anyone expects; discuss and plan for what it means to set goals of inclusivity and diversity, particularly in terms of time; learn from past experience how long things take; write realistic funding proposals with realistic time frames; be clear about how you will make good decisions in an atmosphere of urgency.

As white privilege, and other types of privilege prevalent in museums (straight privilege, male privilege, able-bodied privilege) operate as unseen, invisible, even seemingly nonexistent, people often feel that their power is challenged when inclusion of others is imminent.[30] This

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[28] Schein, Edgar H. 2010. *Organizational Culture and Leadership.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 28.
[29] Jones, Kenneth, and Tema Okun. 2001. *White Supremacy Culture.* Accessed February 7, 2017. http://www.cwsworkshop.org/PARC_site_B/dr-culture.html.
[30] Sullivan, Shannon. 2006. *Revealing Whiteness: The Unconscious Habits of Racial Privilege.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1.

often leads to a sense of defensiveness exhibited by those in power. People often respond to new ideas with defensiveness, making it more difficult to implement change. Within museums, "much energy is spent trying to prevent abuse and protect power as it exists"[31] or to expend extra energy in an effort not to hurt the feelings of those with power. "The defensiveness of people in power creates an oppressive culture."[32] This is the opposite of the culture that must be created for museums to become inclusive organizations. Jones and Okun recommend the following: "understand that structure cannot in and of itself facilitate or prevent abuse; understand the link between defensiveness and fear (of losing power, losing face, losing comfort, losing privilege); work on your own defensiveness; name defensiveness as a problem when it is one; give people credit for being able to handle more than you think; discuss the ways in which defensiveness or resistance to new ideas gets in the way of the mission.

Paternalism is another characteristic of a culture of white supremacy that is prevalent in museums. In paternalistic organizations, decision-making is only clear to those with the power to make decisions. Therefore, the decision-makers feel capable of making decisions for and in the interests of those without formal power, often without feeling it is important to understand the perspective of those impacted by their decisions. This creates a situation where those who do not have power are hyperaware of who does and does not have power within the organization.[33] The diversity within museum staff tend to exist outside of the positions that hold power within museums. "Non-Hispanic, White staff continue to dominate the job categories most closely associated with the intellectual and educational mission of museums, including those of curators, conservators, educators and leadership."[34] Paternalism is inherent in the culture of museums. It is taken for granted as the way things work, so those with power don't often recognize it within their actions. Staff, particularly staff from groups that have been marginalized within society, are not only aware of their lack of power, but that those with power are the ones paying lip-service to inclusion. Herbert Marcuse, a German-American philosopher, sociologist and political theorist associated with the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory, developed the concept of repressive tolerance.

> Repressive tolerance is the tolerance, in the name of impartiality, fairness, or even-
> handedness, of intolerable ideologies and practices, and the consequent marginalization

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[31] Jones, Kenneth, and Tema Okun. 2001. *White Supremacy Culture.* Accessed February 7, 2017. http://www.cwsworkshop.org/PARC_site_B/dr-culture.html.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. 2016. *Art Museums Staff Demographic Survey.* https://mellon.org/programs/arts-and-cultural-heritage/art-history-conservation-museums/demographic-survey/.

of efforts for democratic social change. It is also a tolerance for just enough challenge to the system to convince people that they live in a truly open society, while still maintaining structural inequity. This tolerance of challenge and diversity functions as a kind of pressure cooker letting off enough steam to prevent the whole pot from boiling over.[35]

When those who hold power within museums create strategic plans, mission statements, and support programming with more diverse content, it creates the illusion that inclusion is being supported. The paternalistic nature of museum culture, and the lack of input and power for those who have a deeper understanding of inclusion, creates an impediment to culture change. Jones and Okun recommend the following: "make sure that everyone knows and understands who makes what decisions in the organization; make sure everyone knows and understands their level of responsibility and authority in the organization; include people who are affected by decisions in the decision-making."[36]

Paternalism is closely related to power hoarding, another characteristic of white supremacy culture in organizations. Power hoarding is characterized by little value given to sharing power by those who possess it and when changes are suggested related to how the organization works, it is seen as a reflection on leadership. There is an assumption by those with power that they "have the best interests of the organization at heart and assume those wanting change are ill-informed, emotional, or inexperienced."[37] Front-line staff, often in positions with no power, are the closest staff to our audiences. Staff that implement programs and are working directly with our constituents often receive direct feedback, both positive and negative. How often are staff in these positions consulted by organization leaders when they are making decisions? Those in leadership positions often become insulated at a certain level of the institution, and without intentional effort to be inclusive of input from staff at all levels of the organization, decisions are made in a vacuum at times. The direct access to information about what works and what does not work, possessed by those who are implementing programs and interacting with the audiences we serve, have valuable information that often goes unutilized. Ways to combat this are: "include power sharing in your organization's values statement; discuss what good leadership looks like and make sure people understand that a good leader develops the power and skills of others; understand that change is inevitable and challenges to

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[35] Brookfield, Stephen D. 2004. *The Power of Critical Theory.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 211.
[36] Jones, Kenneth, and Tema Okun. 2001. *White Supremacy Culture.* Accessed February 7, 2017. http://www.cwsworkshop.org/PARC_site_B/dr-culture.html.
[37] Ibid.

your leadership can be healthy and productive; make sure the organization is focused on the mission."[38]

Jones and Okun also list objectivity as a characteristic of a white supremacy culture. This encompasses repressing emotions in decision-making or group processes, thinking in a linear fashion, impatience with those who do not exhibit linear thinking or with thinking that does not appear logical.[39] The issue is that what is defined as objective is relative to dominant white norms as "we have not yet reached a situation in which white people and white cultural agendas are no longer in the ascendant."[40] As we unconsciously adhere to white norms (and those of other dominant groups), these norms form the basis for how we judge objectivity. They become the measure for what is normal. Museum staff have always inserted their worldview into their work, forming a lens for our interpretation, collections, and other work that defines culture. Museum staff have never been objective, but because dominant norms typically coincide with the worldview of the vast majority of museum staff, it has appeared to be objective to the dominant culture. Those with worldviews outside of the dominant culture are hyperaware of the fallacy in this pretense of museum objectivity. Ways to create recognition of this lack of objectivity include: "realize that everybody has a world view and that everybody's world view affects the way they understand things; realize this means you too; push yourself to sit with discomfort when people are expressing themselves in ways which are not familiar to you; assume that everybody has a valid point and your job is to understand what that point is."[41]

The Impact of Unconscious Bias

Within the basic assumptions of organizations, unconscious bias becomes embedded into work practices. Often, what we term as best practices, are the practices that best fit the unconscious biases that are embedded deep within organizational culture. "Unconscious biases are social stereotypes about certain groups of people that individuals from outside their own conscious awareness. Everyone holds unconscious beliefs about various social and identity groups."[42] Unconscious biases are embedded into the worldview of museum staff, and often

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[38] Jones, Kenneth, and Tema Okun. 2001. *White Supremacy Culture.* Accessed February 7, 2017. http://www.cwsworkshop.org/PARC_site_B/dr-culture.html.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Dyer, Richard. 2002. "The Matter of Whiteness." In *White Privilege: Essential Readings for the Other Side of Racism*, by Paula S. Rothenberg. New York: Worth Publishers, 11.

[41] Jones, Kenneth, and Tema Okun. 2001. *White Supremacy Culture.* Accessed February 7, 2017. http://www.cwsworkshop.org/PARC_site_B/dr-culture.html.

[42] Navarro, Renee. n.d. *Unconscious Bias.* Accessed February 10, 2017. https://diversity.ucsf.edu/resources/unconscious-bias.

cause staff to formulate opinions or make decisions without staff understanding the impact. These actions are not intentionally meant to cause harm or marginalization, but because these biases are unconscious, "you are not aware of your cultural biases until someone challenges them or until you have offended someone with a different background."[43] Unconscious biases cause microaggressions in the workplace, skew perspectives in the narratives of museums, impact the criteria for what is high culture, and impact leadership and decision making in museums.

Unconscious bias happens to individuals, but are also embedded in teams and organizations. Every organization has insider and outsider groups. Organizational cultures are embedded in national cultures and tend to reflect the norms of the dominant society. The insider-outsider group dynamics often define which group identities are included within an organizational culture and which are not. Depending on if you are an insider or an outsider, your experience within an organization is quite different.

> Being affiliated with the in-group can often provide an unspoken advantage when it comes to hiring or promotion…Outsider groups must work much harder to stay level with the insider groups. There is an inherent unfair advantage for insider groups and disadvantage for outsider groups at many levels.[44]

Unconscious bias can also become systemic, or embedded in organizational systems. This happens several ways. First, the biases of very powerful individuals get magnified.[45] Leadership within an organization holds great influence over the culture. Leaders set the criteria for acceptable behaviors, beliefs, and norms. The influence of the leaderships' biases impacts the entire organization, creating a systemic effect on the culture of the organization. Second, when a bias becomes part of a process or system it becomes systemic.[46] This usually happens unintentionally, but often, bias permeates hiring processes, performance management systems, and other processes where societal norms impact the biases of individuals, which carry through to impact an organizational process. The third way a bias becomes systemic is when the historical culture of an organization continues to have an impact.[47] Museums are institutions founded by the elite of society in order to provide culture for those that the elite perceive need

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[43] Schein, Edgar H. 2009. *The Corporate Culture Survival Guide.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 19.
[44] Kaplan, Mark, and Mason Donovan. 2013. *The Inclusion Dividend: Why Investing in Diversity and Inclusion Pays Off.* Brookline: Bibliomotion, Inc., 65-66.
[45] Ibid, 114.
[46] Ibid, 115.
[47] Kaplan, Mark, and Mason Donovan. 2013. *The Inclusion Dividend: Why Investing in Diversity and Inclusion Pays Off.* Brookline: Bibliomotion, Inc., 115.

lmore of it. The values and aesthetic tastes of the elite are what have created the standards for culture in this country. "Museums have grown on these historical foundations of colonial identity-building…into institutions that continue to struggle with the contemporary reality of diverse populations in their communities."[48] The foundational values of museums continue to impact museums today. The legacy of the elitism of museums has become a systemic bias that impedes work towards developing inclusive museums.

In order to mitigate unconscious bias, first individuals must become aware of the biases they hold. "Many experienced diversity and inclusion practitioners say that, in learning to be inclusive, people need to go from unconscious incompetence to conscious incompetence to conscious competence to unconscious competence."[49] This is the process of becoming aware of unconscious biases within organizations whether at the individual, team/group or organizational level. The incompetence has now become conscious. Working to mitigate biases, or change practices and perspectives, is the intentional shift from conscious incompetence to conscious competence. As new behaviors are learned and become the norm, they become the new basic assumptions, or the way things are done at the unconscious level.

Gathering Data

"Understanding your culture is not automatically valuable, just as understanding your personality is not automatically valuable. It only becomes valuable and necessary if such understanding enable you to solve a problem, to make a change, to learn something new."[50] In order to gain a deeper understanding of the organizational culture of a museum, it is critical to gather data. That many of the barriers to change are either a result of unconscious biases or taken-for-granted, tacit assumptions, it is important to provide a disconfirming event in order to create a realization that change is necessary. Useful data for organization change is both internal data and external data. In order to collect accurate and useful data, the following practices are recommended: ensure anonymity in the data gathering process, use quantitative and qualitative methods and put them together to tell the most complete story, have a plan to use the data as simply collecting the data will create expectations, use the data to establish a

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[48] Ng, Wendy, and Syrus Marcus Ware. 2014. "Excellence and Equity?: A Reflection on the Diversification of Museums." In *Multiculturalism in Art Museums Today*, by Joni Boyd Acuff and Laura Evans. New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 40.

[49] Hayles, V. Robert. 2014. "Communicating About Diversity and Inclusion." In *Diversity at Work: The Practice of Inclusion*, by Bernardo M. Ferdman and Barbara R. Deane, 55-90. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 60.

[50] Schein, Edgar H. 2009. *The Corporate Culture Survival Guide.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 76.

baseline, but more importantly, use the data to develop key success indicators for going forward on inclusion initiatives.[51]

Gathering internal data can include several different techniques. Employee engagement surveys are easy and allow you to segment data by demographic groupings." Measuring the differing opinions, perspectives, and levels of engagement of different groups of employees by gender, race, age, position in the organization, sexual orientation, etc., can provide important insights that might otherwise stay underground."[52] Human Resources data, such as recruiting and hiring statistics, promotion data, performance ratings and turnover rates can also provide information related to inclusion initiatives.[53] In addition to this quantitative data, qualitative data from the HR department can also be helpful. An example of quantitative data would be exit interviews. Comparing exit interviews conducted with employees from groups that are marginalized and comparing them to exit interviews with those from the dominant culture can also reveal patterns of behavior that impact retention of diverse employees.

Looking for patterns within this data may help to uncover unconscious biases within the HR work systems. Another way to gather qualitative data is focus groups and interviews with employees. Utilizing these methods, attitudes towards inclusion efforts and practices can be surfaced, as well as employee experiences within the culture. Utilizing groups of similar employees can create an atmosphere of safety, which allows for a deeper exploration of issues based on different affinity groups.[54]

Collecting data related to the external climate of an organization can also prove very useful. "Business research has indicated there is frequently a correlation between the experience of employees and the experiences of customers. We believe it is imperative to incorporate marketplace and customer data into an inclusion initiative."[55] External data centers on customer and client demographics. Here are some suggestions when collecting external data: make sure to incorporate a diversity and inclusion lens into the measures you use to evaluate your customer data, include your customers in your diversity and inclusion events when you can, and think outside of the box in terms of the type of data your museum collects and how it relates to the diversity and inclusion initiative in your organization.[56]

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[51] Kaplan, Mark, and Mason Donovan. 2013. *The Inclusion Dividend: Why Investing in Diversity and Inclusion Pays Off.* Brookline: Bibliomotion, Inc., 197.
[52] Ibid, 194.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Kaplan, Mark, and Mason Donovan. 2013. *The Inclusion Dividend: Why Investing in Diversity and Inclusion Pays Off.* Brookline: Bibliomotion, Inc., 198.
[55] Ibid, 198.
[56] Ibid, 200.

Change Is Hard

Change within an individual requires motivation, discipline and courage. Change within an organization requires those same qualities, but on an organizational scale. People do not generally support change unless compelling reasons convince them to do so because people are invested and comfortable with the status quo.[57] "Organization development (OD) is a system-wide application and transfer of behavioral science knowledge to the planned development, improvement, and reinforcement of the strategies, structures, and processes that lead to organization effectiveness."[58]

One of the basic tenants of OD is that organizations are open-systems. American systems scientist and founder of the Society for Organizational Learning, Peter Senge, defines systems thinking as "a discipline for seeing wholes. It is a framework for seeing interrelationships rather than things, for seeing patterns of change rather than static 'snapshots'."[59] It is this whole system that supports change. Change in one area of the system is not effective. For large-scale, organizational change to happen, change must occur across the entire system.

Museums are systems. There are several subsystems that make up individual museums, including various departments, functions and audiences. A change in one subsystem does not create sustainable change. For example, simply increasing diverse content within exhibitions does not increase diversity within the staff, create more effective marketing materials, generate inclusive leadership practices or shift organizational culture. When seeing the organization as a whole system, targeted change interventions can be designed within all of those subsystems to generate an increased chance of sustained change.

Organizational systems also have various levels: Individual, Group/Team, Organization and Marketplace/Society. Developing an inclusive organization "can be conceptualized and operate at multiple levels, including the individual, interpersonal, group, organization, and society, and may be experienced differently by different individuals and in different situations."[60]

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[57] Cummings, Thomas G., and Christopher G. Worley. 2009. *Organization Development and Change.* Stamford: Cengage.

[58] Ibid, 2.

[59] Senge, Peter M. 1990. *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization.* New York: Doubleday, 92.

[60] Ferdman, Bernardo M. 2014. "The Practice of Inclusion in Diverse Organizations." In *Diversity at Work: The Practice of Inclusion*, by Bernardo M. Ferdman and Barbara R. Deane, 3-54. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 14.

Organization change pioneer, Kurt Lewin, described a three-step model for change. The first step, Unfreezing, "requires awareness of the need to change and desire to change it."[61] The next step, Moving, "involves taking action that will change the system."[62] The third step, Refreezing, "is the process of reinforcing the change and making it permanent."[63] While seemingly simple, the organizational change process is complex.

Organizational culture expert Edgar Schein provided more context to Lewin's three-step model. He outlined three ways that unfreezing happens: "(1) creating motivation and readiness to change through disconfirmation or lack of confirmation, (2) creating guilt or anxiety, (3) providing psychological safety.[64] He further clarifies what he means by guilt or anxiety. Survival anxiety, what he refers to as guilt, is the recognition of the need for change, otherwise something bad may happen. Schein identified learning anxiety as the realization that change requires learning a new behavior or the acceptance of new beliefs or values that might be difficult to accept.[65] He goes on to outline two principles of change. First, survival anxiety or guilt must be greater than learning anxiety. The will to survive must overcome the anxiety of learning a new skill, attitude or behavior. The second principle is that learning anxiety must be reduced, rather than increasing survival anxiety.[66] The resistance to change comes from the lack of willingness to learn new behaviors or skills, not from a lack of understanding that change is necessary.

According to Schein, the moving stage "incorporates two processes: (1) identifying with new role models and (2) environmental scanning."[67] Identifying with a new role model allows an individual to understand different perspectives and develop a new appreciation for worldviews different from his or her own. Understanding new ways of thinking or observing new behaviors exhibited by the role model that can be emulated by the individual are all benefits of the mentor/mentee relationship. It is critical to find a role model that embodies the desired changes or new behaviors the individual aspires to. An environmental scan does something similar on an organizational level. Understanding what other museums or cultural organizations are doing, both successfully and unsuccessfully, can provide valuable information to support the organization in the change effort.

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[61] Bierema, Laura L. 2010. *Implementing a Critical Approach to Organization Development.* Malabar: Krieger Publishing Co., 19.

[62] Ibid, 20.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Ibid, 21

[65] Schein, Edgar H. 2009. *The Corporate Culture Survival Guide.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 111.

[66] Ibid, 115.

[67] Bierema, Laura L. 2010. *Implementing a Critical Approach to Organization Development.* Malabar: Krieger Publishing Co., 22.

Schein elaborated on the third phase, refreezing, by highlighting the process of integrating the changes within the self and others. Transformative learning is integral to this process. "Transformative learning is the expansion of consciousness in any human system, thus the collective, as well as the individual. This expanded consciousness is characterized by new frames of reference, points of view and habits of mind."[68] Change is difficult and the new behaviors, roles and attitudes will take time until they feel comfortable. An individual may have to make adjustments and continue to reflect on progress.

Interventions is a term used in Organization Development to describe mechanisms for change. Any intervention within a system or organization can create change. There are four major types of interventions in OD: (1) Human Process Interventions at the individual, group and total system levels; (2) Interventions that modify an organization's structure and technology; (3) Human Resources Interventions that seek to improve member performance and wellness; (4) Strategic interventions that involve managing the organization's relationship to its external environment and the internal structure and process necessary to support a business strategy.[69] A change effort may incorporate any combination of these interventions to create sustainable change. As it relates to museums and inclusion, human process interventions could target behavior of individuals and groups within organization to create inclusive work cultures and work practices. Structural interventions could include reorganizing an organization to better meet the needs of changing audiences or working to maximize employee input and involvement within organizational processes. Human Resource interventions could focus on talent management and performance management systems to create inclusive and equitable practices. Strategic change interventions could focus on fostering an inclusive culture or embedding critical reflection in organizational practices and norms.[70]

Targeting Four Levels of System Change

As mentioned before, organizations are systems. Within organizations, change can be targeted to different levels. The Levels of Systems theory of change identifies four levels: Individual, Team Group, Organization, and Marketplace/Societal.[71] At each level, change

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[68] Kasl, Elizabeth, and Dean Eilas. 2000. "Creating New Habits of Mind in Small Groups." In *Learning as Transformation: Critical Perspectives on a Theory in Progress*, by Jack Mezirow. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

[69] Cummings, Thomas G., and Christopher G. Worley. 2009. *Organization Development and Change.* Stamford: Cengage, 29.

[70] Cummings, Thomas G., and Christopher G. Worley. 2009. *Organization Development and Change.* Stamford: Cengage.

[71] Kaplan, Mark, and Mason Donovan. 2013. *The Inclusion Dividend: Why Investing in Diversity and Inclusion Pays Off.* Brookline: Bibliomotion, Inc.

mechanisms are different, but as you change levels from individual through marketplace/societal, the magnitude of the change in terms of impact on the organization, increases exponentially. "The most powerful (and thus sustainable) change is one in which all four levels are being leveraged in an aligned, consistent way."[72]

      The individual level centers around museum staff members becoming cognizant of their individual actions and behaviors and developing inclusive work practices. "A change effort must impact individuals' knowledge, shift patterns that are inconsistent with the strategic direction and impact the culture – both the written and unwritten norms."[73] The individual level is deeply concerned with changing mental models. "Mental models are deeply ingrained assumptions, generalizations, or even pictures or images that influence how we understand the world and how we take action." [74] Revisiting the AAM definition, best practices are "commendable actions and philosophies that demonstrate an awareness of standards, successfully solve problems, can be replicated and that museums may choose to emulate if appropriate to their circumstances."[75] Mental models are embedded in the language of the AAM definition. When actions and philosophies are commendable, what criteria or norms are we using to pass judgment? Who gets to define if a museum may choose to emulate these commendable actions and replicate them at their museum? Critical theory posits that the "dominant ideology of White supremacy is a crucial source of alienation in that it blocks efforts at self-recognition."[76] With the lack of diversity within museum staff, the white, straight, able-bodied, dominant mental models are pervasive throughout all museum functions. These mental models often tend to impede progress. Senge writes, "new insights fail to get put into practice because they conflict with deeply held internal images of how the world works, images that limit us to familiar ways of thinking and acting.

      The team/group level of the system is concerned with both individual identity groups and group dynamics within teams. For groups whose cultures are outside of the dominant culture norms found in museums, it is often hard to express perspectives or behaviors that authentically represent various identities related to race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or other realms of difference. Every team or organization has insider and outsider groups. These groups could be based on things such as age, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or on education

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[72] Ibid, 76.

[73] Ibid.

[74] Senge, Peter M. 1990. *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization.* New York: Doubleday, 8.

[75] Merritt, Elizabeth. 2008. *National Standards and Best Practices for U.S. Museums.* Washington D.C: American Association of Museums, 6.

[76] Brookfield, Stephen D. 2004. *The Power of Critical Theory.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 288.

level, class or geography. The insider group is the group with more power, while the outsider group is subordinated in terms of power.[77] Figueroa, Kincaid, Rani, and Lewis mention in their Communication For Social Change Working Paper Series that

> Individual-change strategies also have a habit of succeeding with one segment of a population (often the "haves") while failing with another (the "have-nots").The unintended outcome may be an increase in the pre-existing gap. In addition to failing to change as expected and then lagging further behind, these same individuals may even be blamed for a program's failure. Personal or individual blame is to some extent a natural consequence of doing individual, *psychological* research on problems that are fundamentally *social* problems[78]

Seeking an inclusive culture helps to eliminate the imbalance of power between various groups within the organization. Creating environments that are accepting of these group differences is one way the team/group level of system creates inclusion within the workplace.

Group dynamics deal with processes and behaviors within a social group, or between social groups. To foster inclusive work group norms, Diversity and Inclusion practitioner Bernardo Ferdman points out that "it is important to consider creating safety, acknowledging others, dealing with conflict and differences, showing an ability and willingness to learn, having and giving voice, and encouraging representation."[79] He continues by defining each of these further:

> Creating safety involves having and using clear ground rules for respectful behavior, avoiding belittling others, and speaking up about issues that matter to people and the organization. Acknowledging others involved not only greeting people but also recognizing contributions and asking for input, in a manner that also connects to coworkers in personal and human ways. Dealing with conflict means being able and willing to address it as it arises, developing skills for effectively working through and learning from conflict, and developing cultural competence for working with those who may think and behave quite differently.[80]

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[77] Kaplan, Mark, and Mason Donovan. 2013. *The Inclusion Dividend: Why Investing in Diversity and Inclusion Pays Off.* Brookline: Bibliomotion, Inc., 65.

[78] Caplan and Nelson. 1973. Rogers and Kincaid. 1981. 40).

[79] Ferdman, Bernardo M. 2014. "The Practice of Inclusion in Diverse Organizations." In *Diversity at Work: The Practice of Inclusion*, by Bernardo M. Ferdman and Barbara R. Deane, 3-54. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 40.

[80] Ibid, 40.

There is much benefit to organizations that can foster an inclusive environment and maintain diverse teams. "In keeping with this line of thought, maintaining sameness (homogeneity) in our teams is unlikely to inspire something new...Research shows that diverse teams are high-risk, high-reward propositions...However, a diverse team does not magically drive innovation."[81] The team environment must be inclusive, allowing for everyone on the team to participate fully as themselves. Based on the underlying tacit assumptions in most museums, these group dynamics must be created intentionally. Support for inclusive groups requires both the commitment to engage with others that are different from you and the capacity to do so in a manner that is respectful and equitable. "Groups create inclusion by engaging in suitable practices and establishing appropriate norms, such as treating everyone with respect, giving everyone a voice, emphasizing collaboration, and working through conflicts productively and authentically."[82] Development of inclusive teams includes creating psychological safety for group members, acknowledging others with respect and treating them how they would like to be treated, dealing with conflict and differences in a productive way, showing an ability and willingness to learn about others in the group, having and giving voice, and encouraging authentic behavior and equal representation for other group members. In team or group situations where inclusive environments have been created, diverse teams will outperform homogenous teams.

     The organization level involves systems, policies and practices that are embedded into cultural norms. Examples of these systems include: "how work is organized and done; how employees are recruited, selected, evaluated, and promoted; how, by whom and on what basis decisions are made, implemented, and evaluated; and how the organization engages with the surrounding community and other stakeholders."[83] Organizational policies and practices outline acceptable behaviors and practices within an organization and are crucial to inclusion efforts as mechanisms to shift culture. The organizational level is concerned with the identity of the organization, as well as the mission, vision and values. Misalignment between espoused values and basic assumptions often occur at the organizational level. Policies and practices may dictate behaviors that create cultural norms, and those that have different worldviews have a choice to either assimilate within those norms, or to risk punishment or, ultimately, leaving the

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[81] Kaplan, Mark, and Mason Donovan. 2013. *The Inclusion Dividend: Why Investing in Diversity and Inclusion Pays Off.* Brookline: Bibliomotion, Inc., 38-39.

[82] Ferdman, Bernardo M. 2014. "The Practice of Inclusion in Diverse Organizations." In *Diversity at Work: The Practice of Inclusion*, by Bernardo M. Ferdman and Barbara R. Deane, 3-54. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 18.

[83] Ferdman, Bernardo M. 2014. "The Practice of Inclusion in Diverse Organizations." In *Diversity at Work: The Practice of Inclusion*, by Bernardo M. Ferdman and Barbara R. Deane, 3-54. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 20.

organization for not being a good cultural "fit." When inclusive values, policies and practices are in alignment, the opposite effect can happen, creating an inclusive work culture and rewarding inclusive work practices. The "organizational level is the place where dynamics, norms, and practices are set into something just short of cement."[84]

The marketplace or society level of the system "refers to the organization's sense of being an integral part of its surrounding community, regardless of whether it derives profits from local institutions and stakeholders. An inclusive workplace maintains a dual focus, simultaneously internal and external, that results from acknowledging its responsibility to the wider community."[85] Richard Sandell, Professor at the University of Leicester, argues "that museums and other cultural organizations have the potential to empower individuals and communities and to contribute towards combating the multiple forms of disadvantage experienced by individuals and communities described as 'at risk of social exclusion'."[86] A museum involved in its community builds trust. This trust leads to more partnership opportunities, increased brand awareness, more opportunities for stakeholder development and potential to increase diversity among staff. It is more than community outreach, though. Community outreach is about extending products and services into the community. Social inclusion takes into account the necessity for agency within communities to shape the work of the museum. These relationships, built on shared power and authority are mutually beneficial, providing opportunities for museums and communities to collectively address pressing social issues. In addition to the increased value of museums, as perceived by community members, there is also a relevancy component to the marketplace/societal level. "The company's success in seeing, understanding, and engaging its current and future customer base is critical to its success as an enterprise. A company's brand will have a D&I component, whether the company is aware of it or not. In a future that looks more diverse, not less, the marketplace level of system is even more critical."[87]

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[84] Kaplan, Mark, and Mason Donovan. 2013. *The Inclusion Dividend: Why Investing in Diversity and Inclusion Pays Off.* Brookline: Bibliomotion, Inc., 86.
[85] Mor Barak, Michalle E., and Preeya Daya. 2014. "Fostering Inclusion from the Inside Out to Create and Inclusive Workplace: Corporate and Organizational Efforts in the Community and Global Society." In *Diversity At Work: The Practice of Inclusion*, by Bernardo M. Ferdman and Barabara R. Deane, 391-412. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 394.
[86] Sandell, Richard. 2003. "Social inclusion, the museum and the dynamics of sectoral change." *Museums and Society* 45-62, 45.
[87] Kaplan, Mark, and Mason Donovan. 2013. *The Inclusion Dividend: Why Investing in Diversity and Inclusion Pays Off.* Brookline: Bibliomotion, Inc., 87.

Interventions Across Four Levels

Efforts to change mental models at the *individual level* are one way to further inclusion efforts within museums. This can happen through learning and development (L&D) programs. Traditionally, museum professional development has centered on technical skills, from exhibit design, to collections practices, to program development, and other skill-based learning that pertains to the work of museums. What has been neglected is the development of staff's cultural intelligence, defined as "the capability to function effectively across national, ethnic, and organizational cultures."[88] This ability to function across cultures allows for museum staff to recognize the lens through which they see the world, and understand how to work with others with different worldviews in an equitable way.

One way to evolve the practices of museum staff at the individual level of the system is to focus on intercultural competence, "referring to the cognitive, affective and behavioral skills and characteristics that support appropriate and effective interaction in a variety of cultural contexts."[89] The focus on the cognitive, affective and behavioral skills is also referred to as the Head, Heart and Hand approach to intercultural competence development. The cognitive, or Head, aspect of increasing intercultural competence deals with the acquisition of knowledge about other cultures. The key cognitive competency is cultural self-awareness, defined as "our recognition of the cultural patterns that have influenced our identities and that are reflected in the various culture groups to which we belong, always acknowledging the dynamic nature of both culture and identity."[90] The affective, or heart, component of intercultural competence development is concerned with the emotional development of individuals. Curiosity is a key hallmark of the cognitive development. In the behavioral dimension, "empathy is the most frequently cited skill, along with the ability to listen, communicate, resolve conflict, manage anxiety, and develop relationships. In other words, empathy is an attempt to understand another person by imagining the individual's perspective."[91]

Learning and development is also relevant at the *team/group level*. Many of the important decisions within organizations are either made in teams or carried out by teams. The importance of team learning is critical for inclusion efforts. The ability for insider-outsider group

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[88] Livermore, David. 2015. *Leading With Cultural Intelligence.* New York: Amacom, 4.

[89] Bennett, Janet M. 2014. "Intercultural Competence: Vital Perspectives for Diversity and Inclusion." In *Diversity at Work: The Practice of Incusion*, by Bernardo M. Ferdman and Barbara R. Deane. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 157.

[90] Bennett, Janet M. 2014. "Intercultural Competence: Vital Perspectives for Diversity and Inclusion." In *Diversity at Work: The Practice of Incusion*, by Bernardo M. Ferdman and Barbara R. Deane. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 158.

[91] Ibid, 160.

dynamics to be addressed within the organizational culture affect the ability of staff in the outsider groups to feel fully engaged in the organization. When the imbalance of power between insider and outside groups is brought into better alignment, employee engagement and morale increase, providing a better experience for all. Transformative learning is a useful intervention at this level. Transformative learning "demands that we be aware of how we come to our knowledge and as aware as we can be about the values that lead us to our perspectives."[92] Emeritus Professor of Adult and Continuing Education at Teachers' College, Columbia University, Jack Mezirow writes,

> Transformative learning refers to the process by which we transform our taken-for-granted frames of reference (meaning perspectives, habits of mind, mind-set) to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, emotionally capable of change, and reflective so that they may generate beliefs and opinions that will prove more true or justified to guide action.[93]

Transformative learning is aimed at the basic assumptions that are the deepest level of Schein's model of organizational culture. By changing the frame of reference of museum staff to be more inclusive, the basic assumptions within the organization will become more inclusive, thereby evolving the organizational culture to become more inclusive.

The difference that transformative learning provides as a discipline is the reliance on dialogue to reframe our assumptions. American systems scientist and founder of the Society for Organizational Learning, Peter Senge, writes, "The discipline of team learning involves mastering the practice of dialogue and discussion, the two distinct ways that teams converse."[94] Mezirow further specifies a type of dialogue called discourse. "Discourse, in the context of transformation theory, is that specialized use of dialogue devoted to searching for a common understanding, and assessment of the justification of an interpretation or belief."[95] Skills such as

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[92] Mezirow, Jack. 2012. "Learning to Think Like an Adult: Core Concepts of Transformation Theory." In *The Handbook of Transformative Learning*, by Edward W. Taylor and Patricia Cranton, 77-95. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 77.

[93] Ibid, 76.

[94] Senge, Peter M. 1990. *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization.* New York: Doubleday, 220.

[95] Mezirow, Jack. 2012. "Learning to Think Like an Adult: Core Concepts of Transformation Theory." In *The Handbook of Transformative Learning*, by Edward W. Taylor and Patricia Cranton, 77-95. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 78.

critical listening, communication, and conflict resolution are important. Reflective discourse requires emotional intelligence and the ability to regulate and manage one's emotions.

A word of caution. You do not need to approach the few people within your staff who represent "diversity" and rely on them to educate the rest of the organization. These people have already been trying to help you in the transformative learning process and may be emotionally drained. This work is important for white people to explore with other white people. Examine your actions, reflect on where your basic assumptions come from. You may need to incorporate the intercultural competence work on the individual level of the system into the process of discourse to help you understand the beliefs and values that you should reflect upon.

Organizational level interventions examine policies, procedures and practices within museums to assess whether they are inclusive, exclusive or neutral. One specific example is the Talent Acquisition system. "HR has an important role to play in fostering both of these elements - diversity and inclusion - in that it has responsibilities in the attraction, selection, evaluation, promotion, and retention of diverse staff as well as in the creation of an organizational climate in which these diverse individuals can contribute and thrive."[96] Identifying unconscious bias and other barriers to creating a diverse workforce can help an institution develop staff that better reflect the demographics that museums have traditionally marginalized.

There are several benefits of a diverse workforce:

> In addition to identifying new market prospects, a diverse workforce can aid in building strong external relationships with customers and communities, with employees more closely representing the demographics of the clients they serve. Also, as the face of the organization, diverse staff can attract additional diverse talent by illustrating with their presence and testimony that the company values different perspectives, thus giving HR a more diverse applicant pool from which to select.[97]

Just increasing diversity within the workforce is not the only Human Resources system that is affected by inclusion initiatives. Performance management systems are also another way

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[96] Offerman, Lynn R., and Tessa E. Basford. 2014. "Inclusive Human Resource Management: Best Practices and the Changing Role of Human Resources." In *Diversity at Work: The Practice of Inclusion*, by Bernardo M. Ferdman and Barbara R. Deane, 229-259. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 233.

[97] Offerman, Lynn R., and Tessa E. Basford. 2014. "Inclusive Human Resource Management: Best Practices and the Changing Role of Human Resources." In *Diversity at Work: The Practice of Inclusion*, by Bernardo M. Ferdman and Barbara R. Deane, 229-259. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 244.

to create inclusive cultures. By outlining inclusive behaviors, utilizing education initiatives at the individual and team/group levels, performance management systems can then reward desired behaviors. This reinforces the work that happens at the other levels of the system. Other systems that can become more inclusive include: vendor procurement, leadership development, professional development, and communication.

Interventions at the *marketplace/society level* need to surface information about the perception of the museum or organization by members of various communities. Gaining a deeper understanding of how the organization is perceived, but also how the organization can use its resources to address issues that are important to these communities will lead to opportunities to create partnerships, support community based organizations in work they are already engaged with, and create a more positive perception of the museum. Large group change methods can be utilized at this level. Appreciative Inquiry and World Café activities can involve both members from various communities and museum professional to explore characteristics of mutually beneficial relationships, identify important issues that can be addressed by both community and museum, and lead to discourse about the perception of the museum and how that has evolved within the community. This information and these types of activities can be crucial in terms of examining long-held beliefs on both sides, creating a deeper understanding between communities and museums and fostering good working relationships.

Managing the Messiness of Change

People do not readily support change. Change is hard, and on an organizational-scale, change is often a long, messy process. Change management is important in any change effort. Organization Development consultants Thomas Cummings and Christopher Worley outline five steps for change management: (1) Motivating Change, (2) Creating a Vision, (3) Developing Political Support, (4) Managing the Transition, and (5) Sustaining Momentum.[98] On the surface, this looks fairly simple, but each step is more complicated than it appears.

Motivating Change

People resist change for many reasons. Often, there is uncertainty about the future, but also change tends to shift power and affect individual's spheres of influence. To create a readiness for change, the change leader needs to fully understand what external trends are related to the desired change. For museums, it is possible to look at inclusion efforts within other museums, but more effective is looking at inclusion efforts in other sectors, such as the

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[98] Cummings, Thomas G., and Christopher G. Worley. 2009. *Organization Development and Change.* Stamford: Cengage, 181.

corporate and higher education sectors. The change leader must also create the disequilibrium necessary to create motivation for change. Gathering data that reveals the discrepancies between the current state and the desired states can create survival anxiety, as outlined by Schein.

It is also critical that the change leader is prepared to overcome resistance to change. Habits of mind, tacit assumptions embedded within culture, and an investment in the status quo will all generate resistance to the change. A change agent can utilize tactics to help minimize resistance. Generating empathy and support for the change can cause a willingness for those affected by the change to suspend judgment and to see the situation from another's perspective.[99] Clear communication can help mitigate anxiety that comes from a lack of information. In the absence of information, those affected by the change will fill in the gaps. Providing information clearly and consistently will help to reduce anxiety. Participation and involvement will also help reduce anxiety. Allowing opportunities for those affected by the change to help shape the change builds trust and buy-in from staff.[100]

Creating a Vision

Within a change effort, having a strong vision is critical to success. Vision incorporates the core values and purpose that guide the organization as well as an envisioned future toward which the change is directed.[101] Within this vision, a clear connection is made to the purpose of the organization. For an organization with espoused values of inclusion, or inclusion embedded in the mission or vision statements, or the strategic plan, the core purpose should be clear and easy to connect with the change efforts. These values and the purpose should inform the goals of the change effort and the desired future state. The goals should be aspirational and bold and include specific outcomes. The desired state should be outlined in vivid detail. For inclusion efforts, this could include a description of the organizational culture, behaviors, employee interactions or the demographics of the workforce.

Communication as Dialogue

Communication for Social Change involves various communication techniques to address systems that aren't working. Instead of addressing health issues for example, these systems can be applied to systemic change in museums. 'Community' and 'local culture' in this section should be interpreted as organization and organizational culture.

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[99] Ibid, 183.
[100] Ibid.
[101] Cummings, Thomas G., and Christopher G. Worley. 2009. *Organization Development and Change.* Stamford: Cengage, 184.
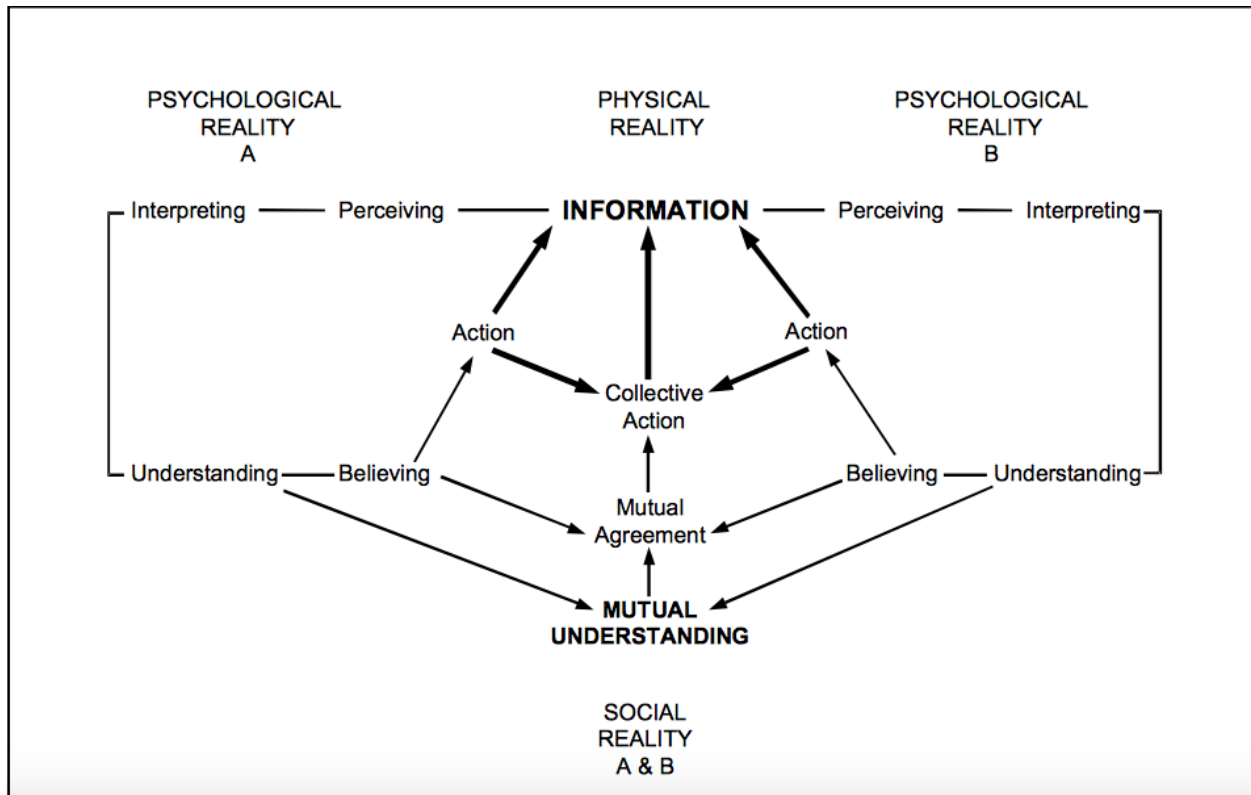
In the above figure "Information" is preferred over the term "message" to allow for both verbal and nonverbal information, unintended as well as intended information.

Each participant perceives and arrives at her/his own unique interpretation, understanding and beliefs (defined as the validity of one's interpretation) about information that is shared. Once reached, each person's understanding and beliefs can then be expressed to others. In the diagram, talking (self-expression) is one type of action that follows from, and is based on, each person's own understanding and beliefs. Any action creates new information, which potentially can be interpreted by the other participants. For instance, this means walking out of a meeting is also a form of information that can be interpreted. In a dialogue, a process of turn taking occurs as each participant seeks to clarify what others believe and understand as well as one's own understanding and beliefs. And that turn taking constitutes a minimal form of collective action: joint action in the form of two or more persons engaging in dialogue. But dialogue must mean more than just endless turn taking. The underlying assumption of dialogue is that all participants are willing to listen and change not just one of the parties. Communities that have a long history of conflict may not be able to engage even in this minimal form of collective action — talking to one another.

This turn taking (conversation, dialogue) constitutes a feedback process for each participant which, if effective, leads to a "series of diminishing mistakes — a dwindling series of

under-and-over corrections converging on a goal" (Deutsch, 1963, in Rogers and Kincaid, 1981, p. 62). The common experience of "ah...so that's what you mean," indicates a process in which participants gradually converge toward a greater degree of mutual understanding and agreement (shared beliefs).The initial, relatively unique understanding and beliefs of each individual gradually become more similar and share more in common with those of others. Convergence does not imply perfect agreement, only the direction of movement.

The inherent properties of this process suggest that over time most groups will converge toward a state of greater internal uniformity, also referred to as "local culture" (Kincaid, 1988, 1993).The convergence theory is valid in part because of the important roles played by boundaries. Within the boundaries created by the dialogue itself, convergence occurs because those who do not see an issue the same way nor agree with other participants tend to stop participating in the dialogue and then "drop out" of the group. Simply leaving a group (moving outside the boundaries created by the dialogue) automatically ensures greater uniformity among those who remain within the group. In communities, this process of divergence describes the formation of factions. The existence of factions/subgroups within a group (culture) implies two simultaneous processes: convergence among members within each bounded subgroup and divergence between subgroups over time. Boundaries determine who is included and who is excluded within a dialogue. Boundaries can be determined by observation and self- report, and by mapping the social networks within a community. Splitting communities into factions with different points of view reduces the overall social cohesion of a community and hence its capacity to solve mutual problems through collective action. If severe, it can bring cooperative action among groups within a community to a halt.

Ironically, dialogue itself is one of the primary means of overcoming such divisions. Effective dialogue occurs (1) when participants with differing points of view listen to one another, as indicated by paraphrasing the other's point of view to the other's satisfaction, (2) when each one acknowledges the conditions under which the other's point of view can be accepted as valid, and (3) when each one acknowledges the overlap or similarity of both points of view (Rapoport, 1967, as derived from Rogers' client- centered therapy, 1951). But sometimes dialogue can lead to disagreement and divergence, especially when the dialogue makes it clear each individual's true interests and values are in conflict. The model depicted in Figure 1 does not show the nature of the relationships among the participants, nor does it say anything about the role of emotion, conflict and group motivation. Other models are needed to add this level of complexity. The social-change model described below considers these missing elements.

The convergence model of communication implies symmetry in the relationship of participants and equity of information sharing (action). Real groups and communities are sometimes far from this ideal. Power relationships substantially affect the communication process. Power may be exercised by means of authority (threat or use of positive and negative sanctions), influence (persuasiveness of participants), pre-existing social norms or all three. So, power and conflict represent another means for overcoming differences and opposition within a group. But even in cases where a community leader or outsider coerces recalcitrant individuals and subgroups to cooperate in a project, some minimal level of mutual understanding and agreement is still required for them to comply and engage in collective action. Negotiation represents a third means of overcoming opposition and conflict. Leaders of opposing factions can propose trade-offs and agree to compromises in order to obtain sufficient mutual agreement for collective action to proceed. For example, the subgroup within a village that wants to build latrines rather than new wells can agree to cooperate with building the wells first if the other subgroups agree to help with latrines later and if some of the wells are located close to their houses. Third- party arbitration or mediation provides another alternative to conflict if dialogue and negotiation fail.

In summary, some initial amount of communication within a community or group is required to identify areas of agreement and disagreement among those participating. When different points of view and beliefs arise (divergence), further communication is required to reduce the level of diversity (convergence) to the point where there is a sufficient level of mutual understanding and agreement to engage in collective action and solve mutual problems. The method used to reach consensus is usually determined by leaders within the community. The communication for social-change model describes a process by which leaders guide community members through dialogue and collective action in order to resolve mutual problems for themselves."

Developing Political Support

Change often upsets the power structures within organizations. This often comes with political repercussions. In order to manage the political climate, the change leader needs to realistically assess his or her power. Understanding the sphere of influence that one has is important to understanding what key stakeholders you need in order to create the type of influence needed to create change. A change agent needs to understand his or her knowledge, personality, and the support from others. Having expertise that is valued by others and

controlling important information helps the change agent gain credibility with stakeholders.[102] The personality of a change agent helps to build networks and coalitions in order to bring key stakeholders on board with the change effort.

<u>Managing the Transition</u>

Change can be messy and take a long time and often requires a period of time for the organization to learn how to reach the desired future state. Change leaders must be able to plan for this. Creating a road map for change, including citing specific activities, events and milestones will help stakeholders understand the process, manage expectations and see progress as the change rolls out. Gaining commitment to the plan for key stakeholders requires a solid plan, transparency, and honesty about the difficulties along the way as the process unfolds. Creating learning processes in which staff and stakeholders learn to work within the new culture and understanding new expectations and systems will help to provide a smoother transition. Reflection is also a critical component. After-action reviews as the change process occurs will help to assess the transition progress and provide opportunities to make changes to aid in the success of the change effort.

<u>Sustaining Momentum</u>

As the change transition is stabilizing, it is important to provide resources to continue the change process. These may be financial or human resources, but these must be committed to ensure success. This could include investing in training, consultation, data collection, and feedback processes.[103] These investments will continue to build a support system for the change leader, help to develop new competencies and skills and reinforce new behaviors. It should also be acknowledged that to sustain these new behaviors, processes should be continually readjusted and recalibrated.

Change Models

In organization development and change literature, there is no shortage of change models. The theory behind the models is relatively similar though. Earlier in the chapter, Kurt Lewin's three-step model of change was explained with enhancements from Edgar Schein. This process of unfreezing, moving, and refreezing is an underlying theme to most change models.

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[102] Cummings, Thomas G., and Christopher G. Worley. 2009. *Organization Development and Change.* Stamford: Cengage, 192.

[103] Cummings, Thomas G., and Christopher G. Worley. 2009. *Organization Development and Change.* Stamford: Cengage, 200.

You must create a desire to change through some type of disorientation, or understanding that the status quo does not meet the desired identity of the organization or museum. Moving is about identifying the types of changes that are needed and utilizing interventions within the system to create new mental models, work habits, and organizational culture norms. Refreezing is solidifying the new changes as the new status quo.

The Level of Systems theory of change provides another way to look at change. Change at the individual, team/group, organization, and marketplace levels are all necessary to successfully change the culture and identity of an organization or museum. Understanding the types of interventions that can be applied to each level to create change can help to ensure that inclusion is embedded into every level of the system.

While two models of change specific to inclusion are outlined below, it is important to understand that these are stages of change, not step-by-step instructions. Each museum is in a unique place. Some museums have already started to incorporate inclusion into organizational conversations, strategic plans, or organizational structures and practices. Other museums are starting from scratch, with a desire to be more inclusive, but less of an idea of how to start. The change models can serve as a loose roadmap, but make sure that the specific needs of your museums are met and feel free to mix and match techniques, models, interventions and tools. Change models not mentioned here include Action Research, ADKAR (Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability and Reinforcement), Kotter's 8-step model of change, 7 Habits Model (Stephen Covey), Stages of Change (Kubler-Ross), and the Six-Box Model (Weisbord).

Inclusion Initiative Phases – Kaplan and Donovan

In their book, the Inclusion Dividend, Mark Kaplan and Mason Donovan identify 4 phases that happen during an inclusion initiative.

<u>Research</u>

Phase one is research. "The primary focus of this phase is building a solid foundation for the initiative....each organization needs to develop its own rationale, in its own language and in the context that is unique to that organization. Thus, the primary focus of Phase 1 is research."[104] Most change efforts are going to begin with data collection. It is hard to understand what you need to change without the data to help you prioritize. Data gathering techniques were outlined earlier in this chapter. The research phase is also a good place to regroup when changes or

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[104] Kaplan, Mark, and Mason Donovan. 2013. *The Inclusion Dividend: Why Investing in Diversity and Inclusion Pays Off.* Brookline: Bibliomotion, Inc., 189-190.

challenges to the initiative happen. Data is hard to argue with, and often can be the fall back to either make course corrections during an initiative or to help convince resistors that change is needed.

<u>Resource Allocation</u>

Phase two focuses on how to allocate resources, both financial and human, in order to create change. The data gathered in phase one will provide an opportunity to prioritize how to allocate the resources to maximize impact.[105] Funding allocations can send a clear message to the rest of the organization that inclusion is a priority. This often requires trade-offs, so it is important to understand the business case for inclusion. While the moral imperative for inclusion should be a strong enough argument to embark on an inclusion initiative, often it is the business case argument that will influence leaders who are responsible for the bottom line of the museum. Creating the talking points about the benefits of inclusion on the organization through creating a more diverse audience, increasing long-term relevance of the museums, developing a diverse workforce, increasing employee engagement and morale, and increasing innovation and creativity within the work practices of the organization will all have a positive impact on the organization.

<u>Implementation and Integration</u>

This phase is about "directly involving the entire organization with the inclusion initiative in some significant way."[106] This is the most arduous phase. It is important to involve the entire organization in order to clearly send the message that inclusion is an expectation of everyone within the museum. This is not the responsibility of one person or one department, but will become part of the formula for how the museum conducts day-to-day business. Buy-in from front-line and mid-level staff is critical at this stage. Learning and development, as mentioned earlier in the chapter, can be an effective way to support staff in understanding how they can support the inclusion effort, both as an individual, but also as part of organizational teams.

<u>Measurement and Recalibration</u>

It is important to measure progress of inclusion efforts. For one thing, accurate measurements can help an organization assess whether it is making progress. Whether an organization is making progress or not, assessment can help an organization understand what is working and what is not. Assessing the impact against the strategy is important to determine if

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[105] Ibid, 190.
[106] Ibid, 189-191.

new interventions are needed to achieve the objectives of the initiative. It is at this point where phase four blends in with phase one, data collection, and this phase becomes an iterative cycle.

The Inclusion Breakthrough – Miller and Katz

Judith Katz and Frederick Miller outlined a model called The Inclusion Breakthrough. They write, "The inclusion breakthrough cycle examines key components for leveraging diversity and creating a culture of inclusion by focusing on five key elements: new competencies, enabling policies and practices, leveraging a diverse workforce, community and social responsibility, and enhanced value to a diverse marketplace."[107]

New Competencies

For an organization to implement a successful inclusion initiative, staff must learn new competencies. "Everyone's competencies must be enhanced to enable the organization to leverage all its talent and to respond to an ever-changing and demanding environment."[108] Inherently, change implies that a museum intends to create a different outcome for the organization. To become inclusive, museums need "to develop norms that enhance innovation, problem solving and creativity so that the combined wisdom of the entire workforce is leveraged."[109] The organizational culture of museums must shift to embrace diversity, thereby creating an atmosphere where the norms of the organization reflect inclusion as a part of how the museum functions. This implies that we must change our practices and our work culture. If staff are not given the education necessary to develop new competencies, they will continue to practice in the same manner, whether that is interacting with staff or creating products and services for external audiences.

Enabling Policies and Practices

"To sustain a culture of inclusion, an organization needs to create a new set of policies and practices that not only support new competencies, but also create the environment that enables all people to do their best work."[110] Management consultant, Peter Drucker, says that "Culture eats strategy for breakfast."[111] Developing organizational policies that embed inclusion into the expectations and cultural norms of the museum will help to ensure that new behaviors

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[107] Miller, Frederick A., and Judith H. Katz. 2002. *The Inclusion Breakthrough: Unleashing the Real Power of Diversity.* San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 41-42.
[108] Ibid, 43.
[109] Ibid.
[110] Miller, Frederick A., and Judith H. Katz. 2002. *The Inclusion Breakthrough: Unleashing the Real Power of Diversity.* San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 43.
[111] Favaro, Ken. 2104. *Strategy or Culture: Which Is More Important?* May 22. Accessed February 12, 2017. http://www.strategy-business.com/blog/Strategy-or-Culture-Which-Is-More-Important?gko=26c64.

are reinforced. Policies related to domestic partner benefits, promotions, performance management, succession planning, professional development, and mentoring and coaching are all areas where inclusion can be embedded into the DNA of the museum.[112]

Leveraging a Diverse Workforce

"The real test of an inclusion breakthrough is *unleashing* the power of diversity by making it a way of life in the organization."[113] Creating an inclusive organizational culture is a prerequisite for increasing and retaining workforce diversity: "the workforce needs to become an ever higher-performing one, comprised of partnerships and teams whose diversity works for them, not against them."[114] Successfully increasing diversity within the workforce brings a different lens through which the work of museums is produced. This new lens will help to decrease the paternalistic tone of museum work and lead to more inclusive working relationships and programs that are more relevant for a broader audience, thereby increasing the future relevance of museums.

Community and Social Responsibility

While inclusion is an internal change effort within organizations, "organizations also extend the effort beyond their walls and begin to establish true partnerships with the communities within which they operate."[115] Museums can be sites for social inclusion when they collectively work to address social issues with community partners. Becoming rooted in community work not only increases the perceived value of the museum, but it helps museums meet their mission as service organizations in ways that museums have neglected in the past. Museums have met the needs of a narrow slice of society, that being white, straight, and able bodied. Inclusion efforts give museums the opportunity to be more socially conscious institutions and utilize resources and technical skills to assist in community related efforts, whether using the power of art for healing and refuge, or utilizing the cultural narratives to connect the past to the present.

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[112] Miller, Frederick A., and Judith H. Katz. 2002. *The Inclusion Breakthrough: Unleashing the Real Power of Diversity.* San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 43.
[113] Ibid, 44.
[114] Ibid.
[115] Ibid.

<u>Enhanced Value to the Marketplace</u>

"The key to having a successful breakthrough is incorporating and implementing it in an organization's overall business strategy and delivering enhanced products and services to the marketplace, customers, constituents, and other key stakeholders."[116] While this enhanced value comes with benefits for the museum, this is really about providing enhanced services to market segments that have been marginalized by museums.

Structuring Efforts to Ensure Inclusion

While change models present flexibility for application within organizations, some common components of structural change for inclusion can be found in the corporate and higher education sectors. These components create an infrastructure for inclusion within the organization and allow time and space for staff to intentionally address inclusion initiatives.

<u>Affinity Networks or Employee Resource Groups</u>

These are group of staff that align around a particular affinity. These groups often provide a space where staff from outsider groups can find psychological safety within the organization.[117] These groups can also be a resource to the organization. Affinity groups for Employee Resource Groups can help with recruitment, increase the perception of an organization as an employee of choice, provide learning and development opportunities for the rest of the organization, and provide advice to leadership on issues related to diverse communities. Groups should have a sponsor from the leadership team of the organization, a charter, a budget, and a sense of confidentiality. While these groups can be open to all staff, including allies or accomplices, there must be some safeguards built into the charter or guidelines that protect these spaces for the people that identify with the affinity of the group. That might mean that membership is restricted to people that identify with the affinity, but at certain times of the year, meetings will be held where allies or accomplices are welcome.

<u>Diversity Council</u>

Diversity Councils are entities within the organization that set the strategy for inclusion initiatives and manage implementation. "An effective council will have the involvement or direct sponsorship of the CEO and its members will include leaders with broad decision making

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[116] Miller, Frederick A., and Judith H. Katz. 2002. *The Inclusion Breakthrough: Unleashing the Real Power of Diversity*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 45.

[117] Kaplan, Mark, and Mason Donovan. 2013. *The Inclusion Dividend: Why Investing in Diversity and Inclusion Pays Off*. Brookline: Bibliomotion, Inc., 207.

authority."[118] The council members are responsible to take the data collected in the assessment or research phase, and develop an organizational strategy for inclusion. The council is also responsible for change management (see the steps outlined earlier in this chapter). The council is also charged with communication of the inclusion initiative. Kaplan and Donovan outline best practices for Diversity Councils:

> Ensure sponsorship and involvement of top executives; Include a mix of insider and outsider group members so multiple perspectives are represented on the council; Provide both authority and accountability to the council so members are invested in the outcome and the council is taken seriously in the organization; Utilize a clear set of concepts and frameworks to guide the strategy development; Utilize external expertise to both help the council work together effectively and choose the best concepts and frameworks.[119]

Diversity and Inclusion Department

Development of a Diversity and Inclusion department builds the internal capacity of the organization to meet the objectives of the inclusion initiative. It is an internal resource solely focused on strategically embedding inclusion into the DNA of the organization. This should be a department separate from the Human Resources department, where the D&I function can too easily get lost. D&I should be working with HR, but also with many other departments across the museum, and creating a department that is an entity unto itself sends a message of the importance of D&I and makes it visible to the rest of the organization as a resource.

Human Resources/Diversity and Inclusion Task Force

"The Human Resources department should not oversee the D&I work, but it should be intimately involved in the way inclusion is integrated into day-to-day management and leadership behavior in the organization."[120] The talent acquisition and management functions are the responsibility of Human Resources, but are also critical for inclusion initiatives in museums. A task force that has representatives from both departments can focus specifically on increasing the ability to recruit, retain, and develop a more diverse workforce. As one of the critical elements of an internal inclusion initiative, the success of this task force will have a

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[118] Kaplan, Mark, and Mason Donovan. 2013. *The Inclusion Dividend: Why Investing in Diversity and Inclusion Pays Off.* Brookline: Bibliomotion, Inc., 212.
[119] Ibid, 215.
[120] Kaplan, Mark, and Mason Donovan. 2013. *The Inclusion Dividend: Why Investing in Diversity and Inclusion Pays Off.* Brookline: Bibliomotion, Inc., 216.

significant impact on the organizational demographics, which in turn impact the culture, products and services of the museum.

<u>Inclusion Marketing Function</u>

"Multicultural Marketing" is becoming a more common organizational function in large companies. Typically, this function looks at positioning the company for success in particular niche markets." [121] This is not about marketing to niche markets, but developing marketing practices that are more inclusive of multiple markets. This may require some market segmentation, but labeling diverse markets as niche markets subtly undervalues their importance. "We believe a state-of-the-art inclusion marketing function will look at the broader challenge of creating inclusion across the whole product line, actually integrating an inclusion lens into the entire marketing function."[122]

Creating New Inclusive Habits

The literature within museums that focuses on diversity often fails to address inclusion. "Inclusion has emerged as a core concept in relation to diversity; in particular, it is now considered by diversity practitioners as a key approach to benefit from diversity and is in many ways at the forefront of contemporary diversity practice."[123] Inclusion refers to a practice that, once embedded within a museum, can help to leverage the benefits of a more diverse workforce and shift the external products and services produced by museums to more inclusive cultural narratives. Currently, whiteness, straightness, and able-bodiedness are front and center in museums cultures, dictating the norms and values of cultural organizations. Creating change within the culture of museums allows for efforts to de-center these norms and create new habits of mind that incorporate the practice of inclusion within the very fabric of our museums and cultural organizations.

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[121] Ibid, 217.
[122] Ibid.
[123] Ferdman, Bernardo M. 2014. "The Practice of Inclusion in Diverse Organizations." In *Diversity at Work: The Practice of Inclusion*, by Bernardo M. Ferdman and Barbara R. Deane, 3-54. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 3-4.

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CHAPTER 4

Inclusive Leadership:
Avoiding a Legacy of Leadership

CONTRIBUTOR: Chris Taylor

The call for museums to be inclusive in their practices has been loud and clear for decades. Inclusive workplace culture has been discussed previously, but organizations do not become more inclusive overnight. Strong leadership within museums is necessary to create a vision of an inclusive museum and how to create change within the organization to realize that vision. Not only do museums need strong leadership, they need a different type of leadership. Inclusive leadership can help to develop an inclusive culture within an organization, but it can also help to develop a more inclusive workforce within museums. Leaders set the tone for organizations, based on their beliefs and values. As leaders become more inclusive, organizations become more inclusive. This chapter will define and describe the characteristics of inclusive leadership. Next, an examination of the barriers to inclusive leadership will highlight some of the areas where museum leaders are challenged to exhibit more inclusive leadership. The benefits of inclusive leadership and the impact on followers and the organization are also discussed. The chapter then explores the development of inclusive leadership at multiple levels and provides tools and suggestions for leaders to incorporate into their leadership styles.

What Is Inclusive Leadership?

Bernardo Ferdman defines inclusion in the following way, "[i]n its most general sense, inclusion involves both being fully ourselves and allowing others to be fully themselves…It means collaborating in a way in which all parties can be fully engaged and…at the same time believe that they have not compromised, hidden, or given up any part of themselves."[124] This definition also pertains to those in leadership positions. Although leaders, due to their power within the organization, typically feel included, they also determine whether or not others will feel included within an organization. What is more important for leaders is to understand and practice inclusive leadership. Lize Booysen defines inclusive leadership as leadership that values diversity and the effective management of diversity and inclusion of all. It shifts the focus from affirmative action and equity toward equality, social justice, fairness, and the leveraging of

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[124] Ferdman as cited in Booysen, Lize. 2014. "The Development of Inclusive Leadership Practice and Processes." In *Diversity at Work: The Practice of Inclusion*, by Bernardo M. Ferdman and Barbara R. Deane, 296-329. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 281.

diversity effects in the system.[125] She goes on to say, "Inclusive leadership extends our thinking beyond assimilation strategies or organizational demography to empowerment and participation of all, by removing obstacles that cause exclusion and marginalization.[126]

Inclusive leadership leads to organizations where diverse talent is fostered and in which diverse teams operate to their highest potential. Placida Gallegos writes, "[i]nclusive leadership involves attention to the question, "Whose voices or perspectives might we be missing?" or asking "What are the limitations to the current way we are seeing this issue?"[127] Leaders that proactively ask these types of questions begin to understand that they may be privileging certain perspectives over those that do not typically have a voice in leadership or are not represented at all. Inclusive leaders view diversity as a business imperative, stand out front as diversity champions, have broader definitions of high-potential employees, share unwritten rules, try different approaches, set high expectations related to inclusion for all staff, provide opportunities for ongoing education and development, are inclusive of all staff and open to learning from others across the levels of the organization.[128]

Characteristics of Inclusive Leadership

Change for inclusion requires strong leaders with the ability to challenge dominant organizational paradigms and evolve practices that have long been held as "best practices." The leadership paradigm in museums must move away from the dominant perspective that focuses on a unidirectional relationship between leaders and followers to one that is relationship-based with a focus on the relationship between leaders and followers. Leaders need to "nurture and sustain dyadic, group and collective relationships and collaboration."[129] Inclusive leaders must challenge their own norms and assumptions and develop the ability to acquire new behaviors and skills to adapt to new cultural situations. There are many characteristics of inclusive leadership, including being able to adapt, being authentic, having emotional intelligence, and developing good relationships with followers.

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[125] Booysen, Lize. 2014. "The Development of Inclusive Leadership Practice and Processes." In *Diversity at Work: The Practice of Inclusion*, by Bernardo M. Ferdman and Barbara R. Deane, 296-329. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. 298

[126] Ibid.

[127] Gallegos, Placida V. 2014. "The Work of Inclusive Leadership: Fostering Authentic Relationships, Modeling Courage and Humility." In *Diversity At Work: The Practice of Inclusion*, by Bernardo M. Ferdman and Barbara R. Deane. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 181.

[128] Offerman, Lynn R., and Tessa E. Basford. 2014. "Inclusive Human Resource Management: Best Practices and the Changing Role of Human Resources." In *Diversity at Work: The Practice of Inclusion*, by Bernardo M. Ferdman and Barbara R. Deane, 229-259. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. 236

[129] Booysen, Lize. 2014. "The Development of Inclusive Leadership Practice and Processes." In *Diversity at Work: The Practice of Inclusion*, by Bernardo M. Ferdman and Barbara R. Deane, 296-329. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 303

Rising to Adaptive Challenges

An adaptive challenge is one that challenges people's beliefs, attitudes, and values. They are usually related to values and stir up people's emotions.[130] The connection between relevance and museums becoming more inclusive is an adaptive challenge. It is creating the need for museums to change. Peter G. Northouse writes that adaptive leadership is about how leaders encourage people to adapt to face challenges and changes. Inclusive leaders can identify and focus on the adaptations required of people in response to changing environments.[131] Museum leaders who want to develop inclusive organizations must have the capacity to assess the conditions and circumstances around them, identify opportunities for change, and create an environment where change happens on an ongoing basis. Leaders must have the courage and ability to convince staff to examine long held assumptions and beliefs and change them to create more inclusive work cultures and work practices. Inclusive leaders must also provide space or opportunity for staff to "learn new ways of dealing with the inevitable changes in assumptions, perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors that they are likely to encounter in addressing real problems."[132]

The major challenge facing leaders who are adaptive is to "help others recognize the need for change but not become overwhelmed by the need for the change itself."[133] Leaders who want to become more inclusive need to be willing to work on changing themselves as well as the rest of the organization. If leaders do not "walk the walk," they will not be successful in creating change across the museum. Inclusive leaders are willing to examine deeply held beliefs and values on a personal level, and when those values and beliefs are challenged, remain positive and committed to evolving on an individual level.

Being Real and Authentic

Authenticity is an important element of inclusive leadership. Northouse explains that authentic leaders have a genuine desire to serve others, they know themselves, and they feel free to lead from their core values. There are five basic characteristics: they understand their purpose; they have strong values about the right thing to do; they establish trusting relationships with others; they demonstrate self-discipline and act on their values; and they are passionate about their personal mission.[134] Leaders who are authentic understand their own values and

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[130] Northouse, Peter G. 2016. *Leadership: Theory and Practice.* Los Angeles: Sage 264-265.

[131] Ibid, 257.

[132] Ibid, 258.

[133] Ibid, 266.

[134] This information, including the 5 basic principles were developed by Bill George, but cited in Northouse, Peter G. 2016. *Leadership: Theory and Practice.* Los Angeles: Sage.

behave towards others based on those values. As individuals, leaders must develop inclusion as a core value. This relates to becoming comfortable interacting with various dimensions and seeing the value and worth of all people, internally and externally. When this becomes a core value that shapes the behaviors of a leader, they become a role model for the rest of the organization. It becomes an expectation, or a new norm, within the culture.

Authentic leadership is also relational, created by leaders and followers together. Leaders affect followers, but are also affected by followers. Inclusive leaders that are authentic exhibit emotional intelligence, humility, and transparency towards staff. Emotional intelligence refers to leaders becoming self-aware and sensitive to the emotional needs of others. The ability to tend to the needs of self and others simultaneously is difficult, but critical for leaders who are creating change within their museum. Change increases anxiety: inclusive leaders must be able to sense this anxiety and behave in ways that can influence staff to persevere through the change process. Leaders must use "actions and words that demonstrate to followers that their concerns are a priority, including placing follower's interests and success ahead of the leader" at times.[135]

Engelmeier writes that "humility involves having not only the wisdom to recognize that you are not always expected to have all of the answers but also the ego strength to admit when you don't and to seek insights from others who do.[136] It is critical for leaders to understand that they "don't know what they don't know." Inclusive leaders must be equally aware of their weaknesses as they are with their strengths. Understanding limitations, particularly as they relate to inclusion and cultural knowledge, allows leaders to develop an openness to learning. Personal learning and development helps them to continue on a journey to develop more intercultural competence. Moua writes, "the ability to acknowledge one's cultural mistakes, and having a commitment to learning what culture brings, is a skill one must have in cultural intelligence work."[137]

Northouse identifies relational transparency as "being open and honest in presenting one's true self to others."[138] Inclusive leadership, as a relational process between leaders and followers, hinges on the development of trust between both parties. Followers must be able to anticipate that leaders will act consistently in uncertain situations. Inclusive leaders must be consistent in their practice of inclusion, even when being inclusive is challenging. Leaders need

[135] Northouse, Peter G. 2016. *Leadership: Theory and Practice.* Los Angeles: Sage, 234.

[136] Engelmeier, Shirley. 2014. *Becoming an Inclusive Leader: How To Navigate The 21st Century Global Workforce.* Minneapolis: InclusionINC Media, 25.

[137] Moua, Mai. 2010. *Culturally Intelligent Leadership: Leading Through Intercultural Interactions.* New York: Business Expert Press, LLC, 25.

[138] Northouse, Peter G. 2016. *Leadership: Theory and Practice.* Los Angeles: Sage, 203.

to make their own positions on inclusion clearly known and stand by them consistently. "Trust requires transparency. Inclusive leadership requires transparency."[139]

Out With The Old, In With The New

Placida Gallegos points out that, "Traditional organizations rely heavily on hierarchical structure, which typically assume that those at the top of the management ladder have the answers and solutions to the major problems facing them. When applied to inclusion, this model is particularly dysfunctional."[140] As museums evolve to more inclusive organizations, leadership styles must be less hierarchical and more inclusive. Leaders who fail to see multiple perspectives narrow the range of opportunities for their museum. Warren Bennis points out a difference between managers and leaders. He writes, "A manager's behavior and activities focus on controlling, planning, coordinating, and organizing. This differs from a leader, whose behaviors and tasks focus on innovation, vision, motivation, trust and change."[141] Leaders may have the best intentions for their organizations, but lack the skills or understanding to create vision for an inclusive museums and implement the changes necessary to realize that vision.

The future relevance and sustainability of museums requires a new type of leadership. Museum leaders must first let go of the "iconic image of the leader as hero-standing alone atop the mountain, pointing the way forward to followers in the foothills."[142] Inclusive leadership requires that leaders inspire and enable others, rather than commanding and controlling them. Welcoming input from all levels of the institution must become the new normal. As museums strive to develop a more diverse workforce, Gallegos cautions that, "[w]e require a paradigm shift in our frameworks of leadership to incorporate how dimensions of diversity shape our understanding of leadership and influence styles of leadership and followership, and how bias influences the exercise of leadership."[143] Self-awareness is crucial to inclusive leadership and leaders that cannot recognize their blindspots will fail to create inclusive organizations.

Leaders of museums must recognize that inclusion is not a numbers game in terms of how many diverse employees or members they have. It is not a soft skill that does not have a

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[139] Engelmeier, Shirley. 2014. *Becoming an Inclusive Leader: How To Navigate The 21st Century Global Workforce.* Minneapolis: InclusionINC Media, 22.

[140] Gallegos, Placida V. 2014. "The Work of Inclusive Leadership: Fostering Authentic Relationships, Modeling Courage and Humility." In *Diversity At Work: The Practice of Inclusion*, by Bernardo M. Ferdman and Barbara R. Deane. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 190.

[141] Moua, Mai. 2010. *Culturally Intelligent Leadership: Leading Through Intercultural Interactions.* New York: Business Expert Press, LLC, 13.

[142] Human Capital, Deloitte Australia Point of View. 2012. *Inclusive Leadership: Will A Hug Do?* Sydney: Human Capital, Deloitte Australia Point of View, 1.

[143] Gallegos, Placida V. 2014. "The Work of Inclusive Leadership: Fostering Authentic Relationships, Modeling Courage and Humility." In *Diversity At Work: The Practice of Inclusion*, by Bernardo M. Ferdman and Barbara R. Deane. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 178.

business impact. Museums have long underserved communities that are labeled as diverse. Museums must not remain negligent in their responsibilities to a wider spectrum of society. The "traditional" museum audience, or the audience that museums have catered to for over two centuries is shrinking. Add the shifting demographics to the moral responsibility of serving all people, and leaders who are not integrating inclusion into the DNA of their museums are failing their organizations. Shirley Engelmeier points out how crucial inclusion is for organizations. She writes, "[e]mbracing inclusion is no longer something that can be relegated to the sidelines, or relegated to the HR department. Inclusion is not an HR initiative. Inclusion is a business imperative."[144] Leaders have the ability to elevate inclusion as a critical factor within organizational planning. As creators of the vision for organizations, leaders must be cognizant of the desires and input from various units in the organization, but it is the leader that synthesizes the input into the direction of the organization. Embedding inclusion into the vision creates the roadmap for museums to keep pace with our changing external environment.

Simply understanding opportunities for increased relevance and value to our audiences and embedding inclusion into the institutional vision is not enough. Leaders must align the culture of the organization to be inclusive and model the desired behaviors for the rest of the staff. Edgar Schein writes, "leaders require not only insight into the dynamics of the culture but also the motivation and skill to intervene in their own cultural process. To change any elements of the culture, leaders must be willing to unfreeze their own organization."[145] Beyond modeling inclusive behaviors, leaders create alignment between vision, organizational goals and inclusive practices by communicating vision and priorities and holding others accountable for their behavior.

Organizations in the corporate sector have realized that the best companies today are comprised of a wide range of people. Creating an inclusive culture increases the likelihood for a museum to increase diversity within the staff. As museum staffs become more diverse, they are in a better position to serve a more diverse audience. Diversity in the workplace provides more insight into how to serve diverse communities and that insight can be reflected in a museums priorities, mission, vision, strategies and resource allocations. As a result, museums are better prepared to be relevant to diverse audiences. It is not enough to just increase the numbers of diverse staff, though. Engelmeier writes, "[t]hose hired must be retained and their inputs must

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[144] Engelmeier, Shirley. 2014. *Becoming an Inclusive Leader: How To Navigate The 21st Century Global Workforce.* Minneapolis: InclusionINC Media, 97.
[145] Schein, Edgar H. 2010. *Organizational Culture and Leadership.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 381.

be sought and listened to. That requires ongoing leadership efforts to ensure engagement and alignment around the key issues that impact the organization."[146]

Established Norms and Unconscious Bias as Barriers

While inclusion has been a slow process in museums, leaders have the level of influence to increase the pace of change. However, the ability of the leader to be inclusive and to create change are key factors in creating an inclusive museum. Leaders encounter several barriers related to inclusion, such as an individual's dominant norms, unconscious biases, and lack of experience with creating change that addresses the need for inclusion within museums. Often, a leader's mental models or norms are a barrier to creating change for inclusion. Moua writes, "the conscious and unconscious learning we undergo, over time, turns into beliefs that we consider to be valid. We then teach each other that these beliefs are cultural norms, and they are then expressed in our daily lives as behaviors and actions."[147] A leader whose cultural norms are based on dominant culture ideologies will, in turn, embed those norms into the culture of the museum. These become actions and behaviors that are seen as normal. "Our habits of thinking and practice have developed over years, and redirection will take time."[148]

Another barrier to inclusive leadership is unconscious bias. Similar to the norms discussed in the previous paragraph, unconscious bias creates in-group and out-group dynamics within the culture of an organization. Moua explains that these in-groups result in group think, a term to "explain the ways in which groups ignore alternative solutions and take on actions and behaviors that discount the experiences of others."[149] This type of exclusion already exists within most museums, it is the failure to recognize it as an obstacle to creating inclusive work cultures and work practices that is the barrier to moving forward. When issues of diversity are not addressed or discussed, leaders continue to perpetuate the status quo within organizations. Leaders who do not address unconscious bias "allow their organizations to bury their inclusion blind spots...Blind spots can lead to underestimating or overestimating our

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[146] Engelmeier, Shirley. 2014. *Becoming an Inclusive Leader: How To Navigate The 21st Century Global Workforce.* Minneapolis: InclusionINC Media, 84.

[147] Moua, Mai. 2010. *Culturally Intelligent Leadership: Leading Through Intercultural Interactions.* New York: Business Expert Press, LLC, 26.

[148] Human Capital, Deloitte Australia Point of View. 2012. *Inclusive Leadership: Will A Hug Do?* Sydney: Human Capital, Deloitte Australia Point of View, 4.

[149] Moua, Mai. 2010. *Culturally Intelligent Leadership: Leading Through Intercultural Interactions.* New York: Business Expert Press, LLC, 28.

cultural abilities and to truly understanding what needs to be done regarding culture and diversity."[150]

In addition to norms and unconscious bias, museum leaders may lack experience with changing the direction of their organization to be inclusive. Engelmeier points out that a common "obstacle is lack of experience and skills for inclusive leadership."[151] When addressing intercultural situations, most museum leaders lack the ability to address the deeper cultural issues and problems that lie below the surface level. The tendency is to address symptoms rather than deeper issues. This often results in "simplistic rules to guide behavior and training managers in how to perform accordingly."[152] The inability to address the deeper issues and provide opportunities for staff to develop the necessary skills and capabilities to be inclusive can have the opposite impact, creating anxiety in staff and failing to sustain change.

Developing Inclusive Leadership

For museums to successfully evolve into inclusive organizations, inclusive leaders must be developed within institutions. Museum leaders need to develop individual human capacity (knowledge, skills, attitudes), as well as growing their social capital (relationships and networks).[153] Leaders must learn how to be inclusive, and then use their new found abilities to expand membership within organizational in-groups. Leadership is a continuous learning journey, and leaders who have not exhibited inclusive leadership must learn a new skill set and integrate it into their leadership philosophy and style. Booysen writes that leadership development "is an ongoing, developmental cycle of continuous learning and not a series of one-shot events."[154] This continuous process requires self-reflection, honest assessment and a commitment toward change on the part of the leader.[155] This can include training, but goes beyond formal training settings. Leaders must have genuine conversations about inclusion to continue to push themselves to deeper levels of learning. Gallegos lists a number of behaviors needed for inclusive leadership, including listening well, practicing empathy, and being

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[150] Moua, Mai. 2010. *Culturally Intelligent Leadership: Leading Through Intercultural Interactions.* New York: Business Expert Press, LLC, 115.
[151] Engelmeier, Shirley. 2014. *Becoming an Inclusive Leader: How To Navigate The 21st Century Global Workforce.* Minneapolis: InclusionINC Media, 15.
[152] Gallegos, Placida V. 2014. "The Work of Inclusive Leadership: Fostering Authentic Relationships, Modeling Courage and Humility." In *Diversity At Work: The Practice of Inclusion*, by Bernardo M. Ferdman and Barbara R. Deane. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 184.
[153] Booysen, Lize. 2014. "The Development of Inclusive Leadership Practice and Processes." In *Diversity at Work: The Practice of Inclusion*, by Bernardo M. Ferdman and Barbara R. Deane, 296-329. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 300.
[154] Ibid, 311.
[155] Engelmeier, Shirley. 2014. *Becoming an Inclusive Leader: How To Navigate The 21st Century Global Workforce.* Minneapolis: InclusionINC Media, 52.

curious.[156] Moua adds to this by listing three principles for inclusive leadership. First, knowledge is a central tenet in intercultural training and is essential for all people, but particularly leaders. "You must know how cultures are created, interpreted, and shared, as well as how cultural interpretations, meaning, and symbols can impact behaviors and attitudes."[157] Next, she writes, "Strategic thinking is important because it is how you think about, or make sense of, the knowledge and use it in a way that helps you better perform and interact with different cultures."[158] Learning new knowledge is useless unless you understand how to apply the knowledge. Thinking strategically about how to integrate new knowledge into the vision and behaviors of leaders helps actualize the benefits of learning new information. Lastly, according to Moua, leaders need to pay attention to [their] surroundings as well as [their] responses to unfamiliar situations."[159] This requires leaders to reflect on their own interests, drive and motivation, as well as their level of willingness to work through difficult cultural situations.

A general model for developing inclusive leaders integrates assessment, challenges, and support to help leaders grow. Assessment provides an individual leader with an understanding of where they are now in terms of inclusive practices, and provides a baseline of their current performance and can serve as a benchmark to measure future progress. It also serves as a catalyst for learning by clarifying what leaders need to learn, change or improve upon.[160] Challenges provide opportunities for leaders to push themselves outside of their comfort zone to try to apply new knowledge and behaviors. There is anxiety in applying new knowledge in the face of a challenge. Booysen writes challenges, "require people to deal with ambiguity and paradox and to find new ways of doing, or to evolve their ways of understanding and learning to be successful."[161] The risk of failure is real, but inclusive leadership encourages leaders to have humility. Leaders are not required to have all of the answers. Failures allow the organization to learn together and create safety for staff to also take risks. Support becomes critical to provide encouragement to leaders who are addressing challenges in new ways with the goal of creating inclusive organizations. Support can come from multiple directions. It can come from above, when a supportive board of directors understands the need for change and

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[156] Gallegos, Placida V. 2014. "The Work of Inclusive Leadership: Fostering Authentic Relationships, Modeling Courage and Humility." In *Diversity At Work: The Practice of Inclusion*, by Bernardo M. Ferdman and Barbara R. Deane. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 185.
[157] Moua, Mai. 2010. *Culturally Intelligent Leadership: Leading Through Intercultural Interactions.* New York: Business Expert Press, LLC, 62.
[158] Ibid.
[159] Ibid, 63.
[160] Booysen, Lize. 2014. "The Development of Inclusive Leadership Practice and Processes." In *Diversity at Work: The Practice of Inclusion*, by Bernardo M. Ferdman and Barbara R. Deane, 296-329. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 316.
[161] Ibid, 281.

the need to address adaptive challenges with new ways of working. It can come from below when staff help leaders reflect on the way a challenge was addressed and create space for all to learn from the results. This requires suspending judgement and allow leaders to be vulnerable. According to Gallegos, "[p]roviding the right combination of challenge and support becomes critical and relates to the importance of having an inclusive culture that fosters relationships of caring, empathy, and mutual support."[162]

Leadership development is a systemic process as well. Leaders must expand capabilities to embed inclusion into the organization at individual, group and organization levels of the system. Booysen writes, "to enable the organization as a system to continually learn and develop, formal and informal learning mechanisms must be established on all three levels."[163]

Individual Level

The individual level concerns both a leader's development, but also how the leader facilitates the development of others within the museum. The leader's development centers on cultural intelligence and self-awareness. Essentially, cultural intelligence is your ability to adapt to unfamiliar cultural settings.[164] Learning how to adapt to various cultural settings, rather than reacting to them from a fixed perspective rooted in dominant norms, allows a leader to be flexible and inclusive. Moua writes, "Leaders must be able to reframe their thinking and practice of culture. Cultural intelligence is a tool that helps move leaders from a place of single perspective to one that has multiple filters for sorting through and navigating the cultural intelligence labyrinth."[165] While learning cultural knowledge is important, it is impossible to know all of the important information about every culture. Learning how to adapt within cultural situations is a capability that allows leaders to be open to learning and to sense when they need to adjust behaviors.

Self-awareness deals with how well we know ourselves. Northouse writes, "Self-awareness refers to the personal insights of the leader. It is not an end in itself but a process in which individuals understand themselves, including their strengths and weaknesses, and the impact they have on others. Self-awareness includes reflecting on your core values, identity,

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[162] Gallegos, Placida V. 2014. "The Work of Inclusive Leadership: Fostering Authentic Relationships, Modeling Courage and Humility." In *Diversity At Work: The Practice of Inclusion*, by Bernardo M. Ferdman and Barbara R. Deane. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 189.

[163] Booysen, Lize. 2014. "The Development of Inclusive Leadership Practice and Processes." In *Diversity at Work: The Practice of Inclusion*, by Bernardo M. Ferdman and Barbara R. Deane, 296-329. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 306-307.

[164] Moua, Mai. 2010. *Culturally Intelligent Leadership: Leading Through Intercultural Interactions.* New York: Business Expert Press, LLC, 59.

[165] Ibid, 166.

emotions, motives, and goals, and coming to grips with who you really are at the deepest level."[166]

It requires that we understand our various identities and that leaders are self-reflective in order to begin to understand their basic assumptions, norms and values. It also means that we must be aware of how we process information, particularly in different cultural settings. Self-reflection is an important tool to develop a deeper awareness of self. Self-reflection can help an individual to better understand how they identify with various dimensions of diversity, how those identities may or may not have privilege attached to them, and help them to understand personal biases. A report by Deloitte Australia points out that "if we are mindful of how biases can influence our perceptions, judgements and behaviors, we have the opportunity for self-correction. And once we are in a more receptive state, we can populate our broader field of vision by being more curious about diverse points of view."[167]

Self-efficacy is also important for inclusive leaders to develop. Self-efficacy represents your perception of your abilities to meet a goal you have set for yourself. "As a leader working with different and unfamiliar cultures, your self-efficacy determines how you think, feel, and behave in cultural situations. It is your beliefs about what you can and cannot do, your confidence level in intercultural situations and the results that it has on your ability to adapt to another culture."[168] Once leaders understand their biases and become more self-aware, self-efficacy provides them the catalyst to put themselves into different cultural settings and learn new behaviors.

In addition to developing themselves on an individual level, inclusive leaders also help their followers develop on the individual level. This happens through exhibiting transformational leadership. Northouse defines transformational leadership as "a process that changes and transforms people. It is concerned with emotions, values, ethics, standards, and long-term goals. It includes assessing followers' motives, satisfying their needs and treating them as full human beings…an exceptional form of influence that moves followers to accomplish more than what is usually expected from them."[169] In contrast to transactional leadership, which focuses on exchanges between leaders and followers, transformational leadership requires building relationships with followers and leading in ways that inspire and motivate them. For inclusion efforts to be successful, leaders must motivate followers to continue to challenge themselves to

[166] Northouse, Peter G. 2016. *Leadership: Theory and Practice.* Los Angeles: Sage, 202-203.
[167] Human Capital, Deloitte Australia Point of View. 2012. *Inclusive Leadership: Will A Hug Do?* Sydney: Human Capital, Deloitte Australia Point of View, 2.
[168] Moua, Mai. 2010. *Culturally Intelligent Leadership: Leading Through Intercultural Interactions.* New York: Business Expert Press, LLC, 82.
[169] Northouse, Peter G. 2016. *Leadership: Theory and Practice.* Los Angeles: Sage, 161.

be more inclusive in their day-to-day work. "Transformational leaders set out to empower followers and nurture them in change. They attempt to raise the consciousness in individuals and get them to transcend their own self-interests for the sake of others."[170] Helping others understand and shift values and beliefs is critical to developing inclusive work practices. Leaders must help staff see beyond their anxiety to change and challenge themselves to develop.

Team/Group Level

At the team or group level, it is important for leaders to foster a climate and work norms within groups that is inclusive of difference. Northouse points out that "within an organizational work unit, followers become a part of the in-group or the out-group based on how well they work with the leader and how well the leader works with them."[171] Followers with stronger relationships with the leader tend to be in the in-group, while those that have weaker relationships with the leader fall into the out-group. It is critical that a leader develop relationships across difference within the organization so that the in-group becomes as diverse as possible. Leaders must understand their biases and conduct an audit of those who are close to them as a self-reflective practice to identify whether or not their in-group is homogenous. If it is, it requires intentionality on the part of the inclusive leader to increase diversity in those close to them.

Once the leader has created a diverse network of relationships, leaders must become less authoritarian and be willing to seek input from across all levels of the organization. Inclusive leaders understand that they can leverage radically different viewpoints to create better solutions for organizational and work challenges. They recognize and resist group think, demonstrating higher levels of ease with diversity and realizing that the different viewpoints drive innovation within the organization. Engelmeier writes, "it is also important that the inputs being sought come from those who are most knowledgeable about the markets you are pursuing; either they represent those markets or have a background and history that has made them very attuned to those markets."[172] These people can be both internal and external to the organization. What is most important is that the leader develops the capacity to listen to those that are giving the input. "Listening means really listening, especially when the things you hear differ from your own viewpoint or perspective; in fact, that's when the most meaningful impacts

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[170] Northouse, Peter G. 2016. *Leadership: Theory and Practice.* Los Angeles: Sage, 175.
[171] Ibid, 138.
[172] Engelmeier, Shirley. 2014. *Becoming an Inclusive Leader: How To Navigate The 21st Century Global Workforce.* Minneapolis: InclusionINC Media, 47.

occur."[173] Soliciting input from others, and really incorporating it into the vision and strategy can be an effective way for leaders to create inclusion within their museums.

Organizational Level

Inclusive leadership at this level concerns the vision of the leader and how that shapes the direction of the museum. Northouse identifies four basic patterns that facilitate adaptive change. First, a leader must make sure that espoused values and behavior are in alignment.[174] While museums continue to espouse inclusion as a value, most museums struggle with putting inclusion into action within their museums. Leaders who are developing themselves at the individual level are better equipped to actualize inclusion as a practice within museums by creating inclusive systems and expectations at the organizational level. The second pattern identified by Northouse is competing commitments.[175] Often, museums have too many priorities or some of those commitments are viewed as in conflict with each other. As a business imperative, inclusion is as much about relevance and long-term sustainability as it is about the moral imperative of social justice. Leaders must understand the future of museums hinges on the ability of museums to shift to more inclusive organizations that diverse communities will see as a valuable asset. Northouse's third pattern is speaking the unspeakable.[176] Inclusive leaders provide a culture where difficult, controversial, or sensitive topics are discussed, rather than these types of conversations being seen as disruptive or uncomfortable. The final pattern identified by Northouse is work avoidance.[177] If inclusion is core to the work, then everyone must engage the work head-on. This requires staff to move beyond their comfort zone and try new practices. Inclusive leaders must create an atmosphere that supports staff taking risks and learning by doing. If staff feel that they may be punished, they will remain in their comfort zone and avoid participating in inclusion work.

Inclusive leaders can begin to create and communicate this vision is several ways. They can frame the change in a positive way. Leaders who create the understanding that this work will be hard, but that the positive impact on the institution far outweighs the anxiety of the work, help people remain engaged, supported and motivated to change. Inclusive leaders can help articulate a vision of success and help staff move in that direction. Inclusive leaders must also take a critical look at their own practices and the organization as a whole. Leaders must model

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[173] Engelmeier, Shirley. 2014. *Becoming an Inclusive Leader: How To Navigate The 21st Century Global Workforce.* Minneapolis: InclusionINC Media, 56.
[174] Northouse, Peter G. 2016. *Leadership: Theory and Practice.* Los Angeles: Sage, 265.
[175] Ibid.
[176] Ibid.
[177] Ibid.

the change they want to see. Inclusive leaders must also understand the ways the culture of the organization will either support change or make it impossible, including examination of current practices. For example, talent acquisition and talent management systems are crucial to creating a more diverse workforce. Inclusive leaders will first recognize that the current systems are not increasing diversity in the workforce, and then help to shift these systems to be more inclusive. Most important of all, inclusive leaders can develop and support other inclusive leaders. Working to create inclusive leadership practices as the norm for all leaders within an organization sets this practice as the new norm for the organization.

More specifically, activities that can support inclusive leadership development include coaching and mentoring programs, formal training, informal training, practice fields, and support groups. Leaders would benefit from cross-cultural coaching. Finding a role-model who is at a similar level who can help a developing inclusive leader in a one-to-one relationship: this allows for discussion of difficult topics, and honesty and transparency. The developing leader can also benefit from learning from someone who has a different perspective or background. Formal training programs can include targeted topics on recognizing bias, cultural competency, cross-cultural communication and other skills necessary for emerging inclusive leaders. Informal training consists of putting oneself into situations that will challenge beliefs and norms and learning through observation and interaction. Opportunities for informal learning may be various community festivals or situations where the leader is in the minority group. This is an opportunity to develop emotional and cultural intelligence, or the ability to sense and feel difference and use that information to adapt actions. Practice fields provide opportunities for emerging inclusive leaders to apply learning from formal and informal situations and coaching relationships to work responsibilities. These are judgement free zones where leaders can experiment and take risks to learn by doing. Feedback in these situations is critical for emerging inclusive leaders. Support groups provide opportunities for leaders to communicate, receive feedback and encouragement, and to renew motivation for learning.

This Work Must Start Now

The practice of inclusion goes well beyond programs and exhibitions. Museums must undergo core changes to the identity of the organizations in order to become inclusive organizations. These changes require strong leadership. Edgar Schein writes, "leaders require not only insight into the dynamics of the culture but also the motivation and skill to intervene in their own cultural process… leaders must be willing to unfreeze their own organization...[and find] a way to say to his or her own organization that things are not all right and must, if

necessary, enlist the aid of outsiders in getting this message across."[178] Leaders must develop themselves as individuals, while supporting the development of others throughout the organization. In addition, it is the leader's responsibility to create the vision of an inclusive organization, and then help to align the institutional values with the new vision. This is tough work. It will not be an easy shift, but leaders who are not working to create an inclusive organization will leave a legacy of irrelevance. This work must start now. The current business model of museums, who we serve and how we serve them, is not sustainable. Leaders, above all others, are the ones that can be the catalysts for change within their organizations, and within the larger field as a whole.

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[178] Schein, Edgar H. 2010. *Organizational Culture and Leadership.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 381.

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CHAPTER 5

Interpretation: Liberating the Narrative

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Shout-out/Grounding: This chapter is intended for museum interpreters and educators, but is relevant to all museum staff and those who engage in museum work, as well as students who hope to do so in the future. We especially draw on our experience working at Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site in Philadelphia, the Whitney Plantation in Louisiana, and the Brooklyn Historical Society.

What Is Interpretation?

Interpretation is a narrative and a method of communicating to and with visitors; it might be written, spoken or visual. The type, size and scope of an institution has a lot to do with what interpretation looks like. At historic sites and open-air museums, interpretation can be a guided tour or outdoor plaques and signage. At art museums, interpretation can be object labels, interactives, gallery guides, and exhibition books. History and science museums interpret their content through exhibits, both interactive and text-based, and guided docent tours. Zoos, aquariums and parks might interpret through ranger tours, signage, object labels, videos or demonstrations.

Interpretation also conveys an institutional voice. It can be the lens through which an institution views its particular subject matter. The Whitney Plantation in South Louisiana interprets plantation life through the experiences of enslaved people. The Tenement Museum in New York City interprets its building through the waves of immigrants that lived there from the mid-19th century to the late-20th century. Interpretation encompasses the myriad ways that museums share their stories with visitors and staff.

- Interpretation is **a language** that museums use to communicate their values and narratives to their visitors, colleagues, boards, staff, and the wider world.
- Interpretation is **a bridge** between institutions and their audiences and communities.
- Interpretation is **a system of communicating** an institution's values, information, knowledge, understanding, and narratives.

● Interpretation is **a cultural experience** that designs physical and conceptual spaces, object choice, written text, and live presentation.

Traditional interpretation has employed a didactic, top-down model in which the institution's voice is privileged and set apart as all-knowing. Many museums in the United States share a history as Eurocentric institutions that have been positioned as sacred keepers of knowledge that filter out stories deemed unimportant by the dominant culture (which is often white and male). Often, museums and historic sites use the records of those in positions of power or state authority to tell their histories. The words and knowledge of people that have been historically oppressed—including women, people of color, queer people, differently-abled individuals, immigrants, and working class and poor people—have not been recorded, saved, or transmitted inside of these institutions, and museums continue to perpetuate these historical silences.

Traditional guided tours at historic homes, for example, might dwell on the wealthy owners' success in business, through which they were able to purchase the many beautiful objects on display. In these tours, visitors are asked to understand and even sympathize with individuals whose lifestyles are, more often than not, very remote from their own. Interpretation of historic homes that is inclusive complicates this top-down narrative by asking visitors to think about key questions: Who built this home? Were they free or enslaved? At whose expense did the home's owner make their money? When the homeowner got home after a hard day's work, who was there to cook them dinner? Who cared for their children? Who made sure their house was clean and their laundry done? How did the lifestyle portrayed here differ from people who lived throughout the city or state?

Liberating Interpretation

We envision a role for museum interpretation that is both anti-oppressive and liberation-minded. Museum interpretation can and should move in the direction of being dialogic (conversational), de-centered (all people given equal consideration), and open source (sharing authority with audiences, particularly those directly affected by the legacies of our spaces). Examples of this work include a plantation museum employing interpreters who are the descendants of enslaved African people; a prison museum hiring formerly incarcerated people to discuss their experiences of incarceration; and a Native American site employing Indigenous peoples at all levels of museum staff.

Museum workers should think creatively about bringing into their interpretation the voices of those who have been marginalized or trivialized. At Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site in Philadelphia, the education and programming teams work almost exclusively with historic records created by prison keepers and others in positions of state-sanctioned authority. These records comprise most of the historic site's archival collections. Documents created by inmates were rarely saved. Often, prisoners' identities were erased, as they were referred to only by inmate number. Staff should cast a wider net that might better highlight the experiences of the 80,000 men, women, and children incarcerated in the penitentiary. Staff should investigate regional repositories for court records and trial testimony that highlight the voices of the imprisoned and the voices of victims. If "a riot is the language of the unheard," as Martin Luther King, Jr. once stated, staff should "listen" to the languages used by prisoners—including uprisings, strikes, and other acts of disobedience—and interpret those actions with the same consideration that they would interpret an official board report or a warden's journal.

Inviting Multiple Voices

Interpretation should be poly-vocal, multi-directional, and self-aware. Interpretation in the 2010s—the era of mass incarceration, Occupy Wall Street, Black Lives Matter, climate change, global capitalism, Barack Obama and then Donald Trump, "alternative facts," #OscarsSoWhite, the alt-right, sanctuary cities, and marriage equality—should reflect the larger culture and be grounded in the multiplicity of human experience. However, interpretation should not be so liberal as to put every perspective on equal footing. Interpretation should not make room for oppressive or conspiratorial narratives. Science museums should not host debates on whether climate change is real or human-made, when overwhelming evidence confirms that it is both. Holocaust museums should never host debates about whether the event happened or not, as this is an oppressive fallacy that white supremacists use to advance anti-Semitism. Historic sites and museums that interpret women's history should base every piece of interpretation on the fact that women are intrinsically equal to men. Museums that interpret race-related or race-informed histories—including plantation museums, civil rights museums, and prison museums— should think strategically and radically of race as a social construct, thoughtfully guiding their visitors with anti-racist language and a multiplicity of interpreters.

The interpretation that a museum puts forward—through tours, exhibits, labels, and more—can make a space feel inclusive or exclusive for its visitors. Creating interpretation that feels not only accessible but safe to a multitude of populations demands a reconceptualization of the museum—from language, to hierarchies, to built environments. Interpreters can do fairly

simple exercises to become aware of implicit biases in interpretive planning—like counting the number of artworks by people of color in an art museum, or spending a half-day navigating their historic site grounds in a wheelchair, or mapping where audio stops about women or minority populations exist within the grounds of a historic site. Cultural competency trainings on implicit bias and creating queer-friendly, feminist, and anti-racist work spaces can affect not just hiring and training cultures in museums, but also interpretive strategies.

At their core, museums are generators of narratives and ways of thinking; they should be aware of their role as eminent cultural meaning-makers and make space for institutional self-reflection and a diversity of interpretive perspectives. Museums should move toward interpretive approaches that are grounded in complex and universal narratives but guided by heterogeneous collectivity.

Honoring Lived Experience

Interpreters should be supported by senior staff and boards when their own lived experience becomes a part of the interpretation, especially if they occupy the position of "other" with "expertise" about an issue the museum seeks greater representation of. Greater movements toward equity, access, and inclusion in governance, hiring, training, and other facets of museum culture would likely mitigate feelings of tokenism felt with particular resonance by front line interpreters (e.g., a queer tour guide discussing LGBTQ content on her tour). As a more diverse array of voices form a poly-vocal chorus within museums, all departments—including interpretation—might feel less over-burdened (*I need to present a diverse array of experiences to make up for a troubling lack of awareness among my colleagues and visitors--and the poor job my predecessors did!*), isolated (*No one else in this institution wants to touch this subject, so I guess I will!*), or tokenized (*I guess I have to speak for ALL "my" people since I'm the only one in this museum who can do so!*).

According to museum director Juliette Fritsch, complex relationships between the different disciplinary approaches of curator, designer, educator, senior management, and front line interpreter all affect the implementation of interpretation. Visitors bring their own "ways of seeing" to museums; they are consumers, co-creators, and evaluators or our work--determining the success, failure, and gaps in museum interpretation. Roland Barthes, a literary critic, noted that a "text is a tissue [or fabric] of quotations," drawn from "innumerable centers of culture" rather than one experience. Similarly, "texts," such as museum objects, and "scripts," such as museum interpretation, are informed by multiple experiences and cultural influences.

In addition to our own social locations, our co-workers, boards, and visitors inform our work, as do the "ghosts of interpretative authorities past," as the educator Cheryl Meszaros and her colleagues call our predecessors.[179] The National Council on Public History has noted that: "revisiting and often revising earlier interpretations is actually at the very core of what historians do...because the *present* is continually changing."[180] New cultural contexts and historical perspectives suffuse objects, events, and narratives with new meaning. When Eastern State Penitentiary was developing an exhibit on mass incarceration, the interpretation team engaged in heated debates about whether or not to include a panel on law enforcement. Showcasing photos of prison guards and police might trigger in some visitors feelings of terror at the spectre of white supremacy and state-sanctioned violence. For other visitors, the same photos might elicit feelings of pride and service. And for others, perhaps those exposed recently to the struggles brought forth by the Black Lives Matter movement, the photos might engender questions around authority and surveillance. Formative evaluation--by interpreters or their colleagues in other departments--of an anticipated audience can help predict visitor responses and also shape the direction of interpretation. Similarly, summative evaluation can inform interpreters of whether their goals and learning outcomes are being met, and if any unexpected consequences are arising with visitors.

Attending to Absence

Drawing on the work of deconstructionist Jacques Derrida, the educator Cheryl Meszaros and her colleagues have questioned: "If presence has been privileged over absence, what happens if we start attending to absence?"[181] Museum interpretation has traditionally emphasized "presences"—artifacts, buildings, artworks, etc.—the tangible items produced or left behind by a culture. Radical interpretation might instead emphasize—or be self-consciously aware of—the "absences"—the stories and artifacts of those whom traditional history has largely forgotten or those whom dominant cultural thinking (infused as it is with racism, sexism, classism, anti-Semitism, homophobia, etc.) has deemed unworthy.

Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site largely skirted all questions of race (as it manifests in the contemporary prison landscape) in its interpretive program until relatively recently. Around 2010, the historic site began looking for guidance in interpreting the racial

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[179] Cheryl Meszaros, with Twyla Gibson and Jennifer Carter, "Interpretation and the Art Museum: Between the Familiar and the Unfamiliar," in Fritsch, Juliette, ed. (2012). *Museum Gallery Interpretation and Material Culture*. New York: Routledgek, 42.
[180] National Council on Public History. "Why do historian's accounts of the past keep changing?" http://ncph.org/what-is-public-history/how-historians-work/the-changing-past
[181] Meszaros, et al., 40.

disparities in the American justice system. Early in this process, at a strategic planning meeting, an Eastern State employee noted: "We talk about race every day at Eastern State. Our silence on the matter indicates we have nothing to say about it." This absence reflected a larger culture of ignorance and fear around the topic of race. The historic site had incorporated stories from the past (some stories were several decades old, while others were 100+ years old) about black men and women into its audio guide and guided tours, but it struggled to connect past to present, even in an era when one in three black men has a lifetime likelihood of going to prison. It took an investigation into absences to truly change its interpretation. Eastern State has since created an audio stop and signage connecting the over-representation of people of color in prisons in the past with the over-representation of people of color in prisons today. Race is a consistent thread throughout its mass incarceration exhibit and other recent programming on contemporary corrections.

At Brooklyn Historical Society, a long-term exhibition: *Brooklyn Abolitionists/ In Pursuit of Freedom* similarly presents a counter narrative to dominant narratives of the Abolitionist Movement in the US, through a focused case study on lesser known activists in Brooklyn, NY. A traditional study of the Abolitionist movement invariably focuses on the people who were the most well-known in their time, including a great number of white men, Henry Ward Beecher, William Lloyd Garrison, and a handful of well-known black abolitionists including Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth. Without seeking at all to denigrate any of these leaders' work, the counter narrative provided by the exhibition, Brooklyn Abolitionists seeks to broaden the lens of what is considered activism, and who, therefore was influential to this many decades long social movement. For instance, Benjamin Croger was a free black Brooklynite who worked as a white washer and also opened up a school for black children in his home in the early 1800s because public schools were denying admittance to black children at that time. Freeman Murrows invented a rotating brush for house painters and patented it with the aim of ensuring economic freedom so his wife and daughters would not have to perform domestic labor in white New Yorkers' homes. By looking at education and entrepreneurship as significant arenas for black self-determination and resistance, the exhibition invites us to wonder what other stories we've been missing as we deepen our understanding of abolitionism.

Case Study: The C.H. Nash Museum at Chucalissa
Student Researchers Uncover Local Black History

The C.H. Nash Museum at Chucalissa in Southwest Memphis opened during segregation in 1956 on the campus of Memphis State University. The sole focus of the museum was interpreting an open Native American burial site, which was under archaeological investigation. Though Memphis State University desegregated in 1959, for decades the museum did not provide any economic or community benefit to the historically black neighborhood that surrounds the site on three sides. The passing of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act in 1990 effectively ended what had been the dominant interpretation at the site.

However, there was another, less-explored history of the site. The immediate community is 95% African-American and the museum's campus includes the remains of an African-American homestead from the turn of the century. In the 2000s, the C.H. Nash Museum began to radically transform its mission and interpretation through community co-creation and exploring counter-narratives.

In 2010, the museum started The African-American Heritage in Southwest Memphis Project, which brought high school students into the museum for active participation in the museum's work. Museum staff tasked the students with finding members of their own community who were significant to the area's history. Co-creation centers the museum's partner or community, rather than enforcing traditional interpretation by allowing the museum to set the values and curate while the community does the work. In the C.H. Nash project, the students' only requirement was to work specifically in Southwest Memphis, excluding some of the more notable figures in Memphis African-American history. This constraint meant that students had to dig deep to uncover their own history.

With their research in archives and with oral history, the students created a museum exhibit, filmed a documentary, and gave tours to the public. In the process, these students discovered that elders in their own community had been active participants in the Civil Rights movement, marching and getting arrested with Dr. Martin Luther King. Memphis is also famous for music history, with the Stax Museum a major tourist destination. Students discovered that the woman who taught Booker T. Jones piano was also a member of their community.

Beyond the African-American Heritage in Southwest Memphis Project, the museum created community-centered programming and served as a resource and gathering place for

the residents. Through shifting its focus to explore counter-narratives and actively engaging its community, the museum maintained relevance in a period of slipping visitation, becoming a vital part of its neighborhood.

Case Study: Detroit Institute of Arts
Inviting Expatriate Africans to Supply Counter-narratives

In 2010, the Detroit Institute of Arts organized an exhibition called "Through African Eyes; the European in African Art from 1500 to the Present." The big idea demanded that the exhibition present multiple counter-narratives to reverse the western gaze by bringing together works of art made by African artists over the past 500 years to represent African imagery and perspectives on whiteness, European culture, Americanness, and the impact of the West on post-colonial Africa. In order to avoid reductive presentations of the vastness and volume of potential African perspectives, the interpretive planning team focused on themes and presented artworks from nearly 20 African cultures. The team structured all interpretation to reposition visitors' perspective to align with--broadly speaking--African perceptions.

During interpretive planning, the team brought in an advisory group of expatriate Africans from different nations to help tease out the tense, sometimes conflicting and competing relationships many individuals, communities, and cultures had historically and sustain currently with the West. Interpretation throughout the exhibition featured historic quotes and firsthand accounts from Africans. A multimedia tour featured the voice of one of the advisors as well as video perspectives from elders. The exhibition introduced visitors to the perspectival shift they would experience and premise of the show with a Ghanaian proverb spoken by the curator in the language Ga and translated into English: "When you speak of the beauty of the horizon, it is only from your side of the earth."

Case study: Mining the Museum

Fred Wilson's 1992 exhibition at the Maryland Historical Society, "Mining the Museum," used objects within the historical society's collection to probe questions about the presumed neutrality of cultural institutions. All collecting institutions make choices about what objects to acquire and display. Curators and interpreters make further choices when they decide which objects to include or exclude from exhibitions. Wilson critiqued both collecting

and curatorial practice with his installation.

In the entrance to the exhibition, Wilson displayed a "Truth in Advertising" trophy, flanked by three busts of famous white men from history: Napoleon Bonaparte, Henry Clay and Andrew Jackson. On the opposite side of the trophy sat three empty pedestals with labels identifying the missing figures as Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass, and Benjamin Banneker. Bonaparte, Clay, and Jackson's busts' presence within the Maryland Historical Society's collections raises as many questions as Tubman, Douglass, and Banneker's absence. All three African Americans have histories in the state, while none of the white figures do.

Wilson used context as a key tool to explore omissions in traditional museums' interpretation. Next to an antique silver set he displayed iron slave shackles. The label identified the objects in the case as "Metalwork." In a section labeled "Cabinetmaking 1820-1960," a whipping post stands in the corner with ornate carved chairs as its audience.

"Mining the Museum" is still incredibly relevant work today, as many institutions have yet to look inward and critique themselves for their exclusive interpretive practice, both past and present. By hiding shameful or painful objects from public view, museums do their audience a disservice. Though Wilson's work was provocative and would be controversial even 25 years later, it highlighted the ways in which curators and interpreters are not neutral, even in seemingly innocuous interpretation.

Strategies for Transformation

Strategies

Expand Research—Interdisciplinary exploration (whether for a work of art or an entire topic) can open up facts, identities and perspectives that illuminate ways of seeing the subject matter with new eyes. This is not only, for example, using poetry or philosophical treatises to inform issues like climate change. This means using the poetry and treatises of indigenous peoples to intersect with scientific literature on the topic.

Learn Critical Race Theory, which emphasizes the importance of experiential knowledge—research and facts should be viewed from a critical perspective; who is writing authoritative information that becomes "truth"? What are the biases implicit in these findings? Personal

narratives and counter-storytelling can be a powerful and illuminating way to discover multiple truths.

Find Who's Missing—Identifying gaps in representation begins with understanding presence. The exercise of examining the stories, identities, political positionings, etc. that are evident bubbles up those that are lost, missing or hidden. The work of presenting those missing stories *is* the work of representation. Critical to this is identifying the power dynamics at play. If those missing are historically marginalized or unacknowledged, interpretive plans should be structured to include objects and interpretation to highlight those narratives and support responsible representation. However, if what is missing represents dominant culture, voices, and ideas— interpretation can leverage this by acknowledging "this is what people know" and shifting to less familiar ways of thinking and seeing. Different types of museums may find value in a series of critical "reminder" protocols—at a history museum, for instance, interpreters may consider their narrative through the lens' of gender, race, class (while understanding intersectionality).

Explore Intersectionality— Intersectionality involves thinking about multiple intersections of systems of oppression—racism, ableism, sexism, homophobia, etc. Consider how various identities—sex, gender, race, ability, religion, class, sexual orientation, indigeneity, etc.—inform the stories you tell and how they are received by visitors.

Create Polyvocality—Polyvocal means multi-voiced. For interpretive work, this can be seen as seeking and presenting multiple perspectives and counter narratives. It also requires seeking the ways meaning can happen and be offered differently in different forms (spoken versus written language). Polyvocal interpretation also allows for multiple impressions, meaning documenting perspectives from individuals that may change over time.

Listen and Make Space—Museum staff, including those in leadership positions, need to prepare themselves to be comfortable working through discomfort and uncertainty. Disorder, unrest, and antagonism are necessary parts of democracy and to make the museum a more genuinely "public" space, museums need to make themselves not only transparent, but visibly present to people; they need to show up and make themselves available to their publics, and take their critiques to guide institutional action.

Recontextualize—Interpretive plans and interpretation that support the anti-oppression frameworks fundamentally recontextualize information, ideas, and perspectives. This means penetrating the dominant or easy narratives for those diminished and reframing them within

different contexts that have traditionally been subsumed. This activity is very different than only creating multiple perspectives. This is interpretive planning that moves visitors to entirely different ways of experiencing art, objects, and ideas through interpretation and the designed experience.

Assert a Position—Museums too often attempt to stand on neutral ground. Interpretive planning that acknowledges a position is different than interpretive planning that asserts a philosophical or ethical grounding for the work.

Museum professionals avoid difficult or controversial topics but do not realize that their silence and avoidance is a very clear stance. In matters of social justice, you are either working towards a solution, or you are part of the problem.

Conduct Culturally Responsive Evaluation—An important strategy for good interpretive planning is to engage visitor evaluation and research. Culturally responsive evaluation deliberately seeks to test and measure interpretive plans and interpretation with members of stakeholder communities. The museum, must, however, commit to authentic listening and response; otherwise such extensions of effort will be perceived as tokenism

Mine the Human—Perhaps the most powerful strategy named throughout this chapter is engaging the human experience through narrative, perspective, and expression. We can leverage universally experienced feelings (distress, joy, triumph, fear, etc.) by not assuming that the same contexts elicit the same experiences for all when we develop interpretive plans. There is much good work being done to explore the potential of empathy, but interpretive practices must be aware of the need to foster emotional empathy alongside cognitive empathy. Information, facts, and data that reframe the space in which emotion is drawn will help people move beyond implicit biases that inform emotional empathy.

Tactics for Change

During Interpretive Planning:

> **Expert advisors**—To explore interdisciplinary connections, it's important to bring into the planning process whenever possible the individuals who are scholars and experts in subsumed histories, imagery, and narratives. These experts may be community elders or academics.

We should challenge our notion of who is an expert and who holds valuable knowledge! Elders are wise but so are youth! Look for more opportunities to partner with youth and allow them to guide us.

Focus groups—This evaluation method is meant to allow for honest feedback from visitors or non-visitors about interpretive plans as they are developing. To do work toward reparative social justice, focus groups have to be specially designed to be made up of members of stakeholder communities and facilitated to support comfort and critical honesty

Institutions need to take these findings and make sure to address people's concerns -- to not engage community members in a performance of relevance and caring, but to take people's critiques and concerns and allow that to directly impact what happens in the museum.

Community conversations—When museums develop exhibitions or installations that represent or may be of particular meaning to particular communities, interpretive teams can build understanding, glean new content, and build relationships simply by visiting people in their own communities.

Co-creation—Bringing members of stakeholder communities onto interpretive planning teams to develop exhibitions and installations fundamentally changes the role of museum as content creator into a space of shared meaning-making.

In-gallery interpretation

Design spaces to support new ways of seeing, feeling, and thinking, as well as multisensory, immersive experiences. Encourage social and participatory experiences as much as possible. Museums can be a solitary space for introspection, but they do not have to be quiet palaces of empty-vessel schooling. It can be a space to meet new people and share/discuss experiences.

Labels can (and should!) pose questions, not only to the visitor, but also to institutions and organizations. Show that the museum is open to dialogue, debate, questioning, and critique. Don't just say it, make questions and inquiry a visibly permanent part of the space/design.

Audio and multimedia tours might feature faces and stories that are not from curators or directors of museums. Incorporate multigenerational, multilingual storytellers of different backgrounds and experiences.

Response stations. Ask genuine questions of your visitors—questions that get them to think beyond their assumptions and expectations. Don't just ask them about facts that they may or may not have picked up. Choose moments throughout the space to challenge their thinking.

Social media. Sites like Facebook, twitter and Instagram bring a museum's interpretation into their audience's lives. Creative and thoughtful engagement through social media platforms allows museums to respond quickly to events that impact their interpretation.

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CHAPTER 6

Sharing Authority: Creating Content and Experiences

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Founded in 1969, the Oakland Museum of California (OMCA) was conceived as a "Museum for the People," a cultural hub for the extraordinary diversity of Oakland. Since its founding, OMCA has been committed to being accessible to multiple ethnic communities and to reflecting diverse cultural traditions. But, what does it mean to be "The Museum for the People" in the 21st century? The response from our community members is that it means being a creative partner with the diverse communities that reflect a changing California.

History of OMCA's founding:

What is currently known as the Oakland Museum of California came together in the 1960s, when the City of Oakland passed a $7 million bond measure, in order to bring together 3 long-standing institutions: the Oakland Public Museum, (founded in 1910), the Snow Museum of Natural History (founded in 1916) and the Oakland Art Gallery (founded in 1922).

At that point, the focus of the Museum shifted to California as proposed by Paul Mills, the Director of the Oakland Art Gallery and founding Chief Curator of Art, to distinguish the new Museum from the institutions in San Francisco. The architect for the new building, Kevin Roche, along with other museum designers, envisioned the Oakland Museum as a community museum for the people.

The Museum at that point was overseen by a City Commission, most likely made-up of Caucasians, as was all of the Oakland City leadership at that time. In fact, there were protests against the Museum prior to its opening for not representing the Oakland community in its staffing and leadership. In support of the community-focused vision, the originating director of the Museum, JS Holliday, created an advisory council to represent community interests and was fired for insubordination by the City Commission 6 weeks before the Museum opened. His Director of Education, Julia Hare, an African American woman, resigned in protest.

Two temporary exhibition projects of different scales from OMCA explore 21st century community engagement practices in a variety of ways. *Pacific Worlds*, a large-scale exhibition, interpreted collections through partnerships with diasporic community members and *Oakland, I want you to know…* a smaller scale exhibition, experimented with a new model driven by a lead artist and community members as co-creators with the museum. Both models utilized community engagement practices based on a system that scales participation—contribution, collaboration, and co-creation (the three Cs).

The Spectrum of Community Engagement Practices

This system was originally adapted, from the Public Participation in Scientific Research (PPSR) project developed by Rick Bonney and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, by Kathleen McLean as part of a 2008 National Science Foundation proposal for the new Gallery of Natural Sciences at OMCA. In 2009, McLean elaborated and customized this system for the Natural Sciences Gallery exhibit development team, that included Christine Lashaw and Evelyn Orantes, community engagement specialists. Since then Lashaw, Orantes, and other staff have evolved the three Cs at OMCA to be defined as a spectrum of activity that moves from less to more community involvement and sharing of authority. There is not a formula that prescribes how categories are attributed. Each exhibition project is different and has different needs.

Contribution:

Visitors and community members "contribute" by advising, loaning something, writing a response, attending a single meeting/convening or answering interview questions. The internal team conceives of and drives the vision and goals for the project. Community voice may or may not be incorporated.

Collaboration:

Community members and museum staff work together as a team, to develop ideas and share some decision-making. Community voice is visible in key moments of the project/exhibition.

Co-creation:

Community members or artists are part of the key decision making. This could be creative direction, designing elements for the project/exhibition, creating an artwork, adding interpretation, producing a media experience, or designing a whole section—

determining the "how" an exhibit experience is implemented. Co-creators play a role throughout the whole project/exhibition. Community voice is a key piece of the narrative and is visible throughout the whole project/exhibition.

These two exhibitions occurred at a time when the OMCA found itself grappling with balancing the financial pressures currently facing many museums and engaging communities through various strategies to entice new audiences and reflect the demographic makeup of their surrounding communities. *Pacific Worlds* was located in a primary exhibition space and was charged with ambitious audience goals that were difficult to meet although it was well received by the community and won many awards. *Oakland, I want you to know…* was presented in a smaller experimental space with low visitation expectations and delivered a slightly above average attendance for that exhibition space. It was also well received by visitors and engaged over 700 participants in the creation of the space.

It is important to note that other exhibitions hosted in the primary exhibition space utilizing minimal resources for community engagement and featuring renowned artworks or collection objects also had difficulty meeting projected audience goals. However, the same measures of success tend to apply to both community driven exhibitions as collection driven exhibitions. What are the markers of success for community driven exhibitions and how do those markers reflect the balance between sustainability and engagement?

Case Study: *Pacific Worlds*, Oakland Museum of California

On view May 30, 2015–January 3, 2016
By Christine Lashaw, Experience Developer, Oakland Museum of California

Internal Core Team (No OMCA staff on the project team was Pacific Islander, which is why a Task Force was put together): Experience Developer, Associate Curator of History and Contemporary Trends, Designer, Project Manager
Internal Extended team: Curatorial Assistant, Public Program Developer, Community Partnership Manager, Media Developer, Registrars, Conservators, Preparators, Evaluator

Community Collaborators: Over 100 Pacific Islanders from the Bay Area and beyond participated through multiple modes of engagement, from interviewee to project task force member.

Project Description

Pacific Worlds, an 8,000 sq. ft. temporary exhibition at the Oakland Museum of California (OMCA), highlighted the historic and contemporary connections between the Pacific Islands (Polynesia, Micronesia, and Melanesia) and California, inviting diverse communities to get to know their Pacific Island neighbors. OMCA's Pacific objects were collected before the museum's focus was solely about California. Since 1969, they have sat in storage awaiting a California connection. Recent scholarship re-positions California as the Eastern edge of the Pacific, rather than the Western edge of the United States. This re-interpretation opened up the obvious connection between California and the Pacific Islands releasing these powerful objects and stories from storage. The *Pacific Worlds* exhibition provided a new way forward for museums to reinterpret collections in collaboration with diasporic communities.

Pacific Worlds was developed about, with, and for Pacific Islanders in California. It aimed to reach a broad audience and connect them with the experiences of Pacific Islanders in California. It was the first exhibit on the US mainland to highlight the people in this growing minority group, which is largely invisible in public discourse. It illuminated Pacific Islander experiences in historical context, in their own words. The exhibition brought to the forefront contemporary Pacific Island living culture in California through 236 outstanding objects in OMCA's collection. It privileged stories told from Pacific Islanders' perspectives over the museum perspective—thus sharing interpretive authority.

Community Engagement Practices

External and internal collaborations were the key to success.

External Collaborations

Over 100 Pacific Island community members were engaged in various roles to create this exhibition. OMCA worked alongside Pacific Islanders in four categories of participation.

1. *A Thought Convening*

   OMCA curatorial staff identified Pacific Island scholars from around the country to convene for a two-day meeting to provide feedback and guidance on the exhibit's conceptual development. The Community Partnership Manager, Public Program

Developer, and Experience Developer advocated for four local community member activists to also join the conversation. These four people eventually became Task Force members.

2. *Project Task Force*

   The museum convened a group of 11 cultural advocates from diverse Pacific Islander communities who worked with the exhibition team. Additionally, Pacific Island community members asked for a Native Californian voice on the taskforce. The team met monthly over the course of a year. Guided by the Museum, the Taskforce helped to surface the rich stories their cultural objects hold, identified themes, brainstormed experiences, contributed visitor goals, weighed in on some decisions—particularly the direct handling of the interpretation of collection objects. They encouraged the museum to emphasize that indigenous peoples of the Pacific are part of living cultures in California and have been for a long time. All members were compensated for their time and expertise per attendance at each meeting.

3. *Exhibition Component Development*

   Community participation at this level took many forms and ranged in activity from contributive to co-creative. For each project, participants were compensated in accordance with their level of participation.

   Contributive: First-person interpretation was a major strategy; artifact cases featured quotes of Pacific Islanders in California and the Pacific Islands talking about what historic objects in the collection mean to them. OMCA conducted interviews with 20 indigenous individuals from the Bay Area and Pacific Islands.

   Collaborative: OMCA commissioned two new Pacific Island objects to be created for the exhibit. An Oakland Tongan seamstress, Langilangi Mavae, made a contemporary *tapa* (barkcloth) and outfit. To complement these, Samoan artist Jean Melesaine produced a video portrait of the tapamaker reflecting on what it means to be Tongan in Oakland today. Additionally, a Modesto Native Hawaiian feather artist, Rick San Nicolas, was commissioned to teach students from an Oakland *halau* (cultural school) how to make two *kāhili* (feather standards used for monarchy), helping to pass on traditional knowledge while he created the exhibit object.

Co-Creative:

The primary co-creative effort on this project was through the work of the Task Force—they decided which cultural practices to focus on and who should be highlighted to represent them. These cultural practices were prominently visible through a portrait and profile series produced in partnership between Samoan-American artist and task force member Jean Melesaine and the OMCA Experience Developer. Melesaine's large-scale black and white photographic portraits were paired with excerpts of interviews that profiled 12 Pacific Islanders who are living their cultures in the Bay Area. These portrait profiles were placed alongside the historic collection objects used with the associated cultural practices.

4. *Program Development*

Public programs were catalyzed by the project Task Force and actualized through community connections. The goal was to cultivate community engagement within museum walls via performance, storytelling, traditional and contemporary art practices, film screenings, and discussions that highlighted the Pacific Islander experience in California.

The public programs team was very conscious to create events that not only placed a spotlight on traditional cultural practices but also heightened the profile of Pacific performers who were innovating cultural traditions. This tactic attempted to lift a stereotype which froze Pacific Islanders in a colonial past. Perhaps the best example of this was the Community Welcome event. Attended by more than 300 visitors, this program performed an opening ritual that emphasized the diversity within the Pacific, both in ritual and artistic practices. It placed local California Pacific Islander communities first and foremost within the opening of the exhibition as it reflected the vitality and unique contributions they bring to California culture in an immensely inspiring manner. The program included performances of Hawaiian *hula,* Maori *powhiri,* and contemporary Samoan song. Finally, a community procession led by Samoan conch blowers in war regalia ceremoniously welcomed the group into the exhibition space.

<u>Internal Collaborations</u>

Working with external community members takes more internal staff time and requires new ways of approaching the work, which can challenge teams. Clearly articulating roles and responsibilities and engaging in some difficult conversations helped to support each other in forging new internal relationships and methods of working. The following are some examples.

The internal team that worked with the Task Force was cross functional. It included the Community Partnerships Manager, Public Program Developer, Experience Developer, and Associate Curator of History and Contemporary Trends. Team members supported one another from logistics to navigating difficult conversations. The result was a very positive experience. Respect for each person's unique expertise and contribution to the group allowed staff to form a unique bond with one another and the Task Force that continues to this day.

Collections access for Task Force members required some new ways of working with registrars. Museum artifacts can hold sacred meaning and significance for communities. In order to reveal the stories of our Pacific Island collections, task force members requested they be able to touch and hold collections objects. Registrars and conservators were very open to negotiating a process for these members to handle objects. The result was a powerful experience for both Task Force members and collections staff. This strengthened relationships between curatorial and collections staff who struggle with tensions between access and conservation.

Some internal team members were new to working with community members and *Pacific Worlds* was a good learning experience for them and provided experienced staff the chance to build capacity in others. For example, the media developer and designer were accustomed to a particular aesthetic and method of working that was different from that of community stakeholders.

The Experience Developer, who held many years of experience developing exhibitions with community members, played a critical role in articulating roles and responsibilities that fundamentally shifted decision making and how the internal team defined quality and success. Within this framework, the internal team worked together to establish technical parameters for the community artist that allowed her creative freedom while also delivering a strong experience for the visitor. The result was a positive experience for all involved and thus increased the number of staff members who have worked on community engagement exhibitions.

Lessons Learned

Audience and Impact

Pacific Worlds met three OMCA strategic plan goals:

1. Created relevant experiences that diverse audiences value.
2. Connected with diverse partners to respond to community needs—to highlight Pacific Island culture as a living culture in local neighborhoods.
3. Utilized collections to share the stories of California's past, present, and future communities

Pacific Islander attendance was several percentage points higher than the typical attendance from the year before. The summative evaluation showed that 10% of those interviewed identified themselves as Pacific Islander, whereas typically 1% of total OMCA attendance identifies as such. Family attendance was also high at 72%.

The evaluation indicated that many visitors gave the exhibition a high rating because they learned about Pacific Island cultures—an underrepresented group of people. They also liked the balance of history and cultural interactions. Some visitors commented on the connection between California and Pacific Islands while other visitors found the large scale, strikingly beautiful, or familiar types of objects most memorable.

The process of content development allowed for a large number of Pacific Islanders to participate, including some who lived on the islands. The community engagement practices used contributed to the positive impact on visitors and the local Pacific Island community, particularly those that participated in the exhibition or program development. During an exhibit debrief, partners reported that the Pacific Islander community felt valued and had a sense of ownership over this project. Their personal experiences were reflected in the museum, and they developed new feelings about OMCA—a place they felt welcomed.

Task Force member Carolyn Kuali'i expresses:

Museum staff respected and allowed for community knowledge to help guide the content and design. It was truly was fueled by community voice. Task Force members were allowed to contribute resources and networks. As a result the community's voice was strongly represented, showing the public that we are alive and contributing members of the larger community. The beauty of our cultures were displayed with care and respect. Powerful storytelling was used to tie the past with the present. OMCA staff also shared the award with Task Force members—they gave us credit!

Pacific Worlds leveraged historic collections and contemporary community collaborations to create an exhibition that serves as a model for community engagement in the field. It was recognized as such with four awards including the Excellence in Exhibitions Award from the American Alliance of Museums and awards from the American Association for State and Local History, the Western History Association, and the Western Museums Association. The OMCA team had additional AAM trophies produced to give to taskforce members, acknowledging their essential role in the exhibition development process.

Clearly the Pacific Islander community felt connected to the exhibition in a deep way, but the impact was not necessarily as deep for non-Pacific Islanders. In the future how could a project about specific cultural groups reach a broader audience in a personally meaningful way? Would it mean engaging non-Pacific Islanders in the exhibition development process?

Evaluating Success

Pacific Worlds was located in one of OMCA's primary changing exhibition spaces (8000 ft. sq.) for which the museum has ambitious audience goals. This exhibition did not meet attendance goals. That said, the exhibit won major awards based on a methodology that demonstrated the potential of museums to engage new and diverse communities through shared authority and voice in programming**.** This suggests that a future model for this level of community engagement and investment may be better suited for a space that doesn't have expectations to draw high attendance. In today's climate, museums will continue to struggle with the ongoing challenge of balancing the goals of financial sustainability and impact. How do we take both into account as we measure exhibition success?

Grassroots Marketing

Many conversations took place between the exhibit development team and the Marketing team to strategize ways to cultivate the local Pacific Islander audience. It was identified that this effort fell into the category of Grassroots Marketing—using methods that are aimed at targeting a specific group. This required new ways of working, and as such, it was not clear whose responsibility this work should fall to—Marketing staff or the Community Partnership Manager. It also wasn't clear who had capacity for outreach. Complicating the situation further, the Community Partnership Manager left OMCA partway through development of the show. As a result we weren't able to be as ambitious as we hoped in reaching Pacific Islander communities. This is not an uncommon problem in museums. How can we develop

different strategies, which are also sustainable, for cultivating audiences who fall outside traditional markets and require different methods of outreach?

Existing External Conflicts

The Task Force itself was challenged with tensions between cultural groups. For example, who is considered a Pacific Islander can be disputed. Part-way through the exhibit development process, one task force member raised this as an issue, challenging the inclusion of one cultural group in the exhibition. This provoked a series of difficult conversations and decisions for OMCA which threatened to derail the task force collaboration. The Experience Developer was able to navigate and resolve this situation having built strong relationships through the process, but upon reflection more thought was needed up front to avoid this tension.

Building Relationships

Building relationships and trust are at the core of successful community engaged projects. This requires conversations based on reciprocity and mutual respect among all participants. The Community Task Force was put together specifically for the *Pacific Worlds* exhibition and program development because OMCA has a strong practice of working with community experts alongside museum experts. OMCA staff built valuable relationships with the Pacific Islander community through the exhibition content development.

Post *Pacific Worlds,* the institution has been challenged to find ways for Pacific Island collaborators to continue to be involved with OMCA. We know that it isn't sustainable to maintain the intensity and intimacy required during a project run, but we also want these stakeholders to continue to feel part of the OMCA family. What kind of habits and systems does the institution need to develop for this to happen? One example currently being explored is the creation of a database, that includes all collaborators, to provide regular communications about what is happening at OMCA—on-going invitations to attend. Another strategy for long-term engagement is the incorporation of Pacific Islander faces and stories (assets produced for *Pacific Worlds*) into the core Gallery of California History, further demonstrating that Pacific Islander stories are always part of California history—not just during a temporary exhibition run.

The Experience Developer, Curator, and Program Developer have continued to maintain some relationships, particularly with task force members, through sporadic gatherings and in some cases calling upon individuals to make recommendations with new collaborators. If a core institutional goal is to transform partnerships into visitorship, then what other systems can be put in place to cultivate long-term relationships?

<u>Outcomes</u>

The objectives met through community engagement:

1. Raised the profile of Pacific Island living cultures within California.
2. Honored and encouraged Californians to learn about Pacific Island living cultures in California.
3. Developed programs that centered Pacific Island historical and social issues, values, and creativity.
4. Brought to life the stories of objects in OMCA's collections from the perspectives of Pacific Islanders.

There were both missed opportunities and extremely positive outcomes. The invitation for diverse Californians to get to know their Pacific Island neighbors fell short of expectations, reflected in the number of visitors overall. However to balance that out, the local Pacific Islander community was recognized and visible in a museum like never before because of what *Pacific Worlds* represented for them. Task Force members comment:

> "The Pacific Islander community overall was proud of this exhibit...it represented them in a real way."—**Carolyn Kuali'i,** *Hawaiian*

> "We have strengthened the networks among ourselves, but also have a recognized and established voice in the OMCA family for future outreach and collaborations."
> —**Angela Carrier,** *Chamorro (Guam)*

> "It was empowering and helped amplify the voices of a community that is rapidly increasing in California and across the nation. It helped break down stereotypes of Pacific Islanders and more importantly it celebrated the diversity, resilience and how we continue to sustain our culture, our visibility in the U.S."—**Ella Wolfgramm,** *Tongan*

An outcome goal for the exhibition that Task Force members contributed was that new generations of Pacific Islanders would learn about their own heritage. The success of this outcome is evident in an excerpt from a letter of support made by one community member writing about the opening event:

> "....Children standing in rapt attention listening to stories from grandma or an uncle...I heard our beautiful Pacific languages. One young boy, looking at the *tapa* display said, 'wow. This is all us.' It struck me that many of these younger generations have never

had the opportunity to visit their ancestral homelands—and in this way, the exhibit became a homecoming."—**China Ching**, *Native Hawaiian*, *Program Officer Indigenous Rights and*

Representation, The Christensen Fund

This strong impact had lasting results. Two years after *Pacific Worlds* closed, participants still have positive feelings about OMCA. These two individuals were included as part of the portrait series in the exhibition:

> "This project was a HUGE accomplishment not only for me PERSONALLY but also for my heritage. It meant so much to see our story being told. Thanks for giving us a platform to share our culture & teach others about our jewels in life. Our ancestors are PROUD & continue to urge us to PRESERVE our practices in America and the world now."—**Larina Kulu,** *Tongan Kava practitioner*

> "Participating in this exhibit was an honor for myself and my family, as well as my dance troupe as we were able to share our culture through picture and performance. I think it is vital that we take every opportunity to share our culture so that others may understand that the things that make us different are truly the things that unite us as a human race."—**Whitney Skillman,** *Maori Dancer*

In other words, Pacific Island cultures were authentically represented at OMCA through *Pacific Worlds*. The exhibition was centered around stories told by Pacific Island people who are practicing their living cultures, rather than scholarly interpretations, and through the amazing objects which hold their histories. Personal experiences were reflected and cultural stories were visible in the museum for the first time. Pacific Island community members who participated continue to feel valued and deeply connected to OMCA as a result of *Pacific Worlds*.

Case Study: Oakland I want you to know... Oakland Museum of California

On view July 23–October 30, 2016
By: Evelyn Orantes, Independent Curator and Community Engagement Consultant
Formerly Curator of Public Practice for the Oakland Museum of California

Team:

Internal Core Team: Lead Artist, Curator of Public Practice, Project Manager, and Exhibition Designer

Internal Extended Team: Public Program Developer, Learning Initiatives Developer, Community Engagement Manager, Community Engagement Coordinator, Registrars, Conservators, Preparators, Evaluator

Collaborators: Over 700 participants contributed to the creation of the exhibition including 7 local artists, 6 community organizations and 19 schools.

Project Description

Cultural diversity, the defining characteristic for the city of Oakland, California is a huge point of pride for its residents. However, like many cities throughout the United States, an evolving economy and the pressures of gentrification are changing the city's social fabric. *Oakland, I want you to know...* (OIWYK) explored the accelerating social, economic, and demographic changes in Oakland as seen through the eyes of its community. The exhibition featured artworks co-created by artists and Oakland residents and contributory elements that invited Museum visitors to share their thoughts about what's happening in Oakland right now. Over 700 artists, school children, community groups, and Oakland residents participated in the making of the exhibition.

Oakland I want you to know... was part of a three-year grant (2013–2016) from the James Irvine Foundation to build institutional capacity in community engagement knowledge and practices, to respond to important community needs, as well as inspire residents of the Museum's surrounding neighborhoods and the broader community to connect to their personal creativity and express their cultural identity. Exhibitions related to this grant were approached as experiments that aimed to establish a model that reflected a depth of community involvement with timeliness (shortened time frame) in exploring current and at times urgent community issues. A lead artist worked with community members and played a pivotal role in determining the focus of the subject matter, content and exhibition development and design. Participants created site specific, multimedia art installations in exhibitions and in the core art gallery.

Teamwork and Team Players

To develop and implement a project that was artist and community driven, it was necessary to shift the power dynamics in the project team. In this model the lead artist's expertise and community content are valued on more equal footing with that of scholarship and museum expertise, weighing significantly in the overall vision of the project and decision-making processes. Team members worked with the lead artist and co-creators as thought partners, offering their expertise and knowledge when necessary and taking cues from collaborators on content, aesthetics, design, and collaboratively prioritized resources as ideas evolved.

Not surprisingly, the biggest challenges that surfaced during the staff debrief for the project were related to the shortened project timeline, and the discomfort and tensions that come from sharing authority with external team members who have not been trained in museum practices or indoctrinated to museum culture. In order to move past those challenges, we all strove to find a level of comfort within the discomfort and ambiguity that comes from not having all the details in the way we had become accustomed to when working with an internal team. Some of the details were worked out at the tail end of the project, which meant that the team had to operate with a different set of expectations for the implementation and production phase of the project. The final phase required all hands on deck, improvisation and creative problem solving with external collaborators as final projects trickled in and unforeseen challenges came up. The expertise and contributions of the museum preparator were particularly crucial in this phase.

Consistently working this way on several projects helped the museum explore an exhibition model where staff members collaborate closely with community to co-create installations, while strengthening organizational capacity by building staff understanding of and commitment to community engagement practices. *Oakland, I want you to know...* also helped us to build capacity by broadening the circle of staff members that had worked in community engagement exhibitions and allowed us to experiment with the idea of being timely and responsive.

The Curator of Public Practice

Another factor in the shift of team dynamics was the introduction of the Curator of Public Practice as a key member of the core team. Community engagement in museums has traditionally been the role of education or public programming staff members. The culminating projects that result from these efforts most often take the shape of programs and rarely occupy gallery space. Gallery spaces and collections have been the purview of the curator, but as

museums grapple with being relevant and responsive to demographic shifts, among other pressures new expectations and needs are surfacing in the role of curator. The 21st century curator will be expected, "not only to select and organize arts programs, but to diagnose needs in their communities, seek out new and unusual settings for their work, forge partnerships with a wide array of disparate stakeholders, and, in some cases, cede a certain amount of artistic control in order to gain broader impact."[182]

The role of the curator of public practice on these projects deliberately blurred the borders between curator and educator. In this role the curator identified and recruited external collaborators, was the primary co-creator with the lead artist, facilitated the collaboration between internal and external participants, augmented artistic social practices with museum community engagement practices, and worked with content experts and scholars to create historical context.

Lead Artist

Selecting the right artist was key to the success of this exhibition. It was established early in the process that we needed to showcase the work of an artist who incorporated the participation of community into their art-making process in addressing social issues. We also needed an artist that had established a range of collaborators in the local community. This was particularly important due to the short time frame for the development and implementation of this project.

Artist Chris Treggiari, a past collaborator, was selected as the lead artist for this project because his projects demonstrated a practice that connected a wide range of community collaborators. Using a range of artistic approaches including a mobile art platform, his work turns the passive viewer into an active art maker. His past projects highlight community identities as well as shared and personal stories.

Community Engagement Practices

A mixture of community engagement practices that range in depth and scale were used in this exhibition to create a robust infrastructure for community participation. Each element was unique and evolved in its own way based on the goals, form and collaborators. In this model the community engagement efforts were facilitated by both the lead artist using social art practices and museum staff using museum community engagement practices.

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[182] Brown, Alan, and Steven Tepper, Ph.D. "Placing the Arts at the Heart of the Creative Campus." White Paper commissioned by the Association of Performing Arts Presenters, December 2012

As aforementioned, the spectrum for community participation in the exhibition development process ranges in scale that moves from less involvement at the contributory level to sharing of authority in a deeper way at the co-creation level. Although it is helpful to categorize these efforts for the purposes of planning, managing of expectations, and dialogue among colleagues, it is important to note that these categories have blurry boundaries.

These practices were built on a legacy and commitment of many OMCA educators and staff members whose dedication and advocacy for community voice and accessibility breached into exhibition development practices. This foundation was necessary in order to execute an exhibition that incorporated over 700 participants.

Community voice as starting point

The inception of an exhibition tends to be an insular process. To explore a different beginning process for this exhibition we started with the Neighborhood Identity Report. This report was commissioned by OMCA in the fall of 2013 and aimed to understand the needs and values of the Oakland neighborhoods surrounding the museum, with the goal of strengthening ties between these communities and the Museum. The lead artist was asked to propose an overall vision and theme for the exhibition based on the report. Additionally, the lead artist was responsible for proposing a generative framework for community participation and an aesthetic vision of the exhibition informed by community input.

Co-creation

The primary co-creator in this exhibition was the lead artist who was involved in every phase of the project from the conception to the implementation of the project. Additional co-creators worked on a variety of components ranging in form and scale. These included director and film-maker Alex Ghassan who created three films that incorporated over forty interviews reflecting key content topics for the project. In addition to working with the exhibition project team to determine the focus of the films Alex also collaborated with the marketing and communications team to identify and prioritize subjects for the interviews and to share contacts.

Other co-creation elements included an installation by Youth Radio, a nonprofit organization based in Oakland. OMCA already had a strong relationship with this organization and had collaborated on other programs and exhibitions. This allowed us to progress quickly with the participants even though we were dealing with a delicate and controversial issue because a level of trust had already been established. In this installation, youth worked with the lead artist and the curator of public practice to translate an online project about gentrification in

Oakland into an immersive environment. Lastly, Oakland resident and musician Fantastic Negrito co-designed the re-creation of his personal creative space for the exhibition.

Collaboration

Several participating organizations including Town Park, Acta Non-Verba, City Slicker Farms and individual artists Angie Wilson, Michael Wertz, Querido Galdo, and Julie Placensia created specific elements in the exhibition. Collaborators were invited to respond to the theme and reflect their aesthetic preferences within a specific pre-determined form like a wheat paste wall or billboard. The form was determined by the lead artist and curator of public practice in conversation with the exhibition designer.

Contribution

Over 600 handmade books were created by local school children for the exhibition to create a community library made up of unique and individual stories. Photographer and teaching artist Julie Placensia was invited to create a book template that was further developed by a museum educator in collaboration with the curator of public practice. Museum educators led the effort of recruiting participating teachers and the distribution of book kits provided by the museum to be used to create the books in the classrooms.

Additionally, several in-gallery participatory elements were developed in the exhibition to invite visitors to contribute to the content of the exhibition as part of their experience. Activities included a poster-making activity where visitors could contribute their voice to the exhibition using stencils and colored pencils to complete a poster with an artist designed border. Two additional opportunities invited visitors to share their personal thoughts by responding to two content-related questions. Contributory elements were developed and designed by lead artist and curator of public practice in collaboration with the graphic designer.

Off-Site Programs

The Oakland Rover an interactive electric mobile museum, is one of the many tools that OMCA Connect, the community engagement team of the museum, used during this time to engage Oakland Residents outside the museum walls. The main charge of OMCA Connect was to bring together community members, professional artists, community-based organizations, and Museum staff to create participatory arts projects in community spaces and surrounding neighborhoods.

In collaboration with the lead artist and the curator of public practice, OMCA Connect developed a series of art activities facilitated throughout the city that complimented OIWYK content. For several months OMCA Connect bloggers attended several of the events and asked community members for their honest opinions about the changes happening in their neighborhoods and what makes Oakland great. Their words were compiled into zines that included original photography, artwork, and illustrations. The zines were a take away for visitors and were incorporated into one of the installations of the exhibition.

Project Outcomes

An internal summative evaluation was conducted for *Oakland, I want you to know...* to understand visitors' experiences in OIWYK, to determine whether the visitor outcomes were achieved, and to examine whether visitors grasped the main idea of the exhibition.
Data revealed that the project was successful in communicating the main idea and messages of the exhibition. The content experiences and design held the visitor's attention, timing and tracking also indicated that visitors were actively involved throughout the exhibition.

Most visitors interviewed had positive feedback about their experience in the exhibition. Many of them acknowledged and praised the museum for tackling a relevant, local issue. Other visitors shared that the experience made them hopeful and reinforced the idea that people can work together for positive change. They also noted that the museum could be an important gathering space to bring people together to create a shared understanding of issues like gentrification and build a sense of community.

The exhibition was also well received by the press. Sarah Burke, from The East Bay Express wrote, "But *Oakland, I want you to know...* is not a processed reaction or a memorial; it's an exhibit unfolding in the present tense. It's a show that insists museums can do more than archive — that they can spark social change." And Jeffrey Edelatapour from KQED wrote, "That over 700 people participated in the creation of the exhibition is notable. *Oakland, I want you to know…* is a worthy example of social practice art at its best. Instead of a lone curator informing the people of West Oakland about their neighborhood, the neighborhood is educating OMCA visitors about themselves and the reasons why they're fighting to stay in the place they call home."

Evaluation also revealed that we could have done a better job of developing and providing ways for visitors who wanted to get involved in the community. We attempted to do this through a community board and a poster that offered ways that visitors could get involved. Another area for improvement was to explore ways to make an exhibition of this scale more

visible to visitors in the museum and externally to the public. This exhibition was considered small in scale for the institution and was located in a special exhibition space in at the end of the Gallery of California Art. While there was great coverage of the exhibition, more could have been done to work with the project participants and community groups to spread the word through their networks. Many visitors on site learned about the exhibition through the front line staff who were excited about the project.

Concluding Thoughts

Oakland, I want you to know... demonstrated that museums can play an important role in creating dialogue and providing a place where members from the community can come together to discuss urgent community issues. As one visitor commented about the exhibition:

 "I would tell them [friends] to come, and check it out for themselves. I would love to bring my friends here. Because, [this] is creating dialogue, about the things that we are talking a lot about, anyway. . . .   I would definitely encourage them to come. I would want to come with them. . . . It is very current. It doesn't feel like a museum. Sometimes [at a museum], you [might be] looking at really interesting stuff, but you don't really know how it connects to you. This is so relevant, that even if you don't like art, it is still so important to you. [woman, age 18 and woman, age 18]

This work requires teamwork and an ongoing commitment to accessibility, exploring new ways of working together internally, and to experimenting with a variety of ways of working with external collaborators. Putting less pressure on this project to drive audience to the museum allowed us to focus on the community engagement project outcomes. The trade off was limited marketing resources to make this project more visible externally and programming resources to engage visitors to the museum in a deeper way with the content.

For Further Discussion
The Costs and Potential Benefits of Community Engagement

Museums are grappling with the reality of financial sustainability and are prioritizing revenue-generating opportunities and strategies. Success is being measured by drawing greater paying audiences which puts added expectations on exhibitions and projects.

- What do the pressures of financial sustainability mean for the future of community engagement projects?
- Will the assumption that community exhibitions cost time and money deter museums from continuing their commitment to this work?
- Will community engagement projects only remain sustainable at the contributory end of the community involvement spectrum, rather than the more resource-intensive collaboration and co-creation levels?
- How does committing to allocate resources to community engagement projects help entice, reflect, and provide participatory platforms for potential new audiences?
- Can a commitment to these projects help museums combat skepticism that museums are an ivory tower for the 1% that is boring, sterile and unwelcoming?
- How do we measure the success of community driven exhibitions?

CHAPTER 7

Collections: How We Hold the Stuff We Hold in Trust

AUTHORS: Joy Bivens, Ben Garcia, Porchia Moore, nikhil trivedi, Aletheia Wittman

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We're interested in transforming the way museums think broadly about collections. Many of our large, encyclopedic institutions were started in a colonial period, when collecting was often a function of university research or a way to construct hierarchical categories of human existence. We question the legacies of institutions whose missions were to preserve, categorize, and document human achievement and history at a time when large portions of our populations weren't considered human at all. Masses of people were being trafficked for labor, killed for land, and exploited for profit. Museums inherited this colonial paradigm and some of this is still reflected in contemporary collecting policies and procedures. This paradigm asserts that once the Museum possesses something, they alone own it, and they hold onto it tightly.

We seek to decolonize and reframe our institutions' authority from one of ownership and objectivity to one of collaboration and transparency. We want to make our museums less about things and more about people, love, trust, and shared authority. We believe this is work that challenges us to rethink many of the things people value in our institutions. We understand the huge implications that raising these issues can have. But it's critical work that is necessary to transform our institutions into places that serve and represent broader publics.

The principles that guide our thinking in this chapter are `consent, access, and giving voice to suppressed histories`. We'll dig deeper into these ideas while providing small, practical and impactful actions that we can start today.

Collections

Many of our institutions are defined by our collections—the stuff we hold in trust. We wish to argue that museums are places that preserve human ideas and achievement, but challenge the belief our current procedures and practices hold that human ideas are as fragile as the things we choose to represent them. Our greatest ideas need nothing more than human connection to survive. In this section, we'll provide tools for assessing your collection's herstories, access to your collection, and some guiding principles around procedures.

Assessment: What was the context in which your objects were collected?

By the time Christopher Columbus reached the Caribbean in 1492, historians estimate that there were 10 million indigenous peoples living in U.S. territory. But by 1900, the number had reduced to less than 300,000.[183] Make a bar graph or other visual tool showing the years when all the works in your American collections were created, and another showing when they were initially acquired–not necessarily acquired by your museum, but the year they were first collected. That information might be harder to uncover. Do the best that you can. Recognize that historically documents have been destroyed and histories have been obscured to hide how certain objects were acquired. What are the patterns you see between 1492 and 1900? What stories do these graphs tell?

Consider using this tool for other collections acquired from populations who have survived colonization during the specified years. For instance, if you have objects from Africa in your collection, you can try out this tool, which visualizes the correlation between your African collections and the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade:

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[183] http://endgenocide.org/learn/past-genocides/native-americans

Visualizing the correlation between museums' African collections and the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade[184]

Consent and Access

The anti-sexual violence community has shared a lot of great thinking about consent, which we feel is useful to share here. RAINN defines consent as: "Consent is about communication. And it should happen every time. Giving consent for one activity, one time, does not mean giving consent for increased or recurring sexual contact."[185]

In much the same way feminisms have challenged patriarchal definitions of gender roles: in the context of museum collections, this means that to practice true consent, a radical shift has to be made in the way we think about ownership of objects from exclusive to mutual. Practicing consent means that communities that previously held ownership of an object still participate in decisions on how it's used, displayed, conserved and interpreted. Consent isn't something that's only given once, when the object was first accessioned or collected from the originating community. Consent can

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[184] https://github.com/nikhiltri/african-collections-transatlantic-slave-trade-vis
[185] https://www.rainn.org/articles/what-is-consent

be withdrawn at any point and should be honored. This can get complicated for communities that no longer exist as they once did, especially considering that many objects were likely held by multiple intersecting communities. Furthermore, no one community is a homogenous group, nor should they be expected to be or treated as such. Clearly, navigating this diversity of opinions and voices can be complicated. There is still much for us to figure out of what practicing consent in this way can look like, and it's among some of the most ambitious, radical work we can do.

Increasing the public's ability to engage with museum collections is generally considered an indisputable goal of the modern museum. It does seem intuitive that museums driven by the desire to make their collections more available would be at the forefront of democratizing the museum and combating legacies of elitism. While this may be true in the case of many historical, scientific and/or art collections, there are also cases in which the ethical considerations of access are far more complex. For example, the idea that museums can and should steward collections for the benefit of "the most" or "the public" does not apply ethically when used to justify instances of a museum or collector failing to secure consent in the assembly of collections. When museums position themselves as neutral agents in these instances, they ignore their own power and institutional legacies. In effect, they deny their agency in promoting and justifying white supremacy, colonialism and settler colonialism. The idea that a museum is always the best place for contested collections, when those collections remain on display, also avoids the ethical dilemma of the museum continuing to benefit from stolen items.

Public access, in cases where collection items were acquired without consent, is a direct result of a group of people being denied the right to determine where and how their objects are used and seen by others. Examining the rhetorical function of "access" in privileging museum modes of engagement with collections, over those of the culture within which the item was created, is an exercise that can build staff competency in collections care. Probing the concept of access as it relates to different collections and their histories can also be a productive exercise for staff as they reckon with past and

present collections care practice. This collective work of self-reflection can lead to setting transformative goals for collections care moving forward and foster equitable exchange between the Museum and the communities from which it has collected (or collects).

Assessment: Full consent in acquisition transactions

Look at one example of a transaction in the accession of an object and ask: Were all parties aware of and did all parties consent to the transaction?

Collaborative Care with Descendant Communities

Often, a great deal of time has passed by the time museums reconnect with descendant communities to redress the non-consensual way in which they acquired the objects in their collections. The separation of a people from a piece of their cultural heritage is a rupture that can contribute to a loss of information around exact ownership. The separation and rupture could lead to the involvement of a large group of stakeholders in the decision making process about the future of the heritage. To reiterate: communities, or any social grouping of people for that matter, are not monolithic in their views and beliefs. Therefore, communities involved in repatriation or involved as partners in collections care with the museum may agree on the next steps for their belongings but may express divergent opinions as well.

So, what is the museum's role in engaging with community members who may or may not be in consensus on the future of the objects/heritage in question? There is not a one-size-fits-all formula for this work. However, putting descendant community members first, listening closely, and offering resources to support the co-creation of a solution that satisfies stakeholders are just a few ways for a museum to support communities. What might this look like in practice? Holding meetings where descendant communities want to meet instead of at the museum or, if the communities are acting as advisors to the museum, budget for ways to pay descendant communities for their time. Building staff competencies in indigenous or non-western knowledge systems and in intersectionality (the ways an individual's identities are related to oppression) is another

method of changing the culture of collections care practice to support descendant communities and their leadership. The allocation of time and money to process-oriented, deliberative collections care can be a means of demonstrating the museum's strong commitment to creating an environment of accountability to communities.

Assessment: Co-creating solutions with stakeholders

Do you have any meetings in the coming months with non-museum staff? Where are those meetings? Could they be scheduled off-site? This could make stakeholders more comfortable with the conversation and offer more neutral territory for conversations or decision making.

Thinking about who has access to your collections

As museums move to more inclusive and culturally aware practices of accessing their collections, leadership and staff should consider who currently has access to those holdings and the circumstances under which access is granted. Are collections only accessible when an institution decides to display them in exhibition? Is accessibility limited to scholars and other subject specialists? Are collections electronically accessible? If so, are there opportunities to engage, modify, and revise knowledge about objects or collections of objects? These and other questions relevant to the specific type of museum should be considered as organizations look for ways to open up dialogue about their collections and the knowledge collected and documented about them.

Questions about who can, does, and will access institutional collections (through traditional means such as exhibition, programming, research) provide critical information about the communities that museums serve and their levels of engagement, interest, and comfort with the institution. Museums should consistently look for new ways to invite communities to use their collections in ways that benefit them and the institution. For instance, if an institution houses research collections, what are the ways it can invite participation and knowledge creation from the communities it serves? Are youth allowed to engage with collections in ways that interest and benefit them? While collections are

fraught with complicated histories, some can possess potential that has not yet been tapped by museum staff and leadership. If collection access is severely limited, those possibilities are not realized and the goal of fostering the idea that museums are about people and not only things is compromised.

Assessment: Who does/doesn't access your collection?

Do you allow community members to access your collections in ways that don't just benefit the museum, but benefit their particular interests? How do you let audiences know that there are collections they can access outside of exhibition display or programming?

Giving voice to suppressed narratives

Many museum collections reveal not only the ways different groups have been perceived by the institution but also present significant gaps that hinder museums from being able to fully tell and interpret stories that are critical to understanding the present and the future. In other words, there are communities who are not represented in our institutions or represented only by their fragile relationships to power. Contemporary and future collecting initiatives and policies should seek to expand who is represented and what stories can be told with those collections. Potential collection assessment should not only consider common rationale such as aesthetics and filling in gaps in current holdings but also objects' abilities to reveal suppressed narratives. Collections have the potential to be ways for museums to continuously open up their doors, particularly to communities who have perceived they have not been previously welcome.

Potential collecting presents new possibilities but so does asking new questions of existing collections. Along with developing new initiatives on what collections to seek, museums can partner with scholars, community partners, activists, and other identified stakeholders to re-examine existing holdings for stories that may have been missed, hidden, or misunderstood.

Appropriation in Collections Interpretation

In the process of endeavoring to build visitor appreciation and respect for cultural collections, museums must build competencies with interpretive strategies that do not appropriate culture. There are questions we can ask ourselves to make sure that we are not engaging in appropriative interpretation:

- Have I made sure that the collections are displayed or used in accordance with the wishes of descendants of the community of origin?
- Are the stories I am telling about these objects/heritage rooted in first-hand experience? If not, have I consulted with those that do have first-hand experience?
- Does the experience I am creating for visitors rely on the historicizing of a culture and contemporary erasure?
- Does the experience require visitors to use collections or reproductions to role-play a culture they are not a part of?
- Does the experience require visitors speak on behalf of a culture?

As a museum, one of the best ways to ensure that you are not appropriating culture is to employ people with first-hand experiences with different cultures. It is important to have either staff or paid advisors who can speak from experience about cultural collections. When museums do not work with those who know cultural heritage first-hand, they risk making assumptions about culture or speaking on behalf of a culture. This can create a power dynamic that perpetuates the marginalization of already oppressed communities and breeds distrust between visitors, communities and the museum.

Sidebar: Special consideration: Collecting politically charged objects

Making decisions about whether and how to collect objects in moments when their political histories are raw and urgent requires deep consideration and a commitment to a process that opens rather than limits the possibilities of those objects. Museums must ask themselves serious questions about their intent in acquiring the material, if they are

the most appropriate repository, and in what ways they foresee sharing the objects. In some instances, there may be cases when a large institution collects material that a smaller museum may feel a sense of ownership of. This is particularly true for institutions that interpret the stories of particular communities. Rather than a limitation, this could be an opportunity for collaboration, and for being creative about challenging what it means for your institution to own objects. In cases where the perspectives on an object or collection of objects is contested, the solutions may not be as straightforward. Museums may want to reach out to multiple constituents (scholars, other museums, and community stakeholders) to develop a specialized solution in these cases. If possible, give yourself lots of time, be patient with yourselves, and think about the process of making decisions in these contexts primarily as community-building exercises that privilege people, especially those historically neglected by museums, over objects.

Sidebar: Special consideration: Collecting objects that are meant to be touched

Preserving objects for future generations—transferring them from the private to the public domain—is one of the critical reasons for acquiring objects. As such, limited handling of objects is considered best practice in collections care. However, the intended use of the object (a community's perspective or the very nature of the material) should be considered in acquiring the object and assigning status within the museum collection. For instance, is the object only relevant and useful with human interaction or when it is handled? Does the deteriorating nature of the object underscore its meaning? Museums and other cultural institutions with collections can and should engage multiple ways of thinking about objects and their meaning when acquiring new collections or accessing existing ones.

Different types of museums

While not all museums collect or have collected materials, such as human remains, or religious or culturally sensitive materials that are connected to complicated histories, all museums must engage in careful consideration of how their collections were shaped and what they represent. Every museum (art, history, natural history, children's, et

cetera) must create collecting plans and collections policies that give full consideration to the communities they serve currently and hope to serve in the future. Likewise, issues of consent, access, and expanding the possibilities of stories that can be told through the objects institutions seek out and prioritize is important regardless of the types of materials that form the basis of a collection. If collecting and collections remains a priority for an institution, those collections should provide the possibility for inclusion and not continue to create barriers for accessing the knowledge that can be found in material culture.

Present-day collecting practices

Modern-day collecting is a practice in storytelling. Institutions need to ask themselves what are the stories we want to collect around? What are the dynamic, compelling narratives of our time? Which stories lost over time do we want to lift up? There are always many layers of stories attached to objects. We need to learn as much about the objects and the stories attached to them as we possibly can. Our newly collected objects bring with them opportunities to reveal something more about the history of human ideas and interaction.

A transformation in our collecting practices will surely require a greater investment in the process. What are some ways your institution can truly resource your collection?

In all of our interactions with the people and communities from which our objects come, we must be cognizant of where power lies in our transactions, and how this affects our decision making processes. Following are a few ways to consider power dynamics:

- *Economic*: are the people we're collecting from dependent on our transaction with them in any way financially? How might this affect the negotiation of terms of an acquisition? How can the transaction support more sustained economic equity for all parties involved? Do all parties have a clear understanding of the impact of an acquisition in the short and long term?

- *Race*: how does the race of the people involved in a negotiation affect the final terms? Do all parties have a clear understanding of the impact of an acquisition in the short and long term?
- *Gender*: who's at the table and who's not? Are a diversity of voices being heard?

Assessment: Power Audit

Where have you been collecting from in recent years? What is the character of the relationships from which your acquisitions have been made?

For this exercise, take geographic data of where the objects you have acquired in the last five years were created and/or collected. Lay that over economic data of the region within your scope, be it the world or your city. Is there an even distribution of where you're collecting from with regard to the amount of economic power a region holds? If most of your collecting has happened in more affluent or poor areas of your region, why is that? How will you work to change this? Does that inform your current collection plan?

Tools: Mapping data

Excel has a plugin called Power Map[186] that allows you to put data in a spreadsheet on a map. If you have JavaScript expertise in-house, there are a number of mapping tools available based on D3.js, including DataMaps.[187] Finally, if your institution uses Tableau, there are a number of ways you can map data there.[188]

For economic data, the U.S. government has income data you can use that's broken up by zip code on the Census.gov website[189] or at https://www.incomebyzipcode.com.

Team brainstorming questions

We hope this chapter's assessments provided a number of starting points for you to begin this work, or move your existing efforts further towards justice. To close, following

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[186] "Get Started with Power Map", support.office.com
[187] http://datamaps.github.io
[188] https://www.tableau.com/solutions/topic/maps
[189] https://www.census.gov/topics/income-poverty/income.html

is a list of questions you can run through with your teams to brainstorm additional ways forward:

- Where did your collections come from and how did they get here?
- Who founded your collections, and where did their wealth come from?
- What kind of community relationships are represented through your collections and collecting practice?
- If your institution has primarily collected with/from white communities, how can your collections grow to represent the stories of communities of color?
- What work must you do to prepare for shifting the dominant narrative your collections tell?
- What steps do you need to take to make your collecting practice nimble and responsive so that significant current events are documented for local communities and future generations?
- Who do you need on staff or as advisors to become more competent in collecting and collections care?

Coming from a place of love

Our collections and the policies and procedures around them affect every aspect of our institutions. Challenging these things is no small task. But this work is fundamental if we are to transform our museums from cathedrals frozen in time to dynamic bazaars[190] that truly serve a wider range of people.

We want our institutions to dismantle the colonial underpinnings of our collections. What would that look like at your institution? Maybe you would offer multiple, sometimes conflicting narratives of your objects. Or, maybe an anti-colonial collection wouldn't exist at all.

What does social justice look like in your organizations? Perhaps it's work towards representation and access, like Native participation at every level of the museum. Or

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[190] Phillips, Lori Byrd. "Defining Open Authority in Museums", Marcus Institute for Digital Education in the Arts blog, 2012. http://midea.nmc.org/2012/01/defining-open-authority-in-museums

committing to tell the truth about colonialism and your institution's history. Whatever it looks like for you, we hope this chapter provided some practical steps you can take today as well as some seeds for larger visioning of your museum's future. We hope you'll leave with a fresh understanding that any practice that includes consent is anti-colonial. With a clearer sense of suppressed narratives, we hope you can bring to light new thoughts on access to your collection.

Our recommendations come from a place of love. We're passionate about our institutions and the people they could serve.

Our overarching suggestion is that museums and cultural institutions create long-term visions for how their collections can foster equity, inclusion, and paradigms for shared authority and knowledge creation. This includes assessing the contexts under which objects were brought into our collections and how that informs the ways they are interpreted and understood. It also includes taking steps to return materials to communities from which collections were obtained without proper and informed consent. Most importantly, new visions of museum collecting should include steps that ensure the objects and knowledge associated with neglected, omitted, and erased stories are pursued in a way that respects the participation of all in the preservation and interpretation of human achievement.

CHAPTER 8
Change-Making through Pedagogy

AUTHORS: Alyssa Greenberg, Anniessa Antar, Elisabeth Callihan
Including interviews with Educators: Alyssa Machida, Hannah Heller, Keonna Hendrick, Marit Dewhurst, Paula Santos, Nenette Luarca-Shoaf, Wendy Ng

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While the MASS Action project was founded by and largely shaped by educators, when it came to writing a chapter on pedagogy, we were stuck. Capacity was stretched, and it was hard to find time to connect and compose our thoughts on the "state of the museum education field". Our collaborators all said the same thing: Educators were too busy *doing* the work to sit down and *write* about the work.

So, for this chapter, we decided to conduct a series of interviews with seven educators whose work supports greater inclusion, equity, and social justice – both in their teaching practice and in the institution as a whole. It is relevant to note that all seven of the educators identify as women, and five as women of color. In social justice work, particularly within the realm of education, this work often falls on women of color. In our conversations, we asked about the ways in which social injustice—racism, sexism, xenophobia—has manifested in their practice as a museum educator. We asked about their approaches to responding to social issues through their work, and about some of the challenges they have encountered in trying to align social justice values within museum practice.

Museum educators are often the ones leading the institutional charge to expand audiences, using programing to respond to issues affecting our communities, and working internally to build staff capacities and competencies to align with our public-facing missions and stated values. When asked why educators are usually at the front of this work, Wendy Ng of the Royal Ontario Museum pointed out the unique skillsets that educators bring to the institution:

> Educators are the intermediaries between the museum's collection, the 'stuff', and the people. Our skills as educators are active listening, understanding human development and learning theory, and advocating for visitors' needs. As museums have expanded our audiences beyond the traditional white elite, it has been educators who have led that movement.

Keonna Hendrick of the Brooklyn Museum talked about the accountability many educators feel to our visitors, and why we feel the need to be responsive to their concerns:

> While curators are stewards and preservers of the collection, as educators we generally prioritize our accountability to visitors. This becomes integral to our efforts to support visitors as they build and maintain relationships with objects, the museum and other visitors. At times visitors pose challenging questions and introduce language that might make us uncomfortable, but if we want to keep the relationship, then we have to be responsive.

However, despite the skillsets and relationships educators have developed within the institution, both Wendy Ng and Keonna Hendrick reminded us that there is still much work to be done both interdepartmentally and within Education departments themselves. In our interview with Alyssa Machida, she further underscored this point, emphasizing:

> It makes sense that people working within the realm of education, interfacing with and advocating for diverse publics, would respond to the urgency of this. [However] I want to be careful here with potential generalizations or assumptions; I don't believe that just because someone works in museum education that they can automatically situate their self within the noble struggle for human rights and liberation. It is one thing to be aware of global, societal problems, and to be able to discuss or analyze them thoughtfully, and another thing entirely to be fighting for fundamental human rights, working to actively dismantle oppressive systems and institutions such as the museum. It's problematic and irresponsible to reflexively begin conflating the field of museum education with social justice activism. For the majority of us working in museums, including myself, we're still in the process of figuring out how to be better.

With that in mind, it is our hope that in documenting and highlighting the work and expertise of these educators here, we may all join in the process of "figuring out how to be better". The work of transforming our institutions belongs to all of us.

Working conditions shape pedagogy

Before going into greater detail about the role of educators within the museum, it is important to note that the conditions educators are working from within influences the role they play; and shapes our museum pedagogy and curriculum, as well.

The particularities of the *work* of museum education includes front line exposure to museum visitors, the expectation of being the voice of museum visitors in internal conversations, and the expectation of implementing the museum's social value. This labor is often un(der)paid, part-time, temporary, and/or freelance. Benefits and healthcare are not guaranteed, and job security is uncommon. How can museum educators create social value externally, if institutions undervalue them internally?

In this section, museum educators reflect on how the labor of museum education shapes their work -- a lens that museum practitioners from other departments can utilize as well.

Hannah Heller shares the power and responsibility they have within their institutions, but also calls managerial staff to take greater accountability:

> We [freelance educators] are the most vulnerable, expendable voices in our institutions, but because of 1) our front line exposure, 2) object based learning practices, and 3) very little managerial oversight; in some ways I think we have a lot of power.

> As a part time freelancer, I see thousands of students a year. At X many tours a week, 20-30 students per class, our points of contact add up in real ways. Let's be real-- at most smaller institutions, far and away the majority of people that actually see the art are kids. If we feel like this work is urgent it's because it is-- almost literally every day is a new opportunity to at least try and do something transformative. So if we aren't, then... *what are we doing?*

> Most of us have the freedom to choose our objects, teaching methods, and learning goals. Maybe we can't change the top down hiring practices at our institutions, or the way POC visitors are treated by security staff, or any number of ways museums oppress, but we *can* decide how we teach. (That being said I think we do have some power to change those other things, but the freedom described here is a real, daily source of power.)

> I get the sense that managers are happy to let us do the heavy lifting [in this area], but not necessarily interested in taking the next step to, let's say, draft anti-oppression educational mission statements, or develop trainings towards these goals. In other words I think it can't just be on the freelancers to carry out a progressive educational

agenda; managers need to also be thinking about how recast their roles towards that end.

Keonna Hendrick openly acknowledges the impact of the microaggressions she has experienced within the museum field, and discusses how those experiences influence how she builds connections with visitors. She discusses the responsibility museum staff have to think deeply about the experiences visitors carry into the museum.

> Some people have yet to recognize how racism manifests through their actions or in our institutions. We have to be aware of the potential harm we can do to our visitors. Radiah [Harper, former Vice Director of Education and Program Development at the Brooklyn Museum] would point out that, "People come with enough pain from their lives, we don't want to add any more harm." Her words have stayed with me all these years, pushing me to consider the impact of pedagogy that is inclusive and compassionate.

Wendy Ng, too, draws from her personal experience of bias as a source of knowledge. She explains how this experience shapes her understanding of what people—colleagues and visitors—bring with them into museum spaces, and the dangers of relying on assumptions.

> When we come into work, we come as whole beings, and when we interact with colleagues, volunteers, and visitors, we may experience sexism, racism, and ageism. I have experienced these things personally, and these experiences have informed my practice. And professionally, working in education departments, we also have to recognize that everyone has implicit biases. For example, with our core audience, the school audience, colleagues may make assumptions about students based on which neighborhoods they are coming from, and assumptions about their level of achievement based on what they look like. Our colleagues may communicate their biases through their assumptions so we may also witness injustice in our relationship with colleagues, and seeing how their biases manifest in their own practice.

Nenette Luarca-Shoaf describes how an institutional lack of awareness and sensitivity impacted her as a person of color, and how a focus on mentorship enabled her to strategically shift the institution towards cultural competency.

> Working with people who don't deal with change well is challenging. Within our department, we have a lot of young energy, but we also have people who have been

here for decades for the most part are open to these new directions but don't necessarily have the background in the terminology for the work.

I think on one hand, institutions are struggling with a lack of diversity in the workforce and the lack of diverse perspectives to represent and tell the story of our work, the story of the art--to interpret the art. Also, a lack of awareness and sensitivity to other perspectives that have been marginalized. So that is something definitely as an institution we are tackling across administration. On the other hand, in my almost 20 years in the field, there are many more perspectives represented now. That is particularly in education departments and by educators.

It was very lonely before, I can tell you. I grappled with a lot of the same kinds of experiences in any kind of learning environment where you're a person of color and everyone looks to you to speak for everyone. I feel now better equipped to deal with situations and to better help my younger colleagues deal with those situations and see them for what they are and to know when are the right times and ways to speak out. I do a lot of that work here with mentoring. It's really important to me, and it's something I didn't anticipate, but something that has increasingly been central to my way of changing the institution from within.

Cultivating a Rigorous Practice

As museum educators, we engage with the public on a daily basis and our colleagues look towards us to represent museum visitors in internal conversations. Positioned as holders of museum authority and expertise, we navigate complex power dynamics with visitors. Thus, there is a significant ethical component to our work: How can we make responsible choices when engaging with museum visitors, and in reflecting their experiences to our peers?

Rigor is necessary to lend credibility to ideas, to demonstrate theory and knowledge behind ideas, to indicate that what we advocate for is well-thought-through and considered from multiple angles. Embedding research within the museum discourse helps make the values and commitments behind our thinking to be accessible to others. It ensures that our peers and visitors can trust our work and that we responsibly wield the power that our institutional affiliation affords us. That said, academic theory and knowledge is only one form of rigor – we also look toward other ways of knowing.

Alyssa Machida explains that a critical, rigorous approach to social-justice-oriented museum work is necessary – that acknowledging problematic conditions or gesturing towards change is insufficient.

> As museums and their staff try to engage in social justice work in these spaces, this reality means that many folks are not equipped to do this with the necessary criticality, rigor, and sensitivities. Simply knowing that current conditions are wrong and wanting things to be different is not enough. What is required is critical action, and constantly pushing the threshold of how much you are willing to risk of yourself and your position to make a difference. Waiting for the field to catch up is a major challenge and barrier to fully immersing ourselves into the work.

Paula Santos shares how her rigorous approach to her museum education practice and how she envisions its effects on museum visitors:

> I feel like I have to be incredibly well-versed in knowing how to talk about each of those things. If I'm going to have an audience in front of a work of art, especially at our museum which has socially responsive work, a lot of work about the Mexican experience, which there is a lot of racism, then I feel like it goes beyond the object. It goes into, what do I know about feminism? What is racism? It becomes all this political work that I have to do on my own, even to begin to speak in front of an audience. I'm also very mindful what works do I choose, am I favoring a certain type of artists, am I only choosing male artists, so I try to examine a lot of that, more and more I'm becoming, this is truly my biggest growth area, how do I make inclusive language as part of my everyday life, not even gallery talks. Not assuming people's gender and pronouns, how am I able to do that with an audience that is a couple years old to school teachers. That's the kind of stuff I am currently very much working on.

Many museum educators, like Hannah Heller, embody dual roles as student and practitioner, roles that inform one another: "I think a lot about how to adapt the theories I'm steeped in as a student and researcher (Critical Race Theory, critical pedagogy, whiteness studies) to my work as an art museum educator." She demonstrates how she applies theoretical frameworks to her museum work:

> For example, we teach with objects that have the capacity to tell amazing stories and counter stories as well as free reign to use inquiry to suit our teaching goals. Counter

stories or counter-narrative is a Critical Race Theory concept that addresses what voices have not and continue to not be heard. In classroom education this more often than not centers on content-- telling alternative (truer, less white) versions of history, reading books written by POC, women, LGBT folk, etc. In museum education, in addition to counter thinking in terms of content, we have objects and inquiry, which are also really powerful tools to get students to engage in critical thinking around anti-oppression.

For Hannah Heller, being versed in whiteness studies allows her to be more self-aware about how white supremacy influences the choices she makes when designing curriculum and facilitating pedagogy.

> In my research I read a lot about how whiteness manifests in classroom teaching contexts, which has tons of bridges to museum education. Alice Mcintyre (1997) talks about teachers as constantly making choices-- what students to track into what level class, what types of testing to do, what questions to ask, content to teach, etc. Arguably museum teaching deals as much if not more with constant decision making. So what are the choices museum educators make? For me my big questions are which art works, what's the general theme, what lines of inquiry to pursue or not, and what choices am I making based on the specific group? I try to be as conscious as possible in the moment about what I'm doing (and not doing).

An approach to inclusive museum practice driven by whiteness studies, critical race studies, is going to have the most impact and value. Keonna Hendrick takes this analysis a step further, by illustrating how even the research and theory that lends rigor to our work is shaped by an academic culture that upholds white supremacy.

> We have to resist anti-intellectualism, while acknowledging that academia is based on western European models. So we need to challenge that and understand that there are different ways non-western cultures learn and share information.

We should not privilege and lift up academic knowledge at the cost of other ways of knowing. Academic knowledge is shaped by whiteness, its institutions perpetuate inequity. Museum practitioners must look at other kinds of knowledge as well. Keonna Hendrick expands on this concept of multiple ways of knowing:

> If cultural equity is the driving force of our work then it is important for museum educators to acknowledge multiple ways of knowing, within and outside of academia.

One way we can do this is by challenging learners and colleagues to enhance the criticality of their exploration of objects and issues, inviting them to bring in new resources and compare prior knowledge to contextual information to visual analysis. Another strategy is to deepen and vary our understanding of national and global histories from multiple perspectives through collective and individual investigation. While we're doing this, it would be useful to take the texts and information we perceive as truth through the ringer, questioning its impetus, validity, and impact so that we can begin to expand our own assumptions about how facts and truth are accepted. Also remembering, when we're being critical, we're using our own standards. So how do we switch out our "tools" or criteria to look at things from a different point of view?

The work of infusing rigor into the practice of museum education need not be a solo pursuit. Nenette Luarca-Shoaf indicates how gathering knowledge to inform our work can be a collective process:

We had a departmental working group that drew from each of our divisions that was about gallery teaching and learning, and over the course of the year, we assessed what we do, what each division does, how we teach, what we expect, how we expect people to learn, how we train interns and docents and other people we train to teach, and then we came up with a draft statement of values for teaching and learning in the galleries that is a good working document, and we are working to fill it out with literature and with resources. You'll see, there are lots of questions still in there, but it was cool to see we have different audiences, and different audiences have different needs, but there are core principles that we share, through our practice rather than through a theory we are applying, it is from the practice outward… It was also great, from my point of view, I'm speaking from a managerial point of view, I don't know if everyone would see it this way, but in that working group I felt like that was one way to break down some of the hierarchies that exist in the structures of the department because we were all representing something different, but it was a space where others lead the group and we had goals, but the ways we got that outcome was intentional and it was democratic.

Through these testimonies, it is clear that staying on top of critical theory is an ethical way to promote just worlds in our museums. However, it is important to note that this rigor must be framed by praxis -- meaning that the theory must not surpass the acknowledgement of lived experience. Theory should inform the work, but the work should also operate outside of

academia, another institution situated within whiteness. In our interviews, we discussed the importance of moving away from white supremacy culture to create more just institutions.

Centering Anti-Oppression: Confronting Whiteness

Museums hold institutional and cultural power as established by their colonial and imperial histories. Like other institutions (schools, hospitals, housing, policing, etc.) the ways in which museums maintain that power is by uncritically and unreflectively upholding the very systems that define this power. These systems, intersecting assemblages of capitalism, patriarchy, whiteness, ableism, and cis- and heteronormativity, have been historically presented as "objective" in museum interpretation and continue to be the lens by which objects and narratives are interpreted. As such, museum educators are tasked with making these interpretations accessible to audiences, the burden being to promote critical thinking and inquiry skills that deconstruct this "objectivity". In our interviews, it became evident that one system of power that manifests most saliently is white supremacy. White supremacy culture is defined and expanded upon in Chapter Three of this toolkit (Changing Museum Culture: Making the Case for Inclusion), but   some of its characteristics, defensiveness, either/or thinking, power hoarding, objectivity, and right to comfort, came up in our interviews. We discussed the psychic and emotional toll women of color educators bear, the roles white museum educators need to embody in museums, and transforming the spaces we create by confronting whiteness.

When considering the impacts of whiteness, nothing is more important to consider than the bodily, emotional, and psychic harm of unreflectively acting within white supremacy culture. Keonna Hendrick spoke about how whiteness/white supremacy culture in museum logic impacts her very existence and humanity:

> Far too often [art museums] continue to place art before people of color's lives and bodies in explicit and implicit ways. When I experience this in museums it reminds me that the field is not siloed from the rest of our society in terms of the types of racism that can exist, but at times a microcosm of racist values. It's a challenge for institutions because we value free speech and expression, but how do we reconcile that when these objects cause trauma and have a history of being used as a tool to make people feel less than? And while some institutions and individuals are working to change this, there are still educators who do not understand why prioritizing objects over people of color is deeply hurtful and ostracizing. Their response--and silence in some cases--reminds me

that for some the emotional, mental and physical health of people is less significant to an inanimate object.

The frustration of having to constantly make the case to be valued to the institution speaks to the fact that museums-as-institutions benefit from placing objects before lived experience. If museums were truly interested in contributing to a more just world, there would be no hesitation in reflecting on and actively preventing the trauma inflicted by its decisions. Museums who claim to be "doing the work" are often using superficial methods that do not get to the root of power. As Hannah Heller noted in her interview, "[there is] a real reluctance to making the shift from being non-racist to being explicitly anti-racist-- not even talking about top down, but even just within education departments." This "work" is often veiled by neoliberal concepts like "multiculturalism", "tolerance", "color-blindness", or unreflective freedom of speech, which Keonna Hendrick alludes to here. The paradox of tolerance/free speech/non-censorship of harmful exhibitions is that systems of oppression are not confronted outright in the name of preserving free speech. This effectively erases and diminishes struggles for liberation and recognition. The historical and systemic reproduction of oppression continues uninterrupted, and it is people of color who must endure the bodily and mental harm. What would it look like for art museums to wield their cultural power to impede, confront, transform, and help heal the harm done to people of color? Alyssa Machida reiterates this:

> I see these [systems of oppression] as ever-present in our work, in our lives, and society. They are far more pervasive and sinister than we can fully sense or fathom… without complex understandings of just how deep-rooted these systems of oppression are, we confuse the symptoms with the problems… Looking for actual, concrete ways these issues manifest themselves in our work is a good thought exercise but the risk with this is twofold: a) it trains our minds to look for incidents and "cases of" rather than addressing and dismantling the root, systemic causes, and b) it gives the mind space to opt out of one's own complicity. There is a real danger when we become fixated on symptoms because it encourages us to distance ourselves from the outrageously offensive, the violent extremists, and those we identify as "the problems," while further retreating into a bubble of colorblind racist, neoliberal neutrality and political correctness. We have to acknowledge that both ends of this illusory spectrum reflect folks who refuse to get to grips with the reality surrounding them, and that they actually benefit from the same systems of power. No matter what, we are always going to be part of the problem

and perpetuating harmful mechanisms at some level. We'll never really be "in the clear." Acknowledging this is an important step in taking on this work.

Machida's reminder that harmful mechanisms will be perpetuated is important to reflect on because this work is always shifting as systems of power morph and mutate. Effective educators understand the importance of growth mindset, rather than striving for the unrealistic expectation of mastery of content. There is no end to dismantling power, as each person is understanding power from different vantage points, and we must create systems that allow to reflect and process as new instances of power arise.

One such solution for a shift discussed was for museums to take on an explicitly anti-racist/anti-oppressive stance, to confront race at the root, instead of simply being "non-racist" or "culturally sensitive". Anti-oppression work has mechanisms built into it to critically reflect and recognize when and how power manifests. Because most museums are still majority white, Hannah Heller offers this as a way to confront this issue head-on:

> I think centering whiteness in a conversation about anti-racism is important so that white people can first of all name it, critique it, and figure out what it means for them first as individuals and then as part of a system, like museum education, that on one hand acts as the oppressor but which can also be used dismantle the status quo. What seems clear is that white supremacy is a white people problem that white people need to fix. And the only way this happens though is if we ALL (managers, educators, curators, board members) make a shift from conceptualizing our various roles as being simply "culturally sensitive," or "multicultural" to something more radical…

White supremacy culture breeds defensiveness. If museums are truly going to open up toward transformation, those with the most proximity to whiteness, white people, need to let go of defensiveness in order to share power. This work should happen amongst white folks so the burden does not continue to fall on people of color, but also within a spirit of solidarity. So often identity politics sequester and isolate instead of moving towards a politic of working across difference. As Paula Santos mentions,

> To be the only person, or one of only two people who says like, this is systemic racism… is exhausting. [Addressing] things that for many people in museums are like, those are just the rules, I'm like, you have to examine who you enforce the rules to and how you enforce them. I think that's what makes it really difficult. You can't really get to the

content [of white supremacy culture] because there are so many other issues and it eats up all your bandwidth [as a woman of color educator].

Working across difference to dismantle power releases the strain on everyone, but not without some discomfort on the end of those with privilege. Confronting the ways power is hoarded also a concrete way to break down whiteness. Keonna Hendrick mentions that:

There are systemic and individual barriers to dismantling cultural inequity. A common barrier that many individuals have is an unwillingness to identify which parts of their identity afford them privilege (race, gender, sexuality, nationality, etc.) and/or an unwillingness to give up some of the power associated with their privilege. If you truly wants to address cultural inequity on the interpersonal level I recommend engaging in critical self-reflection. Try asking yourself: "Sitting with the privileges I have, what am I afraid to give up? What am I holding on to?" Is it authority or resources or something else? Figure out where this personal fear lies, and work from there. It's a difficult task because people don't want to go against their own immediate self-interest, however, if we look at long term and immediate impact of sharing power and resources it's easier to recognize how we all benefit from cultural equity.

This call for personal reflection extends beyond the self and must necessarily flow into the institution. What would institutions be willing to give up in order to heal trauma attributed to its complicit participation in systems of oppression? In order to move forward, we can no longer afford willful ignorance to dictate how decisions get made in institutions. New norms are needed, norms that are adaptable, mutable, and transforming in the face of the shifting of power. Along these lines, Alyssa Machida suggests an "unapologetic, unyielding centering of social justice values to [our] work and practice." She says that this centering is:

…essential to pursuing genuine and sincere solutions to our complicated, intersecting social problems. It's the difference of asserting that diversity, equity, access, and inclusion be the requisite starting point rather than the eventual goal. If you have different core values and goals, and are only doing the work of gradual alignment, then your work runs the risk of being quite shallow, disingenuous, and frankly too late. Without making social justice work a part of our central core, it is always a disposable, peripheral appendage to an elitist white supremacist ableist cis-heteronormative colonialist imperialist capitalist patriarchal core. It will always leave room for the argument, "Well, that's not what a museum *does."*

Museum educators have realized that centering anti-oppression work needs to be a cross-departmental effort if there are to be systemic changes. This work cannot and should not be done in isolation, and when it is relegated solely to museum educators, it risks becoming inauthentic and falls back into the same patterns of white supremacy culture. We must create a sustainable, adaptive culture of critique of the institution and know that the work will never be "finished."

Creating a Culture of Critical Reflection

As outlined in other chapters of this resource, this moment we find ourselves in is an urgent call to action for museums to transform their traditional modus operandi towards more inclusive, equitable, and socially just practices. There has been an argument made for the moral and ethical need for this shift, as well as a strong business case made for its necessity. Together, the resulting understanding is this: Museums must change, now, in order to ensure their relevance and sustainability into the future. To make this change, we must—to quote the #MuseumWorkersSpeak movement—turn the lens of social justice *inward* and begin to question and hold ourselves accountable for the behaviors and practices that have perpetuated a supremacist culture within our institutions and have excluded and denied access to many.

As educators in many institutions are embedded within this change work, we discussed the idea of institutional transformation in our interviews with this group of educators, who had an insightful, multi-faceted approach to the topic.

Keonna Hendrick starts big picture with the concept of museums:

> We have to transform the very idea of what a museum is. Look at your museum: Is it [perceived as] a mausoleum or a monument to conquest? That kind of questioning is where institutions have to be vulnerable and try new things and new approaches.

Wendy Ng emphasizes it has to come from the top:

> Senior management has to prioritize this. We all can, and should, do this work at our level, but it is going to stay at that level unless the powers that be specifically make this work a priority across the entire institution.

There should also be a strategic, unified vision. As Alyssa Machida points out:

If folks working in museums are coming at these issues from various understandings and perspectives, and there is not a solid foundation of support or code of ethics coming from the institution itself, it becomes incredibly difficult for people to build coalitions of solidarity and allyship.

Ultimately, this needs to be woven within the fabric of your organizational culture. As Wendy Ng explains:

Yes, you have to have a strategy. But if 'culture eats strategy for breakfast', how do we address and shift institutional culture to support strategy and make change? Is your organizational culture open to and supportive of risk-taking, collaboration, and sharing? The culture of perfectionism also permeates museums so museums often find it difficult to accept and learn from failure – everything has to be perfect. That's a particularly Western way of knowing and communicating, which is based in hierarchy. Whereas if we look to indigenous ways of knowing and models of organizing relationships, we can develop a culture of interconnectedness and equitable knowledge sharing.

Alyssa Machida also points out the conflict between museum culture and transformation towards a more socially just practice:

Another tension here is that social justice work cannot be institutional(ized). The very nature of social justice movements is the need for flexible, improvisatory, and constantly evolving responsiveness to fight against the status quo and problematic normative standards. The institution is able to exist and function effectively and efficiently because people working in them fulfill their functions to uphold its structures.

Hannah Heller also recognizes that addressing social injustice is challenging for some, but sees her role as an educator as integral to this process. During our conversation she mentions that two of the three museums where she freelances "deal explicitly with issues related to social injustice." This implies not only that one institution *doesn't* explicitly deal with issues related to social injustice, but also that an institution—or an individual museum educator—can choose to avoid grappling with issues of social justice, despite the negative impact its avoidance may causes the visitor, the institution, or its staff. "I've seen firsthand how easy it is to choose *not* to engage," she says, but she tries to use her position as an educator to engage in institutional critique and enact change. "I've always associated museum teaching with thinking of new ways to use my various and profound privileges as a white person to dismantle the status quo."

Wendy Ng echoes this aspect of an educator's role within the traditional museum structure, going on to say:

> The history of museums is rooted in colonialism and patriarchy. The way collections and information are acquired and shared privileges certain ways of knowing. Given the ties between museums and academia, which is also rooted in colonialism and patriarchy, these institutions elevate curatorial knowledge and practice. Educators, along with their curatorial colleagues, have a responsibility to challenge these roots to help make collections accessible and accountable to the broadest range of public.

This idea came up through many of our conversations, that educators are often in a role of bridges or "translators", as they are trained facilitators and skilled connectors who bring people together through conversation. When asked how this manifests in the galleries, two of the art museum educators gave concrete strategies, which involve questioning dominant narratives and creating space and opportunity for critical thinking.

Hannah Heller focuses on the counter-narratives that can be revealed by an object:

> I like to choose objects based on what aspect of a counter story they can reveal. This counter story can say something about the artist, the content, the subject—something that reveals a turn away from the dominant (white, male, straight, cis, "able" bodied) narrative. A lot of educators feel like they can't talk about oppression because their institutions' collections don't explicitly treat the topic (i.e., are made by and picture all white men, for example). So I pick an object and ask students to create narratives to fill in the gaps. *Who isn't there? Why? What if the artist was working today in your neighborhood, what might look different? What if YOU were the subject—how would you like to be represented?*

Keonna Hendrick talks about the process and importance of fostering critical thinking skills in gallery experiences:

> We have to teach critical thinking, and understand this process of observation – taking in information; interpretation – asking about the object's meaning; analysis – seeing the object both formally and within multiple cultural contexts; critique – assessing validity, impact, aesthetics of objects, analyses, and even or your own perspective; and adaptation or application.

I start with asking students to use all of their senses to collect information around a work, in order to acknowledge the different ways people learn. Then we'll talk about what is physically present or represented in the work, with consideration to meaning. I encourage groups of students to keep asking, "Why?" and acknowledge other ways of knowing, outside of a Western European tradition. As educators we must encourage students (and one another) to dig deeper, compare to what they already know, and bring in resources in order to expand their knowledge, build empathy and support critical thinking. In order to help them to do this, we must do own work to foster critical thinking within ourselves---studying how multiple narratives exist in our study of histories, reading and discussing texts across disciplines with a critical lens, and looking to new sources for perspectives different from our own.

She further expands on the importance of educators working on themselves, and *their own learning*:

To teach others to be critical, and to think critically, you also need self-awareness and honesty with yourself. To really relate to other people, you need empathy and being okay admitting when you are wrong. Empathy is integral to critical thinking, and in order to foster it towards inclusivity, teaching and modeling vulnerability is key.

Keonna Hendrick paused at one point to note that, "Museum educators are really good at these processes around an object. How can we be better when we're together, as colleagues, with one another?"

To explore this idea, perhaps it would be instructive to take a look at some of the pedagogical theory that museum educators operate within, to understand some of its terminology, and consider ways we may incorporating it into our own work, and/or how it might "scale up" to be used on an organizational level to create a culture of questioning and critical thinking. Below are snapshots of the theories of Transformative Learning, Critical Pedagogy, Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, Critical Self-Reflection, and Critically Reflexive Practice.

Transformative Learning

In the theory of *transformative learning*, the goal is one of "perspective transformation". This process has three dimensions: Psychological, in which there are changes in the understanding of self; Convictional, in which there are changes or revisions within belief systems; and Behavioral, in which there are changes in lifestyle.[191] A key aspect of transformative learning is for individuals to change their frame of reference by *critically reflecting* on their assumptions and beliefs and *consciously making and implementing plans* that bring about new ways of defining their worlds.[192]

In practice, the transformative educator's role is one of a guiding facilitator, assisting learners in becoming aware and critical of assumptions. However, this learning theory also holds the teacher accountable for their own self-reflection, inviting them to challenge the assumptions that lead to their own interpretations, beliefs, habits of mind, or points of view. Thus, transformative *teaching* only occurs when educators critically examine their practice and develop alternative perspectives of understanding it. And so, we might extrapolate to the organizational level that in order to foster transformative learning in others (our colleagues, visitors, etc.) we must also critically examine ourselves and our practices.

Critical Pedagogy

Museum practitioners may also find inspiration and instruction within the theory of *critical pedagogy*. This teaching approach, first introduced by Paulo Freire, was inspired by critical theory and attempts to help students question and challenge dominant, and dominating, beliefs and practices. Critical pedagogy explores the relationship between teaching and learning, and proposes a new relationship between educator and student in which knowledge is co-created and exchanged; thus acknowledging one another's incompleteness as humans.[193]

This "praxis", the intersection of the theoretical and the practical, involves engaging the learner in a cycle of theory, application, evaluation, reflection, and then back to theory, in

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[191] Clark M. C., Wilson A. L., "Context and rationality in Mezirow's theory of transformational learning". *Adult Education Quarterly*, 1991: 41, 75–91.

[192] Mezirow, J., "Transformative Learning: Theory to Practice". *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 1997: 5–12.

[193] Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed, 30th Anniversary ed.* New York: Continuum, 2006.

order to lead to transformation on the individual level. Friere suggests that social transformation is possible when this praxis is conducted at the collective level. This feels particularly resonant within the museum context wherein a.) we are simultaneously learners and leaders, and b.) we are all individuals who comprise a larger collective system or institution.

Culturally Relevant Teaching

Another important pedagogy that "empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes" is that of *culturally relevant (or responsive) teaching*. This approach acknowledges the impact our culture has on our learning styles and behavior, that "even without being consciously aware of it, culture determines how we think, believe, and behave." Thus, culturally responsive teaching is learner-centered, relevant to each learner's cultural identity, and emphasizes the importance of recognizing and nurturing unique cultural strengths. Though there are some similarities to critical pedagogy, culturally relevant pedagogy urges cooperative action grounded in cultural understanding and the student's own ways of knowing and doing.

More generally, outside the classroom—and perhaps most relevant to the museum as a whole—cultural responsiveness is the ability to learn from and relate respectfully with people of your own culture as well as those from other cultures. When working with adults (visitors or colleagues), it is essential to establish an environment of inclusion through respect and connectedness. We can approach conversation with an aim to co-construct knowledge and be inclusive of participants' ideas, perspectives, and experiences. There should be an equitable treatment of all participants with an invitation to point out any behaviors, practices, and policies that discriminate. Lastly, our perspective should be realistically hopeful of people and their capacity to change.[194]

A Critically Reflective Practice

As the above mentioned pedagogies point out, the way we facilitate, interact, and participate in conversation–whether with visitors in the galleries or with our colleagues in the office— depends on us become more open and self-aware practitioners ourselves. One way of doing

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[194] Ginsberg, M., & Wlodkowski, R. *Diversity and motivation: Culturally responsive teaching in college*. 2009 San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

so is through *critical self-reflection*, a process that helps make meaning of an experience. It moves beyond typical reflection, which involves being aware of the assumptions that govern our actions, towards a deeper practice in which we begin to question the meaning and origin of our presuppositions and may develop alternative behaviors.

A critically reflective practice allows us to understand the way socially dominant perspectives may be restrictive, and enables new, more empowering ideas and practices to take shape. Thus, critical reflection *enables social change beginning at an individual level*. And, "once individuals become aware of the hidden power of ideas they have absorbed unwittingly from their social contexts, they are then freed to make choices on their own terms."[195]

Further, when we engage in critically reflection on an institutional level, we become aware of the wider environment in which we operate. *We may also begin to grasp the social power exercised by our institution externally through its networks and relationships*.[196]

For educators, or anyone, engaging in critical reflection, the practice may raise a number of questions, about our ability to be objective in this process:

- To what extent can we, as practitioners or learners, step outside the dominant ideological context?
- To what extent can we avoid colluding with negative stereotypes, assumptions and practices?
- Are we able to challenge inequality and oppression, particularly when these are enacted in subtle, unseen ways?
- Are we at times colluding with the dominant culture by guiding a participant's reflection (or our own) so that we may avoid engaging with issues of power and control?[197]

As Hannah Heller earlier illustrated from her experience, it is easy for educators and other members of museum staff to choose to *not* engage in social issues. However, if we are serious and committed to creating change as an institution, then practitioners must engage in

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[195] Fook, J., Beyond reflective practice: reworking the "critical" in critical reflection. Keynote speech for conference "Professional lifelong learning: beyond reflective practice", July 3, 2006.
[196] Reynolds, M. (1998). Reflection and critical reflection in management learning. Management Learning, 29(2), 183-200.
[197] Finlay, Linda. *Reflecting on 'Reflective practice'*. Open University, 2008.

both personal reflection and *a broader social critique*. It is only through a combination of personal consciousness within a framework of critical theory that will move us towards true transformation.

A Critically *Reflexive* Practice

A key concept to support transformation involving both personal reflection and social critique is *critical reflexivity.* Very simply defined, while reflection is a process of analysis after an experience, reflexivity is an immediate process *during* the experience. A more nuanced explanation might be this: While critical reflection operates within the idea of an *objective* reality through which we conduct analysis, a critically reflexive practice acknowledges that we, in fact, operate within subjective, multiple, or *constructed* realities.[198] Critically reflexive questioning allows the practitioner to expose contradictions, doubts, dilemmas, and possibilities:

In doing so, we can expose unspoken assumptions that influence (unconsciously or otherwise) our actions and interactions: We can surface silences in conversations—what is not said or interpretations that may remain hidden or unspoken. Critically reflexive practitioners therefore question the ways in which they act and develop knowledge about their actions. This means highlighting ideologies and tacit assumptions—exploring how our own actions, conversational practices, and ways of making sense create our sense of reality.[199]

Again, moving from an individual learner to an organizational level, here are some examples of how we might practice critically reflexivity in our work:

- Be willing to engage in dialogue that is open and critical
- Recognize the need to discuss competing interests and dissenting voices in the decision making process
- Question the acceptance that there is one "rational" way of doing things
- Examine status quo strategies, policies, programs, and organizational practices
- Be aware of power relationships and their impact
- Develop awareness and curiosity about the wider environment in which you operate

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[198] Cunliffe, Ann. "On Becoming a Critically Reflexive Practitioner". *Journal of Management Education* 40 (6), 747-768.
[199] Ibid

> • Encourage staff to question their assumptions and actions, and their impact on the organization and the community at large

This idea of deep, critical questioning emerges often from educators as part of both their teaching and organizational practice. During a 2015 convening of leaders in museum education, co-hosted by Bank Street College's Leadership in Museum Education and the Education Professional Network (EdCom) of the American Alliance of Museums, attendees created a series of "beautiful, scary questions" about the future of their field. This exercise was inspired by Warren Berger's book *A More Beautiful Question* in which the author writes that a beautiful question is, "an ambitious yet actionable question that can begin to shift the way we perceive or think about something—and that might serve as a catalyst to bring about change." Attendee Karleen Gardner, Director of Learning Innovation at Minneapolis Institute of Art, reflected on her experience:

> We must challenge ourselves to find these new paths and ask beautiful, scary questions, which will inspire us to take risks and head into uncertain territory, and possibly fail. To begin exploring the strategies and solutions to these beautiful questions, we must become adaptive leaders and both individually and collectively embrace the gradual but meaningful process of change.[200]

If we accept that museums need to change—to innovate and make the institution stronger, better, more relevant—then in order to do so, museums have to create an environment where staff feel comfortable to question, critique, and challenge when necessary.

Despite the urgency of this work, it is perhaps also important to remember that this process will take dedication, resources, staff capacities, and most importantly, time and patience in the knowledge that you, as an individual, can and are making change. Wendy Ng reminds us:

> Big institutions, like museums, are slow-moving and slow-changing. As a change-maker, it never happens fast enough for you, but over my career I have begun to see a shift, albeit slowly. Try to make change in your sphere of influence and then help it ripple out. I just think, "I'm going to do the best that I can in the sandbox that I'm in and encourage others to eventually join me."

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[200] Gardner, Karleen. "Asking Beautiful, Scary Questions". Museum Education Roundtable Blog, June 2015. http://www.museumedu.org/asking-beautiful-scary-questions

Rupturing Norms by Engaging with Discomfort and Redefining Expertise

Taking on the "meaningful process of change", as discussed by Karleen Gardner in the section above, means that there will be necessary ruptures in the "business as usual" logic of the institution. If we use exercise as a metaphor, the effort to dismantle power is like moving from a sedentary lifestyle to an active one. At first, it will be extremely uncomfortable to start working out — your body will be sore after the initial movement, you may have doubts, and you will most likely feel some pain. However, after setting up a routine and moving in controlled and monitored ways, you will begin to understand your body, your limits, and push through them. Ultimately, you will start to feel the health and emotional benefits of activity. Discomfort is necessary to access holistic change. Recognizing privilege and power when you are not confronting it on a daily basis will be difficult, however in the long run it is beneficial to your well-being, as well as the well-being of others. Hannah Heller further complicates this notion of leading with discomfort in our conversation with her. Here, she refers specifically to her own positionality on discomfort as a white woman working with youths of color:

> As part of one of my earlier pilot studies on the topic of race and museum teaching I interviewed a POC educator and she said something I'll never forget. I was asking about her thoughts on the pedagogical role of discomfort (at the time I was really interested in problematizing discomfort in a field that prizes "soft" skills, emotional intelligence, etc). And she was like 'yeah, I get it, some kids need to be made to feel uncomfortable in order to shift their thinking, but for the most part I mostly see POC students and to be honest **I want to think about how to get them to feel comfortable in this space that traditionally doesn't feel safe or comfortable for them. How can I help make it feel like it's theirs too?'** She quoted Banksy, who said **art should comfort the disturbed, and disturb the comfortable.** And since then I've really shifted my teaching to thinking about well okay, I'm clearly white—these Black or Latinx kids do not need me to tell them about racism, they live with it. Yes, I want to facilitate the conversation if it's coming up for them, but if the students want to talk about color, or shapes, or what random stories or emotions are emerging from a random work that they're drawn to, I'm open to that too. Basically, what's going to help these kids feel some ownership here? That all being said, if it's a bunch of white kids from a fancy suburb or whatever, believe me they will be made to feel at least a little uncomfortable at some point during their tour.

While black and brown students may not necessarily need to be confronted with race to experience discomfort, there are constant opportunities to discuss intersections of class, gender, sexuality, ability, even further complicating race through discussions of colorism/anti-black racism. However, in order to be able to have this conversations with students or other audiences, we have to feel confident in our own ability to recognize our intersections of privilege and know where to apply solidarity. Keonna Hendrick echoes this here:

> We have to be brave and ask ourselves, individually and collectively, why are we afraid to talk about certain issues – race, gender, ability? We need to develop a personal reflective practice. Too often, fear holds us up. We have to lean into this discomfort and ask yourself, what is stopping me? We can't compartmentalize ourselves between work and home. **You can't be a part-time ally.** These issues permeate all aspects of our society so it has to impact all parts of ourselves, and our work, as well.

As mentioned before, museum educators are frontline workers; we are in contact with diverse publics every day and we see firsthand how and when people feel welcomed and included. We are also on the frontline of responding to these feelings. Historically and currently, museums have been socialized as gatekeepers of knowledge. The ways art and stories have been told are from a perspective that honors empiricism as *the* way of knowing. Because our visitors are coming from varying backgrounds, part of doing the work is also recognizing the tacit racism and classism in this prioritizing of knowledge production. A way to open this up is to invite other modes of knowledge into these spaces. Nenette Luarca-Shoaf, Director of Adult Learning and Associate Curator of Interpretation at the Art Institute of Chicago, expounds upon this in her interview:

> I think as educational theory and activist work and Indigenous knowledge have come to the center to decentering notions of expertise and privilege, we have had the space within our work to include those approaches in more conversational and learner-centered kinds of tactics. There is a kind of a respect for people because we're learning from them, whereas in academia where there are still certain kinds of expertise that are privileged are not accessible to most.

One of the ways Luarca-Shoaf has been actively decentering a privileged expertise is with a program she developed called "Intersections", an interactive lecture series that seeks to catalyze conversations about urgent social questions and current events. People come together talk with one another in new ways because of the interactive nature of the talks. One of the

important differences about "Intersections" is the way Luarca-Shoaf has created a vulnerable, safe culture of expectations for participants. She notes:

> … we take our time. We don't try to rush and teach you about the artwork. We have to set the ground rules, I always begin by saying this is not your typical gallery talk, if you don't want to stay you don't have to and setting expectations for what this is. I am most proud of this work because it's given a new framework for discussing things that as educators we want to but often times feel tied to objects.

Another initiative Luarca-Shoaf discussed is a new cooperative model to interpret art:

> We've created a system where everyone is kind of equal in the process of conceiving of an exhibition before things are installed or produced that we talk through the main goals of the exhibitions. It's interpretive planning as it's done in other institutions, but here it is very new to **decenter the curatorial voice and expertise and allow others to support the ideas that we identify together as being important.** The curator has the most presence in defining those, but we are allowed to ask questions, we're even using these words like "allowed to", and that we together decide what are the best modes through which these ideas are expressed. We are in the beginning of that process.

Part of engaging with discomfort is also recognizing and never disengaging with the reality of violence and harm. To be truly working towards a just world, there ought to be a sharing of burden and internal transformation to mirror the world we hope to create. Alyssa Machida processes this thought with us in her interview:

> I think museums need to be highly aware of their tendency to appropriate social justice issues topically, conceptually, and cerebrally **without ever truly engaging in the fight.** Museums have, and continue to, plunder and exclude the communities who have been part of the long arc of the noble struggle for rights, justice, and freedom. **There is a vast chasm separating the realm of the art museum and raw human suffering**. My hope for anyone wanting to commit to this work in museums is that we never lose sight of the reality that we are dealing with actual matters of oppression, suffering, pain, hatred, and violence. I want to share these words from Ta-Nehisi Coates:
>
> > *"But all our phrasing—race relations, racial chasm, racial justice, racial profiling, white privilege, white supremacy—serves to obscure that racism is a visceral*

experience, that it dislodges brains, blocks airways, rips muscle, extracts organs,
cracks bones, breaks teeth. You must never look away from this. You must
always remember that the sociology, the history, the economics, the graphs, the
charts, the regressions all land, with great violence, upon the body."[201]

Find Allies

In all of our conversations with these educators, a common theme that emerged was the
importance of finding allies, being an ally, and developing relationships.

Hannah Heller talks about what it means to be an ally:

> I see my role as someone who strives towards allyship as a white person to be
> **someone who models what it looks like for a white person to talk about**
> **their own complicity**, think about systems of oppression on both individual and
> systemic levels, and ultimately help students consider their privilege, and take the next
> step to think in terms of: what can I do?

Wendy Ng talks about finding strength in numbers:

> **Find and cultivate champions.** I haven't done any of this work in isolation. An
> article I co-authored with Syrus Marcus Ware and Alyssa Greenberg for the Journal of
> Museum Education talks about allyship and what that means for museum educators.[202]
> Find colleagues who are on the same page and work together. There's strength in
> numbers.

Keonna Hendrick talks about finding allies across departments and the museum, and
recognizing your individual role within a larger system:

> Radiah Harper and I wrote an article, "Doing the Work: A Discussion on Visioning and
> Realizing Racial Equity in Museums", in the *Journal of Museum Education* that addresses
> the importance of creating allyship across the museum in order to support cultural
> equity.[203] One strategy we addressed was simply having conversations within the
> education department, across other departments, and then back in our own area to share

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[201] Coates, Ta-Nehisi. *Between the World and Me*. First edition. New York: Spiegel & Grau, 2015, pg. 10.
[202] Wendy Ng, Syrus Marcus Ware & Alyssa Greenberg. "Activating Diversity and Inclusion: A Blueprint for Museum Educators as Allies and Change Makers." *Journal of Museum Education* Volume 42 Issue 2 (2017): pgs 142 - 154.
[203] Radiah Harper and Keonna Hendrick. "Doing the Work: A Discussion on Visioning and Realizing Racial Equity in Museums." *Journal of Museum Education* Volume 42 Issue 2 (2017): pgs 163 – 168.

and ask how these issues relate to our work. What are the barriers to doing this work in your own department or institution? **Recognize that you are not just working in isolation. You are doing it within a system—the institution—and a field. So understand how your efforts are a part of that.**

 Alyssa Machida also emphasizes the importance of individual commitment to this change-making endeavor within a system, and leaves us with these words:

> The institution, as a mechanism, does not care for social justice. People care. Regardless of place or position, **it has always been individuals who care and feel the urgency of the matter who have paved the way towards a better world.**

Conclusion

In this chapter, we centered the narratives of seven museum educators who are committed to a social-justice-oriented museum practice. Their rigorous approaches are grounded in critical self-reflection around their own professional and personal lived experiences—as workers, as racialized and gendered beings, as people who have experienced microaggressions and bias. Their approaches are also grounded in and informed by scholarship, activism, knowledge from peers, and knowledge from visitors.

We hope that considering these five themes—working conditions, rigorous practice, confronting whiteness, critical self-reflection, and engaging with discomfort—can function as lenses through which you can consider your own relationship to your identities; how this informs your museum work; which forms of knowledge you uplift; and sources for strategically advancing social justice in your institution. In her interview, Luarca-Shoaf wonders "[w]hat role do institutions have in contributing to a just world, and just relationships?" This collection of interviews invite you to wonder and begin drawing from these educators' experiences in order to create versions of this just world in your museums.

Section II: Practice

How to Use this Section

The following pages are a series of "worksheets" aimed at moving the *theory* you have read towards *practice*. Each is based on one of the chapters in Section I. We call them worksheets because they will involve work! They can be used across any level of the institution, but we have found them most effective when used by a cross-departmental team that also includes member(s) of your institution's leadership.

You may notice some redundancies across them, but we have left these in to acknowledge that this work is not linear and may involve consistently revisiting topics and conversations.

The worksheets are comprised of the following parts:

Inventory
A checklist format of a few guidelines and practices to have or put in place.

Internal Conversations
Prompts for dialogue around topics you should discuss as an institution, or challenging questions that invite further discussion within your museum.

Tools and Activities
Some action-oriented practices you can do as an organization to further this work.

Reading List
Resources you could use for a staff reading/discussion group in order to develop shared language and understanding around these topics.

Scenario
One worksheet also contains a scenario to help you run through a real-world example.

* * * *

Before you begin
Committing yourself and your institution to more equitable and inclusive practices is a journey. One of the first steps is to reflect on how ready we are for the road that lies ahead. Your institution may want to begin by taking the MASS Action Readiness Assessment if it has not already done so. This resource outlines some topics and questions to measure organizational assets and to identify opportunities for growth. It can be found on the MASS Action project website: www.museumaction.org.

PRACTICE: CHAPTER 1

Getting Started

Inventory

☐ I believe the case for inclusion is as much about relevance and long-term sustainability as it is about the moral imperative of social justice.
☐ I believe that museums can be sites for community healing where we are compassionate with each other and create a safe and supportive organizational culture.

Internal Conversations

o **Why.** The case for inclusion is as much about relevance and long-term sustainability as it is about the moral imperative of social justice. What is the case for inclusion within your institution? Can leaders and staff articulate the goal and vision?

o **Language.** Does your institution have a glossary of language around equity/inclusion efforts? Have you had a conversation on the terminology and developed a shared understanding of what it means, both to individuals and the institution?

o **Legacy.** In order to truly transform the museum space, we must first recognize how and why it has come to be and for whom. Do you know your institution's history, who founded it and how? Who was displaced for its creation? Who has been its traditional audience?

o **Location.** How was the museum sited in your city? Is it proximate to pedestrian spaces? Does it offer access to mass transit? Are its entrances welcoming and accessible? What message might its architectural style communicate to passersby? Your building, entrances, and gallery spaces all serve as clues to the type of visitor the institution expects to receive and, by extension, the type of visitor who is not explicitly made welcome.

o **Public Input.** Are multiple publics invited to share in the process of exhibition making at the beginning (rather than the end—i.e., public programming side) of the process? Does your museum provide discursive spaces - places where audiences can discuss and debate the ideas presented in exhibitions and collections? Do exhibitions allow for audience voices and narratives? Who decides which voices are prioritized?

o **Funding.** Has your museum considered alternate, more distributed—or at least more transparent—models of funding?

Tools & Activities

✓ **Daily Affirmations**
Resisting museum practices that undermine equity, reconciliation and justice is emotional labor. This tool is a gesture of support toward your self-care. We affirm that self-care is priority and resistance. Take a moment before you start your day (or at the end of your day) to do one of the following:
1. Reflect on one of these Self Care quotes (or one of your choosing) for 3 minutes:

- *Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is an act of self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare.* - Audre Lorde
- *Activists and caretakers who do not attend to self-care are vulnerable to burnout, and burnout in turn can breed alienation from both issues and communities… Self-care and care of others needs to be balanced.* - Layli Maparyan

2. Schedule time to read a book or make art for 20 minutes in the middle of your day.

3. Share a photo of yourself or something that brings you joy, whether privately with friends or via social media. Be sure to meditate on your needs, your skills and your talents. Remind yourself that your needs have high value and that you deserve time to devote to the things that bring you joy.

Reading Guide

Brown, Aleia, and Russell, Adrianne. "Museums & #BlackLivesMatter". medium.com, 2015.

Crenshaw, Kimberlé. *Critical Race Theory : The Key Writings That Formed the Movement*. New York: New Press, 1995.

Golding, Vivien, and Wayne Modest, eds. *Museums and Communities: Curators, Collections and Collaboration*. London Etc.: Bloomsbury, 2013.

Kinsley, R.P.; Middleton, M.; Moore, P. (2016). (Re)Frame: The Case for New Language in the 21st Century Museum. *Exhibition* (36)1, 56-63.

"(Re)fram: The Case for New Language in the 21st Century Museum", Incluseum.com, April 27, 2016.

To support the goal of work-life balance in cultural institutions, read and discuss these:

Andrew Ross, The Mental Labor Problem, Social Text 18.2 (2000), 1-31.

Do What You Love: And Other Lies About Success and Happiness by Mia Tokumitsu (Reagan Arts, 2015).

The Problem with Work: Feminism, Marxism, Antiwork Politics and Postwork Imaginaries by Kathi Weeks (Duke University Press, 2011).

PRACTICE: CHAPTER 2

Moving Toward Internal Transformation

Inventory

☐ Is DEAI work embedded in your mission and/or strategic plan?
☐ Do you have a budget allocated to this work?
☐ Do you have a diverse talent development and/or cultivation system/structure, for your current staff, as well as internships/fellowships?

Internal Conversations

o **Institutional Legacy.** Do you know your museum's origin story? What are your institutional legacies in relationship to colonialism, to segregation? What is the story you tell everyone vs. the story you tell yourself internally, and why might these be different? Who decides what story is told and what voices are prioritized?

o **Organization Structure.** What is the museum's leadership structure? Does this support/hinder this work? What are the number of layers between entry level staff and the director?

o **Responsibility and Power.** Who is charged with DEAI efforts, and where does it live within the museum's "power structure"? Is there a staff member within the organization who has all of the responsibility and yet none of the power? (Those who have the power and are tasked with the work should overlap.)

o **Upholding Equity.** What is our approach? Have we decentered whiteness? What is the impact of focusing on diversifying existing white spaces? What is the impact of working from the position of centering all voices?

o **Responsiveness.** When events happen that affect our defined community (city, group of people, etc.), what is our policy regarding making public statements in support and solidarity?

Scenario: The Museum Voice

Using the questions above and below as a framework, critique the following scenario from the perspective of the associate and director. This example is based on an actual experience in an art museum in a large multiracial city. The museum has been working to create more inclusive programs and exhibitions. The director is a white woman who has headed the museum for 10+ years. The associate is a woman of color who is new to the museum and who is the only person of color on the professional staff. Although not specifically in her job description, it is often assumed by the all-white leadership of the museum that she is the representative of and liaison to "underserved audiences."

The museum associate is asked to write a blog post about how communities of color can engage with the museum. After writing a thoughtful piece acknowledging the history of normative and oppressive behaviors within Museums, with insights on how to challenge those norms from a variety of perspectives, the blog is heavily edited – all the context providing a perspective from a non-white, non-affluent person is removed.

When asked why such bulk edits were made, the director responds:
"This blog post you wrote is nice, but it's not really right. Sure, we want to discuss what is happening in our community, but there is no reason to be critical of the museum. We are a public organization- we steer clear of anything political! Don't worry, we'll get you up to speed on the Museum way of doing things."

The outcome of this interaction was that the edited blog was posted. There was no further discussion of this between the director and the museum associate.

Unpacking the Conflict

Discussion
1. What do you think is the perspective of the director? Why do you think she edited the post very heavily? What is "the museum way of doing things?" What are the values/drawbacks of having a consistent museum voice? Is this a perspective you can relate to?

2. What is the perspective of the associate? What did she see as her goal in writing the post? What impact did the heavy editing have on her? Is this a perspective you can relate to?

3. Do the respective roles, levels of experience, and races of the two women have an impact on this interaction? In what way? Is this an example of intersectionality? What kind of coding is going on here?

4. The ideas of Awareness, Acceptance, and Action, including Active Listening, are discussed in Chapter 2. How could these ideas be used to create a different outcome for the above interaction?

5. Are the ideas of a consistent institutional voice and respect for differing staff perspectives opposed? Can they be reconciled? What do you suggest?

Moving Forward

- Using the process of Awareness, Acceptance, and Action, regularly evaluate situations, projects, programs and initiatives in order to decenter whiteness and move towards equity and empathy.
- Practice Active Listening, especially in staff meetings and project planning. Consider how the roles of position, power, and privilege affect staff interactions.
- Process the vocabulary found in the Glossary; understand the presence and impact of these terms throughout staff culture and beyond.

Tools & Activities

✓ **Measuring Growth.** How are you going to document and measure growth in this work? Choose a racial justice or empathetic framework like Empathetic Museum Maturity Model (see Addenda, pgs 197-200) or Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist Organization (see Addenda, pg 201) and reflect on your institution's progress each year.

✓ **Gender & Racial Pay Equity.** HR & Leadership analyze staff wages to uncover gender / race pay gap. An analysis of gender pay gaps can be found at GlassDoor.com.

✓ **White Privilege and Oppression.** Analyze the characteristics of white privilege and how they might be showing up in your organizational culture. Use resources like:
  - "White Supremacy Culture" from *Dismantling Racism* (see Addenda, pgs 203-207)
  - The conversation guide on Race, White Supremacy, and Whiteness from *The Dreamspace Project*, available at the MASS Action project website www.museumaction.org

Reading Guide

Brown, A. June 25, 2015. "The Confederate Flag Does Not Belong in a Museum", *Slate.com*

Jennings, G and Rizzi, J. 2017. "Museums, White Privilege, and Diversity: A Systemic Perspective", *Dimensions*.

McIntosh, P. 1989 "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack"

PRACTICE: CHAPTER 3
Changing Museum Culture: Making the Case for Inclusion

Inventory
☐ I understand inclusion efforts must extend beyond programs and community outreach and must impact the internal organizational culture of the museum.
☐ I have funding resources allocated to inclusion work because it is a priority for my institution.
☐ Our museum culture encourages staff to share differing perspectives and staff are comfortable with discomfort.
☐ I understand that the historical culture of an organization continues to have an impact, and that the legacy of the elitism of museums has become a systemic bias that impedes work towards developing a more inclusive culture.
☐ All staff are encouraged and expected to be working towards greater cultural competency; expectations are made explicit through job descriptions; and staff are held accountable through performance evaluation measures.
☐ My museum acknowledges its responsibility to the wider community, and recognizes that museums can be sites for social inclusion when they collectively work with community stakeholders to address social issues. A museum involved in its community builds trust.
☐ Does your museum have any of the following?
   • Affinity Networks or Employee Resource Groups
   • A Diversity Council
   • A Diversity and Inclusion Department
   • Formal internal communication about DEAI

Internal Conversations

o **Opportunities and Challenges.** What in your museum's culture supports an inclusion initiative? What values and/or principles exist or could be developed or instituted to ground the work and support authentic engagement? What is keeping your museum from moving towards greater inclusion? What barriers, challenges, patterns of resistance exist in the museum that will impact your implementation of effective inclusion initiatives and practices?

o **Understand White Supremacy**. Use this resource to develop an awareness of the characteristics of white supremacy—perfectionism, sense of urgency, defensiveness, quantity over quality, worship of the written word, paternalism, either/or thinking, power hoarding, fear of open conflict, individualism, progress is bigger/more, objectivity, and the right to comfort—and have an conversation to reflect on how these behaviors impact your work culture. "White Supremacy Culture" from *Dismantling Racism* (see Addenda, pgs 203-207).

o **Avoid Insider-Outsider Group mentality.** Every organization has insider and outsider groups. The insider-outsider group dynamics often define which group identities are

included within an organizational culture and which are not. Depending on if you are an insider or an outsider, your experience within an organization is quite different. Front-line staff, often in positions with no power, are the closest staff to our audiences. Staff that implement programs and are working directly with our constituents often receive direct feedback, both positive and negative. How often are staff in these positions consulted by organization leaders when they are making decisions? Do all of your staff and partners have an anonymous space in which to voice their own grievances and be heard? Addressing insider-outsider group dynamics within the organizational culture allows all staff to feel fully engaged in the organization.

o **Change Is Hard. And it takes Everybody.** Change within an individual requires motivation, discipline, and courage. Change within a system requires all of those things on a larger scale. Museums are systems. There are several subsystems that make up individual museums, including various departments, functions and audiences. Change in one area of the system or one subsystem is not effective. **For large-scale, organizational change to happen, change must occur across the entire system**, and it must directly involve the entire organization in the inclusion initiative in some significant way. Involving the entire organization clearly sends the message that inclusion is an expectation of everyone within the museum; it is not the responsibility of one person or one department, but must become part of the formula for how the museum conducts day-to-day business. How is this expectation communicated to staff? Is it made explicit in everyone's job descriptions, work culture plan, etc.? Is it incorporated into performance evaluation measures?

o **Considerations for an Inclusive Culture.** To foster inclusive work culture, it is important to consider the following traits: Creating safety (respect); acknowledging others (recognition); dealing with conflict and differences; showing an ability and willingness to learn (developing cultural competence); having and giving voice; and encouraging representation.[204] How does your organizational culture embrace these traits? Consider each and how you might better foster them internally (for staff) and externally (for the visitor). For example, what "safety cues" are offered to your visitors? Do you have gender neutral restrooms, a prayer space, wayfinding in multiple languages/modes when pertinent, etc.?

o **Making the Case.** While the moral imperative for inclusion should be a strong enough argument to embark on an inclusion initiative, often it is the business case argument that will influence leaders who are responsible for the bottom line of the museum. Creating the talking points about the benefits of inclusion on the organization through creating a more diverse audience, increasing long-term relevance of the museums, developing a diverse workforce, increasing employee engagement and morale, and increasing innovation and creativity within the work practices of the organization will all have a positive impact on the

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[204] Ferdman, Bernardo M. 2014. "The Practice of Inclusion in Diverse Organizations." In *Diversity at Work: The Practice of Inclusion*, by Bernardo M. Ferdman and Barbara R. Deane, 3-54. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 40.

organization. **How does your institution articulate the value of inclusion for your organization?**

Tools & Activities

✓ **Understand your Culture.** In order to change organizational culture, characteristics of the culture must be explicitly understood. If your museum does not already have an explicit work culture, take some time to reflect on and articulate what the culture is. Use the lens of Artifacts, Espoused Beliefs, and Values and Basic Assumptions. (see Chapter 3, page 39)

✓ **Assess.** Choose a framework like the Empathetic Museum Maturity Model (see Addenda, pgs 197-200) or Anti-Racist Continuum (see Addenda, pg 201) to assess where you museum is at this moment, and to understand the journey that is ahead.

✓ **Gather data.** Data is hard to argue with, and often can be the fall back to either make course corrections during an initiative or to help convince resistors that change is needed. Use the data gathered to establish a baseline and, most importantly, to develop key success indicators for going forward on inclusion initiatives.
  1. Internal Qualitative
     - Staff DEAI engagement surveys (see Addenda, pgs 209-211)
     - Human Resources data (recruiting and hiring statistics, promotion data, performance ratings and turnover rates)
  2. Internal Quantitative
     - Exit interviews (comparing those of employees from marginalized groups vs those from the dominant culture)
     - Focus groups with employees.
  3. External data
     - Visitor demographics
     - Survey outside the museum to surface information about how the museum is perceived by members of various communities, and how the organization can use its resources to address issues that are important to these communities

✓ **Measure and Recalibrate.** It is important to set indicators and measure progress of inclusion efforts. What is working and what is not? Assessing the impact against the strategy is important to determine if new interventions are needed to achieve the objectives of the initiative.

✓ **Focus on Staff.** For an organization to implement a successful inclusion initiative, staff must learn new competencies. If staff are not given the education necessary to develop new competencies, they will continue to practice in the same manner, whether that is interacting with staff or creating products and services for external audiences. Challenging the status quo by increasing the intercultural competence of staff and creating inclusive work environments will lead new cultures that shape the strategies, mission, values and purpose of museums. It is important to assess and to train and then to assess again. There are

many Cultural Competence Assessment tools you can use. One of these is the **Intercultural Development Inventory**.

Reading Guide

Cultura Conscious Podcast, www.culturaconscious.com

Brookfield, Stephen D. 2004. *The Power of Critical Theory.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. Center for the Future of Museums. 2010. *Demographic Transformation and the Future of Museums.* Washington D.C.: American Alliance of Museums.

Ferdman, Bernardo M. 2014. "The Practice of Inclusion in Diverse Organizations." In *Diversity at Work: The Practice of Inclusion*, by Bernardo M. Ferdman and Barbara R. Deane, 3-54. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Jones, Kenneth, and Tema Okun. 2001. *White Supremacy Culture.* Accessed February 7, 2017. http://www.cwsworkshop.org/PARC_site_B/dr-culture.html.

Kaplan, Mark, and Mason Donovan. 2013. *The Inclusion Dividend: Why Investing in Diversity and Inclusion Pays Off.* Brookline: Bibliomotion, Inc.

Miller, Frederick A., and Judith H. Katz. 2002. *The Inclusion Breakthrough: Unleashing the Real Power of Diversity.* San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.

Moore, Porchia. "The Danger of the D Word". Incluseum.com, January 20, 2014.

Ng, Wendy, and Syrus Marcus Ware. 2014. "Excellence and Equity?: A Reflection on the Diversification of Museums." In *Multiculturalism in Art Museums Today*, by Joni Boyd Acuff and Laura Evans. New York: Rowman and Littlefield.

PRACTICE: CHAPTER 4
Inclusive Leadership

Inventory

☐ I recognize inclusion as a core value. I am (becoming) comfortable interacting across various dimensions and see the value and worth of all people, internally and externally.

☐ In order to become more inclusive, I understand I need to "walk the walk" and work on changing myself as well as the rest of the organization.

☐ As a leader, I seek input from all levels of the organization and understand that leveraging different viewpoints creates better solutions for organizational and work challenges.

☐ I am committed to inclusion, even in uncertain situations when I anticipate that being inclusive might be challenging—e.g. to our board or other stakeholders.

☐ I understand, as a business imperative, inclusion is as much about relevance and long-term sustainability as it is about the moral imperative of social justice.

Internal Conversations

o **Failure as Learning.** The risk of failure is real, but inclusive leadership encourages leaders to have humility. Leaders are not required to have all of the answers. Failures allow the organization to learn together and create safety for staff to also take risks. DISCUSSION: How comfortable is your organization with failure? Is there an understanding that failures allow the organization to learn together and create safety for staff to take risks?

o **Evaluation.** Who evaluates leaders? Does your institution perform 360 reviews? Do your performance evaluation questions include traits of inclusive leadership (self-awareness, cultural intelligence, collaboration, etc.)?

o **Staff input.** As museums evolve to more inclusive organizations, leadership styles must be less hierarchical. Welcoming input from all levels of the institution must become the new normal. Is there a structure in place for staff input in decision-making? How often are front-line staff consulted by leaders when making decisions? How many layers exist between you and junior level staff?

o **Professional Development for Future Leaders.** How are leaders developed in your institution? Is there a culture of mentorship, an internal pipeline, and/or are there development opportunities? How many promotions of POC/non-POC versus outside hires did you have last year?

o **Professional Development for Current Leaders.** Simply embedding inclusion into the institutional vision is not enough. Leaders must model the desired behaviors for the rest of the staff. How often are you or other leadership staff attending cultural competence training? Do all supervisors have the resources to dismantle their own biases?

Tools & Activities

✓ **Assess Yourself.** Self-awareness is crucial to inclusive leadership, and involves reflecting on your core values, identity, emotions, motives, and goals. Though it may sound overly simplistic, taking a leadership style assessment can help you understand your strengths, weaknesses, and potential blindspots. You may also want to assess your conflict / conflict resolution style through a similar tool, as well.

✓ **Assess Your In-Group:** As a reflective exercise to help understand your own biases, conduct an audit of the people you are most closely surrounded by (i.e., your closest working relationships). Is this group homogenous?

✓ **Cultivate your Cultural Competency & Cultural Intelligence:**
  - Attend formal training programs on recognizing bias, cultural competency, cross-cultural communication; as well as informal training opportunities.
  - Find a mentor or role-model at a similar level, but with a different perspective or background, for discussion of difficult topics in an honest and transparent relationship.
  - Put yourself into situations that will challenge your beliefs and norms, or situations (community events, etc.) where you may be the minority group, and learn through listening.

✓ **Develop Practices to Shape an Inclusive Environment**
  - Regularly review policies and programs to ensure that the espoused values of your inclusion efforts and your museum's behavior are in alignment.
  - Address competing commitments or priorities that may be in conflict with each other. Encourage a work culture where difficult, controversial, or sensitive topics are discussed, rather than these types of conversations being seen as disruptive or uncomfortable.
  - Ensure that everyone is engaging in this work head-on. It cannot be seen as the work of just a small group in the institution; everyone should be held accountable.

Reading Guide

Arnold Lehman, former Director of the Brooklyn Museum, once said: *"The most important book a museum director can read is the US Census."* Along those lines, try reading:

> Frey, W.H. *Diversity Explosion: How New Racial Demographics are Remaking America.* Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2014.

For more discussion on how to create a more inclusive leadership style and organizational culture, see:

> Gallegos, Placida V. 2014. "The Work of Inclusive Leadership: Fostering Authentic Relationships, Modeling Courage and Humility." In *Diversity At Work: The Practice of Inclusion*, by Bernardo M. Ferdman and Barbara R. Deane. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

> Moua, Mai. 2010. *Culturally Intelligent Leadership: Leading Through Intercultural Interactions.* New York: Business Expert Press, LLC.

> Northouse, Peter G. 2016. *Leadership: Theory and Practice.* Los Angeles: Sage.

PRACTICE: CHAPTER 5

Interpretation: Liberating the Narrative

Inventory

☐ My museum creates interpretation that is conversational, open source (sharing authority with audiences, particularly those directly affected by the legacies of our spaces), and attentive to historic and current absences in the institutional narrative.

☐ Exhibitions at my museum offer multisensory experiences and/or opportunities for visitor participation.

☐ Exhibition planning at my museum invites community conversation and provides a platform for co-creation and shared authority.

☐ There are places in my museum where visitor, community, and non-expert voices are represented.

☐ The research informing my museum's interpretation is expansive, inclusive, and multi-vocal.

Internal Conversations

o **Whose voice/perspective is missing?** When developing labels and other interpretive content, consider the narrative you are constructing. From whose perspective is the story being told? Whose story might be missing? If you feel bound by historic records, consider if there are other artifacts and records you might use to tell a different—though not necessarily oppositional—story.

o **Consider intersectionality.** Have you considered how various identities—sex, gender, race, ability, religion, class, sexual orientation, indigeneity, etc.—informs the stories you tell and how they are received by visitors? Select one object, or an entire display/exhibition, and discuss its interpretation from this intersectional perspective.

o **Co-Construction**. How often do you invite community voices to co-create the exhibition experience? When representing a particular culture or experience, is the interpretation grounded in first-hand accounts? Are there places within your interpretive content that offer personal narratives or counter-storytelling?

Tools & Activities

✓ **Comprehensive program review.** Conduct a critical review and culturally responsive evaluation of your institution's interpretation program (from labels to guided tours). You critical review might include some of these strategies: counting the number of artworks by people of color in an art museum; spending a half-day navigating a site's grounds in a wheelchair; mapping where audio stops about women or minority populations exist within the grounds of a historic site or museum.

✓ **Interpretive plan.** Create an interpretive plan that includes "reminder" protocols, inviting those responsible for interpretation (interpreters/educators/curators) to "add a lens," considering the perspective of gender, class, race, etc., when creating interpretive content.

✓ **Reject the fantasy of neutrality.** Museums are not and have never been politically or socially neutral spaces.[205] In fact they wield immense power to classify, define, record, interpret, and communicate social values, historical perspective, artistic production, and more. Consider ways to authentically and ethically understand the perspective and power of your professional and institutional voice.

✓ **Non-negotiables.** Identify your institution's non-negotiable guiding principles. What perspectives and values are most important to your interpretation? What topics are unacceptable due to their triggering nature and the historic and current legacies of oppression they enact?[206]

Reading Guide

Frank, Chandra. "Policy Briefing: Toward a Decolonial Curatorial Practice." *Discover Society*, June 3, 2015.

Kinsley, R. P., & Wittman, A. "Bringing self-examination to the center of social justice work in museums." *Museum* 2016: 40-45.

Sandell, R., & Nightingale, E. (2012). *Museums, Equality, and Social Justice.* Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

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[205] http://futureofmuseums.blogspot.com/2016/08/beyond-neutrality.html
[206] https://abbemuseum.wordpress.com/2017/07/19/developing-the-skills-for-decolonizing-work

PRACTICE: CHAPTER 7

Collections: How We Hold the Stuff We Hold in Trust

Inventory

☐ My museum has a collections policy that encourages the acquisition of objects that not only fill gaps in current holdings, but also reveal underrepresented or suppressed narratives.

☐ Communities, who previously held ownership of an object, or whose story it is telling, are invited to participate in decisions on how the object is used, displayed, conserved, and interpreted.

☐ My museum's collections are regularly accessed by a broad range of non-scholars when they are not on display.

Internal Conversations

o **History and Context.** What was the context in which your objects were collected? Do curators or interpretation staff know where your collections come from and how they got to your museum? Who founded your collections, and where did their wealth come from? If your museum that has primarily collected with/from white communities, how can your collections grow to represent the stories of communities of color? What work must you do to prepare for shifting the dominant narrative your collections tell?

o **Who has access?** Are collections only accessible when an institution decides to display them in exhibition? Is access limited to scholars and other subject specialists? Are collections electronically accessible? If so, are there opportunities to engage, modify, and revise knowledge about objects or collections of objects? Do you allow community members to access your collections in ways that don't just benefit the museum, but benefit their particular interests? Are youth allowed to engage with collections in ways that interest and benefit them?

o **Lifting Up Suppressed Narratives.** Whose stories do your collections tell? Whose stories do they not tell? What are the stories you want to collect around? What are the dynamic, compelling narratives of our time? Which stories lost over time do you want to lift up? Do you invite participation and knowledge creation from the communities you serve? Do listen to community members who first held ownership of an object or whose story it is telling, and involve their perspective in the display and interpretation of these objects? Do you budget for their time in this process?

o **Working with Active Consent.** Which communities are represented in your collections but not in your relationships with local groups? How often and to what degree do you engage with dominant audiences versus marginalized ones? If members of a marginalized community say "no" to an action you plan to take, will you listen?

<u>Tools & Activities</u>

✓ **Mapping for Equity.** Where have you been collecting from in recent years? Take geographic data of where the objects you have acquired in the last five years were created/and or collected. <u>Tool tip</u>: Excel has a plugin that allows you to put data in a spreadsheet on a map called Power Map.

✓ **Making Histories Visual.** Make a bar graph or other visual tool showing the years when all the works in one of your collections (e.g., African, Americas, etc.) were created, and another showing when they were initially acquired—not necessarily acquired by your museum, but the year they were first collected. What stories do these graphs tell us? This may help make visual the correlation and impacts of colonization, or in the case of Africa, the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. Here is one example: https://github.com/nikhiltri/african-collections-transatlantic-slave-trade-vis

<u>Reading Guide</u>

Read this book:

Lonetree, Amy. *Decolonizing Museums: Representing Native America in National and Tribal Museums*. First Peoples: New Directions in Indigenous Studies. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012.

And this article:

trivedi, nikhil. "Opression: A Museum Primer". Incluseum.com, February 4, 2015.

And watch this video:

trivedi, nikhil. Ignite Talk at MCN, 2015.
http://nikhiltrivedi.com/2015/11/05/text-from-my-ignite-talk-at-mcn-2015.html

PRACTICE: CHAPTER 8

Pedagogy

Inventory

☐ Senior management prioritizes a social justice lens within our education or interpretation strategy.
☐ There is a strategic, unified vision and shared foundation of support for this kind of work.
☐ I can use my work and the privileges I have to challenge the status quo.
☐ I recognize vulnerability is important. I am okay admitting when I am wrong.
☐ My museum encourages risk and understands that failure provides a valuable learning opportunity.
☐ We all have knowledge. Does your museum privilege "one way of knowing" (academic expertise) or is there room for other ways of knowing, such as cultural experience, lived experience, etc.?
☐ Do you have a cross-functional team that connects educators with curators (scientists, content experts, etc. depending on your type of museum)?
☐ In my work - whether in the galleries, or through interpretation, I encourage the sharing of counter narratives, or multiple readings of an object. I try to add a feminist lens, bring in queer studies, critical race theory, etc.
☐ At my museum, we approach conversation with an aim to co-construct knowledge and be inclusive of participants' ideas, perspectives, and experiences.
☐ My perspective is generally hopeful of people and their capacity to change.

Internal Conversations

o **Decentering Authority.** How is your museum working to decenter the "authoritative" curatorial voice and allowing others to collaborate on determining how to best express ideas? How are educators working collaboratively within the institution to ensure that the information presented is accessible, relevant, and culturally responsive?

o **Leaning in to Discomfort.** Are you and/or educators (guides, docents, interpreters) at your museum comfortable discussing intersections of class, gender, sexuality, ability, etc.? Are you comfortable leaning into discomfort? In what ways do you prepare and encourage yourself to do this?

o **Identifying Barriers.** What are the barriers to doing this work in your own department or institution? Talk to people in the education department, talk across departments, and then go back to your own to share and ask how these issues relate to your own work.

o **Self-Reflecting.** Sometimes the barriers that keep us from doing this work are personal. Sometimes we afraid to give something up. Try asking yourself: "Sitting with the privileges I have, what am I afraid to give up? What am I holding on to?" Is it authority, power, resources, something else? Are we at times colluding with the dominant culture so that we may avoid engaging with issues of power and control? Figure out where this personal fear lies and work from there. Recognize that you may have to give up power for inclusion.

o **Creating a Culture of Critique.** How are you modeling or working to create an environment where staff (your colleagues, students, etc.) feel comfortable to question, critique, and challenge when necessary? Are you able to challenge inequality and oppression, particularly when these are enacted in subtle, unseen ways?

Tools & Activities

✓ **Ask who's not here?** Stand in a gallery and ask yourself: whose voice is not represented here, whose story is not being told?

✓ **Practice Critical Reflexivity**:
- Be willing to engage in dialogue that is open and critical
- Recognize the need to discuss competing interests and dissenting voices in the decision making process
- Question the acceptance that there is one "rational" way of doing things
- Examine status quo strategies, policies, programs, and organizational practices
- Be aware of power relationships and their impact
- Develop awareness and curiosity about the wider environment in which you operate
- Encourage staff/colleagues/students to question their assumptions and actions, and their impact on the organization and the community at large

✓ **Find and cultivate champions.**
Anti-oppression work needs to be a cross-departmental effort if there are to be systemic changes. This work cannot and should not be done in isolation, and when it is relegated solely to museum educators, it risks becoming inauthentic and falling back into the traditional patterns. Find colleagues across the museum who are on the same page and work together towards a common goal.

Reading Guide

Do your homework.

Read theory by scholars like **Sara Ahmed** and **Kimberlé Crenshaw**.

Ahmed, Sara. *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2012.

Crenshaw, Kimberlé. "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics." *University of Chicago Legal Forum* 1989, no. 1 (n.d.): 139–167.

Crenshaw, Kimberle. "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color." *Stanford Law Review* 43, no. 6 (1991): 1241–1299.

Crenshaw, Kimberlé. "Why Intersectionality Can't Wait." *The Washington Post.* September 24, 2015.

This entire issue of the JME:

"Identifying and Transforming Racism in Museum Education." *Journal of Museum Education* Volume 42, Issue 2 (2017).

Also see:

Acuff, Joni Boyd, and Laura Evans, eds. *Multiculturalism in art museums today*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2014.

Dewhurst, Marit. *Social Justice Art: A Framework for Activist Art Pedagogy*. Harvard Education Press, Cambridge, MA, 2014.

Quinn, Therese M., John Ploof, and Lisa J. Hochtritt, eds. *Art and social justice education: Culture as commons*. Routledge, 2012.

Section III: Additional Material

Key Terms

Or What We Mean When We Say What We Say

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Why is it important to develop common vocabulary within your organization to talk about concepts such as racism, white supremacy, power, privilege, inclusion, etc.?

Coded Language German Lopez writes that "[c]oded language describes phrases that are targeted so often at a specific group of people or idea that eventually the circumstances of a phrase's use are blended into the phrase's meaning."[207] Race Forward explains that "coded racial harassment avoids the use of explicit slurs, substituting them instead with seemingly race-neutral terms that can disguise racial animus. It injects language that triggers racial stereotypes and other negative associations without the same risk of public condemnation and scrutiny that comes with explicit racism."

Community An affiliated group of people. Sometimes the term is used in museums for its convenience, expedience and as short-hand for describing a stakeholder group. The word can be reductive, for example when used to describe a large group of different people by focusing on a single attribute these people share. The word can also feel racially coded, as in "the black community". If racial groups are referred to as a monolithic or as a singular community, the result may be erasure of difference and/or the racist implication that all those who are assigned a racial category in a given society are connected to or know each other.[208]

Decolonization The process of bringing an end to colonization. In 1960 the United Nations adopted The Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, which definitively states, "Believing that the process of liberation is irresistible and irreversible and that, in order to avoid serious crises, an end must be put to colonialism and all practices of segregation and discrimination associated therewith…"[209] In the context of museums addressing Settler Colonialism in the United States, Amy Lonetree states that, "A decolonizing museum practice must involve assisting (tribal) communities in addressing the legacies of unresolved

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[207] Lopez, German. "The sneaky language today's politicians use to get away with racism and sexism", https://www.vox.com/2016/2/1/10889138/coded-language-thug-bossy
[208] Moore, Porchia. "Danger of the D Word", https://incluseum.com/2014/01/20/the-danger-of-the-d-word-museums-and-diversity
[209] UN Declaration on Decolonization. http://www.un.org/en/decolonization/declaration.shtml

grief." [210] Decolonization in museums may also refer to the right of colonized or formerly colonized peoples to self-determination as expressed through: 1) the return of cultural heritage held by museums 2) the right to being consulted in the creation of museum narratives and spaces representing them AND/OR 3) the museum itself addressing the ways in which knowledge systems of colonizing peoples dominate museum activities to the exclusion of knowledge systems of colonized peoples.

Emotional Labor

*"Emotional labor refers to the process by which workers are expected to manage their feelings in accordance with organizationally **defined** rules and guidelines."* [211]

Empathy

*"The action of understanding, being aware of, being sensitive to, and vicariously experiencing the feelings, thoughts, and experience of another of either the past or present **without having the feelings, thoughts, and experience fully communicated** in an objectively explicit manner."* [212]

Most people think of empathy as a personal, individual trait. We acknowledge the importance of individual empathy in museum work, but in this chapter, we are also encouraging museums to be institutionally empathetic. We believe that until museums are, "understanding…aware of…sensitive to… and vicariously experiencing the feelings, thoughts, and experiences [of their communities] past or present" they will not be diverse or inclusive, either internally or externally.

Engagement The process of building or entering into a relationship. In museums this word is often used in conjunction with "Audience" or "Community". It also functions as a broad category applied to many different museum activities and practices. While engagement or lack of engagement is implied in the activities of all staff and museum activities, sometimes the function of engagement is perceived as separate from traditionally research focused functions such as collections management and curation.

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[210] Lonetree, Amy. *Decolonizing museums: representing native America in national and tribal museums*. University of North Carolina Press, 2012.
[211] Wharton, Amy S. "The Sociology of Emotional Labor", from the *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 35:147-165 (Volume publication date 11 August 2009).
[212] (Emphasis added.) Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2013.

Equity Unlike equality, equity is used to refer to conditions or processes that, while fair and just, will not look the same way for everybody. In this way, equity recognizes that remedies and actions that address inequality must take oppression and intersectionality into account. Intersectionality is a term that describes how our identities shape the way we experience oppressions in ways different from one another. Oppression is how/when systems (the interconnections between institutions, laws, policies, culture etc.) work to reinforce the dominance of one group of people over another. Equity asks us to acknowledge our position in relation to identities that give us privilege, access class, money and power, and to consider these experiences when designing solutions to make society more fair and just.

Inclusion The way that many museums use the idea of "inclusion" implies assimilation into dominant, oppressive systems. In this model of "inclusion," a museum calls the shots on who should be included and how. Likewise, in assimilationist diversity, diversity implies that whiteness is and always will be the norm; all else will be considered different or diverse. These models for diversity and inclusion allow museums to not only perpetuate oppressive systems, but to enjoy the reputational benefits associated with diversity and inclusion without the work of institutional change.

Institutional legacies The larger, historical network of relationships with community groups, funders, collectors, and others that must be reckoned with in order to better understand present-day challenges.[213]

Intersectionality A term coined in 1989 [214]by American feminist legal scholar, critical race theorist, and civil rights advocate Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, intersectionality proposes that people possess multiple, layered identities, including race, gender, class, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and ability, among others. Building on the insights of previous Black and queer women and groups, including the Combahee River Collective, which, in its 1977 position statement, described a vision of Black feminism that opposed all forms of oppression[215], intersectionality refers to the ways in which these identities intersect to affect individuals' realities and lived

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[213] Rose Paquet Kinsley and Aletheia Wittman. "Bringing Self-Examination to the Center of Social Justice Work in Museums", *Museum* Magazine, Jan/Feb 2016. http://www.aam-us.org

[214] Crenshaw, Kimberlé. "Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A Black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory, and antiracist politics." *The University of Chicago Legal Forum*, 140:139-167, 1989.

[215] For a history of the term, see "Black Feminism and Intersectionality" by Sharon Smith (2013-14), *International Socialist Review*, #91.

experiences, thereby shaping their perspectives, worldview, and relationships with others. Exposing these multiple identities can help clarify the ways a person can simultaneously experience privilege and oppression. For example, a Black woman in America does not experience gender inequalities in exactly the same way as a white woman, nor racial oppression identical to that experienced by a Black man. Each race and gender intersection produces a qualitatively distinct life experience in this illustration, as do all other locations where two or more identities intersect. Black feminist Patricia Hill Collins refers to this system as the "matrix of domination." Because these axes of oppression that intersect are continually shifting and contextually dependent, one may be privileged based on one axis in one situation, yet disadvantaged in a different situation.[216]

Parity The state or condition of being equal, especially regarding status or pay.

Racial Justice Race Forward defines racial justice as: "Systematic fair treatment of people of all races that results in equitable opportunities and outcomes for everyone."[217]

Racism The Anti-Defamation League defines racism as the belief that a particular race is superior or inferior to another, that a person's social and moral traits are predetermined by his or her inborn biological characteristics. Racial separatism is the belief, most of the time based on racism, that different races should remain segregated and apart from one another.

Radical hope Jonathon Lear explores the concept of radical hope in his book of the same title. One summary is "a daunting form of commitment to a goodness in the world that transcends one's current ability to grasp it."[218]

Systemic racism The Center for Racial Justice Innovation's Race Forward initiative defines structural systemic racism as: "racial bias among institutions and across society. It involves the cumulative and compounding effects of an array of societal factors including the history, culture, ideology, and interactions of institutions and policies that systematically privilege white people and disadvantage people of color." Systemic racism presents itself in across all environments,

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[216] Intergroup Resources, "Intersectionality," http://www.intergroupresources.com/intersectionality.

[217] Race Forward: The Center for Racial Justice Innovation, "About Race Forward," https://www.raceforward.org/about

[218] Ryan LaMothe, "Radical Hope: Ethics in Face of Cultural Devastation (Book Review)," review of *Radical Hope: Ethics in Face of Cultural Devastation*, by Jonathan Lear, *APA Div. 39 (Psychoanalysis)* Vol. XXVII, No. 4: 52-55, http://www.apadivisions.org/division-39/publications/reviews/radical-hope.aspx.

yes even in the most liberal "safe spaces," often indiscernibly. This occurs because systemic racism is often coded, or hidden, and is even unintentional, but still problematic and detrimental to creating equitable museums. Race Forward explains that "coded racial harassment avoids the use of explicit slurs, substituting them instead with seemingly race-neutral terms that can disguise racial animus. It injects language that triggers racial stereotypes and other negative associations without the same risk of public condemnation and scrutiny that comes with explicit racism."

Universal Design - A design standard premised on the idea that design outcomes must be inclusive of every user. The standard sets the bar higher than add-on accommodations for users with disabilities as outlined in the ADA, and instead assumes that access for all users must be at the core of the design. It also dismisses the notion of designing for a "standard" user, as this dismisses the realities of human variation in experience and thus is regressive and counter to innovation.

Maturity Model

A Metric for Institutional Transformation in Museums

Empathy is one's ability to connect with others by relating to their personal experiences. It takes insight and a willingness to engage. The Empathetic Museum posits that cultural institutions can relate to their communities in the same way, and should align the work they do with the experiences, values, and needs of the communities they serve.

This assessment tool and associated resources can help organizations look within, and move towards a more empathetic future.

How to use the Maturity Model:

Materials: Overview & Characteristic Definitions (2 pgs), Rubric (2 pgs)

In the rubric, each characteristic is listed in the far left column. The columns to the right represent increasing levels of maturity in empathetic practice.

As you examine each characteristic, evaluate the level to which your institution embodies that characteristic and check the boxes that apply. Checked boxes identify your institution's current level of achievement, ranging from Regressive to Proactive. Unchecked boxes represent goals for your institution, and can inspire organizational change, the reallocation of resources, or whatever it takes to reach the highest level of empathy for all characteristics.

This model is designed to be flexible for institutions of varying size, location, and mission (with moderate & appropriate modification). If you have suggestions to make the tool more useful to your museum or to the field, please contact us at empatheticmuseum@gmail.com.

Key Terms:

Anchor Institution*: A key institution of civil society, such as library system, university, health system, educational system. Museums should be and should view themselves as anchor institutions. (Lord and Blankenberg 2015)
**museums are not anchor institutions by default; this position requires community buy-in*

Soft Power: "The power of influence rather than of force or finance;" soft power resources are "ideas, knowledge, values, and culture." (Lord and Blankenberg 2015).

White Privilege: "An invisible package of assets that [white people] can count on cashing in each day...." Conditions that are viewed by whites as "morally neutral, normative, and average, and also ideal, so that when we work to benefit others, this is seen as work that will allow them to be more like us. "(McIntosh, 1990)

Employment Equity: Adherence to socially just guidelines for hiring in terms of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, pay scale.

Decolonization: Deconstructing the Euro-centric, colonial origin of museums to reframe the way objects are presented, narratives constructed, and cultures privledged in interpretation, exhibition design, and educational programming.

Lord, G. D., & Blankenberg, N. (2015). *Cities, Museums and Soft Power.* American Association of Museums.
McIntosh, P. (1990) White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Backpack. ted. coe.wayne.edu

Empathetic Museum Contributors: Gretchen Jennings, Stacey Mann, Janeen Bryant, Matt Kirchman, Rainey Tisdale, Elissa Frankle, Jim Cullen, Jessica Konigsberg, Alyssa Greenberg, and many others who have generously shared their time and expertise.

Institutional Identity & Relationships (internal/external)

Civic Vision

Civic vision is a matter of imagination and behavior. For museums to be 21st century civic leaders and relevant to the societies in which they reside (i..e. anchor institutions), their leaders must have the imagination (vision) to see their institutions in such a role: that they matter in their communities. Museums must behave as civic leaders, joining with other institutions of civil society to use their combined efforts to influence and shape (soft power) the quality of life in their community and the promotion of social justice in their municipalities.

For more information: *A discussion of museums as agents of soft power can be found in Chapter 1 of "Museums, Cities, and Soft Power," (2015) by Lord and Blankenberg (http://www.lord.ca/Pages/Cities-Museums-and-Soft-Power-Chapter1.pdf)*

Institutional Body Language

A term coined by Gretchen Jennings and discussed frequently in her blog, Museum Commons. Analogous to personal body language, institutional body language refers to the powerful messages museums convey through unspoken and unwritten manifestations of their being: the design of their buildings, the content of their advertising, the behavior of front line staff to visitors, the demographics of their staff and boards, the choices they make in their collections, exhibitions, and programs. In the context of diversity and inclusion, museums' body language often conveys the message that the museum is for the white, the wealthy, and the powerful. Such museums may have written diversity policies and goals, but the image presented to the public by the institution in its many manifestations speaks more loudly than written goals or mission statements. People of color and other marginalized communities get the message—this place is not really for or about us—and stay away.

For more information: *Museum Commons blog posts*
          http://www.museumcommons.com/2013/06/the-empathetic-museum-institutional.html
          http://www.museumcommons.com/2015/06/charleston-the-cultural-landscape.html
     Incluseum article
          https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B2mitjKPAu6yVk9HV0ZwRkRIT0E/view

Community Resonance

Just as an empathetic individual resonates with the thoughts, feelings, and experiences of another group or person, an empathetic museum is so connected with its community that it is keenly aware of its values, needs, and challenges. The best way to achieve this is through a board and staff that reflect the diversity of a community; advisory boards, collaborations, and partnerships also help a museum's ability to be in touch with and responsive to its community.

For more information: *Incluseum Blog (www.incluseum.com)*
     Joint statement from Museum Bloggers and Colleagues on Ferguson and Related Events
          http://www.museumcommons.com/2014/12/joint-statement-museum-bloggers-colleagues-ferguson-related-events.html

Operational Functions & Assessment

Timeliness and Sustainability

Because an Empathetic Museum is so connected to its community (see Community Resonance), it is able to assess and respond to particular events or crises that affect its community (and beyond) in a timely and sustainable way. For example, if a museum is aware of racial tension in its community because of the racial diversity of its staff and/or strong collaborative community relationships, it can be well informed about what programs, exhibits, social media and other initiatives it might take within its mission and vision to address this civic issue. And it is aware that one-off efforts are not effective. It maintains a continuous and sustained awareness of and collaborative spirit towards its community and its needs.

For more information: *Elaine Gurian on Timeliness*
          http://www.egurian.com/omnium-gatherum/museum-issues/timeliness
     Museum Commons blog
          http://www.museumcommons.com/2015/04/museumsrespondtoferguson-whats-authentic.html
     Incluseum article
          https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B2mitjKPAu6yVk9HV0ZwRkRIT0E/view

Performance Measures

A museum working to develop the characterics discussed above also incorporates them into its strategic planning. It creates tools to assess the level of achievement of each characteristic and its related goals. An Empathetic Museum commits resources to regular assessment, not only of its revenues and attendance, but also of its public and social impact.

For more information: *Scott, C.A., ed. (2013). Museums and Public Value. Chapter 3, "Creating Public Value Through Intentional Practice," by Randi Korn.*

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Characteristic	Regressive (Lowest Maturity)	Emergent (Low Maturity)	Planned (Medium Maturity)	Proactive (Advanced Maturity)
Civic Vision i.e. How the museum expresses empathy externally through its civic role. *An "anchor institution" of civil society (like universities, libraries, etc.); Exercises "soft power" (influence for social good) in community.*	☐ Identifies as independent, stand-alone player ☐ Indifferent to/unaware of issues within community ☐ Focused on core subject matter only	☐ Interested in being more relevant to civic life in the community ☐ Willing to reassess mission and vision ☐ Lacking required resources or clear direction	☐ Acknowledges role as anchor institution in community ☐ Ensures mission and vision reflect civic role ☐ Explores authentic ways to be part of its community and allocates project resources to do so	☐ Embraces and internalizes role as an anchor institution in community ☐ Key civic player with responsibilities and influence used for growth and social justice ☐ Exercises soft power in the community with dedicated staffing and project resources
Institutional Body Language i.e. How the museum embodies empathy through staffing, policies, workplace culture and structure, etc. *Aware of unconscious & unintended messages of white privilege communicated by building, administration, staff, hiring practices, collections, advertising, etc. Values intersectional cultural competency at all levels of staff and governance.*	☐ Museum culture embodies privilege (racial, cultural, social, etc.) ☐ Governors, leaders, employees, exhibits, collections, etc. are predominantly single demographic (usually white) reflecting that of founders ☐ Unaddressed issues of pay (unpaid labor, low wages, wage disparity) and employment equity in hiring practices	☐ Token "community coordinator" is hired, or a "diversity function" is added to someone's job to attract "diverse" audiences ☐ "Diversity" initiatives consist of short term "outreach" programs or only overlap with "ethnic" holidays ☐ Some labor practices amended to create more equitable working conditions ☐ No substantial change in internal culture in terms of board, staffing, collections, exhibitions, programming	☐ Enacts formal policies through staff collaborations with community partners, advisory committees, experts on inclusion, equity, etc. ☐ Assesses and reorganizes board, staff, collections, exhibits and programs—its entire ethos—to reflect its community ☐ Hiring practices examined for bias; efforts made to address staff concerns ☐ Parity in representation are prioritized as the responsibility of all staff ☐ Changes from a place of white privilege to a place where all feel welcome	☐ Internalized awareness of privilege communicated by building, leadership, staffing, collections, advertising, etc. ☐ Workplace culture reflects inclusive environment with participation from staff of diverse thought, experience, and cultural competencies at all staff levels ☐ Fully resembles the complex and intersectional community's evolving demographics and values ☐ Recognizes and supports need for staff self-care to limit burnout ☐ Enacts long range plan to ensure sustainability of this transformation

EMPATHETIC MUSEUM MATURITY MODEL

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Dimension				
Community Resonance i.e. How the museum values, relates to, and serves its diverse communities. *Persistent awareness of surrounding community; forges strong, trusted connections with all (often underrepresented) segments of community in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, socioeconomic status.*	☐ Concerned with "attracting wider audiences" to expand audience base ☐ Uninterested in investigation of institutional connections to exclusion, racism, sexism, oppression, white privilege, etc. ☐ Perception that community issues have little connection to museum	☐ Authorizes research into the history of its building, location, collections in relation to racism, sexism, oppression, and privilege ☐ Examines its relationship with previously ignored or excluded communities ☐ Community connections focus on execution of the museum's mission and vision; relationship is predominantly one way, serving the museum's needs; involves cultural appropriation	☐ Solicits help from experienced facilitators and community partners to address engagement issues from an intentional, structural perspective ☐ Revisits institutional policies (staffing, collections, exhibitions, programming, etc.) to prioritize internal transformation ☐ Secures partnerships with other anchor institutions and local organizations more fully integrated with community issues	☐ Acknowledges complicity in legacy of exclusion, racism, oppression, cultural appropriation and privilege ☐ Implements plan to reverse these connections; seeks reconciliation with affected communities ☐ Nurtures reciprocal, community-driven relationships with local organizations that link the museum and its mission to local/national/global issues relevant to the surrounding community
Timeliness & Sustainability i.e. How, why, and when the museum responds to community issues and events in a sustainable way. *Able to respond to unexpected issues affecting its community due to continuous and sustained relationships & role as anchor institution.*	☐ Rarely acknowledges or responds to local, national, or global events. ☐ Programs are reactive, one-offs and not sustained; do not emanate from prior planning.	☐ Responds and can reallocate committed resources as a plan deviation ☐ Aware that one-off, unsustained responses do not build lasting community engagement	☐ Plans strategically for the future and engages periodically with stakeholders (internal/external) so that appropriate community/national/global issues can be addressed ☐ Allocates resources to provide responses that are flexible and sustainable	☐ Plans strategically; reciprocal relationships with community members enable museum to anticipate and respond in a timely way ☐ Rarely blindsided, highly nimble and flexible; resources already allocated ☐ Community resources and programs are fully funded and protected in budget
Performance Measures i.e. How the museum measures success in empathetic practice. *Values and commits resources to regular assessment of public impact; shares this with the public.*	☐ Traditional measures focus on outputs, attendance and revenues ☐ Metrics rarely reported to internal/external stakeholders or the local community	☐ Traditional measures supplemented by attempts to gauge community collaboration and impact ☐ Museum reports to internal stakeholders annually	☐ Community impact and effectiveness as anchor institution are included in outcomes to be measured ☐ Museum reports to internal and external stakeholders annually	☐ Museum continuously assesses and redefines its public value impact ☐ Commits resources to continued impact assessment along with attendance and revenue ☐ Reporting is increasingly transparent and widespread

Citation: Jennings, G., Mann, S., Cullen, J., et al. (2016). *Empathetic Museum Maturity Model.* http://www.empatheticmuseum.com/maturitymodel

Continuum on Anti-Racism

Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist Multicultural Organization

MONOCULTURAL ==> MULTICULTURAL ==> ANTI-RACIST ==> ANTI-RACIST MULTICULTURAL

Racial and Cultural Differences Seen as Deficits ==> Tolerant of Racial and Cultural Differences ==> Racial and Cultural Differences Seen as Assets

Exclusive An Exclusionary Institution	2. Passive A "Club" Institution	3. Symbolic Change A Compliance Organization	4. Identity Change An Affirming Institution	5. Structural Change A Transforming Institution	6. Fully Inclusive Anti-Racist Multicultural Organization in a Transformed Society
• Intentionally and publicly excludes or segregates African Americans, Native Americans, Latinos, and Asian Americans • Intentionally and publicly enforces the racist status quo throughout institution • Institutionalization of racism includes formal policies and practices, teachings, and decision making on all levels • Usually has similar intentional policies and practices toward other socially oppressed groups such as women, gays and lesbians, Third World citizens, etc. • Openly maintains the dominant group's power and privilege	• Tolerant of a limited number of "token" People of Color and members from other social identify groups allowed in with "proper" perspective and credentials. • May still secretly limit or exclude People of Color in contradiction to public policies • Continues to intentionally maintain white power and privilege through its formal policies and practices, teachings, and decision making on all levels of institutional life • Often declares, "We don't have a problem." • Monocultural norms, policies and procedures of dominant culture viewed as the "righ" way" business as usual" • Engages issues of diversity and social justice only on club member's terms and within their comfort zone.	• Makes official policy pronouncements regarding multicultural diversity • Sees itself as "non-racist" institution with open doors to People of Color • Carries out intentional inclusiveness efforts, recruiting "someone of color" on committees or office staff • Expanding view of diversity includes other socially oppressed groups *But…* • "Not those who make waves" • Little or no contextual change in culture, policies, and decision making • Is still relatively unaware of continuing patterns of privilege, paternalism and control • Token placements in staff positions: must assimilate into organizational culture	• Growing understanding of racism as barrier to effective diversity • Develops analysis of systemic racism • Sponsors programs of anti-racism training • New consciousness of institutionalized white power and privilege • Develops intentional identity as an "anti-racist" institution • Begins to develop accountability to racially oppressed communities • Increasing commitment to dismantle racism and eliminate inherent white advantage • Actively recruits and promotes members of groups have been historically denied access and opportunity *But…* • Institutional structures and culture that maintain white power and privilege still intact and relatively untouched	• Commits to process of intentional institutional restructuring, based upon anti-racist analysis and identity • Audits and restructures all aspects of institutional life to ensure full participation of People of Color, including their world-view, culture and lifestyles • Implements structures, policies and practices with inclusive decision making and other forms of power sharing on all levels of the institutions life and work • Commits to struggle to dismantle racism in the wider community, and builds clear lines of accountability to racially oppressed communities Anti-racist multicultural diversity becomes an institutionalized asset • Redefines and rebuilds all relationships and activities in society, based on anti-racist commitments	• Future vision of an institution and wider community that has overcome systemic racism and all other forms of oppression. • Institution's life reflects full participation and shared power with diverse racial, cultural and economic groups in determining its mission, structure, constituency, policies and practices • Members across all identity groups are full participants in decisions that shape the institution, and inclusion of diverse cultures, lifestyles, and interest • A sense of restored community and mutual caring • Allies with others in combating all forms of social oppression • Actively works in larger communities (regional, national, global) to eliminate all forms of oppression and to create multicultural organizations.

White Supremacy Culture

From Dismantling Racism: A Workbook for Social Change Groups, by Kenneth Jones and Tema Okun, ChangeWork, 2001

This is a list of characteristics of white supremacy culture which show up in our organizations. Culture is powerful precisely because it is so present and at the same time so very difficult to name or identify. The characteristics listed below are damaging because they are used as norms and standards without being pro-actively named or chosen by the group. They are damaging because they promote white supremacy thinking. They are damaging to both people of color and to white people. Organizations that are people of color led or a majority people of color can also demonstrate many damaging characteristics of white supremacy culture.

Perfectionism

- little appreciation expressed among people for the work that others are doing; appreciation that is expressed usually directed to those who get most of the credit anyway
- more common is to point out either how the person or work is inadequate
- or even more common, to talk to others about the inadequacies of a person or their work without ever talking directly to them
- mistakes are seen as personal, i.e. they reflect badly on the person making them as opposed to being seen for what they are ó mistakes
- making a mistake is confused with being a mistake, doing wrong with being wrong
- little time, energy, or money put into reflection or identifying lessons learned that can improve practice, in other words little or no learning from mistakes
- tendency to identify whatís wrong; little ability to identify, name, and appreciate whatís right

antidotes: develop a culture of appreciation, where the organization takes time to make sure that peopleís work and efforts are appreciated; develop a learning organization, where it is expected that everyone will make mistakes and those mistakes offer opportunities for learning; create an environment where people can recognize that mistakes sometimes lead to positive results; separate the person from the mistake; when offering feedback, always speak to the things that went well before offering criticism; ask people to offer specific suggestions for how to do things differently when offering criticism

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Sense of Urgency

- continued sense of urgency that makes it difficult to take time to be inclusive, encourage democratic and/or thoughtful decision-making, to think long-term, to consider consequences
- frequently results in sacrificing potential allies for quick or highly visible results, for example sacrificing interests of communities of color in order to win victories for white people (seen as default or norm community)
- reinforced by funding proposals which promise too much work for too little money and by funders who expect too much for too little

antidotes: realistic workplans; leadership which understands that things take longer than anyone expects; discuss and plan for what it means to set goals of inclusivity and diversity, particularly in terms of time; learn from past experience how long things take; write realistic funding proposals with realistic time frames; be clear about how you will make good decisions in an atmosphere of urgency

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Defensiveness

- the organizational structure is set up and much energy spent trying to prevent abuse and protect power as it exists rather than to facilitate the best out of each person or to clarify who has power and how they are

expected to use it

- because of either/or thinking (see below), criticism of those with power is viewed as threatening and inappropriate (or rude)
- people respond to new or challenging ideas with defensiveness, making it very difficult to raise these ideas
- a lot of energy in the organization is spent trying to make sure that peopleís feelings arenít getting hurt or working around defensive people
- the defensiveness of people in power creates an oppressive culture

antidotes: understand that structure cannot in and of itself facilitate or prevent abuse; understand the link between defensiveness and fear (of losing power, losing face, losing comfort, losing privilege); work on your own defensiveness; name defensiveness as a problem when it is one; give people credit for being able to handle more than you think; discuss the ways in which defensiveness or resistance to new ideas gets in the way of the mission

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Quantity Over Quality

- all resources of organization are directed toward producing measurable goals
- things that can be measured are more highly valued than things that cannot, for example numbers of people attending a meeting, newsletter circulation, money spent are valued more than quality of relationships, democratic decision-making, ability to constructively deal with conflict
- little or no value attached to process; if it can't be measured, it has no value
- discomfort with emotion and feelings
- no understanding that when there is a conflict between content (the agenda of the meeting) and process (peopleís need to be heard or engaged), process will prevail (for example, you may get through the agenda, but if you haven't paid attention to peopleís need to be heard, the decisions made at the meeting are undermined and/or disregarded)

antidotes: include process or quality goals in your planning; make sure your organization has a values statement which expresses the ways in which you want to do your work; make sure this is a living document and that people are using it in their day to day work; look for ways to measure process goals (for example if you have a goal of inclusivity, think about ways you can measure whether or not you have achieved that goal); learn to recognize those times when you need to get off the agenda in order to address peopleís underlying concerns

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Worship of the Written Word

- if itís not in a memo, it doesn't exist
- the organization does not take into account or value other ways in which information gets shared
- those with strong documentation and writing skills are more highly valued, even in organizations where ability to relate to others is key to the mission antidotes: take the time to analyze how people inside and outside the organization get and share information; figure out which things need to be written down and come up with alternative ways to document what is happening; work to recognize the contributions and skills that every person brings to the organization (for example, the ability to build relationships with those who are important to the organizationís mission)
- only one right way
- the belief there is one right way to do things and once people are introduced to the right way, they will see the light and adopt it
- when they do not adapt or change, then something is wrong with them (the other, those not changing), not with us (those who ëknowí the right way)
- similar to the missionary who does not see value in the culture of other communities, sees only value in their beliefs about what is good

antidotes: accept that there are many ways to get to the same goal; once the group has made a decision about which way will be taken, honor that decision and see what you and the organization will learn from

taking that way, even and especially if it is not the way you would have chosen; work on developing the ability to notice when people do things differently and how those different ways might improve your approach; look for the tendency for a group or a person to keep pushing the same point over and over out of a belief that there is only one right way and then name it; when working with communities from a different culture than yours or your organizationís, be clear that you have some learning to do about the communitiesí ways of doing; never assume that you or your organization know whatís best for the community in isolation from meaningful relationships with that community

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Paternalism

- decision-making is clear to those with power and unclear to those without it
- those with power think they are capable of making decisions for and in the interests of those without power
- those with power often don't think it is important or necessary to understand the viewpoint or experience of those for whom they are making decisions
- those without power understand they do not have it and understand who does
- those without power do not really know how decisions get made and who makes what decisions, and yet they are completely familiar with the impact of those decisions on them

antidotes: make sure that everyone knows and understands who makes what decisions in the organization; make sure everyone knows and understands their level of responsibility and authority in the organization; include people who are affected by decisions in the decision-making

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Either/Or Thinking

- things are either/or ó good/bad, right/wrong, with us/against us
- closely linked to perfectionism in making it difficult to learn from mistakes or accommodate conflict
- no sense that things can be both/and
- results in trying to simplify complex things, for example believing that poverty is simply a result of lack of education
- creates conflict and increases sense of urgency, as people are felt they have to make decisions to do either this or that, with no time or encouragement to consider alternatives, particularly those which may require more time or resources

antidotes: notice when people use ëeither/orí language and push to come up with more than two alternatives; notice when people are simplifying complex issues, particularly when the stakes seem high or an urgent decision needs to be made; slow it down and encourage people to do a deeper analysis; when people are faced with an urgent decision, take a break and give people some breathing room to think creatively; avoid making decisions under extreme pressure

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Power Hoarding

- little, if any, value around sharing power
- power seen as limited, only so much to go around
- those with power feel threatened when anyone suggests changes in how things should be done in the organization, feel suggestions for change are a reflection on their leadership
- those with power don't see themselves as hoarding power or as feeling threatened
- those with power assume they have the best interests of the organization at heart and assume those wanting change are ill-informed (stupid), emotional, inexperienced

antidotes: include power sharing in your organizationís values statement; discuss what good leadership looks like and make sure people understand that a good leader develops the power and skills of others;

understand that change is inevitable and challenges to your leadership can be healthy and productive; make sure the organization is focused on the mission

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Fear of Open Conflict

- people in power are scared of conflict and try to ignore it or run from it
- when someone raises an issue that causes discomfort, the response is to blame the person for raising the issue rather than to look at the issue which is actually causing the problem
- emphasis on being polite
- equating the raising of difficult issues with being impolite, rude, or out of line

antidotes: role play ways to handle conflict before conflict happens; distinguish between being polite and raising hard issues; don't require those who raise hard issues to raise them in ëacceptableí ways, especially if you are using the ways in which issues are raised as an excuse not to address the issues being raised; once a conflict is resolved, take the opportunity to revisit it and see how it might have been handled differently

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Individualism

- little experience or comfort working as part of a team
- people in organization believe they are responsible for solving problems alone
- accountability, if any, goes up and down, not sideways to peers or to those the organization is set up to serve
- desire for individual recognition and credit
- leads to isolation
- competition more highly valued than cooperation and where cooperation is valued, little time or resources devoted to developing skills in how to cooperate
- creates a lack of accountability, as the organization values those who can get things done on their own without needing supervision or guidance antidotes: include teamwork as an important value in your values statement; make sure the organization is working towards shared goals and people understand how working together will improve performance; evaluate peopleís ability to work in a team as well as their ability to get the job done; make sure that credit is given to all those who participate in an effort, not just the leaders or most public person; make people accountable as a group rather than as individuals; create a culture where people bring problems to the group; use staff meetings as a place to solve problems, not just a place to report activities
- iím the only one
- connected to individualism, the belief that if something is going to get done right, ëIí have to do it
- little or no ability to delegate work to others

antidotes: evaluate people based on their ability to delegate to others; evaluate people based on their ability to work as part of a team to accomplish shared goals

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Progress is Bigger, More

- observed in systems of accountability and ways we determine success
- progress is an organization which expands (adds staff, adds projects) or develops the ability to serve more people (regardless of how well they are serving them)
- gives no value, not even negative value, to its cost, for example, increased accountability to funders as the budget grows, ways in which those we serve may be exploited, excluded, or underserved as we focus on how many we are serving instead of quality of service or values created by the ways in which we serve

antidotes: create Seventh Generation thinking by asking how the actions of the group now will affect people seven generations from now; make sure that any cost/benefit analysis includes all the costs, not just

the financial ones, for example the cost in morale, the cost in credibility, the cost in the use of resources; include process goals in your planning, for example make sure that your goals speak to how you want to do your work, not just what you want to do; ask those you work with and for to evaluate your performance

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Objectivity

- the belief that there is such a thing as being objective
- the belief that emotions are inherently destructive, irrational, and should not play a role in decision-making or group process
- invalidating people who show emotion
- requiring people to think in a linear fashion and ignoring or invalidating those who think in other ways
- impatience with any thinking that does not appear ëlogicalí to those with power

antidotes: realize that everybody has a world view and that everybodyís world view affects the way they understand things; realize this means you too; push yourself to sit with discomfort when people are expressing themselves in ways which are not familiar to you; assume that everybody has a valid point and your job is to understand what that point is

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Right to Comfort

- the belief that those with power have a right to emotional and psychological comfort (another aspect of valuing ëlogicí over emotion)
- scapegoating those who cause discomfort
- equating individual acts of unfairness against white people with systemic racism which daily targets people of color

antidotes: understand that discomfort is at the root of all growth and learning; welcome it as much as you can; deepen your political analysis of racism and oppression so you have a strong understanding of how your personal experience and feelings fit into a larger picture; don't take everything personally

One of the purposes of listing characteristics of white supremacy culture is to point out how organizations which unconsciously use these characteristics as their norms and standards make it difficult, if not impossible, to open the door to other cultural norms and standards. As a result, many of our organizations, while saying we want to be multicultural, really only allow other people and cultures to come in if they adapt or conform to already existing cultural norms. Being able to identify and name the cultural norms and standards you want is a first step to making room for a truly multi-cultural organization.

DEAI Staff Engagement Survey

The Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion (DEAI) staff survey was designed by the **Minnesota Historical Society** to help capture information about their organizational culture. The results have been used to **set a benchmark** and have played an important role in the development of the ideas behind their Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion work. Responses are kept anonymous and confidential. Any reports issued to staff reflect aggregate data only.

The version reproduced below was adapted by the Minneapolis Institute of Art from the original.

* * * *

Definition of terms [*Use this space to outline how your organization defines Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion so that there is a shared understanding of the language.*]

1. Rate the frequency with which [Museum Name] engages in the following aspects of an organizational culture of inclusion:

Answer field includes: Always, Almost Always, Sometimes, Almost Never, Never, Don't Know
- [Museum Name] utilizes policies and practices that create a culture of inclusion.
- [Museum Name] provides continuing education and training opportunities for all employees to better understand the practice of diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion.
- [Museum Name] examines its practices to ensure consistency with diversity goals.
- [Museum Name] integrates a respect for diverse perspectives in decision-making.
- [Museum Name] provides internal networking opportunities for employees to explore the impact of personal identity on organizational culture. (examples: cross-collaboration teams, cross-departmental task forces, exposure to community partners, etc.)
- [Museum Name] translates what it learns about diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion into action.
- At [Museum Name], we address differences in ways that lead to mutual learning and growth.

2. Rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following aspects about employee recruitment and retention:

Answer field includes: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree, Don't Know
- [Museum Name] clearly articulates the contribution of diversity.
- [Museum Name] prioritizes attracting diverse candidates.
- [Museum Name] prioritizes the retention of diverse staff.
- [Museum Name] lacks effective recruitment strategies to engage candidates from diverse communities.

3. Rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following aspects about orientation and value alignment:

Answer field includes: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree, Don't Know

- I am familiar with Mia's Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion (DEAI) policy.
- Orientation for new employees explicitly describes organizational DEAI goals and values.
- [Museum Name] communicates its organizational values to all employees on an ongoing basis.
- [Museum Name] communicates its organizational values to all volunteers on an ongoing basis.
- [Museum Name] effectively enforces its policies against harassment and retaliation.
- [Museum Name] provides orientation to stakeholders (e.g. partners, subcontractors, etc.) to communicate to them the values of Mia.
- [Museum Name] does not have well-defined non-discrimination and harassment policies.

4. Rate the frequency in which Mia engages in the following aspects of community relationships:

Answer field includes: Always, Almost Always, Sometimes, Almost Never, Never, Don't Know

- [Museum Name] communicates with diverse communities.
- [Museum Name] has an impact on the local community.
- [Museum Name] works collaboratively with diverse communities and/or community partners to address challenges.
- [Museum Name] effectively articulates and demonstrates its responsibility to the community.

5. Rate the frequency in which your supervisor engages in the following aspects of inclusion:

Answer field includes: Always, Almost Always, Sometimes, Almost Never, Never, Don't Know

- My supervisor respects my expression of differing beliefs.
- My supervisor encourages me to attend professional development opportunities related to diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion.
- My supervisor models the principles of diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion in their work.
- My supervisor holds me accountable for creating an inclusive culture.

6. Rate the extent to which you agree or disagree on the following aspects about the Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion Strategic Priority:

Answer field includes: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree, Don't Know

- I value the strategic priority for diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion.
- I understand the strategic priority for diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion.
- [Museum Name]'s actions are in line with achieving the goals of the strategic priority for diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion.
- The strategic priority for diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion does not guide my work in any way.

7. **Rate the frequency in which you experience the following aspects of workplace appreciation and involvement:**
Answer field includes: Always, Almost Always, Sometimes, Almost Never, Never, Don't Know

- I am treated as a valuable team member.
- At [Museum Name], we are part of the same team, even when we disagree.
- [Museum Name] provides sufficient resources to help me feel included.
- I feel I cannot succeed here because of my identity.
- My department employs a decision-making process that values the input of all employees.
- I am included in making decisions that affect me.

8. **Rate the frequency in which you experience the following aspects of workplace authenticity:**
Answer field includes: Always, Almost Always, Sometimes, Almost Never, Never, Don't Know

- I can have genuine conversations with others without needing to involuntarily hide relevant parts of myself.
- I can be myself around others at work.
- I need to conceal or distort valued parts of my identity, style or individual characteristics.
- I can share ideas, opinions, feelings, perspectives - especially when they differ from those of others - without fear of negative repercussions.
- I am treated fairly, without discrimination or barriers based on my identities.

- I can be transparent about and proud of my social identities.
- I believe my colleagues notice and value diversity of all types.

Open Comments Section [An open space for feedback on other thoughts or topics employee would like to share]

Demographics Section
All were formatted with a dropdown menu of options, including a "Decline to answer" option:

- Name of Department/Division (*depending on your institution's size, you may or may not want to include*)
- Current employment status (*i.e., Full Time, Part Time, Contract, Volunteer*)
- How long have you worked at [Museum Name]?
- Gender (*we included the following options: Male, Female, Non-binary, Prefer to self-describe as [provide open space], decline to answer*)
- Race and/or Ethnicity
- Do you identify as LGBTQ? *(Yes, No, Decline to Answer)*
- I am a: *Person who is blind or visually impaired; Person with a communication disorder, who is unable to speak, or who uses a device to speak; Person with an emotional or behavioral disability; Person who is deaf or hard of hearing; Person with an intellectual, cognitive or developmental disability; Person with a learning disability; Person with a physical disability or mobility impairment; Person without a disability; My disability is not listed; Decline to answer.*

More Tools and Resources

A (very partial) acknowledgement of conversations, projects, and work that has come before this toolkit that we used to ground our thinking around these topics:

#MuseumsRespondtoFerguson https://twitter.com/hashtag/museumsrespondtoferguson

#MuseumWorkersSpeak https://twitter.com/hashtag/museumworksspeak

Museum Hue https://www.facebook.com/Museumhue

The Dreamspace Project (*see below for more information*)

The Empathetic Museum Maturity Model http://empatheticmuseum.weebly.com/maturity-model.html (*see below for more information*)

Visitors of Color http://visitorsofcolor.tumblr.com

Crosslines http://smithsonianapa.org/crosslines

Incluseum https://incluseum.com

Multicultural Critical Reflective Practice https://artmuseumteaching.com/tag/multicultural-critical-reflective-practice/

New resources continue to emerge on these sites:

MASS Action project website www.museumaction.org
This site will aggregate relevant projects and case studies

Museum Commons http://www.museumcommons.com

International Sites of Conscience http://www.sitesofconscience.org/trainings

AAM Center for the Future of Museums http://www.aam-us.org/resources/center-for-the-future-of-museums

Museums & Race https://museumsandrace.org

Toolkits for systemic change

Racial and Social Justice Initiative Racial Equity Toolkit
The Racial Equity Toolkit lays out a process and a set of questions to guide the development, implementation and evaluation of policies, initiatives, programs, and budget issues to address the impacts on racial equity.
http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/RSJI/RSJI-Racial_Equity_Toolkit-2016.pdf

The Empathetic Museum

The project posits that museums can become institutionally empathetic towards their own staff and towards the communities they serve by building civic vision, being aware of institutional body language, working for community resonance, achieving timeliness and sustainability, and regular assessment of their work. For more information go to www.empatheticmuseum.weebly.com. (See Addenda, pgs 197-200 for the Maturity Model.)

Inclusion: A Crash Course

Laura-Edythe Coleman and Porchia Moore have developed a toolkit that museum professionals can use to examine exclusivity and inclusivity in their institutions and to develop strategies for greater inclusion. A paperback version can be purchased at cost ($2.17) at Lulu.com; or digitally at https://www.scribd.com/document/327467172/Inclusion-a-Crash-Course.

The Dreamspace Project

For art museum practitioners, Alyssa Machida has developed a workbook and toolkit that translates theoretical concepts into practical language and includes frameworks adaptable for art museum professionals with key vocabulary, diagrams and graphic organizers, ideas for building tours, and questions for critical reflection. More information can be found at Incluseum.com. The resources is also available on the MASS Action project website: www.massaction.org.

Additional Reading Suggestions

"Bringing Self Examination to the Center of Social Justice Work in Museums"

A letter by Rose Paquet Kinsley and Aletheia Wittman calling on museums to self-reflect, especially in terms of institutional legacies, staffing, and how language is being used and codified to discuss "social justice work". Incluseum.com, December 30, 2015.

"R-E-S-P-E-C-T! Church Ladies, Magical Negroes, and Model Minorities: Understanding Inclusion from Community to Communities" by Porchia Moore

Porchia reflects on nuancing the myth of a monolithic "Community" and the need to think critically about not reinforcing structural systems. She also calls for the dismantling of respectability politics, and invites museums to process the multiplicity and complexity of identity groups they are serving. Incluseum.com, October 10, 2015.

Createquity -- Making Sense of Cultural Equity

This is a breakdown of how Createquity is addressing cultural equity in the arts world. Their long-term mission is to investigate the most important issues to promote a healthy arts ecosystem and think of a way to change collectively, implementing different visions for cultural equity. The overarching categories that they work within are diversity, prosperity, redistribution, and self-determination. In their words, "[t]o move forward, we must look, think, and act widely." http://createquity.com/2016/08/making-sense-of-cultural-equity

The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex
by INCITE!
A trillion-dollar industry, the US non-profit sector is one of the world's largest economies. From art museums and university hospitals to think tanks and church charities, over 1.5 million organizations of staggering diversity share the tax-exempt 501(c)(3) designation, if little else. Urgent and visionary, *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded* presents a biting critique of the quietly devastating role the non-profit industrial complex plays in managing dissent.https://www.dukeupress.edu/the-revolution-will-not-be-funded

Ruby Lerner: Preparing Artists for a D.I.Y.W.O. World
An interview with Ruber Lerner from Creative Capital, an arts organization working to prepare artists for a D.I.Y.W.O (Do It Yourself With Others) world.
http://99u.com/articles/6495/ruby-lerner-preparing-artists-for-a-diywo-world

The Problem with Work: Feminism, Marxism, Antiwork Politics, and Postwork Imaginaries by Kathi Weeks
Kathi Weeks boldly challenges the presupposition that work, or waged labor, is inherently a social and political good, and instead proposes a postwork society that would allow people to be productive and creative rather than relentlessly bound to the employment relation. Work, she contends, is a legitimate, even crucial, subject for political theory.
https://libcom.org/files/the-problem-with-work_-feminism-marxism-kathi-weeks.pdf

MASS Action Contributor Bios

Melanie A. Adams joins Minnesota Historical Society as senior director of guest experiences and educational services. Adams has been managing director of community education and events at the Missouri Historical Society since 2005, where she was responsible for more than 700 social, cultural, and educational programs. Spending more than 20 years in the St. Louis region, Adams served as an appointed member of the St. Louis Public Schools for nine years. Adams received a BS from the University of Virginia, M.ED from the University of Vermont, and PhD from the University of Missouri-St Louis with an emphasis in critical race theory.

Shaelyn Amaio has been a public experience advocate since her days operating rides as a teenager at an amusement park in Connecticut. She brings her experience in project management, museum education, strategic planning, and exhibition development to her new role as a producer of public programs and community engagement at the New York Transit Museum. Previously, she has worked in a variety of museums, design firms, and consultancies in New York, New England, and Alabama.

Annie Anderson is the manager of research and public programming at Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site in Philadelphia, where she interprets America's past and present prison systems. She recently researched and co-wrote *Prisons Today: Questions in the Age of Mass Incarceration*, which won the 2017 American Alliance of Museums' Excellence in Exhibition Award. She is a cultural historian who studies race, gender, sexuality, liberation movements, vice, crime, and morality.

Swarupa Anila is director of interpretive engagement at the Detroit Institute of Arts. She leads a team in the development of overall interpretive plans, texts, hands-on and multimedia components designed to help visitors have memorable, challenging, and meaningful experiences with art. Key issues include an examination of whose voices and perspectives are missing in museum interpretation and how to integrate visitor voices to flatten museum and art historical knowledge hierarchies. Swarupa has worked in the field of interpretation for 17 years and has developed award-winning interpretation

for the DIA's exhibitions, including "Through African Eyes, 1500 to the Present," winner of AAM's 2012 Excellence in Exhibition Award. She serves on the editorial advisory board for *Exhibition*—Journal of the National Association for Museum Exhibition.

Anniessa Antar is a nomadic educator, prison abolitionist, and artist. She began working in museums as an intern in Minneapolis Institute of Art's Contemporary Art Department, and is this year's MASS Action project coordinator. A language teacher, Anniessa is interested in nepantla pedagogy, translanguaging, new materialist pedagogy, and teaching critical inquiry and language through art. As a prison abolitionist, she has worked as a transformative justice workshop facilitator with the Life After Life Collective in Tiohtià:ke (Montréal, QC). She most recently performed in a queer, post-apocalyptic sci-fi short film called *Swarm of Selenium* (dir. Glass Collective, 2017). Anniessa currently teaches studio art and design students at l'Ecole nationale supérieure des Arts Décoratifs in Paris, France.

LaTanya S. Autry is a PhD candidate at University of Delaware. She studies art of the United States, photography, and museums. Her dissertation, *The Crossroads of Commemoration: Lynching Landscapes in America*, analyzes how communities and individuals memorialize the history of lynching violence in the built environment through sculptural monuments, historical markers, and performances. She works as a curatorial fellow at Yale University Art Gallery; her latest exhibition is "Let Us March On: Lee Friedlander and the Prayer Pilgrimage for Freedom." Autry advocates for greater diversity and inclusion in art museums. At the 2015 CAA ThatCamp she facilitated the session #BlackLivesMatter Teach-In: Dismantling Anti-Black Racism in Visual Culture. She co-organizes The Art of Black Dissent, an interactive, dialogue-centered pop-up exhibition/public program spotlighting 20th- and 21st-century visual culture of the African-American liberation struggle.

Sina Bahram is the founder of the accessibility firm Prime Access Consulting (PAC). Bahram has a strong background in computer science, holding undergraduate and graduate degrees in the field. Bahram collaborates on innovative and user-centered solutions to meaningful problems. In 2012, Bahram was recognized as a White House Champion of Change by President Barack Obama. In 2015, the international

accessibility community recognized Bahram as an emerging leader in digital accessibility.

Dina Bailey is the CEO of Mountain Top Vision, LLC, in Atlanta, a consulting company that focuses on supporting change management within organizations in the areas of diversity, inclusion, and strategic planning to further audience engagement. Previously, she was employed as director of educational strategies for the National Center for Civil and Human Rights and as director of museum experiences for the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center. Bailey holds degrees in middle and secondary education and anthropology of development and social transformation, and a graduate certification in Museum Studies. She has been published in both the formal education and museum fields. She is proud to be on the council of the American Association for State and Local History, the board of the Association of African American Museums, the board of the Next Generation Men, and the Issues Chair for AAM's EdCom.

Joy Bivins is director of curatorial affairs at the Chicago History Museum, where since 2002 she has collaborated on exhibitions such as "Teen Chicago," the Chicago installation of "Without Sanctuary: Lynching Photography in America," "Facing Freedom in America," "Railroaders: Jack Delano's Homefront Photography," and "Inspiring Beauty: 50 Years of Ebony Fashion Fair." Bivins has presented her work at the annual meetings of AAM, Association of African American Museums, and the Costume Colloquium in Florence, Italy. She is co-editor of and contributor to the *Inspiring Beauty* catalog and has contributed to the *Journal of American History*, *Chicago History*, and *NKA: Journal of Contemporary African Art*. Bivins received a BA in Afroamerican studies and history from the University of Michigan and an MA in Africana studies from Cornell University.

Janeen Bryant is an inter-sectional educator, facilitator, and nonprofit leader based in Charlotte, N.C. She presents on topics ranging from authentic community building, creating relationships across difference, attracting new audiences, empathy in museums, and critical conversations for internal development. She conceptualized, designed, and implemented the Listening Sessions model used by the Levine Museum in projects including "Without Sanctuary," "LGBTQ Perspectives on Equality," and the

Latino New South Project that ultimately became NUEVOlution. As a community engagement specialist, she has consulted for nonprofits in New York, North Carolina, Philadelphia, Birmingham, Atlanta, Los Angeles, and Zaña, Peru. Bryant specializes in crafting proactive strategies guiding institutions to address shifting demographics with responsive leadership that strengthens long-term vision, cultural competency, and empathy.

Kayleigh Bryant-Greenwell is an education specialist with the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of African American History and Culture. She curates participatory public programs focusing on social justice issues, which allow museum audiences to share their own ideas and strategies towards equity. Previously, she contributed to the launch of the Women, Arts, and Social Change initiative at the National Museum of Women in the Arts, where she advanced feminist advocacy and brokered diverse and creative collaborations between the museum and local activist and arts leaders. She serves as co-chair of the D.C.–chapter executive committee for ArtTable, Inc. She is also an independent curator.

Elisabeth Callihan is the head of multi-generational learning at the Minneapolis Institute of Art (Mia), where she leads a team that develops innovative, audience-centered programs connecting communities with the museum's collections. Previously, she managed adult programs at the Brooklyn Museum, where she was responsible for an expansive portfolio of exhibition-based programming, including the community-driven *Target First Saturday* series. She also served as manager of public programs and oublic relations at the Memphis Brooks Museum of Art. She holds a BA in art history from the University of Evansville; an MA in fine and decorative art from Sotheby's Institute London; and a certificate in French language & culture from the Institut Catholique in Paris. She is the co-founder and project manager for MASS Action.

Cinnamon Catlin-Legutko Cinnamon Catlin-Legutko serves as the President/CEO of the Abbe Museum in Bar Harbor, ME. Prior to joining the Abbe in 2009 she was the director of the General Lew Wallace Study & Museum in Crawfordsville, Indiana where she led the organization to the National Medal for Museum Service in 2008. Cinnamon co-leads the Abbe's decolonization initiative and develops policies and protocols to

ensure collaboration and cooperation with Wabanaki people. She served as a board member for the American Association for State and Local History and was the founding chair of its Small Museums Committee. She is a board member of Maine Humanities Council and a member of the Smithsonian Affiliates Advisory Council. In 2015, Catlin-Legutko was elected to the American Alliance of Museum's Board of Directors. In addition to several published articles, Catlin-Legutko is the co-editor of the *Small Museum Toolkit* (2012), a six-book series, and the revising author of *Museum Administration 2.0* (2016).

Lauren L. Causey is a senior evaluation and research associate at the Science Museum of Minnesota, where she leads research studies within the museum's Science Learning Division. She uses qualitative techniques to understand various topics related to racial equity, including engagement with visitors from underrepresented groups, and professional development for local K-12 teachers. She earned a PhD at the University of Minnesota–Twin Cities, an EdM from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, and a BA from Howard University. A New Orleans native, she was a member of the 2015 cohort of the Association of Science-Technology Centers Diversity and Leadership Fellowship Program, and in 2013 she was a recipient of the Buckman Fellowship for Leadership in Philanthropy, via the University of Minnesota. She began her career in the children's publishing industry at Scholastic Inc., and has published chapters and articles about diversity within children's literature.

Makeba Clay assists organizations in building their diversity, inclusion, and talent management capabilities. Based in Washington, D.C., Clay has worked with institutions to develop and deliver training and organizational assessments for senior executives, mid-level supervisors, and entry-level staff to build and sustain a more inclusive workforce. For over 20 years, Clay has held leadership or consulting positions at such institutions as Princeton University, University of Maryland-College Park, Johns Hopkins University, the College of Southern Maryland, and the Smithsonian Institution National Museum of African Art. Clay has a BA from the State University of New York at Albany and an MA from Bowling Green State University. She is a certified mediator and holds professional certificates from Development Dimensions International and the School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell University.

Elon Cook is humanities director of the Robbins House in Concord, Mass., which interprets the life of a formerly enslaved African American Revolutionary War Veteran and three generations of his descendants, including farm laborers and racial justice advocates. She is also the program manager and curator for the Center for Reconciliation and its future slavery museum. She is a genealogist and Brown University–trained public historian who uses workshops, interpretation trainings, walking tours, and exhibitions to engage the public with forgotten or erased elements of American history. Cook loves engaging the public with difficult historical narratives, and changing minds one conversation at a time.

V. Gina Díaz is a doctoral student in American Studies at the University of New Mexico. Previously, she worked as a senior curator at the National Hispanic Cultural Center Art Museum, the education director at the Hayward Area Historical Society in the San Francisco Bay Area, and as a museum assistant with the California Indian Heritage Center (State Department of Parks and Recreation). She has also worked at the Smithsonian Institution Latino Center. Díaz completed an MA in museum studies at John F. Kennedy University in 2005, with support from the Western Museums Association and AAM. Her interdisciplinary doctoral research, for which she has received support from the Ford Foundation, concerns critical museum studies, feminist and queer art, and cultural politics in the Americas.

Omar Eaton-Martínez is a museum professional, scholar, coalition builder, and outreach specialist. He works for the Smithsonian National Museum of American History. In the past, he has been a U.S. Park Ranger, K–12 teacher, and an informal educator. He speaks publicly on organizational inclusion, Afro Latinx issues, and professional development.

Ashley Fairbanks is an Anishinaabe woman and citizen of the White Earth Nation, and the director of Narrative & Network Building at Voices for Racial Justice. Fairbanks is also a public artist and interdisciplinary designer who she seeks ways to creatively innovate social-change work. Her most recent work includes a bicycle-driven mobile museum called Spoke that does disruptive history at contested sites. Fairbanks attended the University of Minnesota to study American Indian studies and political

science, and has completed Intermedia Arts Creative Community Leadership Institute, NACDI's Native Organizing and Leadership Institute, the Humphrey School's Roy Wilkins Community Policy Fellowship, and is a 2016 Forecast Public Art Emerging Public Artist Grantee.

Priya Frank is the associate director for community programs at Seattle Art Museum, where her focus is on partnerships, community building, and equity-related initiatives. Previous work at LUCID Lounge, UW Bothell, UW Office of Minority Affairs & Diversity, and the UW World Series have influenced her passion and heart for this work. Frank is a member of the Seattle Arts Commission, a board member of Tasveer and On the Boards, and is a member of Leadership Tomorrow's class of 2015. She holds a BA in communications and American ethnic studies from University of Washington Seattle and an MA in cultural studies from University of Washington, Bothell.

Ben Garcia is deputy director of the San Diego Museum of Man, where he stewards decolonization initiatives and supports the directors of exhibits, education and public engagement, collections, and operations. Prior experience includes six years in the Education Department at the J. Paul Getty Museum, three years at the Skirball Cultural Center, and three years as head of interpretation at the Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology at U.C. Berkeley. He has presented and published on the museum's role in learning, public value, and social change and volunteers with the Adoption Museum Project.

Karleen Gardner is director of learning innovation at the Minneapolis Institute of Art (Mia) and leads strategic initiatives and experiments in learning and interpretation. Through programs, tours, studio classes, and community partnerships, her team creates engaging art experiences that are accessible and relevant for audiences of all ages and abilities. She has been at Mia since 2012 and in the museum education field for 15 years.

Alyssa Greenberg is a museum professional interested in how internal and external museum practices can advance social justice. Currently, she holds a postdoctoral Leadership Fellowship at the Toledo Museum of Art, where she specializes in diversity and inclusion and community engagement. She earned her doctorate in Art History from the University of Illinois at Chicago in 2017. Her dissertation *Arts Awareness at the Metropolitan Museum of Art: Art Museum*

Education as Artistic and Political Practice investigates the relationship between art museum education and institutional power dynamics, embodied experience, and the production of knowledge. She is a founding member of the #MuseumWorkersSpeak movement.

Gamynne Guillotte heads the Interpretation and Education Department at The Baltimore Museum of Art, where she is responsible for strategic planning and realization of interpretive spaces, resources, and public engagement. Her most recent major project is the realization of the Joseph Education Center and its three-year exhibition *Imagining Home*, and related programs and public initiatives.

Radiah Harper is a leading museum educator and senior level professional and consultant with extensive experience creating and developing successful community, school, public, art and art history, and diversity programs. Based in New York City, she has strong, focused leadership and teaching skills with long-term experience in collaborating with other professionals and institutions.

Keonna Hendrick is a cultural strategist, educator, and author who promotes critical thinking, expands cultural perceptions, and supports self-actualization. Based in New York City, she is the co-founder of SHIFT, a collective of cultural workers engaging anti-oppressive feminist professional and personal development. She is also co-creator of multicultural critical reflective practice, a model that supports educators in becoming more culturally inclusive. At the Brooklyn Museum, Hendrick oversaw the museum education fellowship program, where she provided mentorship and training in gallery teaching. Hendrick's work supports educators in museums and classrooms, including at ArtsConnection, Museum of Modern Art, New York City Museum Educator Roundtable, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, and the Crow Collection of Asian Art.

Gretchen Jennings has worked in museums for over 30 years. She was a project director on traveling exhibitions "Invention at Play" and "Psychology," both of which received AAM awards of excellence. She was editor 2007–14 of the journal *Exhibitionist*. For the past five years, she has taught museum professionals in Kolkata. Based in Washington, D.C., she blogs at Museum Commons, is a founder of The Empathetic Museum project, and is a member of the Museums & Race initiative.

Mischa Kegan is an artist/musician, organizer, and youth worker from Minneapolis. Kegan graduated from the University of Minnesota with a BA in 2008, focused on printmaking and sculpture. While living in Chicago, he focused on his artistic practice and became politicized. He later taught English in Seoul. After returning to Minneapolis. Kegan worked as a cook, a screenprinter, and organizer with Community Action Against Racism. He now coordinates the Walker Art Center's Teen Arts Council, which he was a member of in high school. Kegan continues to create and focus on social change through youth work and the lens of art.

Patricia Lannes has worked in the fields of visual literacy and museum education for over 20 years. Based in New York City, she brings a bicultural, multilingual and immigrant perspective to her work. Lannes regularly consults for institutions that want to address issues of equity, community inclusion, cultural participation, and institutional change. She is the founder and director of CALTA21 (Cultures and Literacies Through Art for the 21st Century), an initiative that trains art museum, community-based organizations and higher education professionals in engagement and empowerment strategies for new museum audiences through a shared-authority and asset model. Previously, Lannes was the director of education at the Nassau County Museum of Art, N.Y. She is past-chair of the Latino Network, AAM, and was nominated as a White House Champion of Change.

Christine Lashaw has worked at the Oakland Museum of California (OMCA) for more than 18 years, developing exhibits with community members. As a member of OMCA's collaborative exhibit development team, she leads conversations and designs activities with diverse, local communities. She is committed to engaging museum visitors with exhibits built around voices and stories that reflect their own experiences. The exhibition *Pacific Worlds*, which she writes about in this publication, won awards from the Western Museums Association, American Association of State and Local History, Western History Association, and an Excellence in Exhibtions award from American Alliance of Museums. She has a BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design.

Alyssa Machida is a writer, artist, and educator based in Detroit, MI. She is currently an interpretive specialist at the Detroit Institute of Arts. Working at the intersections of

art, education, and social justice, she is dedicated to building critical pedagogy and anti-oppressive frameworks into museum practice. She earned a bachelor's degree in History of Art from UC Berkeley (2013), and a master's degree in Arts in Education from the Harvard Graduate School of Education (2016). Machida is developing a resource for museum educators titled, *The Dreamspace Project: A Workbook and Toolkit for Critical Praxis in the American Art Museum*.

Margaret Middleton is an independent exhibit designer in Providence, R.I., interested in the intersection of design and social justice. Middleton is a graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design's industrial design program, a member of the Museum Education Roundtable board, and a co-chair for the New England Museum Association Professional Affinity Group for Exhibitions. She is also a queer activist and advocate for family-inclusive museum practice. You may have seen Middleton's Family Inclusive Language chart in AAM's *Museum* or the National Association for Museum Exhibition's journal, *Exhibition.*

Monica O. Montgomery is the founding director of the Museum of Impact (MOI), the world's first mobile social justice museum. Based in New York City, she leads MOI in working within communities to amplify grassroots movements and social issues at the intersection of art and activism. She is also the co-founder and strategic director of Museum Hue, a platform advancing the visibility and viability of professionals of color in museums, arts, culture, and creative careers.

Porchia Moore is a fifth-year doctoral student at the University of South Carolina researching the role of race and structural racism in cultural heritage institutions. Moore is also a consultant at the Columbia Museum of Art and works on various projects and community-based initiatives with Historic Columbia Foundation.

Sage Morgan-Hubbard is the Ford W. Bell Fellow for Museums & P-12 Ed at AAM in Washington, D.C. She is an artist, poet, activist, and educator. She was the youth programs coordinator at the National Museum of American History, academic partnership coordinator at Columbia College Chicago, and a teaching artist throughout Chicago and D.C., instructing youth from pre–K through college. She has a BA in performance studies "Socially Conscious Arts of the Everyday" and ethnic studies from

Brown and an MA in performance studies from Northwestern. smorganhubbard@aam-us.org

Mike Murawski serves as director of education and public programs at the Portland Art Museum in Oregon and founding editor of ArtMuseumTeaching.com. Murawski earned his MA and PhD in education from American University, focusing his research on educational theory and interdisciplinary learning in the arts.

Evelyn Orantes has close to two decades of experience in the museum and cultural arts field. Orantes has dedicated her professional career to fostering exhibitions, educational programs, and events centered on meaningful and relevant community engagement. In her current role as consultant, her most recent endeavors focus on projects that serve diverse communities and are responsive to urgent community needs. She has held staff and consulting positions with Unity Council, Alameda Arts Commission, Oakland Museum of California, The Oakland Ballet, The Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian, Levine Museum of the New South (Charlotte, NC), and other galleries and museums in California and the United States.

Rose Paquet Kinsley is a doctoral student at the University of Washington's Information School. Kinsley has a background in museum work and completed an MA in museology from the University of Washington. She is the co-creator and co-facilitator of the The Incluseum, a project and blog aimed at encouraging social inclusion in museums.

Kyle Parsons is the manager of inclusion and community engagement at the Minnesota Historical Society (MNHS). Over the past six years, Parsons has focused on engaging the diverse communities of Minnesota, specifically different racial and ethnic groups in the Twin Cities, through educational programming. Core work includes overseeing external, community-facing programs for college students and teens, as well as on developing structures to help staff leverage diversity and inclusion practices. Parsons has a BA from Marquette University in communication with an emphasis on diverse cultures.

Adam Patterson is a career nonprofit fundraiser and development officer at the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI), where he is responsible for managing

a portfolio of high-capacity donors, connecting donor interests and passions with funding opportunities across museum programming. During his six years at OMSI, he has acted at the lead facilitator of the OMSI Diversity Workgroup. For the past two years, he has participated in the Association of Science and Technology's Diversity and Leadership Program as both a fellow and mentor. He holds a BS in justice, peace, and conflict studies from Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Va., and spent two years studying Afro-Caribbean philosophy at Howard University.

Chieko Phillips has dedicated her time in Seattle to uncovering and elevating lesser-known historical narratives in informal learning environments. She has worked with exhibitions and programming at the Northwest African American Museum, United Negro College Fund, Photographic Center Northwest, and BlackPast. Phillips is the Heritage Support Specialist at 4Culture, the cultural development authority for King County, Wa. She completed a BA in history from Davidson College and an MA in museology from the University of Washington.

Emily Pinkowitz is director of programs at the Wildlife Conservation Society, where she manages education at five city zoos. Previously, as director of programs and education at Friends of the High Line, she launched the park's education and community engagement initiatives. Past experience includes the Tenement Museum, Oakland Museum of California, Queens Museum, and Exploratorium. She has an MA in museum studies from New York University, is an AAM Diversity Fellow, and serves as a board member of the New York Museum Educators Roundtable.

PJ Gubatina Policarpio is a community arts engager: artist, curator, programmer, and educator. He is committed to creating multiple opportunities for meaningful connections between communities and art, especially addressing a diverse, multilingual, and multicultural audience. In 2015, Policarpio created *Engaging Multilingual Students: An Educator's Guide*, published on artmuseumteaching.com. Born in the Philippines and raised in San Francisco, he is based in Queens, N.Y.

Emily Potter is director of education at Brooklyn Historical Society, where she oversees P–12 programming with an emphasis on critical thinking and interpreting history to reflect us all. Her training is in history and museum studies and her pedagogy

is informed by intercultural work in Dakar, Senegal. She serves on the board of the Museum Education Roundtable. Born and raised in California, she currently lives in Brooklyn with family.

Therese Quinn is director of museum and exhibition graduate studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago, where she serves on the executive board of her faculty union. She writes about the arts and cultural institutions as sites for democratic engagement and justice work, and is the author and editor of *Art and Social Justice Education: Culture as Commons* (2012), *Sexualities in Education: A Reader* (2012), and *Teaching Toward Democracy* (2010), and writes articles for *QED: A Journal in GLBTQ Worldmaking*, *Journal of Museum Education*, *Abolitionist: A Publication of Critical Resistance*, *Monthly Review*, *Curriculum Inquiry*, and *Workplace: A Journal for Academic Labor*.

Joanne Rizzi-Jones is vice president of STEM Equity and Education at the Science Museum of Minnesota. She leads the museum's education initiatives ensuring that they achieve maximum impact and are equitable. Jones-Rizzi has a decades-long museum practice working on systemic, ecological change, specializing in expanding meaningful access through exhibitions and programs and creating approaches that advocate equitable access, reciprocity, cultural relevance and meaningful participation for a broad range of communities.

Ashley Rogers is the director of museum operations at the Whitney Plantation in Wallace, La. The plantation is a site of memory and homage that is focused exclusively on interpreting the lives of enslaved people. Rogers is working to research the legacies of slavery in south Louisiana, which includes an oral history project with descendants and former cane workers still living in the area. She is a contributor to *Positioning Your Museum as a Critical Community Asset: A Practical Guide* (2016) and *The Inclusive Historian's Handbook* (2018). Rogers is a graduate of Colorado State University with an MA in history and museum studies.

Adam Reed Rozan is the director of audience engagement at the Worcester Art Museum, Mass., helping to lead this century-old institution into the future through innovative programming. An indefatigable advocate for visitors, Rozan is part of a

movement to revolutionize the museum visit. In his role, he manages education, studio classes, marketing, design, and visitor services. He holds an MA in museum studies from Harvard University Extension School, where he is an adjunct faculty member.

Adrianne Russell is an arts advocate, writer, and co-founder of the digital humanities project #museumsrespondtoFerguson. Based in Kansas City, Mo. Russell has written and about the intersections of art, race, equity, and culture for *Fusion*, *Temporary Art Review*, *Smithsonian Magazine*, and her blog, *Cabinet of Curiosities*.

Chris Taylor is the director of inclusion and community engagement at the Minnesota Historical Society. Taylor is leading efforts for MNHS to become a more inclusive organization that engages the needs of a demographic rapidly becoming more diverse.

Brenda Tindal is staff historian at Levine Museum of the New South in Charlotte. She is charged with conducting research, planning, and curating exhibits that place the city and region into historical context, developing and delivering educational programs, supporting communications, media, and community relations efforts, and serving on the museum's senior management team. Previously, Tindal was a visiting lecturer at University of North Carolina, Charlotte (UNCC), where she taught 17th–20th-century U.S. and South African history, visual and material culture, and transnational and comparative social reform movements. Tindal has a BA in history and Africana studies from UNCC, an MA in American Studies from Emory University, and a PhD in history and culture from Emory.

nikhil trivedi is an application developer at a museum in Chicago and a social justice activist. His activism work focuses on ending rape culture and patriarchy through his role as a volunteer educator for Rape Victim Advocates. He is a regular contributor at The Incluseum, co-creator of visitorsofcolor.tumblr.com, and his writing has been featured in Model View Culture and Fwd: Museums. He was also a recipient of a Gender Equality Award by the Chicago Chapter of UN Women. You will also find him playing his guitar and sitar, composing noise, hiking, making herbal medicines, and drinking warm glasses of chai on cold winter nights.

Maya A. Weisinger is the access and audiences coordinator at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis. She aims to build more equitable and inclusive practices into programs

through contemporary visual and performing arts, moving image, and public programming. Weisinger graduated with a BA in American Studies from Macalester College in 2012 and is dedicated to engaging the intersection of social impact and the arts through all of her work. She serves on the board of USA Cooperative Youth Council and is an AchieveMpls graduation coach at Roosevelt High School. She is a singer, guitarist, and violinist in the band Avalon Moon.

Aletheia Wittman cofounded The Incluseum, a project that advances new ways of being a museum through community building and collaborative practice focused on inclusion. Wittman is currently Collections Interpreter with the Burke Museum of Natural History & Culture in Seattle, WA. Previously, she developed exhibits, public programs and youth programming for the Seattle Architecture Foundation. Past experiences also include work with All Rise Seattle, 4Culture's Creative Justice Program, the Henry Art Gallery, the Ballard Historical Society, Access Art Gallery in Vancouver, BC, and the University of British Columbia. Wittman has an MA in museology from the University of Washington where she researched emerging curatorial practices in art museums and their relationship with social justice.

Toni Wynn works with museums and historic places. Recognized with an Excellence in Exhibit Writing award, her work appears in the 2016 edition of Beverly Serrell's industry classic, *Exhibit Labels*. Wynn co-facilitated the Museums and Race convening in Chicago in 2016. Based in in Hampton, Va., she is creating print, visual, and electronic media in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Smithsonian's Anacostia Community Museum. A poet and creative nonfiction writer, she also writes about the arts, specializing in STEM and arts education. Wynn studied international relations and social welfare at Clark University and the University of Copenhagen, and instructional technology at San Francisco State and Virginia Tech.