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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

Visitor Learning on Guided Tours: An Activity Theory Approach

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Education

in

Teaching and Learning

by

Lily Beatrice Robinson

Committee in Charge:

Paula Levin, Chair
Stephanie Jed
James Levin

2016

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The Dissertation of Lily Beatrice Robinson is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

Chair

University of California, San Diego

2016

Dedication

To my grandfather, Fred Berson, for his art of storytelling.

To my grandmother, Sylvia Berson, for her appreciation of culture.

To my father, Sherman Robinson, for his quest for adventure.

To my mother, Sandra Robinson, for teaching me to love learning.

Epigram

As if drawn by some force
to give expression to the meaning
of the unmeasurable
dimension of relationship,
our paths crossed,
allowing each to help the other
to say and to reveal
what would otherwise have been
unknowable.

Jonas Salk

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Acknowledgements

With deep appreciation, I would like to acknowledge Dr. Paula Levin for her continual support as the chair of my committee. Her detailed feedback, practical advice, and sincere commitment to excellence underlie all of the work I have done in this study. I am also grateful for the wisdom and insight of my committee members, Dr. James Levin, who guided me through my second year, and Dr. Stephanie Jed. Thank you to all of my professors in EDS, Ann Bayer, Amanda Datnow, Cheryl Forbes, Chris Halter, Tom Humphries, Alison Wishard Guerra, Carmen Restrepo, Marcia Sewell, and Caren Holtzman, advisor for my first-year paper.

To the members of Cohort 11, Alison Black, Bailey Choi, Luke Cuddy, Kristy Drake, Tracey Kiser, Suzi Van Steenberg, and Amie Wong, I am honored to have shared this academic journey with you.

I am forever grateful for the love and support from my family and friends, with special thanks to Elizabeth Spinello for her encouragement, and JC Harkins for his love, patience, and cooking skills.

A huge thank you to the people who allowed me to conduct research at their facilities: the program managers, the dedicated guides, and the visitors who signed up as participants. This study, literally, could not have been done without you.

Vita

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Abstract of the Dissertation

Visitor Learning on Guided Tours: An Activity Theory Approach

by

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Doctor of Education in Teaching and Learning

University of California, San Diego, 2016

Paula Levin, Chair

Guided tours, field trips, and other non-formal learning experiences occur in a variety of settings such as museums, parks, civic buildings, and architectural landmarks for the purpose of educating the public. This study yielded four main findings. (1) Program educational goals were visitor awareness, positive affective experience, and advocacy. (2) Guides' intentions matched program goals, but varied in terms of discourse styles (expository, storytelling and interpretive), and in the level of encouraging social interaction. (3) Visitor learning aligned with, and exceeded, program goals. (4) Visitor

learning related to expectation, delivery strategy of the guide, and opportunity for social interaction.

Through the lens of Social Practice Theory and Activity Theory, this study addressed the overarching question: What do adult visitors learn through participating in a guide-mediated tour of a culturally significant setting? In order to understand the learning objectives within the community of practice and cultural tools at each setting, additional sub-questions addressed: (a) What are the educational goals of the guided tour as expressed by program managers and tour guide training documents? (b) What do the guides intend visitors learn? (c) How do the beliefs, practices and experience of the three participant types intersect to produce learning?

This study examined tour programs at two sites: a Research Facility and a Public Library. Data were collected through document analysis of the official script and tour guidelines, observation of 11 one-hour-long guided tours, initial debriefings with 42 guided visitors and follow-up interviews with 12 of those visitors. The six guides who conducted the observed tours and the program manager at each site were also interviewed. This study builds on previous studies on non-formal learning by including program managers as study participants, rather than only recipients of data. Findings from this study can inform institutions which host non-formal education programs, and formal educators who incorporate guided tours as field trips into their curriculum.

Chapter 1 Introduction

While most educational research examines learning in formal settings, there is a growing body of research which focuses on learning that occurs outside of a school environment, as a result of participation in everyday activities (Holland & Lave, 2001; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Taylor, 2006). This focus has multiple dimensions: an increased interest in adult lifelong learning (Rogers, 2005), an expanding awareness of alternatives to our formal education system (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Taylor, 2006) and the desire for museums and other cultural venues to promote learning as part of their institutional mission (Falk & Dierking, 2000; Monk, 2013). In addition, perceptions exist among teachers and students that out-of-school visits to culturally significant settings are important supplements to formal education (Anderson & Zhang, 2003; Eshach, 2007; Spicer & Stratford, 2001). Anderson and Zhang (2003) found that teachers rely on the organization or institution which hosts the out-of-school learning experience to orchestrate and provide structured or semi-structured events and resources for their students. Non-formal education programs for all ages, housed in museums and other culturally significant venues, consist of guided tours, demonstrations and workshops run by volunteer or paid employees. Rogers (2004) and Eshach (2007) differentiated *non-formal education (NFE)* which indicates a semi-structured, mediated learning activity, from *informal learning* which refers to the unintentional knowledge acquired incidentally through everyday life experiences or spontaneous life situations without an authority figure or guide to navigate a path to knowledge, skill or ability. Although most studies refer to non-formal education, the focus of this study is more learner-centered, so I will mainly be referring to *non-formal learning*, with an emphasis on the learning that occurs

rather than the instruction. Non-formal learning may complement formal learning for adults as well as children (Eshach, 2007). This study focuses on the adult visitor participant.

This study adds to the body of knowledge of adult non-formal learning by describing and analyzing the nature of adult visitor learning occurring at tour programs in two culturally significant settings in Southern California through the lens of Activity Theory. Data was collected through observation of 11 tours, and document analysis of the official tour script from each location. Immediately following each of the tours, a debriefing session was conducted of approximately four guided visitors who answered questions about what they recollected from the tour activity. A total of 42 visitors participated in this study. Out of the 42 visitors who participated in these debriefing sessions, 12 visitors were interviewed four to six weeks following their tour experience to find out what they recalled, and what they did after the tour. This study also included interviews with the guides who conducted the observed tours, and the program manager at each site, to help form a more holistic description of the objectives and meditational tools of the activity.

This study looked at learning as a by-product of a guide-mediated interaction to discover what people learn through the guided activity, and how this learning related to the institutional goals and the intentions of the guides. Implications of this study are intended to inform institutions which host non-formal education programs, the program managers and the guides, as well as teachers who incorporate out-of-school field trips into their teaching and curricula.

Non-formal Educational Activities

Coombs and Ahmed (1974) first defined *non-formal education (NFE)* as “any organized, systematic, educational activity carried on outside the framework of the formal system to provide selected types of learning to particular subgroups in the population, adults as well as children” (p. 8). Schugurensky (2000) further described NFE as “all organized educational programs that take place outside a formal school system, and are usually short term and voluntary” (p. 2). He offered examples such as rehabilitation programs, cooking classes, art workshops, classes which do not normally demand prerequisite knowledge, have an instructor or facilitator, and offer degrees of participation within a semi-structured format.

More recently, NFE has been framed to fit a more learner-centered approach. According to Zepke and Leach (2006), NFE is a form of situated learning that involves voluntary, collective, non-confrontational interaction, which may be therapeutic or technically-oriented, in a certain place, for the enhancement of life, enjoyment, personal interest, or building cultural capital. Similarly, according to Taylor (2006), NFE is offered to a wide variety of abilities and age ranges, often conducted in locations where there may be ongoing distractions as in an outdoor public setting. Neill (2010) described NFE simply as the intentional, purposeful, and structured learning opportunities occurring outside of a formal education system, which is the definition that I will be using in this study.

Romi and Schmida (2009) referred to non-formal education as a major educational force in the postmodern world, citing its underlying philosophical and theoretical assumptions as a starting point of analysis. They call for studies to examine

NFE as an independent educational approach turning towards addressing learning and focusing on situated learning in particular. They identify specific variables of NFE: organizational-institutional affiliation which ranges according to its setting, the nature of the activities within a situated learning framework from a micro to macro level, and value orientations of the activities, ranging from ideological to universal.

Rogers (2004) claimed there is a renewed interest in non-formal education in Western, post-industrial society due to its potential to contribute to the concept of lifelong learning. Non-formal education is targeted beyond the range of formal, yet is somehow related to formal education in its systematic application or delivery. While an organized and systematic learning activity can be seen by some cultures or for some populations as an “alternative” to formal education, it is usually viewed, in Western tradition, as a “supplement” to formal education (Brennan, 1997). Although sometimes viewed as equivalent to non-vocational or non-credit adult education, he warned that it is not synonymous. Children as well as adults can participate and often mixed rather than segregated.

Brennan (1997) called for study of non-formal education in all of its different forms and culturally specific uses. Brennan helped highlight the usefulness of the concept of non-formal education. “In terms of objectives and purposes, NFE is centrally concerned as a response (or responses) to failures or limitations of formal education in achieving specific educational objectives with particular target learners” (Brennan, 1997, p 190). Brennan noted many organizations such as churches, museums and libraries, primarily concerned with other goals, employ non-formal education in order to achieve them. This study explores the educational goals of four programs located in a public

library and a research facility. Brennan (1997) considered “setting” and “process” important to understanding how non-formal education acts a “vehicle of understanding” that needs to be appropriate to the learners, as well as meet the objectives of the institution in which the program is embedded. This study explored the use of the official tour guidelines as a starting point for the guides to construct a sense of place which met what they interpreted as the program goals. They lead the group of visitors along a path through the building, pointed out features, with an accompanying narrative consisting of fact, stories and interpretations. Some guides used social interaction as components of the learning activity.

A Broad Definition of Learning in Non-formal Settings

Lave and Wenger (1991) claimed all learning is situated, a feature of practice present in all sorts of activities, as a by-product of participation. Lave and Wenger (1991) redefined learning from “transmitted, discovered, assimilated” by passive learner to “the historical production, transformation and change of persons” through physical and social interaction (p. 51). Learning, as defined in this study, is a product of social engagement and sensory perception (walking, listening, touching, gazing), which results in new connections, greater appreciation, understanding or awareness.

It is a fundamental assumption in this study that learning occurs through participants’ interaction in the guide-mediated activity, but that learning cannot be measured through traditional means. As Lave and Wenger (1991) stated, if learning is defined as “a relational understanding of person, world, activity, participation” then, “at the core of our theory of learning, [it] can neither be fully internalized as knowledge structures nor fully externalized as instrumental artifacts or overarching activity

structures” (p.51). Simply put, we can only get partial evidence of what was learned on the tour from a learner’s perspective. The measurement of learning, in this study, consist of self-reports of the impressions, memories and features of the tour that stood out as memorable from the visitor’s point of view, in their own words, in response to interview questions. Aggregating individual responses to look for emergent themes or patterns, I was able to develop a collective impression of what the visitors report as memorable.

Eraut (2000) further defined learning as the process whereby knowledge is acquired, or when prior knowledge is applied in a new context, which creates new insight or connection. Visitors of the culturally significant site typically have some prior knowledge of the place. Perhaps they have seen photos, read books, listened to lectures, or viewed resources on the institution’s website. These visitors bring their prior knowledge to the place. The combination of new information, provided within the context of the tour framework, along with experiential sensory inputs: smells, views, textures, and sounds that accompany movement through the space allows visitors to connect prior knowledge in a new context to form new personal knowledge. According to Knapp (2000), these kinds of episodic memories, those associated with specific temporal events such as visceral moments on a tour, “can be recalled and recorded as semantic memories associated with conceptual, independent knowledge” (p. 69). In addition, Anderson, Storcksdieck, and Spock (2007) identified three factors as most important to creating a vivid, lasting memory: conversation about the experience, emotional affect related to the experience and whether the visitor’s agenda was fulfilled or frustrated. While Anderson et al. looked at this theory in a free-choice museum setting, this study tested this theory in relation to guided tours.

According to Eraut (2000), factors which increase potential for learning in non-formal settings are the level of consciousness, intention, and planning from implicit to deliberative. Simply put, a visitor's motivation for participating can range from a passing interest to a more sustained engagement level of interest or life-long goal. I propose that interactive, guide-mediated walking tours contain the ideal conditions for learning since they are typically planned and conducted in a systematic manner, yet allow for individuals to experience episodic personal insight due to the relaxed, semi-structured nature of the activity. Within the framework of the tour, does the potential for conversation with others and assistance by the guide, help fulfill the objectives of the guided participant? In what ways do the participants' report the value of the guide-mediated activity in both affective experience and gain of content knowledge? Eraut (2000) cautions that while it is difficult to determine or investigate acquisition of this kind of knowledge, it is important to inquire into the generation of this kind of knowledge to inform the body of knowledge of non-formal learning. In this study, I investigate how visitor expectations relate to what they get out of the experience in terms of affective memories and technical knowledge.

Guides

Guides, in this study, are the adult educators, or docents, who voluntarily lead small groups of visitors through museum galleries or historical sites on educational and informative, most typically hour-long, tours (Neill, 2010). According to Neill (2010), the term "docent" comes from the Latin "docere" which means to teach, instruct, or give instructions and was first used in a 1907 publication by in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, which stated that the purpose of a docent was "to lead his disciples on to

enjoyment” (p. 8). The modern tour guide has an origin in both “leadership and mediatory spheres” (Cohen, 1985, p.17). For this study, the role of the tour guide is taken as both a leader and educator in the non-formal learning activity. Four different types of guides have been identified by Cohen as instrumental, communicative, interactive, and social. I have reinterpreted and expanded upon his categories to help frame this study in Table 1.

Table 1. Four Roles of the Guide (Based on Cohen, 1985)

Guide’s Role	Activity Focus
Pathfinder	Navigating through the unfamiliar; general orientation
Communicator	Giving factual information as authoritative expert
Interpreter/Mentor	Assisting in understanding of space or objects
Animator	Generating discussion or activity among participants

Guiding, according to Cohen, is a complex endeavor encompassing an authoritative conductor of the way through an unknown environment, a “pathfinder”, who has local knowledge but no specialized training, but leads to a specialized occupation over time, with experience at leading others. A guide, in this study, assumes the role of leader in the direction, access, control, integration, animation and pace, management of the group, orchestrating the movement through a series of spaces, making sure that the individual members of the group do not stray into unauthorized locations or violate the institutions rules with regard to the physical place. The other role of a guide, according to Cohen, is that of a “mentor” or personal advisor who serves to enlighten the

novice in either a spiritual or educational insight. Cohen (1985) refers to this guidance as both “geographic and spiritual” (p. 8). He breaks down this role into two further distinctive components: interaction (representation, organization) and communication (selection, information, interpretation and fabrication). This study concurred with this view of the guide as well as with Neill (2010), as she stated, “with curricular content as narrative text, docents interpret that text so as to make it relevant and understandable to the tour-goer” (p.13). The tour guide, in this study, is the mediator of the activity between the visitor and memorable experience.

Visitors

The term *visitor* refers to the adult guided participant who may be a local community member, or out-of-town tourist. They may be a novice or expert, in terms of content knowledge about the place. Guided visitors come to the place with a varying degree of prior knowledge and a variety of goals or expectations, from being entertained to acquiring new knowledge about the place through personal, sensory experience. Some of these people come with an expectation of a certain kind of transformational or spiritual experience, similar to the motivational factors one would have on a pilgrimage, while others come as a curious spectator on a casual recreational endeavor or a way to spend an hour. I am using the term *visitor*, because, while all of these people have varying motivational and educational goals, they share a common expectation of being led through the place by a guide, for a short time. The visitors, in this study, are participating subjects in the activity who share a common yet transitory role as learner during the guide-mediated activity. They have chosen this kind of experience over a self-guided, free-choice or unmediated experience or meditational means of experiencing the place

through an artifact such as a map or pre-recorded audio guide, assuming something like this was available to them.

Types of Interactions Between Learner and Place

The notion of participating in a tour guided by a knowledgeable, trained person is located within a range of possible experiences a visitor may have in order to learn about a place (Table 2). An individual may learn about a place without actually going there in person. For example one can read a book about a place, attend a lecture, watch a film, interact with a virtual tour via computer or have a conversation with another person who has visited the place.

Table 2. Examples of Ways to Learn About a Place

Remote (No access to physical place)	In Situ (Access to physical place)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read about it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tour by vehicle
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to a story 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk alone
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk about 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk with others
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See photos 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk with map
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See film or video 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk with audio-guide
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtual tour/website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk with Guide (Q&A)

Access to the physical place allows for sensory perception such as touch, smell, hearing, as well as physical engagement of the body through movement through the space that, I argue, leads to understanding of place that is different from visual access through film, photos or even from the remoteness of viewing a place from a tour bus or other vehicle.

A visitor can experience and learn about a place through a variety of ways when he or she arrives at a place (figure 1). One can experience the place without tool or guide mediation such as strolling through a museum or building. There is also a continuum of interaction with a place using artifacts or human mediation. Examples of artifact-mediated experiences include using tools such as a map or an audio recording to help guide the experience. Experiences range in terms of access to place, use of a mediation device or artifact to help guide the experience and level of social interaction or degree of control the learner has in terms of asking questions or engaging in conversation.

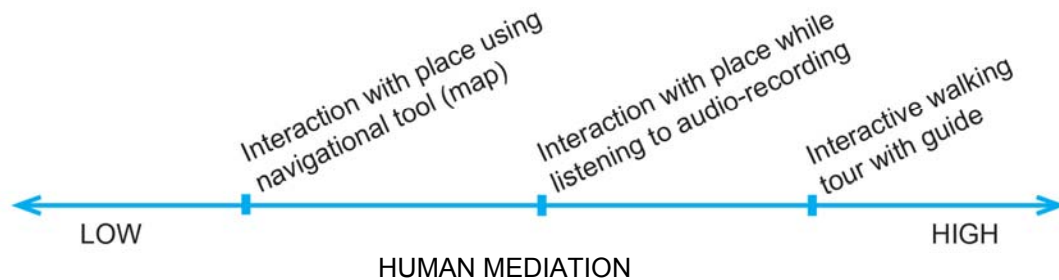


Figure 1. Examples of interactions with place along continuum of human mediation

A tour guided by a person is a type of mediated interaction with the physical environment among many other ways in which to experience a place. The high level of three factors: access to the physical place for multi-sensory experience, human-mediation with an expert and potential for social interaction, found in a guide-mediated activity, I hypothesize, leads to increased understanding of the place which results in learning by participants.

Culturally Significant Setting

In this study, a *culturally significant setting* is a place that serves a concrete function as an institution in society, such as preserving or producing knowledge. In

addition, a culturally significant setting acts as an abstract representation or symbol, or historical example of its function. In this study, I examined two of these kind of settings in which guided tours are taking place. This sense of significance of each of these settings is derived from the concept of a boundary object as defined by Star and Griesemer (1989), “an analytic concept of those scientific objects which both inhabit several intersecting social worlds ... and satisfy the informational requirements of each of them. Boundary objects are objects which are both plastic enough to adapt to local needs and the constraints of the several parties employing them, yet robust enough to maintain a common identity across sites” (p. 393). The authors, in this case, are referring to culturally significant artifacts that one would find in a museum. In this spirit, this study identifies the venue itself as culturally significant.

The two settings in this study, a research facility and a public library, are iconic works of architecture that host research, provide physical locations to study, learn and work as well as preserve or support public education. Each location, in this study, acts as both a symbol of knowledge and container of learning. The building in which each function is housed has been valued, treasured, analyzed, interpreted, documented, and held up as a culturally significant artifact by the public. They are both culturally significant places in their daily operations as well as exist as an architectural icon in the community. Star and Griesemer (1989) articulated four analytic distinctions of culturally significant boundary objects: a “repository” (such as a museum or library), an “ideal type” (an architectural icon or socially-significant institutional form) with “coincident boundaries” and a “standardized form” or structure that is readily recognized (p. 410).

Using these distinctions as criteria for evaluation, each site can be construed as a culturally significant boundary object that one can inhabit and experience.

To describe the embodied experience of inhabiting a place, Ingold (2011) used the term “wayfaring” to describe how trails of different people converge in a place and become entwined to form a “knot” of understanding (p. 148). Framed in this way, we can see that a culturally significant setting can be a place in which activities such as guide-mediated tours serve to enhance communication, experience and interpretation. I argue that the tour activity fosters understanding, yet allows participants to construct a sense of place for themselves. This study answered the question of what people learn on tours in these settings, as they are influenced by listening to and being navigated by institutional agents, along with the sensory experience of moving, seeing, touching to connect new experiences with their own prior knowledge.

Personal Interest

According to Grenier (2009), tour guides typically see themselves as educators and ambassadors of the institution they serve. In addition to being a post-secondary educator and practicing architect, I have been an architectural tour guide for the past ten years at one of the two venues slated to be the setting for this study and for approximately one year at the other location. I have given tours to thousands of people who range in age, ethnicity and level of expertise and have come to understand that there are commonalities and well as variation in learners who report that the tour has had a transformational effect on them. While anecdotal evidence such as facial expressions, follow-up emails and, in some cases, applause, have indicated the tour-attendees have been engaged, entertained or inspired, it is important for me to study this phenomenon in a more systematic and

structured manner. I have always wondered what the people are getting out of the tour, and what aspects of the experience lead to new connections or awareness?

I was approached by one of the organizations to professionalize their tour guide training and to standardize their practices and was inspired to conduct this study. One goal of this study to inform the community of practice of the tour program about the nature of this mediated learning event and provide evidence for practices that can be incorporated to expand the educational benefit and enhance learning outcomes of the program. My experience suggests that there are a wide variety of visitors in terms of prior knowledge and expectations as well as variation in docent beliefs and practices, as well as institutional mission, which culminates in the question: what do visitors learn on these tours and how does that learning relate to the educational expectations of the institutional agents of the program?

Chapter 2 Review of Relevant Literature

There is a growing body of research on non-formal education. These studies tend to focus on one of three distinct areas: the program, the educator, or the learner. When looking at the program, most studies focused on the general approach or strategies used to instill or promote social justice or social change. Many studies, primarily in tourism, looked at outcomes other than learning such as visitor satisfaction, personal enjoyment or some kind of transformative effect that the experience had on the participant, for an immediate or long-term result. Studies on the educator in non-formal settings have collected data on professional development and agency and strategies employed to engage or communicate with the visitor. Looking at the learner in non-formal education, many of the studies focused on field trips for K-12 students, to supplement formal science and arts education, studying strategies to increase content knowledge retention and engagement with exhibits in museums, parks, zoos and aquariums.

For adult learning, which is the focus of this dissertation, there is a lot of research on how non-formal education helps with under-schooled adults in rural, or impoverished areas to replace, complement or supplement formal learning in traditional schools, as well as to enhance life-long learning, building cultural capital, technical knowledge and personal growth. However, more research is needed to describe learning which occurs in different kinds of locations and venues. As Taylor (2006) stated, “lack of understanding about NFE in the literature is problematic considering the overwhelming presence of this form of local education and the dearth of information about its unique educational context and practice” (p. 293). One purpose of this study is to clarify non-formal

learning, particularly for adults engaged in a structured learning experience in a culturally significant setting.

The literature reviewed for this study is organized into three areas: reviews and critique of non-formal education programs, research on the educators in non-formal settings, and research on the learners in non-formal settings. I briefly describe the findings in each of these domains and methodologies employed in these studies. I conclude by discussing the need for further inquiry into the learners' experience, without isolating that inquiry from the other parts of the activity. This study seeks to understand how the objectives set by program, the tools used for mediation, and how the practices and perceptions of institutional agents relate to what people experience, in order to get a more holistic picture of this kind of mediated activity.

Research on Non-formal Educational Programs

In this domain, I review articles in which the author evaluated existing curricula or approaches in non-formal learning environments. Most of the studies aimed at institutional or pedagogical level called for change at the organizational level or in policy or educational reform in that area, yet did not include interviews of policy-makers in their data collection. Common themes among the studies were assessing the role of the program in increasing feelings of empathy, social justice or global citizenship (Baptist & Nassar, 2009; Ciardelli & Wasserman, 2011; Goralnik, Millenbah, Nelson, & Thorp, 2012) and raising environmental awareness (Maclean & White, 2013) and awareness of local history and culture (Van de Laar, 2013). Proposals for improvement in this area mainly lacked sufficient evidence to support the claims. A majority of these articles summarized previous research or called for action to improve non-formal education

without providing clear findings or evaluation of the effectiveness of the program through an empirical study, either qualitative or quantitative. Eskridge (2003), Preskill (2011), and Shaffer (2011) addressed the importance of the institution's administration in setting policy and that their decisions should be informed by research. However, none of the studies included museum administrators in their data collection—program administrators were only seen as recipients of findings. This study includes data collection from policy makers, the unseen forces who help shape the learning environment, to get a fuller picture of the learning event, as well as the tour guides and visitors.

One particular approach to evaluate the role of the non-formal educational program within the broader context of education was to ask elementary school teachers how they viewed non-formal education programs. Using surveys and focus groups to gather information from 93 Canadian elementary school teachers, Anderson and Zhang (2003) affirmed that the vast majority (90%) of participants, believed that field trips were a highly valuable educational experience with the rest believing that a field trip was a moderately valuable. Anderson and Zhang (2003) found that 60% of the teachers partnered with the outside institution to jointly plan the at-venue experience while one third believed it was the “sole responsibility of the venue to provide the planning and execution of the on-site activity and post-visit materials” (p. 6). Their conclusion was that teachers generally rely on the institution when planning a field trip to that location. Although this research focused on adult learners, I believe that similar reliance on the venue for directing and conducting the mediated learning experience exists in the perceptions of post-secondary education teachers when planning field trips to culturally significant settings. In addition, visitors to a venue generally rely on the tools and

activities provided by the place, such as maps, guides and audio-recordings, to help enhance their experience, as illustrated in the studies discussed in the final section of this chapter. In general, studies have concluded that the program elements and objectives play an important role in shaping visitor experience. Further inquiry remained as to what the institutional agents who shape the program believe learning outcomes should be and how these beliefs influence the activity itself.

Research on Educators in Non-formal Settings

The studies of educators who work in non-formal settings tend to look at professional development, content knowledge (Grenier, 2009), self efficacy, delivery pedagogy and identity (Evans-Palmer, 2013; Camhi, 2008; Tsvbulskaya & Camhi, 2009), and methodology, theory and beliefs (Abu-Shumays & Leinhardt, 2002; Grenier, 2009; Neill, 2010).

Inquiring in to the role of learning in the development of expertise in non-formal educators, Grenier (2009) studied the professional development of twelve expert docents in four history-themed museums. Grenier was interested in the characteristics that define an expert and what types of learning experiences lead to the development of that expertise. This study was important to the field because it bridged factual content area acquired through formal means with other skills gained through the process of social interaction on multiple tours over time. Grenier concluded that informal and incidental learning combined with formal training and continuing education enabled the docent to acquire characteristics of an expert such as: declarative and procedural knowledge, intuitive skills, pattern recognition and flexibility in terms of delivery strategy or adaptation to visitor preferences.

Across all the studies, there was a recurring commonality of docent demographics, which seemed to be Caucasian, female, college-educated and over 40 years of age. In addition, guides share identity attributes such as loyalty to the institution, a sense of commitment to excellence, feeling that they add value to the institution and a sense of purpose to communicate and teach the tour-goers. They have “high ethics,” with a tendency to recite approved facts rather than hearsay (Neill, 2010, p. 158).

However, according to Neill (2010), tour guides tailor narratives based on their own learning preferences, and beliefs about teaching. According to Abu-Shumays and Leinhardt (2002) guides select objects or facts to include on the tour based on personal preference and express overt opinions along with personal stories to engage and influence tour-goers throughout the tour. Anecdotes, entertainment and humor seek to anchor visitor engagement (Taylor, 2006). Neill (2010) noted varying degrees of delivery from direct instruction, lecture-based tours to a more use of interpretive techniques in which open-ended questions were asked in order to increase interaction between guide and visitor. Camhi (2008) observed 35 guided tours in multiple venues including a university campus, sculpture garden, nature park, art gallery, university research lab, and public library in four countries. He created a catalog of 58 types of communicative acts that occur between the guide, the guided and the object of study. Camhi categorized these into six communicative pathways such as guide to object, guide to visitor, visitor to guide, along with acts within each pathway such as object is hidden and then dramatically revealed, object is casually placed on a cluttered table or object is carefully placed on an empty table. Camhi hoped this list would encourage guides and their administration to expand the range of ways to engage the public with culturally significant objects. I draw

on a few of these pathways of communication in my development of categories of social interaction to be noted during observation of tours, namely when guides ask or respond to visitor questions and when visitors initiate conversation with the guide or other visitors.

According to Neill's (2010) findings, tour guides see themselves as storytellers, as mediators or translators, conveying messages from an expert perspective, using proper terminology, to a layperson. They reported giving voice to artists and curators, and to representing the institution as a whole, conveying the overall message of their venue. Abu-Shumays and Leinhardt (2002) called this technique a "critical interpretivist stance," as their research showed seasoned guides are continually reflecting on the needs of the visitor, seeing the object through the eyes of a visitor and trying to interpret it for them (p. 79). They noted that this needs to be coupled with content knowledge for the tour to be successful learning experience.

According to Grenier (2009) guides rely on non-verbal and verbal feedback, at the beginning, mid-tour and at the conclusion of a tour. Guides in museums typically ask groups initial questions to determine country of origin, prior knowledge and level of interest or familiarity with the subject matter. A typical question was whether they had attended that location before or if it was their first time. According to Neill (2010), guides believe they can influence visitor beliefs and future behavior, by conducting a positive, transformative experience for the guided for the goals of return visits and deeper appreciation of the subject matter.

The most common methods for these studies were qualitative, ethnographic approaches with small sample size ranging from two participants to 20. Most studies were comparative across several venues such as comparing two or more museums or

contrasting a park with a museum. Grenier (2009) and Neill (2010) each recorded field notes while observing the tour activity followed by semi-structured interviews with the tour guides, however Grenier supplemented these data collection methods with document analysis as well.

The substantial research done in this area served to inform this study in terms of baseline of findings on which to build, and methodologies used to collect data from the institutional agents leading the activities and running the program. It is clear from these findings that tour guides play a central role as mediator in the tour activity in terms of setting the narrative, the sequence of the tour, the focus or theme and the level of social interaction and level of interpretation or opinion. Since guides view themselves as educational agents of the institution they serve they proved to be rich sources of data in this study. They described reasons behind their behaviors observed during the activity, and how they interpret and operationalize the central mission of the tour experience. The question remains, how do these individuals talk about their expectations and intentions with regard to learning? How do the program managers and guides talk about their role in the mission of the program and how it relates to the institution's mission?

Research on Learners in Non-formal Settings

Studies which focus on learners in non-formal settings tended to measure retention of information using quantitative, quasi-experimental methods (Orion & Hofstein, 1994; Stone, 1997; Stronck, 1983). More recent studies focus on visitor enjoyment (Bamberger & Tal, 2008), level of engagement with exhibits, talk generated from exhibits (DeWitt & Hohenstein, 2010), or reason for attendance. Some empirical studies looked at the visitor perspective beyond satisfaction surveys to get at the learner's

experience, personal meaning-making or co-construction of meaning in qualitative studies (Barrett, 2008; Leinhardt, Tittle, & Knutson, 2002). Anderson, Storksdieck, and Spock (2007) summarized research studies done between 1990's-2006 which looked at long term impact of museum visits, defined learning as “attitude, interest or behavior change” (p. 203) and sought to measure “salient memories” that would be long term, through the use of phone interviews and questionnaires. Bamberger and Tal (2007) found students attributed a single visit to a science center as the beginning of a lifelong journey in that field, supporting the long-term effect of field trips on visitors. Given that the effect of a single visit to a culturally significant place can have a lasting effect, this study looked more closely at experiences are occurring at these venues, what patterns of interaction or combination of factors surround this learning experience, from multiple perspectives.

According to Leinhardt et al. (2002), empirical studies of learning in museums have shifted from quantitative studies on information accumulation by the learner to constructivist meaning making by researchers such as Falk and Dierking (2000). It has moved from the study of behavior to analysis of conversation as socio-cultural theorists see conversation between participants touring a museum exhibit as an intertwining activity of knowledge construction. The trend has been from post-positivist experiments to discourse analysis to ethnographic methods to uncover multifaceted dimensions of learners' identity, motivation and interest, their ability to explain, interpret and construct meaning, and has now extended to the physical environment. (Leinhardt et al, 2002, p. x). Leinhardt et al., (2002) used diaries written by museum-goers as a data gathering tool

from which they determined the purpose and construction of the visit (by the learner) and the cognitive tools the visitors use to make meaning of their visit.

Most studies were inconclusive with regards to the educational impact of lecture-based tours versus constructivist inquiry and discussion methods by post-secondary students on a field trip. According to Stone (1997) neither encouraged retention of content, but both promoted general interest in the subject matter. Stronck (1983) found middle school children had greater retention on what he called a structured tour but students reported more positive overall experience with more unstructured tours. Both of these tours were guided, but the unstructured tour was led by a familiar teacher rather than an expert/docent and allowed for more freedom to explore and personal reflection. Does this theory hold true for adult learners who are not attending a field trip as part of a post-secondary educational program? Do highly structured tours, with strong interpretive or storytelling discourse styles influence the production of salient memories in the guided adult visitor as opposed to unstructured, inquiry-based tours? Although an interactive approach to guiding adult learners through an art museum led to an expression of closeness or connectedness among tour-goers, some were frustrated by this approach. Barrett (2008) concluded not all adult visitors respond well to the constructivist approach to tours in art galleries, tours in which they are encouraged to share in guided conversations about perception of art to generate viewer-constructed meanings in museums (Barrett, 2008). Relying on anecdotal evidence and quotes from written responses of 20 adults with no formal art or art history education, Barrett (2008) found that this approach frustrated visitors who “crave a single voice of authority and the ‘right answer’ about a work of art (and life)” (p. 83). As part of this study, I systematically

documented the number and type of questions observed during the tour activity, and compared coded responses to post-activity debriefing questions to see if there was any relationship between the social interactions and the adult guided participants' report of new awareness, greater appreciation, connection to prior knowledge, enhanced technical or content knowledge or personal insight.

According to Gennaro (1981), use of pre-visit instructional materials increased the educational value of the field trip for eighth grade science students. Bamberger and Tal (2008) explored other practical ideas for structuring non-formal learning for middle school students learning science based on interviews of 50 students experiencing a free-choice exhibit in museum setting with use of artifacts and handouts. Part of this study assessed what kind of educational materials are used by adult visitors in preparation for their visit, if any, such as photos, text, video/film, maps, formal classes or informal conversation with others as well as objects or artifacts used while at the location, such as brochures, maps and video shown in lobby or elsewhere in the building.

Cognitive and affective changes measured directly after a visit tended to decline unless the experience was followed by subsequent, reinforcing experiences with personal relevance. However, episodic memories associated with time, place and emotion, are recalled with ease (Anderson et al., 2007, p. 199). Three factors emerged as most important to creating a vivid, lasting memory: conversation about the experience, emotional affect related to the experience and whether the visitor's agenda was fulfilled or frustrated (Anderson et al., 2007, p. 201-202). "Transformative experiences" occurred when concurrent with factors such as prior knowledge, personal interest, visitor agenda and socio-cultural identity of visitor (p. 200).

All participants in a non-formal learning event, both the guided and guides, “gained new knowledge” (Sweeney, 2009, p. 252). In a study of visitors to a zoological facility who interacted with dolphins, Sweeney (2009) discovered that participants connected this new sensory and affective experience to past experiences and beliefs, constructing meaning which created long-lasting, detailed recollections of the event. While most studies focused on the short-term learning outcomes or immediately assessed learning after the event, Knapp (2000) evaluated the effects of a science field trip on elementary students after one month and again after 18 months. Results indicated that while the students did not retain specific objective-oriented content, there was a high degree of positive response towards the subject matter in general and the interest in returning to the place or learning more about that place. Falk and Dierking (1997) found that a vast majority of participants, both children and adults, recalled content-specific learning from school field trips and details of the experience years after attending the field trip.

Research in guided tours spans into other areas such as tourism and travel. Geva and Goldman (1991) and Mossberg (1995) measured travelers’ satisfaction with tour quality. Geva and Goldman (1991) found that tours are “characterized by inseparability of production and consumption” meaning that all participants actively shape the experience (p. 178). In both studies, the guide emerged as playing the central role in satisfaction rating of the experience as a whole. They discovered that a bond develops between guide and tour participants, due to instrumental and leadership role as identified by Cohen (1985). The guide’s performance was viewed by participants as the most important tour attribute. Lopez (1980) found that authoritarian leadership style had an

initial higher satisfaction rate with tour participants but that over time (on longer tours) participants preferred guides who were less structured, more personal and who fostered a more “democratic,” interactive and supportive environment (p. 22). She concluded that, in the beginning, tour-goers may look for clear guidelines from the guide to order an unfamiliar territory, but that as tour-goers get accustomed to the place, a more flexible guide style which encouraged them to explore the environment on their own, was preferred.

Preference for individualized or self-directed experience of place has also been studied. Visitors can now remotely access a representation of a place through photos, video or computer generated environments, accessed via computer or online. Spicer and Stratford (2001) examined post-secondary student perceptions of virtual field trips and the extent to which they believed virtual experience could replace actual visits to the physical location. The researchers had found anecdotal evidence that digital, interactive field trips found on websites assisted learning so they designed and implemented a simulated tide pool for biology students to explore. Results from this study concluded that while participants were positively engaged with the online experience, the 59 students unanimously agreed that it was not a substitute for a real field trip.

While there are many studies documenting children learning in museums, fewer studies are focused on adult learners in culturally significant settings. Leinhardt, Tittle, and Knutson (2002) noted purpose and intentions of adult visitors emerging from patterns and themes recorded in diary entries. They found the younger visitors were more likely to view the venue itself as the core experience while older visitors were drawn there for particular content of the exhibit. Younger attendees tended to identify with the narrative

or story of the experience, while older attendees tended to focus on the describing and analyzing the content of the exhibit. The middle-aged attendees, 34 to 54-year-old, were evenly split in terms of narrative identification and content analysis. This finding is important as it links place and narrative as two separate features of a tour with intended purpose of visit to a culturally significant setting. This study explored these two dimensions further. Are there patterns within the setting or the narrative across venues that contribute to adult learning?

Sweeney (2009) found that in adult interactions, “participation was the main mediated activity, interactions with dolphins in a zoological facility, the guides (the animal trainers), a central participant to the activity, also reported learning throughout the process of preparing for and leading the sessions. They learned how to tailor content to specific needs of the visitor and how to manage groups of people. vehicle by which learning occurred” (p.129). Participation, in her study, included watching, listening, and touching dolphins at a zoological facility and through social contact with other humans. Rather than retention of facts, adult visitors reported becoming more aware and more appreciative of physical attributes and animal intelligence, as well as sharpening their observational skills in general.

Building on Sweeney (2009), this study started with participation in a guided tour as the key to learning about a culturally significant place. It explored what the guided participants learn in relation to intention (Leinhardt, Tittle, & Knutson, 2002), use of pre-visit materials (Gennaro, 1981) and social interaction (Anderson et al., 2007). This study sought to go beyond studies which compared educational preferences or attributes of authoritative versus constructivist approaches to a non-formal learning activity (Barrett,

2008; Stone, 1997; Stronck , 1983). In this spirit of broadening the concept of learning and expanding the scope of learners to include adult visitors, this study looked at how people who come to a culturally significant setting and participate in a guided tour talk about the activity. It was an open-ended inquiry into the nature of learning in this type of non-formal setting which draws upon the previous studies to highlight methods and analytical frameworks applicable to this kind of educational research.

Chapter 3 Theoretical Frameworks

The goal of this study was to understand what adults learned from participating in a guide-mediated tour through a culturally significant setting. Learning, in this study, encompassed a broad range of mental attributes including sensory recall, emotions, motivation and connection, which influence more complex concepts such as awareness, appreciation, insight, and subsequent action (Eraut, 2000; Lave & Wenger, 1991). Participants in this study were the guided visitors, the tour guides who lead the activity, as well as the program administrators who organize, arrange and orchestrate the daily operation of the activity. The rules and norms of the participants engaged in the activity, along with the constraints and attributes of the physical setting, set the context. In addition, this study examined and compared what the institutional agents, the program managers and guides, intended for visitors to learn. Researching what participants in non-formal learning programs learn, as well as the goals, intentions and expectations, should inform practitioners in similar non-formal education programs housed in museums, parks, architectural monuments and other public buildings. Implications of this study will also inform K-12 and post-secondary teachers who incorporate out-of-school learning events such as field trips to culturally significant places into their teaching and curricula.

Theoretical and Analytical Frameworks

According to Maxwell (2013), “the conceptual framework of a study is primarily...a tentative *theory* of the phenomena that you are investigating” (p. 39). The function of this underlying belief system is to inform the research design, including the questions asked, the data collection methods and focus of analysis. This study is guided by a socio-cultural, constructivist perspective on the nature of learning, based in the

Vygotskian notion that knowledge is constructed through social interaction rather than a transmission of content by an authority to a passive audience. Similarly, according to Holland and Lave (2001), Social Practice Theory views learning as taking place within a situated practice, an active, dynamic, ongoing process of construction by learners and educators, operating within contextual factors such as the means of production, the physical tools or environment, as well as factors such as policy which govern the actors in the activity.

This study identifies three groups of people who attend, guide and support the learning activity as occupying distinct roles. While each group is inherently heterogeneous in terms of age and background, they are temporally unified in their role as visitor, guide or director during the situated practice of a guided tour. By contrasting and comparing the perceptions of learning of these three groups, new insight was gained into this practice. What are the goals and expectations of the institutional agents? How do the visitors' responses relate to the goals and intentions of the institutional agents? Data was analyzed through the lens of Activity Theory to help identify and analyze multiple perspectives on learning which takes place in any kind of activity. The guided tour represents one possibility of engagement along a continuum of communication practices provided by an institution which serve to inform or reach out to the public for educational purposes.

Theoretical Framework: Social Practice Theory. In education, a researcher typically assumes a constructivist or post-positivist stance. To overcome this constructivist versus positivist dilemma, Holland and Lave (2001) propose researchers in the social science start with examining social practices, distributed over place and

multiple individuals, which occur at a certain point in time. In Social Practice Theory, the point of origin is the situated practice itself as a process by which human understanding and knowledge is produced through social interaction. Context, according to this theory, is not just a container; it is the coming together of strands of history, actors employing artifacts or operating within modes of production, at a particular place and time.

According to Social Practice Theory, knowledge is not a separate entity, but a continual process of construction, embedded in context.

We only know something by getting some sensory data and imagining the rest. We need the interaction of sensory data and imagination to know and understand and learn. We cannot know something just by looking at it. In fact, physiologically, our eyes are continually moving. So we are not just looking at something in order to learn about it. (Cole, personal communication, February 10, 2015)

As poetically stated by Cole, learning is an active engagement between the viewer and the context. An activity such as a guided tour is experienced through the present moment but also through perceptions of, and connections with, what has come before, as well as imagined futures. This perspective served as an important lens for this study, positioning learning as a dynamic interplay of opportunities provided by the situated practice in a given setting, working with the participants' prior knowledge to construct the learning activity. For this study, the nature of the activity was analyzed by starting from the participant's self report of what was perceived directly after the activity, tracing the origins of those perceptions back from its origin in the past and then moving forward from there to elicit perceptions of what was intended to be learned, from the guide's perspective. In this study three participant types were interviewed: the visitors, the guides, and the program managers.

It is a fundamental assumption in this study that learning occurs through participants' interaction in the guide-mediated activity, but that learning cannot be measured through traditional means. Lave and Wenger (1991) described learning as legitimate peripheral participation (LPP), a theory in which learning is a by-product of participation, produced through engagement. Given this definition of learning as "a relational understanding of person, world, activity, participation, at the core of our theory of learning, can neither be fully internalized as knowledge structures nor fully externalized as instrumental artifacts or overarching activity structures" (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p.51). Simply put, we can only get partial evidence of what was learned on the tour from a learner's perspective. The measurement of learning, in this study, was self-reports of the impressions, memories and features of the tour that stood out as memorable from the learner's point of view in written notes, verbal responses to survey questions. Aggregating individual responses to look for emergent themes or patterns, I developed a collective impression of what the visitors reported as memorable.

Analytic Framework: Activity Theory. According to Vygotsky (1978), human learning begins with social interaction. An essential feature of learning is that it centers around an activity in which the path from the object to learner and learner to object is mediated by another person. The mediated activity unites the elements of past experience (in a learner's memory) with the present. Mediation, in this theory begins with social interaction and extends to other objects, such as signs and symbols which stand for real entities and relations. Manipulation of symbols allows the learner to make higher-order connections which continually develop over his or her lifetime.

According to Wertsch (1994), socio-cultural research must be grounded in the notion of “mediated action.” He argued that mediated action must be understood as a process of interpretation embedded in a particular setting instead of isolating individuals or focusing only on the means of communication. “It is suggested that by using mediated action as a unit of analysis, the human sciences will be in a better position to address some of today's most pressing social issues.” (Wertsch, 1994, p.1). This study addressed a situated practice from the multiple perspectives of those involved in the immediate interaction and policymakers who help form context as well as the mediational means, to arrive at a multidimensional analysis of the learning interaction.

Across the literature reviewed on mediated activities in education, the process of learning is the focus, with the subject, the visitor, as the starting point of investigation. Wells (2004) pointed out that at the heart of Vygotsky’s theory is the focus on goal-directed, tool-mediated activity (p. 74).

The basic structure of human cognition that results from tool mediation has traditionally been pictured as a triangle to describe the interrelationship of subject, object and mediating device or tool (Cole & Engeström, 1993). Cole and Engeström (1993) expanded the triangle to represent interdependent groups: subject, object, tools influencing and being influenced by rules, communities and division of labor, as illustrated by Hasan and Banna (2012) (Figure 2). The starting point is the subject’s perspective of the activity which is then analyzed to see how that may be influenced by the tools, the motives or objectives of the activity, the role the participant plays in the activity and the rules surrounding the activity. The system also accounts for the mediating factors of the community itself and how the groups’ knowledge and interests shape the

activity. In the case of this study, the artifact could be physical tools such as maps, photos and objects used by the guide to explain something, and it can also be the anecdotes or sequence of spaces traversed by the group orchestrated by the guide. These tools can be employed in response to guidelines set by the administration as well as influenced by the needs of the particular group. This study views all parts of the activity system as mutually interdependent and dynamic instead of linear or static in nature.

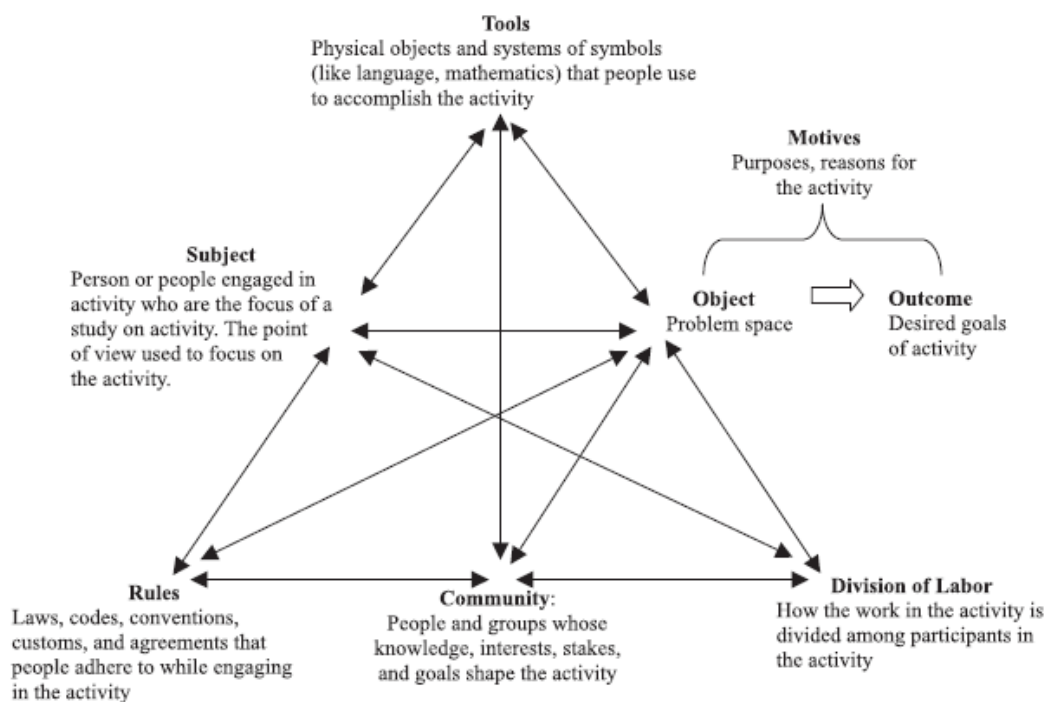


Figure 2. Activity System Triangle by Hasan and Banna (2012) (adapted from Cole & Engeström, 1993)

Viewing learning as dynamic enabled me to see patterns as evolving mechanisms rather than strategies that need to be implemented when discussing finding and implications of the study. Activity Theory (Cole & Engeström, 1993) bridges the learner and educator to focus on the event as a collective, mediated activity using both physical

and conceptual tools. Activity Theory allows the consideration of multiple perspectives within the context of a bounded community replete with rules, norms and division of labor among the participants.

According to Blunden (2007), the essential components of learning, in mediated activities, are the individual, the artifact which is an element of culture and a material practice which becomes “identified in the subject as a single unit of behavior” (p. 261-262). Blunden (2007) interpreted “subject” in this activity system to mean “a self-conscious system of activity” (p. 257). Simply put, an individual’s interpretation of an activity can serve as the basic evidence of learning. Understanding how individual’s appropriate meaning of cultural objects starts with analysis of the subject. In this study, the visitor’s interpretation of the activity served as the fundamental evidence of learning. This data was supplemented by intended learning outcomes and explanation of the practice of guide-mediation as interpreted and conducted by the guide.

Ericsson and Simon (1998) connected Vygotsky’s notion of “inner speech,” internalized dialogue which accompanies action, with external verbalizations in “thinking-aloud protocols” which they used in multiple studies to elicit evidence of what a person thinks in relation to a mediated activity (p. 178). When a participant verbalized what they were thinking during, or just after, an activity, the researchers claimed, it gave a subjective context to the mediated action, helped establish a priority or historical level to thinking and recognized that mind emerges from mediated activity. Ericsson and Simon (1998) discussed how other researchers had applied this protocol, not only to the learners in the activity, but also to the educators, to determine “the social character of expertise” which “has shown how expert performance depends on stored knowledge and

the stored patterns that recognize when that knowledge is relevant and access it” (p.184). Emerging patterns in responses can help researchers identify learning without the use of traditional testing, especially in non-formal environments. In this study, visitor response to questions will serve as evidence of their mental processes and, hence, learning, in a broad sense. Guides’ responses to interview questions should clarify the mechanisms of the social practice of the tour, actions taken and intended outcomes. I analyzed data collected from visitors as well as the guides to look for emerging patterns.

Hutchins (1997) defined mediation as “a particular mode of organizing behavior with respect to some task,” using a tool or procedure that is not inherently part of the task itself (p. 388). He went on to say that all skilled tasks are initially mediated by some structure or artifact that constrains or controls behavior before the skilled action becomes internalized. He used the example of a checklist as a physical artifact that structures and organizes behavior, as well as symbols or objects such as traffic lights (which regulate our behavior of starting and stopping) and supermarket checkout lanes (which organize our purchase and exiting sequence.) According to Hutchins, “mediating structures can be embodied in artifacts, in ideas, in systems of social interaction, or in all of these at once.” (p. 399). Wells (2002) added “mediational means are the descriptions, narratives, and explanations—in speech as well as writing through which understanding is achieved” (p. 43). In this study, the mediational means were the scripted or unscripted narrative spoken by the guide, the sequence of spaces he or she chose to follow, the questions and responses noted on the tour as well as any other artifact the guide used to illustrate an idea or concept during the activity. I analyzed official tour script and guidelines set by the administration, and distributed to tour guides. I also looked at more public descriptions of

the tour found online or at the venue in printed posters and brochures, along with other resources such as video, maps and diagrams which serve as a means to explain, describe or contextualize aspects of the activity.

On the third side of the mediated activity triangle, is a concept referred to as the “object.” Kaptelinin (2005) explained the concept of “the object of activity” which plays a key role in research based on activity theory is somewhat vague and used inconsistently across studies. He called for a clarification of “object” into two types of “motives” of an activity: “sense-forming motives,” which give the activity its personal meaning, and “motive-stimuli,” which refers to a more general objective of the activity such as a field trip as a requirement for a class which may conflict with participant’s personal motive (p. 14). Kaptelinin (2005) used an example: “for an artist their creative self-expression can be a sense-making motive, and achieving recognition can be a motive- stimulus.” (p. 14). While both type of objectives can be associated with emotions, he claimed that, in the case of a conflict, sense-making motives usually prevail over motive-stimuli, but these underlying motives are not the only factor determining the choices people make in their everyday life. (p. 14). In this study, I collected data from the program managers to identify the goals and objectives for the guided tours from an institutional perspective, which became the object of the activity in my analysis. The intersection of the visitor experiences, guide intentions and program goals are discussed in Chapter 8.

Lemke (2000) helped clarify another often misinterpreted or misunderstood concept in the expanded Activity Theory triangle, the notion of “community” which emerges when many people participate in the same activity (p. 276). According to Lemke, participants fill roles in the process of the activity and therefore comprise

coherent groups called communities. Along this line, he stated, if we observe participants during an activity, we begin to find repeating patterns. He focused on processes and patterns that emerge in educational activities, from common practices such as raising one's hand, informal rituals such as waiting ones turn, and common phrasings such as "are there any questions?" Lemke viewed every human community as having both "a uniqueness and a typicality that reflects its position in a larger scale process that is changing more slowly" (p. 278). From this process-oriented perspective, the mediated activity is viewed as taking place within the lifespan of the individual as well as the lifespan of the program or institution. Even though there is a group of participants or community, each participant has their own past experiences and developmental trajectory which causes them to experience the activity differently, but identification of emergent patterns of shared goals or experiences can be examined across participants to determine collective goals and experiences that are useful in research on mediated activities. This concept is very important to this study in that it helped present the non-formal guided activity as a dynamic endeavor which is evolving rather than a fixed, static set of strategies applicable to all participants. The community of guides and community of learners are fluid groups, both typical and yet unique, which fits into social practice theory as well as activity theory to help me view categories and patterns in data analysis.

Summary. The two theoretical perspectives: Social Practice Theory and Activity Theory as well as the three main bodies of research: on non-formal educational programs, educators in non-formal settings and learning in non-formal settings, provide the basis and context for this study. As shown in figure 3, Activity Theory frames the construction of a model from which to view this social practice in terms of the roles of the groups of

participants and the rules, mediation tools of sequence, narrative and physical elements of the building. It helps to see the division of labor among those who run the program, set the policy, enact the policy through their own practice (being a guide) and experience the activity as a guided visitor.

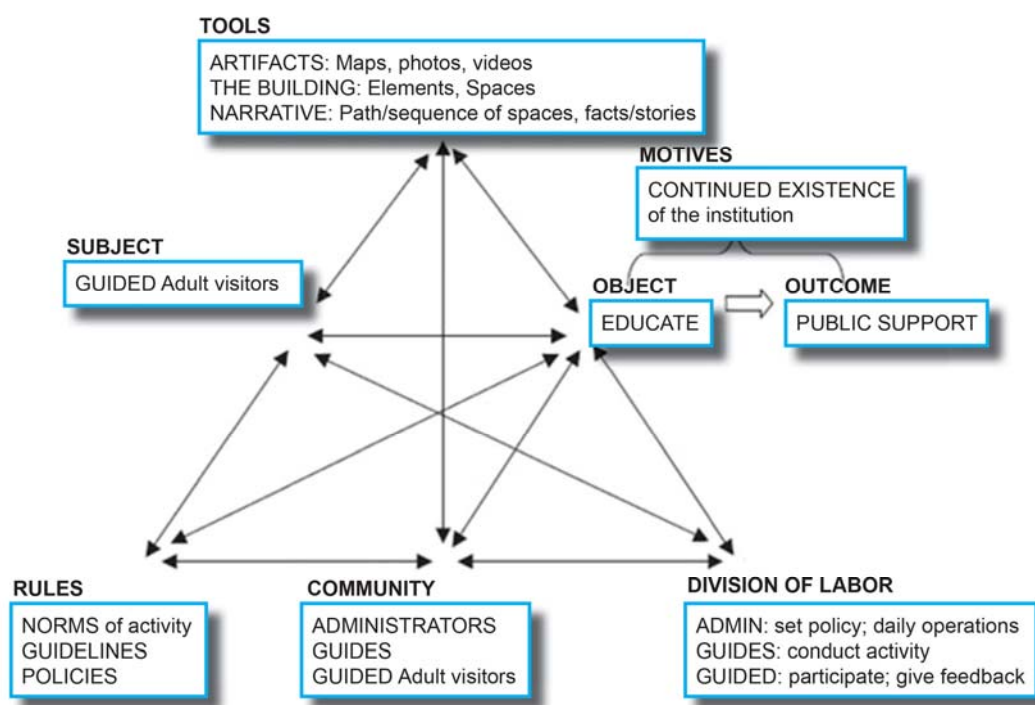


Figure 3. Application of Activity Theory components to this study

This study is grounded in socio-cultural theory in which learning is a mediated social endeavor and Social Practice Theory in which context is also viewed as socially constructed. Therefore, these served as lenses through which to view learning about a culturally significant place on a guide-mediated tour to discover the process of what is learned as well as the salient features from perspectives of multiple participants.

Chapter 4 Research Design and Methodology

Research Questions

This study was designed to answer the overarching question: What do adult participants learn through engaging in guided tours of culturally significant settings? The sub-questions serve to elaborate an understanding of what the participants learn:

- What are the educational goals of the program managers?
- What do the guides intend the guided visitors learn?
- How do experiences of the guided visitors relate to the mission and the expectations of the institutional agents of the program?

Purpose. This study uncovered what people learned through the guide-mediated tour activity, and how this learning related to the perceived goal of the guides and the program managers. This study sought to add to the body of knowledge of non-formal learning by describing what learners report they remember from a guided interaction, and analyzing these reports through the lens of social practice theory and activity theory. In brief, the study involved interviews with the guides and the institutional administrators, as well as observation of the activity, to help form a more holistic description of the objectives and mediational tools of the activity, looking at learning as a consequence of mediated social interaction. This chapter provides details on the methodology beginning with an overview of the context followed by data collection and analysis techniques used in this study.

Context: Description of the Two Sites

Both sites are located in Southern California and are culturally significant due to their function as institutions which serve and benefit the public, as well as their

architecture, designed by well-known architects and iconic examples of their respective architectural styles. Both venues draw a wide variety of local, community members and non-resident visitors and have programs which offer interactive tours with trained docents. Both venues also have other educational resources such as maps and videos, located on their website and printed materials such as brochures at the bookstore or in the lobby in the facility.

Tour Program at the Research Facility. The setting of Research Facility is an architecturally significant biological research facility located on the coast of Southern California that has been giving free daily one-hour architectural tours at noon on weekdays for over 50 years. This program began in the 1960s, as a women-run volunteer organization, responsible for cultivating donors and political support. The initial organization dissolved in 2006, at which time the tour program was placed under the auspices of Facility Development. It is part of this study to determine the current mission of the program, as its focus seems to be to educate the general public about the importance of biological research and the historic architecture of the building.

Based on information shared with the guides at meetings that I have attended over the last 10 years, this program guides over 5,000 adult visitors each year. The venue itself attracts thousands of other visitors who are welcome to explore the campus on their own. This program does not provide audio-recorded self-guided tours or maps. There are brochures and a looped video talking about science in the front reception lobby.

Daily guided tours, open to the general public, typically begin at noon and conclude at 1pm and have a maximum of 15 guided visitors on each tour. Visitors must sign up online to reserve a spot, but walk-in visitors are welcome to join the tour if there

is room. The walking tour consists of the exterior courtyard, open-air arcades, outdoor dining areas and views into the interior spaces, as well as actual interior spaces including the library, sunken courtyard and interstitial mechanical spaces which house utility pipes and structural features such as the nine foot high trusses. Tours were observed and recorded to document the standard path or sequence of spaces that all guides tend to follow or to see if this varies by guide or by any other factor.

At the time of the study, the tour program consisted of a pool of six tour guides who sign up on a rotating weekly schedule. The community of tour guides consisted of five women and one man. The guides ranged in experience, from two to 21 years giving tours at the facility. They had various professional and educational backgrounds, from retired to currently working as an architect or designer. These six guides specialize in architectural tours. The architectural tour guides are considered part-time employees and receive a stipend for personalized tours scheduled at the visitor's request, but no compensation for weekly noon tours.

Tour guides are recruited from friends or professional colleagues of other guides and through positions posted on websites of local professional architecture associations such as AIA (American Institute of Architects). For training, tour guides in this location have a training period in which they received written outlines of points to cover on their tour from the administration. New guides shadow other tour guides until the program manager allows them to lead a tour of their own. At that time seasoned tour guides informally observe and evaluate the novice guide's performance. The new guides receive parking permits and photo identification badges to wear while on the facility's campus.

Tour Program at the Public Library. The Public Library is a relatively new building in a downtown, metropolitan area of a city in Southern California, opened to the public in 2013, which offers guided tours of the library building to the public. The tours range across three content areas: general tours showcasing library services, architectural tours featuring the building, and art tours focusing on the 150 works of art located throughout the building. At this location there is a pool of 17 to 20 volunteer guides who vary in age and occupation. They receive no compensation other than free parking at the facility during their tour. Tours are given weekly with groups of up to 20 attendees and are approximately one-hour long. Recruitment and training for tour guides at this location is ongoing and involves a monthly meeting and other sporadically scheduled sessions a few times per year. Tour guides have keys to certain restricted parts of the library and badges to identify themselves while in the building.

This venue hosts approximately 3000 adult visitors each day, only a handful of which participate in guided tours. The public outreach mission of the public library mission is listed on the website where visitors can find a plethora of pre-visit resources such as 3D maps and virtual tours as well as information videos which feature the architect talking about key elements and spaces and design intent. During the study period, the architectural tours and art tours alternated every other Friday and general tours were given on Saturday and Sundays. Each tour accommodates up to 20 adult visitors per docent. In addition, custom tours were available at no charge for groups. Specialized tours for children and teens were also offered. The tours that were observed as part of this study were general tours. The tours ranged from three to 17 guided visitors, led by one tour guide.

Sampling. Participants in this study were a convenience sample of adults who had signed up to take a tour and who agreed to participate directly following the tour. Participants for this study were drawn from those who sign up online through the institution's website or at the location just prior to the tour. At the time this study was conducted, tours were free and open to the general public, advertised on the venue's website as well as travel websites. The tour guide who was scheduled to conduct the tour on the particular dates I chose to observe was asked to be a participant in this study. They were personally contacted in advance in person or through email or phone conversation to secure a preliminary agreement to participate. Observing tours by multiple guides allowed me to see patterns across different delivery styles and experience levels. I purposively selected the administrator who runs the tour program at each venue, since these are fixed roles. Access to these individuals was critical to this investigation as they are the sole personnel directly responsible for recruiting, selecting and training guides. In addition, they oversee and organize incoming requests for tours via the web, schedule the guides, and set policy for all matters pertaining to the tour program in their respective venues.

Data Collection Methods

To address these research questions within the conceptual frameworks, I conducted a qualitative study of a single phenomenon at two sites. Each site provided a case study of a culturally significant setting that has a program designed to educate the public through guided tours. According to Merriam (2009), "a case study is an in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system" (p. 40). Merriam states that using a case study results in "a rich and holistic account of a phenomenon, particularly useful for

studying educational innovation, evaluating programs and informing policy” (p.51).

Merriam suggests collecting and analyzing data from multiple cases which are categorically similar, but may range or contrast in some areas. A comparative case study is a common strategy to enhance external validity as well as get richer or more generalizable findings.

The three main data collection methods of this study were: observation, interviews, and document analysis. I obtained permission from the program manager at each site to collect data over the course of the summer, to observe the guide-mediated tour activity, interview guided participants and tour guides and get access to archived documents related to the tour program. I obtained documents from the program manager which included the official script of the tour and guidelines which serve as tour guide training materials. Tour guides from both sites consented to being observed while conducting the tour activity, and to follow up with an interview at a later date. At the conclusion of the each observed tour, the tour guide introduced me as a researcher interested in hearing about their experience on the guided tour. I then introduced myself with a short scripted introduction to recruit participants, asking the guided visitors if they would be willing to participate in a short group interview in exchange for a pre-selected souvenir from the gift shop. Following the debriefing, participants were asked if they would be willing to be contacted in the future for an in-depth, follow-up interview. Most participants were willing to be contacted, and gave me their phone number.

Data collection for this study spanned three months, July through September of 2015. During that time, I observed 11 one-hour tours. Tour groups ranged in size, from three to 17 guided visitors. Typically after each tour, four guided visitors volunteered to

participate in the initial debriefing. This was true of all tours except for the first and last tour I observed at the Public Library. In the first tour, five women who belonged to a book club participated. In the last tour, there was only one adult present, and she participated.

Table 3. Data Collection Summary

Data Collection Method	Research Facility (n)	Public Library (n)	Totals (N)
Tour Observation/Field Notes	7	4	11
Initial Visitor Debriefing	28	14	42
Follow-up Visitor Interview	6	6	12
Guide Interview	3	3	6
Program Manager Interview	1	1	2
Document Review	1	1	2

I interviewed a total of 42 guided-visitor participants directly following the tours, 13 men and 29 women. I followed up with 12 of those participants, 2 men and 10 women, in one-on-one in-depth interviews four to six weeks following their tour experience. I then interviewed the three guides from each site who gave the tours I had observed. Lastly, I interviewed the program administrator from each site. A detailed distribution of data collection methods between the two sites are shown in Table 3 and the relationship of data collection methods to research questions are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Research Questions and Related Data Collection Methods

Research Questions	Observation	Interviews	Document Analysis
What do participants learn through engaging in guided activities in culturally significant settings?		X	
How do participants talk about the guided activity and what they have learned?		X	
What do guides intend the guided visitors learn?	X	X	
What do the program administrators expect people learn and how do they describe the educational mission of the tour program?		X	X
How do reports of learning from the guided visitor participants relate to the mission of the educational program?		X	

Observation. Observation of an activity allows a context for the follow-up interviews about that activity (Merriam, 2009). For qualitative studies, Mertens (2014) suggests observation and systematic note-taking to record actions observed at the beginning, middle and end of the activity. She also recommends detailed observed notes to record the physical setting, general patterns of human behaviors, as well as the informal interactions and non-verbal cues. Merriam (2009) recommends describing the researcher’s role and behavior within the setting as well as her thoughts which become “observer comments,” an important part of field notes (p. 121). I plan to describe as much as possible to get a picture of the setting, the participants and the activity to serve as background information for conducting the interviews. The observational field notes template is in Appendix V.

Observational field notes were important to this study. First, my personal observation of the activity served to validate that the activity took place, and the ways

study participants engaged in the guided activity. In addition, observation of the tour helped achieve a sense of rapport with the guided visitor participant during the post-activity debriefing, as well as with the interview with the guide. The fact that I experienced the tour activity along with the guide and visitors served as a point of reference for conversation during the interviews. The interviewed participants could easily refer to features and moments on the tour that they felt confident I had witnessed or was familiar with in some way.

Observational field notes recorded sequence, pace, and overall impressions. They also helped answer the questions about types and frequency of social interactions such as questions asked or comments made. Observational field notes included sample quotes from the guide and guided participants as examples of certain types of social interactions. Observing multiple tours and recording data such as sequence of spaces, pace of tour, what the guide tends to emphasize measured by amount of time spent at each “station,” and facts told by the guide versus anecdotes or opinion, helped generate a sense of pattern in tours to classify tours. This data helped triangulate the data from interviews and documents to clarify the guide’s interpretation of their role and intentions with regard to visitor learning.

Documents. Documents are a data source to supplement interviews and observations (Merriam, 2009). In order to give a fuller picture of the institutional mission, I analyzed documents provided by the program manager at each site website including text descriptions of the official script, guidelines, mission and purpose of the tour. I examined and coded these tour guide training materials using qualitative coding to

categorize how the mission of the program is translated or operationalized into standard practices that guides are required or suggested to follow.

Interviews with the Guided Visitors. The initial part of this study sought to document how the visitors to the venue described their experience. In order to elicit this information, directly after the tour, I asked the guided participants a few categorical, descriptive questions about themselves to determine their prior experience with the place, and background. I continued with open-ended questions to determine what they recollected about the tour activity. This interview was conducted in a semi-public lobby space in which the small group of recruited participants ranging from one to five people. They took turns answering four main questions outlined in Appendix I. This group “debriefing” took between 14 and 25 minutes, depending on depth of responses and conversations or interactions that naturally arose out of the small group of participants as they expressed why they came to the place, their initial reactions, recollections and responses to the activity. Questions and responses were audio-recorded, and transcribed using InqScribe, to produce a written transcript, which was coded using MaxQDA (VERBI Software, 1989-2016), a program which organizes qualitative data.

Participants were given an opportunity to participate in follow-up interviews at a later date by providing their contact information. Most guided visitors who participated in the initial debriefing provided contact information to participate in a follow-up interview. Approximately four to six weeks after the initial interview, I purposively selected and called all participants who were local. I was able to schedule an in-person follow up interview with five of the 12 guided visitors, meeting them at various locations from a local coffee shop to their home. The remaining seven were conducted as phone

interviews. The follow up interview consisted of seven open-ended questions each with multiple parts, which took approximately 30 minutes. The interview outline is in Appendix II. The interview questions focused on what the visitor recalled, what they valued about the tour experience and what actions they took following the tour in terms of further inquiry or feelings of connectedness.

Interviews with the Guides. As another data source for this study, I conducted interviews with the guides who led the activities I observed. I met individually with each guide either the same day I observed the tour or up to four weeks later. The purpose of the interview was to document how the guides described the guided visitors, what they felt was the purpose of the guided tour, what they intended guided visitors to learn or experience and what role they felt they played in achieving their educational goals. A key question was to ask them what they felt was the central message or theme of their tour and what moments on the tour they felt were essential for visitors to experience. I also asked them how they gauged whether guided visitors were learning what was intended or general strategies they employed to engage the visitor. I asked the guides some preliminary questions about their background and experience in general with guiding tours. I then asked questions which sought to elicit their perspective on what they intended people learn or experience on the tour, and what they felt the purpose of the tour is in relation to the mission of the program or of the institution. The interview outline is in Appendix III. Each interview took approximately 30 minutes. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed by me using InqScribe.

Interviews with the Program Managers. The final part of data collection was to interview the program administrator at each site. I met with the program manager at

the Research Facility in her private office and the program manager at the Public Library in a third floor public information desk at the site. Questions centered around what each of the program administrators expected, or hoped, that guided visitor participants learned by taking tours, how she viewed the role of the guide and her own role in promoting learning in these activities. A key question was what the program manager deemed as the central message, or the theme of the tour activity and the underlying logic behind some of the institutional policies and guidelines regarding tours. The interview outline is in Appendix IV. Each interview took about 45 minutes.

Data Reduction and Analysis

According to Merriam (2009), data collection and analysis should be a simultaneous process in qualitative research, as the process of data collection and analysis is “recursive and dynamic” (p. 169). I began by analyzing responses to the debriefing questions of the visitors, coding responses across themes which emerged from the responses themselves. Some a priori categories were for the purpose of categorizing the visitor. According to Wolcott (1994), the first level of coding is about description, purposively constructing categories as “distinguishing attributes” of the participants (p. 17). Visitor responses were also qualitatively coded for sensory recall, what they remembered seeing, hearing and touching or feeling. Further coding, under the broad code of visitor insight included: awareness of scale, context, people working or inhabiting the place, technical or factual knowledge, history or design intent by designer or client, and appreciation or gratitude. An emergent code was the existential quality of “being there” that lead to a connection with prior knowledge or new personal insight or memory. I also coded the responses for the value the visitor placed on the guided tour. Sub codes

of this category included: access to place, ability to interact with an expert guide, conversation/dialogue with fellow visitors and other. Emergent codes came from the frequency of words across all participants. As Becker (1998) urges, “put in what can’t be left out,” that is, what people tend to mention is important to include (p. 57). A lexical search in MaxQDA (VERBI Software, 1989-2016) for the words “beautiful,” “story” and “after the tour” led to emergent codes to help categorize what visitors learned or how they described their tour experience.

I looked at categories and patterns which emerged in my observational field notes. I was primarily interested in the sequence and pace of the tour, and amount of time spent at each “station” of the tour activity. I was also interested in the social interaction on the tours in terms of number of questions and comments from guided participants to guide, and factual statements and anecdotes, stories or opinions expressed by the guide.

To analyze the data found on documents, I codified content in terms of mission of the institution. As a starting point, I used the same a priori codes for these documents as I used interview transcripts: awareness, appreciation, technical or factual knowledge, connection with prior knowledge and new personal insight. I compared coding found in all three data collection methods to draw conclusions about the relationships of what is learned to what is intended by both guides and program managers in regards to the educational mission of the program.

Validity/Trustworthiness

According to Anfara, Brown and Mangione (2002), assessing research quality and rigor in a qualitative study begins with establishing trustworthiness in terms of the study’s “credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability” (p. 30). Credibility,

which corresponds to internal validity in a quantitative study, is established in this study by matching the research questions to the research methods, and clearly defining key terms used in the study, triangulation of data collection methods, and member checks.

Table 5. Strategies to Increase Validity of a Study (Based on Anfara, Brown & Mangione, 2002)

Credibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation of multiple tours • Clear definition of terms • Match research questions with methods • Triangulation of data collection methods • Member checks
Transferability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed description of setting and activity • Purposive sampling
Dependability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple perspectives • Peer examination of coding/data reduction
Confirmability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparency of methods throughout • Reflexivity on positionality to reduce bias

I shared preliminary findings from interview transcripts with the guides and program managers to check for accuracy of interview data and establish plausibility.

Transferability, which Merriam (2009) refers to as external validity, is concerned with the extent to which the findings of this study can be applied to other situations. Transferability of results of this study to other sites will be bolstered by sufficient descriptive data from observation field notes to inform future readers of my study. As Merriam (2009) suggests, “the person who reads the study decides whether the findings can apply to his or her particular situation” (p. 226). I provided enough description and

detail of the setting, the documents collected and the observed activity to allow validity judgments to be made by the reader, as additionally suggested by Anfara et al. (2002).

In order to promote dependability or reliability of this study, I triangulated the data, using multiple sources of data (observation, interviews and documents) as well as multiple perspectives (guides, guided and program administrators). Peer reviewers examined my code book, and coded samples of the interview transcripts using my codes in order to check for reviewer reliability. Seven colleagues from my cohort independently reviewed how I coded visitor participants into descriptive categories based on self descriptions found in the initial debriefing transcripts. Peer reviewers agreed on 98% of the visitor descriptive coding. The ambiguous cases arose when trying to categorize visitors as “local” or “non-local,” and were resolved after discussion, as one visitor to the Public Library who lived nearby reported not feeling part of the community who would use the facility, and when one visitor to the Research Facility reported having grown up in the vicinity of the facility but had recently moved out of state. In addition to verifying the reliability of visitor categories, four of the peer reviewers each independently coded a transcript of a visitor debriefing and a transcript of a visitor follow-up interview using my code book. There was an inter-rater reliability of 87% with a standard deviation of 4%.

Confirmability is ability for others to produce similar results under similar conditions. I have made, as transparent as possible, the methods by which the raw data are collected and confirmed to be what transpired in terms of words spoken and actions taken by the participants. I have publically disclosed the processes by which that data have been reduced, how coding or categories developed and how they translated into recurring patterns and themes to produce findings. I have continually explored

possibilities of researcher bias by reflecting on my position in the study, ethical considerations and other personal beliefs which may have influenced the study results.

Positionality, Ethical Considerations and Reflection on Methods

Methods for this study were reviewed and approved by the University of California, San Diego Institutional Review Board. In addition, I obtained approval to conduct the study from the administration at each site. Participants in this study were recruited using the IRB guidelines. Participants completed signed consent forms prior to being interviewed.

I am aware of some of the challenges in conducting this study, given my position as a professional architect, an experienced educator and seasoned tour guide who personally knows and works with many of the guides and administrators being studied. As Merriam (2009) points out, there are both advantages and pitfalls of being an insider. One advantage is access to information and collegiality which inspired trust during interviews and lead to accurate interpretation of interview responses, since the respondents and I share a common language and vocabulary. However, Merriam (2009) cautions researchers to be aware of underlying politics or power differentials between interviewer and respondent and to be sensitive to issues such as confidentiality and bias. Since I am a seasoned, professional tour guide, I may have been an intimidating presence to less experienced tour guides or I may have been viewed as reviewing them for performance on behalf of the administration. I assured the guides participating in this study that I was not reviewing nor judging their performance. In all observations, I attempted to keep my body language and facial expressions neutral so as not to appear judgmental or overly interested in method or content. I refrained from asking questions or

making any comments during the activity to keep from influencing any of the participants engaging in the activity or the flow of the activity itself. In all interviews, I crafted the semi-structured interview questions using neutral terms, and I conducted a member check to make sure my interpretation of what they say concurs with their intention.

As Gubrium and Holstein (2009) suggest, there are potentially influential factors surrounding the construction of a participant's verbal response to a question during an interview such as context and environment. Initial interviews with the guided visitors took place in a semi-public environment in a small group setting. There was some social interaction between participants which may have influenced their response to a question. Follow up interviews with guided visitors took place either at their home, in a quiet setting, or in a noisy public place such as a hotel lobby or café. Either environment could have been a factor in the way a participant crafted their response, the length of their response or the words they used. Interviews with the two program managers took place in two very different environments. The program manager at the Research Facility was interviewed in her private office without interruption, while the program manager at the Public Library was interviewed while we were sitting at public information desk on the third floor of the library with many interruptions. The influence of the environment cannot be excluded from the analysis as it may have contributed to the content, quality, fluidity or cohesiveness of the narrative of each interviewed participant in this study.

Chapter 5 Program Goals: Awareness, Affective Experience, and Advocacy

In the early 1960's, the wife of a local Rabbi, along with the wives of the state's governor and the city's mayor, founded a non-profit women's organization to help promote the construction of a scientific research facility in Southern California to be designed by a well-known architect. Even before the buildings were complete, the group predicted the international prestige of the institute due to its humanistic mission and its monumental modernist architecture. For over 40 years, members of this group volunteered their time to conduct daily tours of the building explaining its features, function and importance to scientific investigation.

In 2006, the group dissolved but, due to the institute's popularity and world-renowned status, the architectural tours continued under the auspices of the institute's events department. The new program manager, a young ambitious woman, recognized she had inherited a program with significant history but also saw the potential for growth. When asked about her role, she stated "I really saw some opportunity in it. I saw very passionate guides and I saw the fact that our tours were growing more and more popular" due to people posting their experiences on social media and travel-related websites. She realized she had to balance what visitors wanted with the needs of the scientists who worked there.

"We don't want people just wandering around campus, aimlessly wandering in the labs." stated the program manager, "We want to provide a secure, safe experience ... not just a visit but an experience." Her goal was to create what she called an "accessible" activity that would invite people who may be "intimidated by science" and the "fuzziness about what it is we actually do [and] what sets us apart." Based on her own experience of taking a tour when she first arrived, she hoped visitors "leave feeling like, 'wow, this building was so neat and so innovative and, then, what's being done in it is so unique and innovative.' ... That's how I feel... I didn't really appreciate the building and understand it, its significance to how it related to science, until I went on a tour."

Figure 4. Vignette illustrating program goals at the research facility

Tour programs embedded in a culturally significant setting, such as the one described in the vignette above (Figure 4), offer the public an opportunity to get an inside look at the operation of the building, and a sense of the history or importance of the place. As illustrated above, the purpose of offering these tours is three-fold: to educate visitors about what goes on, to create a controlled yet memorable, affective, sensory experience of the place and to connect visitors to the place that would lead to further support or advocacy. The two settings in this study, a Research Facility and a Public Library, each offer a low or no-cost, one-hour long, guide-mediated tour experience of their buildings to the public. While both sites shared similar goals, the two locations differed in how the documents and program managers described the tour activity.

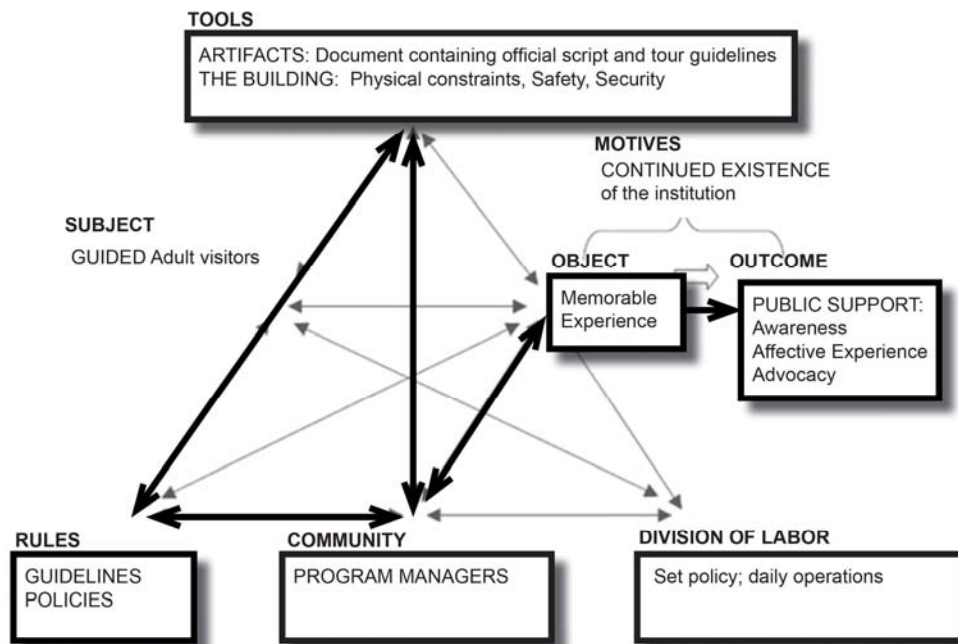


Figure 5. Components of activity theory addressed in chapter 5

This chapter explores what the institutions hope the visitors experience on a tour. This is analyzed through the lens of Activity Theory by examining the documents, the cultural “tools” which regulate the activity, and interviews with the program managers, members of the community of practice, who maintain, distribute and enforce those rules and guidelines as illustrated in Figure 5.

Document Description of Tour Activity

Upon my request for institutional guidelines of the tour activity, each program manager provided me with written documents which contained a sample narrative or outline of bulleted points to mention or discuss at various locations along the suggested route of the tour activity. These documents also contained additional notes or instructions to the guide about restrictions or suggested responses to frequently asked questions. Program managers informed me that they typically give these documents to new guides

as part of their training, and update them periodically to reflect changes to the tour. These written documents represent one of the cultural “tools” of the activity, the official tour narrative or sample script which helps to illuminate the “rules” or guidelines, as illustrated in the Activity Theory diagram [Figure 5]. I compared the documents for similarities and differences. I also coded the documents to give insight into the nature of the institutional framework and objectives. Examining the documents between two sites revealed similarities and differences between the two settings: one in which the public is allowed to view the architecture and the scientific activity in the labs but not participate (the Research Institute) and one in which the public is urged to come back and use the facility (the Public Library). While the format and function of the documents were similar, the pace, purpose and proposed constraints on message and access of each site diverged. Each site serves as a case of a different type of institution. The guidelines reflected differences related to the underlying goals and restrictions of the institution it served.

The Research Facility provides docents with a six-page document entitled *Architectural Tour Guidelines for Tour Guides*. It gives general comments about the training protocol of new guides and states that it is important that the tour guide think of the tour narrative as a story with a theme. The document explicitly states a suggested theme but also states that guides see this document as a starting point on which to build their own narrative. The document lists 11 stations with one to seven key points for each station. The first stop is a poster that serves as an introduction to the “story” of the place by introducing the main characters pictured on the poster: the founder, the architect and

the building itself. The document calls for guides to introduce themselves at this point and to ask visitors where they are from as an ice-breaker, and then tell the story starting from a significant date in history. The last station suggests the visitors sit on a bench as the guide summarizes the main points or restates the theme of the tour, ask the visitors if there are any comments or questions and give final instructions for the visitors in terms of where they are allowed to go, and to mention the opportunity to donate. The document also includes additional facts and quotes that can be incorporated into the tour at the discretion or interpretation of the guide.

The Public Library provided docents with a very detailed 12-page document entitled *One Hour Docent Tour Script*. It outlined the “tour agenda” and approximate times suggested that docents spend on each floor as follows: First floor 20 minutes, Second floor 10 minutes, Eighth Floor 10 minutes, Ninth floor 20 minutes. This was followed by a spreadsheet with 30 stations listed in the order that they expected the tour to take, with the final five, #26 to 30, listed as “optional.” There were four columns to the spreadsheet along the top labeled as *Stop*, *Floor*, *Location* and *About the Space*. Each stop indicates how much time should be spent ranging from one-five minutes and indicating if the tour guide should stop or “keep walking as describing.” The locations were listed as room names such as Garden Courtyard and 3D Printer Lab or features such as Video Wall and Elevator. The “About the Space” column provides bullet-pointed facts such as “at 143 feet in diameter, the [the Public Library’s] dome is larger in size than the U.S. Capital (135 ft), comparable to the Pantheon in Rome (142 ft)” with other comments such as “walk around in silence, since it is a quiet area.” The first stop serves as an

introduction, suggesting the guide say “thank you for coming today,” followed by a list of facts such as how long the building took to design and build, source of funding, construction cost, how many people visit per day and “throughout [the Public Library] you will see areas named after donors who care about this building and the community. Let’s step into our first named space, the auditorium.” The last stop #30 listed what to say as, “This ends the tour. We’re so glad you came today to get the ‘sneak peek’ of [the Public Library]. We hope it whet your appetite to come back and Discover Your Next Chapter at [the Public Library]. We also hope you are motivated to become involved with your Library.” Along with this suggested closing are detailed instructions on how to give a donation, how to volunteer and “advocate” for the library through a website. The very last page had in bold, “Do Not Volunteer This Information-Responses to Questions Only,” and had items which related to security, past complaints about the building from nearby residents and how to address question about the homeless population. The document warns guides to “think how a homeless person would feel if they were in your earshot.”

Similarities and Differences in Tour Documents

For the purpose of comparison pace of the tour activity at each location, I counted the number of stations per hour suggested by the documents, as well as those identified as optional. I looked for evidence of educational delivery strategies by counting the number of times the document advised or gave specific instruction for the guide tell a fact, to tell a story or to read a quote or give an opinion. In addition, I counted how many times the document instructed the guide to ask the visitor a question or encourage the visitors to

make a comment, give an opinion or promote dialogue or other interaction. I noted how many times the documents instructed guides to tell the visitor to take action such as to make a donation, to volunteer or to return. Lastly, I noticed whether guidelines offered what not to do or what not to say or suggested responses to difficult questions. The content of each document, whether explicit or implied, was analyzed to determine if there was a theme or central message to the tour activity.

Pace. The documents used by the two sites were similar in their method to convey what they expected the tour activity to consist of in terms of pace. Both documents were organized around a station-to-station suggested route that had guides pausing at key locations to explain, give facts and point out features. Both sites used a text-based list or Excel spreadsheet to identify a combination of “stations,” stops at key points of interest, the order the stations should be visited and listed a number of facts to be offered by the guide per station. The documents also indicated when the guide should pause or keep walking and when the guide should point out a feature. The overall goal seemed to be an experiential activity that combined kinetic movement through space, visual stimuli and auditory accompaniment. All three senses: touch, sight and hearing were addressed and encouraged to be engaged simultaneously. For example, at one point in the Public Library tour document, the guide was directed to describe the reading room as an “airy, three-story, inspiring glass room with panoramic views,” point out the view, and give visitors time to walk around and sit in the “repurposed blue furniture by an internationally renowned artist.” The overall goal seemed to highlight positive aspects of the building, the history, the function and the aesthetics while minimizing or not addressing any

downsides or controversial issues surrounding the space.

In terms of the physical space of the activity setting, the Research Facility is a six-story building in which the visitors would mainly stay on the ground floor, outside and only go inside a stairwell and up to the second floor briefly inside the building. In contrast, the Public Library is a nine-story building that started the tour outside but allowed visitors mainly in public and semi-private areas on the first, second, eighth, ninth floors, and roof deck. The Research Facility had 14 stations in the one-hour tour compared to the Public Library which had 27 stations for a one-hour tour. The fewer number of stops suggests a slower pace or allows for more, in-depth observation by the visitor and more narrative detail per stop by the guide. Both documents contained a few optional stations, presumably if time or access allowed, but the documents from the Research Facility seemed, in general, to be more flexible in terms of allowing the guides more time at each station with fewer facts per station so that they had more freedom to go in greater depth.

Educational delivery strategies. The sheer number of facts (107) and stations (27) in the Public Library document indicated that this tour is intended to be a fast-paced activity with a fact-based expository delivery method and a lot of physical movement, as the stations were located on different floors of the building, from the first floor to the ninth floor. The document at the Public Library does not have any suggestions about asking the visitors questions or promoting dialogue which also implies that the delivery method is assumed to be expository. However, the Public Library document addresses possible comments or questions being raised by the visitor about noise and homelessness,

and offers ways to avoid or direct the conversation to a message which shows the place in a positive light. The document from the Research Facility explicitly stated that guide should think about the tour narrative as a story. The document stated, “It is important that the tour guide thinks of the tour narrative as a story with a theme rather than just state facts or opinions.”

Central message or theme. The document from the Research Facility outlined a central theme centered on the founder’s vision of science and his working relationship with the architect, and how his vision was realized in the building. The document from the Public Library did not explicitly state the theme or objective of the tour activity, but the body of the script states in two locations that guides should mention that the tour is a “sneak peek” and “we hope it encourages you to spend time later exploring more that each floor has to offer.” in order to inform visitors of the vast array of services that are available to them and hopes that the overview gives the visitor a desire to return and use the place, and explore in more detail on their own.

Summary

The tour guide training document, which included an official script and guidelines, were tools used by the community of practice to operationalize, regulate and communicate the activity’s goals and strategies. I analyzed the document from each site for actions suggested to be undertaken by guides during the tour activity. The frequency of each action in the documents from each site is noted in Table 6.

Table 6. Frequency of Suggested Guide Actions in Document at Each Site

Suggested Guide Action in Document	Research Institute	Public Library
Stop	11 +1 optional	27 +3 optional
Tell a Fact	40	107
Tell a Story	8	0
Ask	5	0
Point	6	4
Interact	1	11
Mention	1	6
Indicates an item to NOT say or address	0	3

These actions included suggesting the guide (a) stop at an area or feature; (b) tell a fact about the space or feature; (c) tell a story to convey information to the visitors; (d) ask the visitors a question or promote social interaction with the visitors; (e) point out a feature; and, (f) interact with, touch, or walk through a feature. These suggested actions serve as the basis for discussion as to how these training documents promote educational strategies and how they describe using the building features as visual or tactile aids.

Both documents described the length of the tour activity to be one hour, however the Research Facility only suggested stopping 11 times while the Public Library listed 27 stations. This major difference in number of stations implies that the pace of the tour at the Public Library is more than twice as fast as the tour at the Research Facility. In addition, the 107 facts that the Public Library tour guide has to say during that time period is more than two and a half times the number of facts at the Research Facility. The Research Facility document suggests the tour guide tell a story eight times as

compared with zero times at the Public Library which suggests that the staff at the Public Library envisions an expository tour rather than an interpretive or tour based on storytelling as an information delivery strategy.

In addition, although the Public Library tour acknowledges that visitors will have questions, as evidenced by the section devoted to what not to say, the Research Facility tour seems to encourage more interaction by suggesting the guide ask the visitors a question five times during the tour activity. While both tours incorporate the guide pointing out a similar number of features, the Public Library gives 10 more opportunities than the Research Facility to interact with a building feature, by walking through or touching something.

In summary, by analyzing and comparing the two documents, it seems that the Public Library tour is faster paced with many more facts and stops. This pace may not allow time for the guide to tell stories, give lengthy opinions, or go into detail in any one area. The Research Facility tour is slower paced and gives the guides more flexibility and autonomy to tell stories and offer interpretations. How these guidelines are enacted is discussed in Chapter 6.

How Program Managers Describe the Purpose and Goals of the Tour Activity

<p>“[I hope] they leave feeling like, ‘Wow, this building was so neat and so innovative and, then, what’s being done in it is so unique and innovative.’”</p>

Figure 6. Quote from the program manager at the research facility illustrating goals

A program manager at each site coordinated the training of new guides, supported seasoned guides, and oversaw or conducted the daily operation of scheduling and managing tours. Program managers responded to daily inquiries, comments and concerns

from visitors, guides and the larger community of staff employed at the facility. In this way, the position of program manager at each site served as an intermediary between the visitor, the guide and the larger community, a key member of the community responsible for setting policy and daily operations. Program managers regularly describe the tour activity to the public who inquire by phone, email, internet-based registration software and in person, as well as train new guides and communicate changes in guidelines or content to guides at meetings, or as necessary. During an in-depth interview, I asked each program manager what she hoped visitors would learn. I also asked what she thought was the theme or central message of the tour, and how she described the tour to prospective visitors. In order to reveal why they might think this way, I asked program managers what role they played in the tour program, what they knew about visitors, and what they believed the visitors got out of the tour activity.

Both program managers were women in their mid-20s who described some connection between their own educational background, their current job description and the expertise of the community of visitors and staff at each site. They are full-time employees who oversee volunteer tour guides who range in age from mid-40's to mid-80's with advanced or professional degrees, and may be working elsewhere, or retired. In addition, at both sites, the tour program was just a small aspect of the program managers' job. Both program managers were very busy, involved in multiple projects beyond the tour program. Both wished they had more time to devote to the tour program. Both program managers saw themselves as balancing the needs of people who are above them

hierarchically, and the needs of the guides they manages, as well as the needs of the public.

Throughout the interviews, the program manager at each site made comments which indicated that she viewed herself as a middle manager, balancing the expectations and desires of visitors with other staff members or employees who they viewed as intimidating. They viewed themselves as coordinators who were good with people. They did not see themselves as educators per se and had no professional or educational experience with teaching and learning. Both program managers respected the experience level and passion of the guides. They relied on expertise and agency of the guides they managed who tended to be older, had higher education background and greater professional content knowledge and who may have been educators but who were retired or semi-retired. Program managers reported having no prior technical or historical factual knowledge of the building before going on a guided tour even though they had visited or worked in the building. They remembered their first tour and how impactful it had been emotionally and intellectually. When they were first hired, they were both given tours by the most senior tour guide at each location, and vividly recollected the experience. They recalled having learned to see the building through the guide's eyes, inspired by the passion, and the body language of the guide. Each program manager described how she came to be in the current position and how they viewed themselves in this role.

Program managers at both locations have many more responsibilities than just managing the tour program and express frustration and regret that they do not have enough time or energy to improve the tour program, although they feel under pressure to

do so. As the program manager at the Research Facility stated, “Yes I have a vision. It's just that here, we're very busy all the time. We're a small non-profit, we're a small organization; we're very busy. There's a lot of just other projects and things that I have to do above and beyond the tour program and it frustrates me that I don't have as much time and energy to move that vision along faster.” This vision seems to have three components which will be discussed in the next section.

Awareness. When asked what they hoped visitors learn, both program managers tended to focus less on learning facts related to the building or location, but rather on achieving affective states, feelings of appreciation and pride which would they hoped would accompany awareness of the history and significance of the buildings. They compared this goal to what they, themselves, had experienced or learned on their first tour. The program manager from the Research Facility said, “[I hope] they leave feeling like, ‘wow, this building was so neat and so innovative and, then, what's being done in it is so unique and innovative.’... That's how I feel... I didn't really appreciate the building and understand it, its significance to how it related to science, until I went on a tour.” The first tour the program managers took had a big impact on them and produced a salient memory. Both recalled who their guide was and the emotional impact of new awareness about features and importance of the building. Both program managers emphasized the physical act of walking through the building with a passionate, knowledgeable guide pointing out features and telling stories as essential to their new understanding or perspective of the building. While the program manager at the Public Library admitted she did not recall a single fact about the building relayed by the guide during her first

guided tour of the building, she remembered the guide herself. “I just remember the tour guide... her persona, and how she represented herself, how she carried herself. She's just, like, very proud of showing the building, you know. She stood very, like, with a posture, like, ‘yeah, everything's so great here. And this is this.’”

Both program managers recalled that they felt a new appreciation and respect for the functionality of the building, the people responsible for its presence, increased pride in working in the building, and a new way of looking at the place they work. They also spoke about the pivotal role of the guide in portraying or interpreting the building for them. “[T]he guide, was really important for me...she thinks about things so differently than me... she stops and really appreciates the angles, and the shadows and the light and so I kind of stopped and went in to that moment with her and got to see the building sort of as a piece of art, which I hadn't, didn't think of a building like that beforehand because that's just not my nature. So, it was really cool because I got to see it almost from her perspective.” Even years after the event, the program manager at the Research Facility recalled details that were embedded in stories and in new ways of seeing or interpreting the building.

Although both program managers had been to the building prior to taking the tour, neither had been aware of the architectural significance, the functionality and the thoughtfulness that had gone in to the design of the building. “The very first time I went on [a guided tour]... it was like a week or two after I started [working here] and it completely opened my eyes. It changed the way I looked at the space. Changed the way I related to [the Research Facility]. It changed the way I felt about working in the building.

I was almost more proud to work here, knowing the history and the significance of the building. And I went in with no prior knowledge, like very, very nothing; kind of a blank slate.” The awareness of the significance of the space led to feelings of appreciation and pride which both program managers describe in more detail as another goal of the tour activity.

Affective experience. Both program managers describe the role of the tour activity as more than just a means to gain understanding or awareness of the building’s features or resources. They describe the tour activity as an “experience” that engages the visitor, guides their movement in a “safe” or “secure” way, and controls the central message through having a guide as mediator. The experience of the Research Facility involves balancing limited access to the private areas while instilling a sense of special access in the visitor. The program manager explained, “We get a lot of questions about what’s covered, do they get to go inside the building and things like that, and we always explain it as an architectural tour about the building and you get to kind of experience the building from that perspective.” She related that she needs to balance the visitors’ desire to get a behind-the-scenes tour with the needs of the working scientists who require privacy, safety and security. She continued, “We get a lot of requests for, like, going inside the building and going behind the scenes and stuff. And so, you know, we always try to explain that it’s an external tour but you get to learn all about the different pieces of the puzzle that went into the building, how the building operates, the importance of the building, as well as what’s functioning within the building.” It is therefore important to the success of the tour that the tour guide be able to tell interesting and engaging stories

about the past and present function of the building to create an illusion of access to what is not physically accessible, which, viewed through Activity Theory lens helps them make sense of the building through a socio-historical perspective of learning. This will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

The program manager at the Public Library described the tour to visitors in a more general way: “I just say, oh, it's a little bit of architecture, it's a little bit of art, and then the whole general information of the building.” According to the program manager, the main purpose of the tour activity is the mutual benefit of institution and visitor. As she summarized, “just making sure both parties, library and attendee, are happy. Like, you're happy to be in the building. We're happy to have you in the building.” In addition to booking tours for patrons, training guides, and scheduling guides, sometimes the program manager at the Public Library sometimes has to step in a give tours. “In my tours, when I do tours...the reaction is like...like they're having fun. I think that's what I enjoy most when I give a tour. And then hopefully they would remember that.” From this quote, it is clear that the program manager at the Public Library believed that there is a strong correlation between a visitor having fun and wanting to return. This seemed to be clear objective, but there was no evidence that the training materials, which provide the rules for the tour activity, specifically promoted visitors having fun during the tour activity, as discussed in the previous section.

Advocacy. When asked what they believed was the central theme or message of the tour activity, underlying educational goals from an institutional perspective emerged. Both program managers wanted the visitor to experience the building in a positive way

and make a strong connection between the building and its community. They wanted the visitors to have an enjoyable affective or “fun” experience but the underlying or ultimate goal was that visitors leave with a belief that the site was important and should be supported and protected.

According to the program manager at the Research Facility, the central message is two-fold, “Science happening at the site is important and the building is unique in its role in providing a creative and supportive place for science work to happen. The goal is to get people to preserve and protect the building.” In addition, she wanted them to get “inspired enough to want to get involved in some capacity.” She believed that there are two main reasons visitors are drawn to tour the place, by their interest in either the architecture or science, and her goal is to inform those interested in the building about the science and those interested in science about the importance of the building.

I hope the architects come in and they gain an appreciation of the science and they start to understand and be inspired by what's happening in the building and the people in the building and how important the science is. And I hope that people come because they're interested in the science and leave, which was me, I was that person who came in that was all about the science, and they leave with an appreciation for the building and the importance of the building and the thoughtfulness of the design and how well suited it is to the collaboration between the art and sciences here. So I hope each group that comes in for their different reasons leaves with an appreciation of the other side of the puzzle.

The program manager at the Public Library also recognized the importance of having a theme to the tour, which could make the tour more successful in garnering visitor personal connection to the spaces. She revealed that “one of the tour guides who is an, um, experienced tour guide said that we need a theme...I'm working on that...

[laughs]. I know. I'm working on that. There should be a theme. I'm not quite sure what it is." According to the program manager at the Public Library, an experienced guide argued for the need for a central theme, and therefore the program manager felt that she needed to implement one. This comment indicated that guides influence program managers in the community of practice surrounding the tour activity.

While there were some similarities in the two sites, the combination of the physical building, the function of the spaces, and the institute's relationship to the public played a central role in determining the theme or message. An important goal at both locations appears to be to frame and control the central message while also physically directing or navigating the public through the place. "We don't want people just wandering around campus, aimlessly wandering in the labs." stated the program manager at the Research Facility, "We want to provide a secure, safe experience with people on site feeling safe and people visiting the program have a kind of a framework to visit within... I think it's really important to provide an experience for people, not just a visit but an experience." While personnel at both sites have guidelines for directing the public during the hour-long tour activity, each differed in the way that the public is able to interact with the building before or after the guided activity. Both sites allow the public into open areas, however the rules of the activity setting at the Research Facility allow the public to travel through the reception area, courtyard, cafeteria and auditorium (for scheduled lectures), allow visitors to view select private areas but do not allow them to enter the workspaces or use their resources such as laboratory equipment or computers. The rules of the Public Library allow the public to access resources, check out books, use

computers and lockable study rooms to work in the building, and encourages them to stay for an extended period of time. When asked what role the tour activity played in the institution, the program manager at the Public Library described it as the “face of the library” for new attendees which featured the guide as “talking up the library, how great it is, what a great resource it is,” showing the role of the library in the community as a great place to be and informing members of the community that they can support this place by attending the programs and coming to the library.

Both institutions frame the message and constrain access, and they do it in different ways because they are different kinds of institutions. Both locations wanted the visitors to leave feeling connected to the place, and responsibility to support it either financially, politically (in the case of the Research Facility) or wanting to return to use or tell others to use (in the case of the Public Library).

Summary of Program Goals

Institutional agents want to inform the public about the nature and function of their facility which they believe will foster not only awareness but appreciation in the visitor. They want to create a safe, memorable affective experience for the visitor and, ultimately, increase public advocacy and support, “to preserve and protect the building” for the continued existence of the institution. Program managers are influenced by their ongoing interactions with the people who work in their facility who require security in their work environment and the visitors who desire access. Internal stories of the program managers, shaped by their interactions with the guides, contributed to their goals for the visitors. The program managers themselves had experienced an affective state of

awareness, appreciation and new perspective on their initial tour and linked it with a deeper learning moment in which they connected that feeling of pride to a sense of responsibility in which the visitor becomes connected, feels a sense of stewardship and a commitment to preservation and support whether through returning to use the facility, telling others, donating money, volunteering or political support. Guidelines are developed by program managers within this framework of a community of practice. Scripted outlines suggest guides take a set route with lists of facts to tell and features to point out the visitor during a one-hour tour activity. The guidelines are given to guides when they are trained and updated periodically to communicate the goals, guidelines and strategies of the guided tour activity. These actors and tools contribute to the ways in which the facts, stories and interpretations of the building features and significance are communicated to the visitors. In the next chapter, I focus on observations of the tour activity at each site and interviews with the guides who conducted those tours to uncover how guides enact the institutional mission, what they intend the visitor learn, and how their interaction with the visitors produce learning outcomes which may or may not align with program goals.

Chapter 6 Constructing a Sense of Place: A Guide-Mediated Tour

Visitors assembled in the lobby, standing or sitting singly, in pairs or small groups near a sign that reads “Tours meet here.” Many had backpacks, cameras or notepads. A few took a brochure as they checked in at the front desk to receive a clip-on pass.

A guide with an identifying badge around her neck approached the group and signaled that a tour was about to begin. She began by welcoming the visitors, looking around the room to get their attention, introducing herself to the people who were now gathered in a semicircle a few feet around her. She asked a couple of questions such as where they were from and if there were any architects present. The tour guide then led the group out of the lobby to face a large poster where she pointed to photos of the founder and the architect behind a scale model of the building.

The guide began to tell the story of how the founder, a famous scientist, procured the funding for the building and how it came to be built in this location. She spoke about the past with an authoritative but engaging manner, pausing occasionally for emphasis and making eye contact with the adult visitors. After a few minutes, the guide asked if there were any questions. Then the guide, trailed by the visitors, positioned herself under a tree, pointed to the structure behind her and described how the land looked before the building was constructed. She mentioned that the next place the group would stop was one of the most photographed spots in modern architecture, world renowned for its impact on the viewer as an inspiring or mystical space. The group seemed excited...

Figure 7. Vignette illustrating the beginning of a typical guide-mediated tour

In this chapter, I examine the guide-mediated activity through observation of eleven tours, seven at the Research Facility and four at the Public Library. The vignette in Figure 7 captures what I experienced when observing the beginning of a typical tour at the Research Facility in terms of how the visitors assembled, how the guide introduced herself and how the walking and talking occurred. In addition to observing the tours, I interviewed the six guides, three from each location, who conducted the observed tours. Looking at the activity through the lens of Activity Theory in Figure 8, the guides perform a pivotal role in the community of practice as conductor of the activity under “division of labor,” enacting the rules and guidelines set by the program managers, as discussed in the previous chapter.

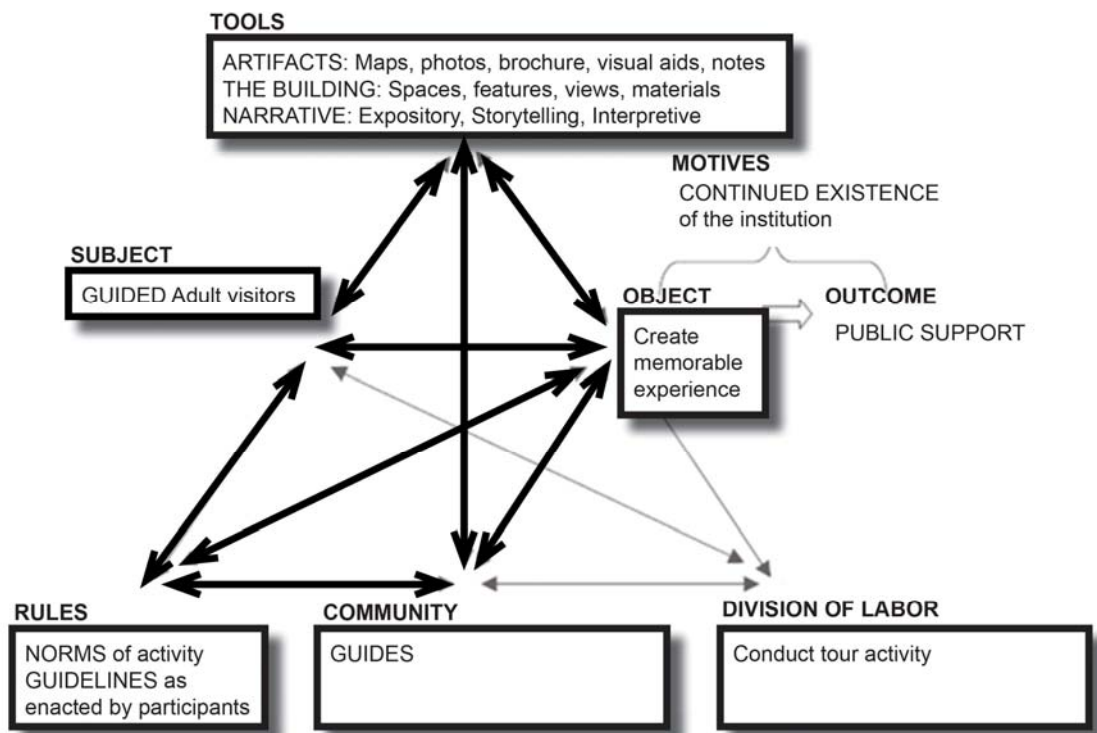


Figure 8. Components of Activity Theory addressed in chapter 6

The tour guide training documents, features of the building that the guides point out, and the facts, stories and opinions observed in the tour narrative, constitute the variety of cultural tools guides use to add to the visitors' experience and understanding of the place.

After analyzing the tour observations and responses to questions, patterns emerged in what guides intended visitors learn, how the tour was conducted, and particular strategies that guides employed to achieve their goals or intentions. LeCompte and Schensul (1999) called the process of pulling apart field notes and interview transcripts to identify relevant information to compare, aggregate and establish patterns and speculate on what it means as building formative theory. I am calling what I observed guides do as "constructing a sense of place."

The six tour guides interviewed for this study, five women and one man, ranged in age from mid-50's to mid-60's and ranged in experience level. The majority of the guides had one and a half to two years of experience leading tours. However, one guide at the Public Library gave her first tour while participating in this study, and one guide at the Research Facility had been giving tours for over 10 years. Four of the guides were retired professionals: a nurse, a middle-school teacher, a college instructor and an interior designer. Two of the guides still worked professionally; one, as an engineer and the other, as an architect. Five of the guides were white and one was Asian.

The findings addressed in this chapter include (1) guides intentions for visitors aligned with program goals of awareness, affective experience, and advocacy. Guides interpret these individual goals to a unified theme (if one exists explicitly in the tour guideline) or construct a theme on their own which reflects their personal beliefs about the place. (2) All guides used the official script as a starting point, were well aware of the suggested tour route, rules and guidelines, however, guides supplemented and expanded their intentions through interactions with staff (other than the program manager), other tour guides and expert visitors. (3) Guides were aware of their pivotal role as mediators of the tour activity, and take their role very seriously. Several guides used metaphors to communicate how they envisioned their role, which reflected their intentions. Guides described themselves as “pioneers” navigating unfamiliar territory for the visitor, “bridges” to awareness, and “conduits” to understanding. (4) Depending on their intentions, and influenced by the program guidelines and physical constraints of the setting, guides use a variety of means to construct a sense of place.

All guides observed typically used a navigation technique by physically walking in front of the group and directing visitor attention through pointing. These actions are combined with a type of talk to communicate the information to visitors. I organized these strategies into three main categories. The first is *expository*, giving factual information related to the visual stimuli encountered at each stop on the tour. When visitors were allowed to enter a space, guides described the space using technical architectural terminology, facts, numbers, sizes, cost, etc. Guides using this method intended to capture and maintain visitor attention by being enthusiastic about what they were saying in terms of body language and voice level. Some guides fostered interaction by asking questions, and telling visitors to touch something. A second category is *storytelling*. Some guides incorporated fact-based stories into the tour activity. Typically, when visitors were not allowed access into a space, such as a private area or the past, guides told stories to foster connections and understanding. Guides with more time at each station had the opportunity to tell longer or more in-depth stories. Guides told the official stories if explicit in the tour documents, secondhand or adapted stories, and firsthand stories about their personal experience at the place. When a guide intended that the tour was not really to gain factual knowledge but to see the place from an artistic standpoint, the third category of guide strategy was *interpretive*. Guides using this method would typically read poetic quotes or design statements made by the architect and bring attention to the sculptural nature of the space or quality of light, as one might appreciate art. Regardless of their main strategy, most guides used a combination of all of these at some point in the tour. All guides included social interaction, such as asking and

answering questions, and indicating that visitors should touch, walk through or pick up items during the tour activity.

This chapter begins with a description of the tours, similarities and difference and how they compared with the sample tour outlined in the tour guide documents discussed in the previous chapter. Then, the chapter continues with how the guides describe the tour and what they intend visitors learn. This chapter concludes with a discussion of how the tour activity intersects with the program goals.

Description of Tour Activity at Both Settings: Similarities and Differences

The tour activity observed at both institutions generally followed the overall length of time of one hour as suggested in the tour documents ranging from 45 minutes to a little over an hour. The tours also followed the basic sequence of spaces, number of stops or stations, length of time suggested in the tour documents with some variation. For example, one of the three tour guides at the Public Library took the visitors behind-the-scenes to the book sorting room and up the freight elevator which was not listed in the tour documents. None of the tour guides at the Public Library were able to get to all 27 stations listed in the documents in the one hour time frame. Although they told many of the facts and details, none gave all facts listed in the Public Library tour documents.

At the Research Facility, the groups ranged from 13 to 18 visitors with one tour guide. For example, the tour timeline outlined in Figure 9 had 14 people on the tour. Nine were women and five men. After the tour guide introduced herself, she asked the visitors, “are there any architects present?” and “where are you from?” On that particular tour,

there were four architects. There were two families with teenagers from France, a couple from Washington DC and two local visitors who arrived together.

12:00 pm	Guide identifies herself as the guide to visitors assembled in lobby. Guide asks a scientist who works there who happens to be finishing up a science talk: "How does this building influence you?" Scientist responds with a story about working in the building.
12:04 pm	Guide goes outside, positions herself in front of a large poster. Guide introduces herself in more detail including her background and personal connection with the place. Guide asks visitors "are there any architects present?" and "where are you from?" Visitors answer. Guide tells story about the founder and the architect pictured on the poster.
12:07 pm	Guide leads group to under tree; tells history of site before the buildings were built.
12:10 pm	Guide leads group up steps to courtyard; allows them to admire view. Stops and points to quote embedded in floor.
12:15 pm	Guide stands under arcade next to concrete wall and describes how concrete was poured. Guide passes around photos and shows a map of the place, pointing out where they are on the map. Guide asked if there were any questions. No questions.
12:25 pm	Group walks across courtyard to stand in the shade of the south building. Guide describes materials. Guide talks about the stone floor. One visitor took off her shoes to feel the stone. Guide tells a story about her daughter getting married in the courtyard.
12:37 pm	Walking past the concrete walls, guide encourages visitors to touch the wall. Side conversations about concrete wall while visitors interact with wall.
12:40 pm	Guide points to floor below and tells a story about a famous architect visiting that spot.
12:42 pm	Guide stands in front of dedication plaque and asks question. No one answers.
12:45 pm	Group walks through corridor to the northwest part of building passing windows through which visitors see scientists working in the lab. Visitor asks a question about scientists.
12:48 pm	Group goes up the stairs; guide describes function of space. Guide asks expert visitor to describe the post-tensioned concrete truss. He tells a story about how it was made.
12:56 pm	Guide leads group downstairs, passing more glass enclosed labs. Group returns to the central courtyard where guide summarizes the central theme of the tour.
1:03 pm	Group returns to tree area. Guide talks about new addition. Man looks at watch (too long?). A few visitors wander off.
1:08 pm	Guide concludes the tour back in lobby. A few visitors linger to ask the guide a question.

Figure 9. Timeline of a typical tour at the research facility

All tours seemed to be comprised of sub-groups who arrived and departed together and were seen having side conversations and interacting with each other such as taking

photographs. What is interesting to note in the timeline outlined in Figure 9 is how the guide uses questions throughout the tour to engage the visitor and those around her. In the beginning, the questions centered on the background or location of origin of the visitor. During the tour, questions were used to elicit content knowledge about history or building features, such as “what do you think this is used for?” Even when no one may have answered the question, the potential for dialogue was opened up. At the end of the tour visitors lingered to ask questions. What is also interesting to note is how the guide directed the groups using her body language and positioning her body in front of and to the side of particular building features to help direct the visitors’ attention. This was typical for all tours. The guide would stand in the front of the group or allow the visitors to make a semi-circle around her.

At the Public Library, groups ranged from one woman with two children to as many as 17 adults. Similar to the Research Facility, visitors arrived in sub-groups. For example, the tour timeline outlined in Figure 10 consisted of six women and one child. Five of the women were members of a book club, while the other woman arrived with her young niece. The tours ranged from 20 to 22 stations which were fewer than the 27 suggested in the tour guide documents, but double the number of stations observed at the Research Facility. In a typical tour at this location, the guide tended to relate many more facts at each stop, and tended to spend less time at each stop. Questions were asked by the visitors mainly for clarification of facts or to have the guide elaborate on facts such as where the funding came from or how long the building was under construction. Tours at this location entered more private or semi-private areas than at the Research Facility.

2:00 pm	Guide meets group standing by sign which reads “Tours Start Here” in courtyard.
2:05 pm	Group enters and sits down in auditorium. Guide stands during lengthy introduction featuring number of floors, overview of services on each floor, number of art pieces, cost of building, date opened, number of patrons, number of books, etc. Mentions website and ways to donate. Several visitors ask questions to clarify length of time under construction, size of building and sources of funding.
2:19 pm	Guide points out materials in auditorium, leads group up ramp along art wall to lobby
2:21 pm	Guide pauses in front of program screen by elevator to parking garage.
2:21 pm	Guide leads group into three-story-high lobby, points up to ceiling and describes architectural features in lobby.
2:25pm	Guide stands in front of check-out kiosk and describes how to check out books
2:27 pm	Group stops in front of glass door; guide talks about services in that room
2:28 pm	Guide leads group to children’s area, points out features, artwork and services.
2:32 pm	Goes up elevator to roof. Guide points to sign showing what is located on each floor.
2:34 pm	Guide points out roof features such as dome, view of park and bridge.
2:36 pm	Group enters special events room. Visitor asks questions about catering.
2:38 pm	Guide leads group through sculpture garden to art gallery. Group lingers to look at art.
2:41 pm	Guide leads group through map and historical records room (pauses briefly) to describe ancestry software on computers that people are seen using. Group continues through to rare book room; Guide allows visitors to wander around to look at objects in glass cases.
2:48 pm	Guide urges visitors to touch the wood table in center of rare book room while telling them it was made from a local Eucalyptus tree.
2:51 pm	Guide leads group back out to roof; group enters the two-story-high reading room from above and walks down the stairs. Guide points out custom furniture and artwork. Guide talks in hushed tones due to quiet area.
2:53 pm	Guide stops in front of sculpture of baseball player in baseball memorabilia room.
2:55 pm	Guide leads group into 3D printer room. Visitors pick up 3D printed objects. Side conversations among visitors about 3D printing. Guide asks if anyone needs to use the restroom. Lots of interaction.
3:00 pm	Down elevator to second floor teen area; guide points out artwork, gaming room, snack bar; points out view of courtyard below where group had met
3:06 pm	Down escalator to gift shop. Ends there. Visitors disperse to browse the shop.

Figure 10. Timeline of a typical tour at the public library

The guide allowed visitors to wander, even if just for a couple of minutes, through the rare book room and art gallery. In addition, guides at the Public Library encouraged visitors to interact with more items such as the table in the rare book room and items in the 3D printer room. All visitors in the observed guide-mediated activities followed a similar “script.” Schank (1990) defined a “script” as a “set of expectations about what will happen next in a well-understood situation” (p. 7). Guided visitors followed the social norms of this activity, quietly listening to the guide and following the guide’s directives throughout the activity. This adherence to the unspoken rules governing a typical tour experience allowed the guided visitors to be part of a group, to physically engage with the place without fear of trespassing or getting lost which added to a feeling of belonging.

One might expect that all guided tours are essentially expository, intending to explain or describe something. Observations revealed three different strategies to impart descriptive, technical, historical or factual information, or ways to organize visitors’ attention. The talk throughout the tour seemed to be of three ideal types. Some tours had elements of all three discourse types. The expository method relied mainly on lists of facts or description of places, objects and people including details such as dates, sizes, or names. In contrast, a storytelling strategy indirectly communicated the facts or descriptive information by a dramatic account of how characters such as the architect, workers, the guide herself, or someone the guide knew, took actions which led to the unfolding of historical events. The third way guides organized their talk on a tour was by presenting an artistic viewpoint of the building. A guide employing this interpretive

strategy used poetic references, quotes and other language related to appreciating aesthetics, or describing the spiritual quality of the space.

The guide's delivery strategies were of three main types: expository, storytelling and interpretive, or a combination of these techniques based on the guide's interpretation of the purpose of the tour and their perceived role in the activity. The following section examines each of the three approaches as taken by the six tour guides based on my observation, and their description of what they intended visitors learn.

Expository strategy.

<p>I thought that it was a friendly place. I'd like to go back. There were people there to help me if I had questions. I didn't feel intimidated to go back and ask questions. [I now know] where sections were if I were looking for a certain book. There was also the children's library and a special needs area and an area where you could check out DVD's. There was a lot of things [that are] available to me as a library card member now [laughs]. -Visitor to the Public Library</p>
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Figure 11. Quote from visitor describing a guide's expository delivery strategy

Two of the tour guides at the Public Library conducted primarily expository tours. These tour activities were categorized as expository when I noted facts and technical descriptions but not stories in the content of their narrative in my observation field notes and when the coded transcripts of visitors who participated on their tours did not yield codes related to "stories" or "guide as storyteller." An expository tour was not necessarily a top-down or authoritarian approach. In addition to facts, the guide also included a lot of interaction such as asking and answering questions, and suggesting visitors touch the wood table or look for a certain page from a book that was incorporated into a wall-hung artwork. In addition there were several times the tour guide mentioned ways to donate.

Expository tours stressed the importance of knowing where spaces were located, and what they were used for. One tour guide pointed to a sign in the elevator which listed

what was on each floor. She gave a brief explanation of the services located on each floor as the visitors passed that floor. One tour guide believed that telling visitors an abundance of factual information would help generate excitement. She said, "I really encourage people by telling them about all the programs... I'm not really involved other than [in an] informational aspect." She also recognized that visitors have different levels of interest.

When asked what visitors get out of her tour, she said:

At the beginning level, it's "oh wow, that's really something, I didn't know they had it here." So it's an awareness of the different areas, the facilities, the services and the option for them to come back and use those services. On a higher functioning level, it's someone who wants to become more active, involved and part of the community.

When listing facts about a particular space, guides tended to use their body language and posture to generate enthusiasm, almost like a cheerleader. During the interviews these tour guides talked about the importance of enthusiasm and keeping the information "fresh" which helped explain their gestures and high energy. When asked what kind of feedback they would give the guide, most visitors who went on this kind of tour described the guides as passionate, and seeming to "love" the library. One visitor commented that the guide's energy "made you wanna come back." Generating excitement seemed to be an accompanying strategy, perhaps because a long list of facts on a tour could be perceived as monotonous.

Another guide at the Public Library who gave an expository tour she emphasized the importance of following the official script for "public relations." As she said, "pretty much I would try to do the script. Because that's what they [library staff] want." She

recognized that too many facts may be difficult to remember, but believes, based on questions visitors have asked on her tour, that facts are important to visitors. She said,

I try not to give out too many statistics. I figure people can ask that. For me I wouldn't remember them anyway if I were on the tour...But some people do. They really want to know certain data. How much money was used. How many employees work here. How many people use the library every day. That kind of thing. I did give out some data, but I try not to do a lot of that.

In contrast to lists of facts, she believed that access to visuals was the most important aspect of her tour. In fact, she believed the more spaces and resources visitors can see, the more likely they are to see something in particular that interests them. She hoped that by becoming aware of the many programs, the more likely a visitor something in the library that they can use. In summary, the expository tours observed in this study relied on quantity facts and visuals to create not only awareness, but a sense of excitement and increased the chance of a visitor making a connection based on personal interest or need. The number of spaces on the route and the number of features the guide pointed out led to a fast paced activity.

Storytelling strategy.

I thought it was kind of a more interesting story as to why it's physically here then what I had imagined... And, I think, just walking, I mean, you appreciate the structure but probably not nearly as much as actually having someone there to answer your questions if you have them and then, yeah, just hearing about the history of the process and the grants and the money and original designs and then what manifested itself in person. –Visitor to the Research Facility

Figure 12. Quote from a visitor describing a guide's storytelling delivery style

Schank (1990) claimed “human memory is story-based” although not all memories are stories (p. 12). Stories help us understand context. Events and experiences become stories when we retell them to others. Schank (1990) outlined five kinds of stories: “official, invented or adapted, firsthand experiential, secondhand and culturally

common” (p. 30). In this study, I observed the two tour guides at the Research Facility tell all of these types of stories. The sample tour narrative or script found in the tour documents constituted the official story. Guides typically personalized or modified the official narrative to create an adapted story. An example of a culturally common story occurred when a guide asked if any of the visitors knew why the founder of the Research Facility was famous. When hands went up, visitors murmured, and nodded in response to the guide telling the story, it was clear they were familiar with the story of the founder.

Two guides at the Research Facility told firsthand experiential stories based on their own personal experience. One guide told the visitors about how her daughter got married at the Research Facility. She talked about living next door to the facility and watching the contractors pour the concrete, and the political controversy surrounding the addition. Another guide talked about having an interesting conversation with a famous scientist at the Research Facility. These guides also told secondhand stories such as what they heard another guide tell them about how she took a well-known architect on a tour, or how they had heard the architect died. According to Schank (1990), we use stories to illustrate a point, make the listener feel some way, transport the listener, transfer information to the listener and to summarize significant events (p. 48). These story-based accounts consist of a theme, goal, action and lesson. The storytelling strategy defined in this study were factually accurate, but told in a series of literary narratives, or amusing tales, rather than a strictly descriptive report about incidents, events, people or objects.

Both guides who used storytelling as a primary strategy told detailed official stories, adapted stories and secondhand stories about the history and current function of

the place as a major part of their tour narrative during the tour activity. Five tours, conducted by two guides at the Research Facility, were characterized by this mix of fact-based stories about the people who were related to the history of the place, in particular the founder, and the architect, famous visitors, and people who worked there. The visitor transcripts of these five tours, including initial debriefings with a total of 20 visitor participants and three follow-up interviews, contained 47 segments coded for “story” and “guide as storyteller.” It was evident in these interview responses that the visitors recognized the presence of the stories and appreciated the stories that were told.

One of these two guides mentioned the importance of telling stories six times in during his interview. The role of stories in communicating the big ideas through storytelling ran as a theme throughout the interview. He started by saying:

“every great piece of architecture, and this certainly is, has got a great back story. So I'm always trying to link the story... whatever it is they're working on here, that there's this relationship. It's not just a bunch of concrete boxes here operating in isolation. It's populated by this population of scientists that are doing this extraordinary remarkable work here. This all dovetails together. I try and make a big point.”

Throughout his interview, he responded to my questions with interesting facts and rich examples that could lead into stories that were indexed in his memory such as Baron Von Richthofen (the Red Baron whose historic castle was claimed to be haunted), and “C-Suite,” a reference to offices of the chiefs, the highest ranking officers in an organization, such as the COO, CFO, dedicated to a wing in an organization. During his interview, this tour guide explicitly stated that he had collected stories over the past 10 years which he added to his tour. “Plus, you know, I've thrown in a lot of stories over time that I've added

of my own... People love that stuff because it personalizes the tour in a way that nobody else does that, I don't think.”

The other tour guide at the Research Facility who told stories mentioned the importance of stories four times during her interview, and most of her interview transcript consisted of stories she told in response to my interview questions, even though I had not asked for stories. In addition to telling her own personal stories, she also encouraged visitors and staff members to tell their stories. On the first tour I observed her conduct, the guide asked an expert visitor if he wanted to explain the construction of post-tensioned concrete trusses, which he gladly did. In her interview afterwards, the tour guide expressed that she routinely identified expert visitors on her tour and asked them to give the detailed technical explanations, or tell stories of their own. On the second tour I observed her give, she asked a scientist to tell a story about how the building influenced him in his work at the Research Facility. She asked many questions of the visitors and she allowed visitors to interact with each other through side conversations while also interacting with the building. One visitor actually took off her shoes to feel the stone floor on her bare feet.

When asked about the central or theme of her tour, this tour guide replied, “The message is obviously about [the Research Facility] and what they do and about the building and why it is so timeless.” When asked about the most important part of her tour, she responded “I think some of the stories. I love the stories in the courtyard. I think that that's, you know, because the courtyard is something that evolved after the buildings were designed. And it wasn't what they thought it was going to be. And those stories

about how they chose the material, I think, is great. And a lot of people don't get that from books.”

When observing the tours, I noticed that guides at the Research Facility lingered at each station on the tour and, after pointing out features or telling a few facts, used stories to further enhance understanding or construct a sense of place.

At the Public Library, two of the three guides mentioned the word “story” once during their interview. One of those two guides told me several stories to illustrate points during her interview. But none of the guides used storytelling as a delivery strategy during their tour.

Interpretive strategy.

[the tour guide] did a great job in making it accessible to everybody, including my seven year old. People that don't know about architecture; people that do know about it; they were able to get information. And then she had these little poetic tidbits that you don't normally find...Just that final, you know, that piece of trivia about how he [the architect] died alone in the train station. It was, like, ohhhh, poor guy. He was on his way to see something new, or the next thing. Who knows?...[It] was very cinematic to me. That one, little, one-liner just opened up a whole new way to see his stuff, in a way. Yeah...And then my favorite part of the tour is when she [the tour guide] mentioned that little river running through the courtyard, about how the idea behind it was that the ideas and the creative juices of those who work at the [Research Facility], their ideas are meant to flow through that river, figuratively, out into the ocean, to the people of the world. And, to me, that will always stick with me. That just was so poetic. I think that quote, that little snippet of what she said to me, brought to life what I envisioned the [Research Facility] to be, this creative space inside this beautiful work of art. I thought was amazing.- Visitor to the Research Facility

Figure 13. Quote from a visitor describing a guide's interpretive delivery strategy

One of the tour guides at the Research Facility conducted a primarily interpretive tour. The guide emphasized the artistic qualities of the building such as how the sunlight created shadows when it hit the building, interpretations of the meaning behind the texture or color of the materials, or how the shape and size of spaces made people feel. This tour guide use quotes from the architect and founder to show what they were

thinking when they designed or commissioned the place. Visitors who went on her tour recollected an emphasis on the artistic qualities or spiritual nature of the place. At the conclusion of the tour activity, this tour guide did not ask if there were any questions, but gave a list of additional resources read from her notes: websites, movies and books that visitors could refer to for additional interpretation or information. Two visitors were observed looking up the resources on their tablet and phone.

During the interview, this tour guide at the Research Facility believed the main reason visitors went on the tour was to appreciate the artistic nature of the place. The guide revealed that although she is an engineer by profession and training she does not consider herself good at remembering facts and numbers. Therefore her tour related to the general nature of what is aesthetically important about the place. She stated, “you would think being an engineer I'd be good with all the facts and the numbers, and those are things that people can just look up or have, like, in the brochure. It's more like conveying the information in a way that engages people and it's more of a storytelling, if that what's you would call it.” She felt her role was to tell the visitor about these artistic qualities, rather than technical features, history or facts about the place. She said, “I don't feel like...well maybe there's a little bit of teaching. Most people want to hear...they want someone to tell it like a story.” An interpretive tour does not necessarily mean that there are no stories. The intent of her story was to have the listener perceive the building through the eyes of the architect in terms of aesthetic quality and meaning of forms. In this quote, the guide responded to my question which used the word “story.” It seemed that although she referred to her practice as storytelling, she probably would have used a

different word to describe it if she thought of one. Although the interpretive guide talked about narrating the tour as if it were a story, she did not use stories as a primary delivery strategy during the tour activity. She used what was referred by a visitor as “poetic tidbits” which were either quotes from books she had read about the building or interesting bits of trivia that were designed to allow the visitor to gain a new perspective. They were not solely a fact or a story but something that fell in between these two things. At the Public Library, one guide conducted an expository tour with interpretive moments. Similar to interviews with visitors on tours with the other two guides at the library, visitor transcripts did not have any segments coded for “story” or “guide as storyteller.” She told lot of facts with occasional personal opinions, such as what she thought of a piece of artwork, or how the space made her feel. In addition, she asked visitors what they thought after she made a descriptive statement, or at the conclusion of standing at one station, before moving on to the next. She also used her own poetic phrases, such as her comment that “the dome sings” to describe the wind whistling through it, even though the tour narrative developed by the program managers specifically stated that a guide should not say this.

Most visitors on interpretive tours responded favorably to having a guide point out new ways of looking at a building through an artistic lens. One visitor to the Public Library, in the initial debriefing, said, “it’s good to have a guided tour to tell you ... this is what the artist thought of when they were painting this thing.” In his follow up interview the visitor recalled, “She added a personal touch. She showed us some paintings and artwork that she liked, and described why she liked it, so I can get an idea.”

But one visitor to the Research Facility, who had studied the building in school, and who went on an interpretive tour, wanted more technical information. She noted with disappointment a lot of what she called “hyperreflection.” She said, “I can look down a hallway and interpret shadows on my own... there was just a little too much of that for me.”

In general, when asked to give feedback to the guide, there were a few visitors who went on expository tours who would have liked to hear more stories. And one visitor who went on an interpretive tour wanted to hear more facts and stories. The important take-away, I believe, is that visitors who went on tours with a storytelling delivery strategy seemed to be more satisfied with their tour experience. This point will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 8.

Guides’ Intentions Align with Program Goals

All guides mentioned that they were familiar with the guidelines and used the program document as a starting point for conducting the activity. Some carried the tour script or notes with them to refer to as needed during the tour. A few mentioned adding stories because they felt it “personalized” the tour, or emphasized donations when an informal interaction with one of the staff made an impression on her that it was important to the institution. In fact many of the guides were aware of the institutional hierarchy above the level of the program manager, such as the president of the institute. One tour guide at the Research Facility concluded his interview with a comment that he believes this study is important as a means to link what the tour guides are doing with scientific

inquiry, and hopefully, catch the attention of the people who run the institute, “the C-suite” as he called them. He said:

Yeah, where all the executives are, the C's. CEO, CIO, COO, that's what they call it. So if it [the findings of this study] gets in to the C Suite, they may say, ‘wow, you know, there's something scientific about what they're doing here. There's some rigor to this. There's some methodology to this educational process. It's not just a bunch of people wandering, you know, around the buildings here.’ I hope it [this dissertation] gets passed along to them.”

In this quote, the guide used language that perfectly matched how the program manager at the Research Facility described the purpose of the tour, that she did not want the public “aimlessly wandering around” the facility. The guide took his role as educator very seriously.

Many guides used metaphors to describe their role in the activity. They saw themselves as “pioneers” helping visitors through unfamiliar territory, as “conduits” to the past, or “bridges” to awareness, linking visitors to information. Guides also described using sensory experience (visual and touch) as mnemonic devices to help visitors store new information in their “memory banks.”

Awareness. One of the tour guides at the Public Library summarized her view of the purpose of the tour activity to get the community to be aware of the services, use the resources and contribute financially. She stated:

I think it's a community outreach effort in terms of getting the community to understand what services, what's available, what's physically here, what's gone into the building of it and to get the community involved in participating, anywhere from attending the special programs to attending regular programs, to just using the library as a reader and also contributions. That's a biggie...So the more people that become aware and use the library, become emotionally invested in this very viable part of our

community, I think the more they will contribute, either as a volunteer...or...just become involved in many, many different ways.

The guide believed her role to be two-fold, to inform the public of the services offered and motivate visitors to come back to use the library, or support the library through donations. She stated, “I really encourage people by telling them about all the programs, all the movie night, the activities in the auditorium. My goal is to get them to actually come back and engage and be part of the process here.” While the official tour script suggests guides mention donations six times, as discussed in Chapter 5, she seemed to believe that mentioning donations were not a part of the formal training material given to tour guides. Instead she attributed her emphasis on donations to an informal interaction with senior members of the institution’s staff: “It's not really in the script, but when the librarian spoke to us, she brought in a man who's in charge of the foundation and he made a big deal about it so it kind of made an impression on me.” What guides do on tours may be influenced by factors other than the instructions in the training document. In this case, a senior staff member influenced her emphasis on donations in conducting the tour.

Another tour guide at the Public Library noted the participatory aspect of the activity to add to visitors’ prior knowledge. She stated:

I think guided tours are important for people who want to participate. I think there are people who live here, who've heard about this new library especially, being so wonderful. They've seen a lot about it on the media, and wanted to have a kind of a quick orientation to see what's really available to them.

Her main goal is for visitors to “get a snapshot of the place, just the highlights” and then go off and explore the details on their own. Her focus is not on the books but on

the spaces which house the books, as she stated, “it's the architecture, the art, the programs and services for all age groups. I think they really get to see it visually. To me, that's the biggest advantage of [visitors] doing the guided tour.” For her, the ability to see and experience the place adds to their initial awareness that the place existed.

While the guides at the Public Library were explicit about making visitors aware of the resources, guides at the Research Facility tended to talk about building on prior knowledge, expecting a visitor to come in with some level of awareness prior to taking the tour. One guide said, “it's a place where that so many people have read about and want to come and see...Most people who have come and talked to me afterwards said I knew about the building but I didn't know this, this, and, this.” At the Research Facility, the guides' explanation of visitor awareness tended to be in line with the goal of awareness as expressed by the program manager. One guide at the Research Facility said he intended for the visitors to learn, “the significance of the work that's going on in the laboratories” and become “aware of the role the building plays in the science.” He also talked about the uniqueness of the place, when he stated, “There's no place like it in the world. So we're fortunate to be here, sharing that with people.” Another tour guide at the Research Facility said, “The tour is a great way for someone to get their foot in the door...And that might pique their interest in visiting other places of architecture.” In this quote, the tour guide made a connection between the tour experience and visitor awareness of the importance of architecture in general, not specific to one place. Awareness, as intended by this guide, becomes a more universal educational goal, to inspire visitors to gain a more focused interest or passion.

Affective Experience. Guides believed visual cues, striking or unusual features of the building, served as memory anchors (mnemonic devices) for connecting facts to visitors' "memory banks" to the story or narrative of past events (history) as framed by the guide. When asked what he thought was the role of the guided tour to the institute, one guide at the Research Facility said guided tours were an important means to link sensory experience with facts and aid in long-term memory, as a mnemonic device. Here is the quote in its entirety:

I think they're [the guided tours are] very important. It's sort of like the view. The people walk up and they step up those steps and they get this view and then suddenly they've got a memory in their memory banks that they never realized they're gonna have. When you take them on a tour and...they say [to themselves], 'wow, that is really cool and they answered questions for me that I never knew the answers to. There's so many amazing facts that turned up in the course of this tour that I will take with me.' Makes it memorable. It's a mnemonic device. It makes it existential."

Researcher: I have to think about how to spell mnemonic. What does that mean exactly?

Well, it means it's a memory cue. You know, you have this experience and every time you see a piece of concrete like this [you] flashback to [the Research Facility]. It's a mnemonic device.

He believed his role in the activity was pivotal, citing that, along with a salient visual memory of the view, the visitor will also recall what he said.

You know they put us out in front of these groups [of guided visitors] but, you know, decades from now people will have memories of something you or I say. They'll flash back on that wonderful day, when the sun broke through and the whole thing was lit up and they've no experience like it since.

He saw himself as a link between what is seen and what is not visible. When the guide was talking about the past, he saw himself as a "conduit," linking the past with the

present. When the guide was talking about the spaces a visitor has never been before, he viewed his role as a “pioneer.” Not only a passive guide but someone who encourages hand-on explorations, or someone who enlightens the visitor with unexpected moments, as evidenced in the following quote.

You're a conduit to what happened here in the past and what goes on today. But sometimes, you're kind of a pioneer exploring and pointing out stuff that if they were to wander around by themselves they would never notice or know. I can't imagine, even if you had a book and you know there was fifty pages all about walking through [the Research Facility] that you could still ever have such an appreciation of the building as having somebody point it out to you, encourage you to put your hands on the concrete, to slide something open, to watch somebody mark with chalk on the wall.

The tour guide explained that one important feature of his tour is to write with chalk on one of the exterior slate panels which was designed by the architect to encourage social interaction among the scientists when they were walking around between the buildings. The tour guide explained that the intention behind this strategy of writing on the wall during the tour was for the dramatic emotional impact he imagined it would have on the guided visitors. Over time he had discovered that it was more impactful if the panel did not contain any writing when the visitor first saw it, so he made a point of cleaning off the panels prior to the tour activity.

I also make a point of going out with a wet paper towel and cleaning off those panels because I have found that if I go up to a clean panel with a piece of chalk, there's this moment of tension. ... [he imagined the guided visitor says to him or herself,] ‘He isn't going to’ ... And then I mark on the wall. [he imagined the visitor thinks to him or herself,] ‘Oh my god, he's drawing on the wall.’ And it's just like, focus, you know. [He imagined the visitor thinks,] ‘How did you do that?’ So if I do it on a wall that's already been marked, it doesn't have the same impact as a blank slate panel and doing that. So I've learned over time what works. [laughs]

He also believed that when people get access, they also get a sense of belonging to a group and empowerment from going on his tours. In addition he believed that the institute wants people to feel that way, that the place is accessible and that they're special to get a backstage pass. He said, "when you get on a tour group it's like, 'I'm with him,' 'I'm with her.' I can go anywhere." He intends visitors feel special, like they belong and they feel comfortable in the space. He stated, "They got the inside tour; they got the backstage pass."

While this guide from the Research Facility talked in detail about his intention to create an affective experience for the visitor, the other two guides from the Research Facility did not specifically address this area. At the Public Library, when asked what they hoped visitors get out of the tour, one guide hoped, "They appreciate it. They enjoy it. They're eager to go around and look some more." Another guide at the Public Library stated that she was very happy when a visitor "was happy to be here and happy that we were here." This statement aligned almost perfectly with what the program manager had expressed during her interview, that she hoped "library and attendee, are happy. Like, you're happy to be in the building. We're happy to have you in the building."

Advocacy. All six guides talked about their understanding of the purpose of the tour as either "community outreach," for "public relations" or a way "engage the public." Two of the three guides at the Public Library talked about the importance of donations, and their role in soliciting financial support from the guided visitors. The third tour guide at the Public Library saw her role as convincing visitors to change their opinion about the library, to promote general support as opposed to financial support. She grouped visitors

on her tours into two categories: those who want to learn to use the library and those who are skeptical of the library. She explained, “I have two kinds of people who do this tour: the ones who love a library and the ones who were very skeptical of this whole 30-year project. If I can turn any of those skeptics, I've really accomplished something.” Her view of her role was to be the means to turn a visitor’s opinion from negative to positive, or from unconvinced to convinced of the value of the place. “I really feel that we're a little bit of a bridge between somebody walking in off of the street going, ‘wow, this place is great.’” Her theme, “Sharing what was built by this community to this community” revealed what she believed the intent of the tour to be. Although not explicitly stated in the tour guide documents, this guide crafted her own theme. She also revealed the goals of her tour as communication and community outreach when she described, “hopefully with a tour, I tell those 10 people [on the tour] all the things that can be done in this building. They go and tell two more people, and I've done my job. I'm getting people in here.” She believed that by making the visitors on the tour aware of the programs offered would stimulate them to become advocates of the library, by promoting the place through word of mouth. This tour guide’s intentions aligned with the goals of the program manager.

At the conclusion of her interview, one guide at the Research Facility summarized how she felt about supporting the underlying goal of the tour program. She said,

I hope that we are contributing to the enthusiasm of the community for [the Research Facility]. I think that's a big goal. And, um,...little donations count as much as big donations. So...when these people come in and they look at the donor walls, and...see how much everyone's given and...think

“oh my god, I'll never make a dent.” But maybe that's something we should say is, “little donations make as much difference as big donations.”

This statement illustrates that her goal to encourage visitors to support the institute extends beyond leading her own tours. The tour guide considered herself part of a community of practice, interested in coming up with a kind of slogan, something she felt all guides should say to encourage visitor donation, and, perhaps, to add to the official tour documents. In general, tour guide intentions aligned with the program goals of awareness, affective experience, and advocacy.

Summary of the Tour Activity

The object of the tour activity at both sites in this study, as seen through the lens of Activity Theory, is the construction of a sense of place which forms a memorable experience for the visitor. Guides play the role of mediator in the activity, integrating the artifacts of the building and its features with an accompanying narrative. Guides took their role as navigator and communicator of information very seriously, citing “enthusiasm,” “dependability,” and “commitment” as the most important qualities to do their job. Tour guides used the official script and guidelines, viewed as cultural tools of the activity, as a starting point to construct a sense of place. They followed an adapted route including what they felt was necessary to achieve the goals of the tour. Tour guides constructed a sense of place through navigating visitors through the space, using building features as mnemonic devices, directing action, and encouraging social interaction. Guides also conveyed information about things that were not visible such as historical events, construction costs, or private activities at the place beyond visitors' view. This

narrative took three basic forms: an expository approach, a storytelling strategy, and an interpretive stance, or as a combination of these three methods. Not surprisingly, guides' intentions aligned with program goals, although guides tended to interpret the central message of the tour if one was not explicit in the official script, and guides varied in delivery strategies.

Chapter 7 Guided Visitor Learning

Downtown on a hot Sunday afternoon in late-August, seventeen people are assembled to take a tour of the public library. Among them is Paul, a man in his mid-20's, who has brought his girlfriend and her niece to see the library. It is a place he has been before, but due to its big size, he was interested in finding out how to navigate the place, and what programs are available so that he can take advantage of what it offers to the public.

Paul valued the access and privilege of going behind the scenes, especially to the state-of-the-art sorting machine. He reported feeling empowered to navigate the place in the future by stating that he now knows where to go when he comes back. He reported being aware of programs for the homeless as well as special areas for those with disabilities, teens and children, and for things he would not normally associate with a library such as yoga and meditation classes. He expressed appreciation for the inclusion of art by local artists which, he felt, created a stronger connection with the surrounding community. Paul liked that the guide added some interpretive moments on the tour by stating, "She added a personal touch. She showed us some paintings and artwork that she liked, and described why she liked it, so I can get an idea. A little personal touch, you know, not like a robotic guide walking through, like an audio-book guide." Overall, Paul summarized what he felt was the central message of the tour, "In my thoughts, what the guide was trying to get across was a library is not just paper books, it's an area that has community outreach... That's pretty wild. For me, I imagine, that's kind of a central theme. There's more than what meets the eye." After his tour experience, Paul checked out travel books for his trip to Mexico.

At a glance, this tour has been successful in accomplishing the program goals of awareness, affective experience and advocacy, but what more can we learn by looking deeper into visitor learning in this activity? Did other visitors on the tour have a similar experience or did they come away with something different?

Figure 14. Vignette from the public library illustrating visitor learning

In this study, the guided visitor is the subject and their memorable experience is the object, as seen through the lens of Activity Theory [Figure 14]. All guided visitors recollected some sensory perceptions about what they saw, heard and touched during the tour activity. In general, visitor learning matched institutional goals in terms of awareness, affective experience and advocacy. Visitors became aware of the features and function of the building. In particular, they noted the size, scale and context of the building, the people working in or using the space, and how to navigate the space. Visitors also recalled affective experiences such as having a good time, being inspired by beauty, enjoying the act of walking and listening to stories, and emotional connections of appreciation, gratitude, and surprise.

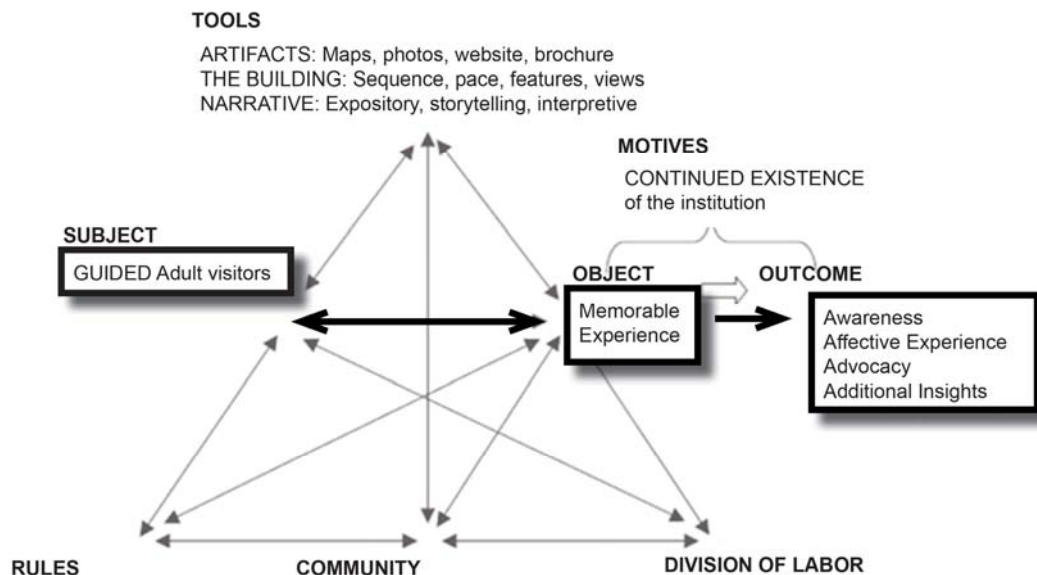


Figure 15. Components of Activity Theory addressed in chapter 7

Many visitors became advocates of the place by taking and posting photos on social media, telling others about their experience and urging them to take a tour. Some visitors also returned to the space, got a library card or planned to give a donation as a direct result of participating in the tour activity. Visitors talked about actions taken as a direct result of participating in the tour activity. Many visitors sought further knowledge by consulting books or Internet sources. Others engaged their friends, family or colleagues in constructive dialogue about their experience. Most visitors reported that these actions, or planned actions, were directly related to their tour experience; they would not have known about something or would not have looked something up, if it had not been for participating in the tour activity. Overall, visitors experienced what the program managers hoped and tour guides intended.

In addition, visitors made new connections and experienced a range of insights above and beyond the information given, or the baseline institutional goals. These

additional insights varied in relation to what visitors brought to the tour activity in terms of prior knowledge and expectations. The range of additional insights, and how the visitors described their experience also varied with the delivery strategies of the guides.

Visitor Learning: Awareness

You just see how large it is, just books and books, and shelves and shelves, and you look up and there's just all this information and you just realize there's so much; so much you can learn and so much you don't know. - Visitor to the Public Library

Figure 16. Quote from a visitor illustrating awareness

When asked what they remember seeing or doing, most visitors listed what they had seen in the order presented to them during the tour activity as if mentally walking through the spaces again. They typically talked about what they saw first, second, third, and so forth. When asked what they recalled hearing during the initial debriefing most people told me what they remembered the guide had said. Typically they recalled a few facts that had been stated during the guide's introduction such as the cost of the building, the source of funding, or the professional expertise of the guide. Beyond some facts, visitors talked about recollecting the size of the place and the function of the spaces.

Scale and context. Visitors expressed awareness of the relationship of their body in the space after going on a tour. They commented on the size of the space, the complexity or simplicity of the environment, noting high ceilings, natural light, rich materials and eye-catching views. One visitor noted, "You just see how large it is, just books and books, and shelves and shelves, and you look up and there's just all this information and you just realize there's so much; so much you can learn and so much you don't know." Another visitor commented, "What stood out was just how large of a library it is and how, yeah, just the volume." At the Research Facility, a visitor similarly noted,

“What stood out, to me, is the massive structures.” Most people expressed that the size of the place was bigger or smaller than they had anticipated. A visitor to the Research Facility said,

It also is somewhat smaller in reality, at least compared to how I perceived it. The two buildings and the central court seemed to be more grand in the photographs than in reality. And maybe grand is not the word. Merely larger in scale in the photos than how I perceived them on site.

The perception of large or small scale seemed a meaningful subjective experience. Also, at the Research Facility, a visitor commented on the scale of the building in relation to watching her young son run around and interact with the building. She said, “What was really cool about coming here with my son is just the scale, to be reminded of the scale.” Another visitor noted the scale of the building in relation to watching another person walk through the space. “Another thing I guess that is hard to get from a photo is a sense of scale. I think, the first photo I took, there was one person walking by. You know, you're like, ‘wow,’ you get a sense of the size of the building.” Visitors got a sense of scale not just by moving through the space, but also in observing other people use or move through the space, and reflecting on that observation.

In follow up interviews, the sense of scale or size of the building remained a salient feature of their tour experience. One visitor to the Public Library commented, “I guess, [I’m] somewhat awed by the size of the structure and the momentousness of the undertaking.” When asked to further elaborate on this point, the visitor reiterated that the size of the building had impressed her. She repeated, “I would say it's remarkably large. I mean, I was so blown away by the size of it.” Other visitors related size to number of services or variety of spaces that the building provided. “I think the biggest thing that

stands out is...how big it is. So it makes you want to just go and see everything that's available to you” Other visitors related the size, both height and floor area of a space, to reducing a sense of claustrophobia or crowding. A visitor to the Public Library stated, “It had, like, high ceilings, you know, the architecture had high ceilings, the nice open spaces when you enter. You don't feel claustrophobic...I didn't know how many people were in the building but it didn't seem crowded.” One visitor reported that although she had visited the Public Library before she had not become aware of the size of the space until she went on a tour. She said,

The first moment, when we went in to the, I don't know what you call it, the lobby, and when she [the tour guide] said, ‘Now look up.’ And when you see all that space. I don't think I had looked up last time I was there.

So, just being in a large space does not necessarily mean that one learns about the size of the space, or is able to recall it. Learning occurred as a result of participating in an activity that included a heightened sense of awareness, by following the direction of a guide, and taking action, in this case, looking up at the ceiling.

Function of building to support human activity. Similar to the experience reported by the program managers, visitors who had been to the building previously, saw the building in a differently following the tour activity. Most of the time, they reported their new awareness stemmed from the fact that they realized that seeing people use or occupy the space made them aware of the connection between architecture and people. In initial debriefing, visitors noted the people working or using the space. Some visitors, who learned about this building through photographs, lectures and books offered surprise at seeing the place filled with people working in it. One architect stated, “Maybe just we

tend to see this building as an icon, as an image, you know. And seeing it functioning as a campus and seeing people's interactions with the building is very important.” The non-formal learning that occurred on the tour activity, in this way, can supplement formal learning, especially in the field of architecture.

In follow up interviews visitors remembered seeing people using the space. One visitor recalled, “There were people in their little cubes doing study type stuff” and offered that she wanted to see more of what was going on in the labs at the Research Facility. A visitor to the Public Library was impressed by seeing the staff using the service elevator, “I remember walking, going through the back to see the people who actually work at the library, like, pretty active, using that elevator.” Visitors connected the fact that they were viewing people who were occupying the space, empathized with them and evaluated perception of themselves as a member of a tour group who may be seen as disruptive. One visitor connected what she heard with what she imagined other people could hear and said, “I could see people were studying, they were focusing and...I was aware that we could have been a little more quiet.”

In the initial debriefing, one visitor noted that it was important to see people who work in the building using the space. “I think that my favorite part was just actually getting to peek in and see how the scientists were using the space, just because that's something that you hear about in school and you tell people, but to actually see it was really neat.” In her follow up interview, she elaborated on her initial impression with further detail. It was evident she recalled more detail after when she said,

I will say, one of the highlights also, was walking past the windows and all the various desks sort of lined up. There's the neat person. There's the

‘munchy-muncher’ there--she had her cereal boxes all lined up. She was eating something. You know, all the different personalities and all the different work styles were on display. And there was the mad, crazy, messy scientist. And that drew so many comments, like people were relieved to see that.

The experience of seeing people working in all the messy reality of everyday life, humanized the building. This comment also implied that visitors on the tour were aware of the reactions of other people on the tour which will be discussed later in the chapter, about the importance of dialogue.

Visitor Learning: Affective Experience

I really remember, just the day, the view, just the space, the courtyard, just getting there with the...the clearest, bluest day ever. I remember the day. Beautiful.
– Visitor to the Research Facility

Figure 17. Quote from a visitor illustrating an affective experience

The guided visitors talked about what they recollected from the tour in terms of what they saw, heard, felt, and so on. They recalled beautiful views, listening to stories, and the experience of being in the space which they described as being greater than the sum of these sensations. I will elaborate on each of these kinds of affective experiences: beauty, storytelling, appreciation or gratitude, and the existential quality of being there.

Beauty. Many visitors reported having come to the site for the tour after seeing photos of the place, which they thought were beautiful, or after driving by the building and being inspired to attend because of the beauty of the exterior. Appreciating the aesthetic quality of the place was both a motivating factor in visitor attendance and a welcome outcome of participation in the tour activity.

In the initial debriefing, when asked what stood out as memorable, seven of the 42 visitors commented on the beauty. As one visitor said, “First of all, of course, the

architecture is just stunning. That stood out to me. I liked the use of the renewable materials and the unusual angles. All of these things are making, have made, this an interesting space.” When asked what they thought most people would get out of the tour activity, one visitor said, “Well, I think, as a non-expert, it’s the experience of the whole, I would say--the timeless beauty.” Even the beauty of ordinary features stood out in the context of the novel environment they had walked through. One visitor claimed, “My idea of a landscape is looking at trees and flowers, but this was more beautiful than anything I’ve ever seen in my life because of the unobstructed view of the Pacific.” In the context of the situated activity of a tour, even common elements can be examined and appreciated anew as beautiful. In the follow-up interviews, even more of the visitors, eight of 12, commented on recalling the beauty of the place they visited. One interpretation of this finding would be that perhaps people need more time to process sensory perceptions in order to report them. Another explanation could be that when a visitor was asked to recall their memory from weeks ago, a visual impression of beauty preceded the other memories of facts, stories and meaning. When asked what she remembered about her visit to the Research Facility, one visitor said, “First word that came to my mind was ‘beautiful.’” A visitor to the Public Library reflected on how beautiful views and interesting interiors facilitated the inherent function of the space as she stated, “You know, when I go to the library, it’s usually to learn something new and I think that having the nice views and having the beautiful architecture really inspires you.” When asked what they thought most visitors would get out of the tour, one visitor said, “Most visitors would be wowed by the space and the beauty of being there.” Visitors, in

the follow-up interview also recalled the natural surroundings and the weather, associating those features with the aesthetic quality of the experience, conceptually combining the tour activity with its context, time and place. One visitor to the Research Facility said, “I really remember, just the day, the view, just the space, the courtyard, just getting there with the...the clearest, bluest day ever. I remember the day. Beautiful.”

In essence, the relationship between the tour experience and memory seemed to lie first in the impact of the visual stimuli of the place. When asked what visitors remembered about the tour, the first response usually contained a reference to something visually unusual, interesting or aesthetically pleasing such as a unique view, innovative materials or a sense of “timelessness” which is a quality of appreciating art. This initial response was followed by the meaning that visitors associated with the beauty, such as the story of what makes the building notable, the history of how it came to be and other facts or descriptions they recalled associated with those memorable visuals. The visuals served as mnemonic devices which anchored a sensation, a fact or a lesson depending on the narrative that was presented by the guide.

Story-telling is an enjoyable way to learn. Beyond individual sensory inputs, the quality of moving through a physical space while listening to a guide and having other sensory inputs triggers emotion, stimulates memories and promotes connection to new knowledge. More simply put, the act of walking and having someone tell you a story about what you are looking at seemed to be an entertaining and enjoyable way for adult visitors to learn. As one visitor described,

it was nice to be able to walk it and hear about it, how he was thinking about designing the building, in that time... He was talking about the

history of how [the Research Facility] came to be placed here specifically...I thought it was kind of a more interesting story as to why it's physically here then what I had imagined.

Most visitors expressed that they enjoyed listening to the stories, if stories had been presented by the guide during the tour activity. Visitors with varying degrees of prior knowledge could relate to the building through hearing stories about the history of how the building came to be located on the site. One visitor to the Research Facility said,

I liked hearing about the process of creation and the partnership between [the founder] and [the architect]. And I think it was very interesting hearing about the personality of [the architect] and [how he] always wanted to keep designing things and it strikes me as having a very noteworthy personality seems to be a common trait of famous architects and their personality quirks.

The “soothing” voice of a narrator added to the experience, as one visitor poetically described,

I wasn't expecting, her, the guide--she was so nurturing and warm and spoke like I just walked in to a spa...I was expecting this snobby, kind of down-to-brass-tacks efficient guide explaining the ‘machine for living.’...But she was so wonderful and feminine... describing the most iconic, concrete Mecca, I think, in this part of the hemisphere.

Interestingly, when stories were not present on the tour, visitors noted their absence. When asked what she recalled about the tour, one visitor at the Public Library stated, “I remember that our guide was really enthusiastic...and she had a lot of good information. She gave us a lot of facts....She told us about the spaces and public spaces that were available for lecture or parties, that sort of thing...” When asked what kind of feedback she would give to the tour guide she stated,

maybe if the docent was to say, for example, this came about because [the benefactor] had a cup of tea and decided we didn't have a good library...“I

have a story to tell you.” Something like that...the back story...Add some stories. That's what I would say.

Appreciation and gratitude. Segments of visitor interview transcripts were coded for appreciation if they included reports of feeling lucky, happy, special, or grateful. For example, after hearing about the history of the founder, a visitor to the Research Facility connected the story of his struggle and accomplishment with a sense of gratitude. She said, “I just want him [the founder] to know that I certainly appreciate all that he has done and thank him...this wonderful man was able to come in and create the most, he, his vision and the scientists and himself, many, many cures. And I appreciate that.” When asked what kind of feedback she would give the tour guide, one visitor to the Public Library said, “I would say ‘thank you’ for such a really nice tour...I really appreciated it.” Another visitor to the Public Library expressed positive feelings associated with the overall experience, “I would just say that I was happy with the experience and I thought the tour was interesting... So I would say it was very educational and it was kind of fun to see the library, to experience the library... I thought that it was a friendly place.” In her follow up interview, the visitor, reiterated the impact of her positive association with the library. She reflected that the tour was, “a great way to spend the day.” An architect revealed the lasting affective effect of the tour by stating, “I think back about the building and that experience frequently so I think, yeah, I think it was a very special opportunity.”

Many visitors expressed appreciation, in general, for sanctioned physical access to spaces in the building, since they did not want to feel like they were trespassing or would be in danger of being removed by security. Visitors felt appreciation that they were part

of a group. “We felt really lucky to be there at that moment...I was just so glad that we had the opportunity, that we had the ability to see into the building, to peek into the theater, and then that sort of big open space that connects the two buildings underground.” Only one visitor, in her follow up interview, thought that should could have “toured herself” and gotten the same kind of experience out of it. After reflecting on our conversation about her experience, I’m not sure she was aware of how much she had learned on the tour, especially when she acknowledged,

[the tour] certainly added to it [her understanding]. I had no understanding. So it added to it. And, I mean, I certainly picked up certain points along the way and then just blocked out things that didn't, you know...--if he [the tour guide] was talking about something too long, longer than three minutes, I would just block it out. Because you only get three minutes with me, and then you're done, I'm on to something else.

I believe this visitor was unaware that the tour had created a base knowledge for her, especially when she acknowledged she had had no prior knowledge of the place. She also revealed a limited attention span as part of her learning style, and the tendency to block things out when she lost interest.

Existential quality of ‘being there.’ Visitors expressed the value of being in the space as paramount to their awareness and understanding of the place at both locations. In the initial debriefing, visitors were very clear about the value of being in the space rather than viewing it online or through “rich media” as exemplified by the following quote:

I don't think I could have conceptualized from a website, this structure... the architecture, which really does allow for a lot of free flowing space, a lot of inside out environment. I just thought it created life and, again, it's not a dimension that you would be able to create through an online

experience...nothing that would give you the vibrancy that you feel when you walk in.

Another visitor stated,

It's nice to learn through experience versus just reading. You know they say a picture's worth a thousand words. I think experiencing it, is even another thousand words... So when you read about something, to me, you learn a certain amount. When you see pictures of it, I think you learn even more, but I think when you come and you immerse yourself in it, it's more meaningful... you know just being in the atmosphere... You can hear about it but you have to imagine it and you don't really know how it really is until you're here and you're experiencing it.

At the Research Facility, a visitor struggles to make sense of why the experience of being in the space was so important. She said, "What makes good architecture good-- it's the so-called 'vibes.' It's kind of cliché but then again here you can feel it." She compared it to, "like sunsets or wine in holidays...you really have to be there to feel it."

The value of being there was also evident in the follow up interview quotes:

it was like the ocean, the open space, the air, the architecture, just the, I don't know, to me it was so soothing and peaceful to be there around that space. That building was a type of art. And to have experienced the tour I feel like I got, I don't know, I just got something from it, this feeling of peacefulness and this soothing feeling of being near the ocean, and being in California. I remember the sun and air and the warmth from the stones of the building. That just stayed with me. And the impression I got from all the open and peaceful and relaxing in a space where people were creating things. That just stayed with me since then.

She further elaborated,

For me, it's the experience of being in the space and the way that being here is different from seeing on a flat screen. It integrates all the senses, you know. When we went upstairs to the interstitial space it was warmer, hotter, kind of stuffy, and you could smell this biological smell, whatever that was I don't know. And just my sense of balance and having to move through the place and what the rock and the cement feel like. It all integrates and sort of cements the memory of the experience for me.

When a visitor expressed a moment of clarity for which they could not pinpoint the sensory source of the insight, a new code emerged. Frick (1987) referred to those significant moments in life when learners create new meaning by experiencing something greater than sensory experiences combined with reason, in the development of a humanistic-existential theory of learning. In this theory, the existential quality results from the learner symbolizing the experience as a direct result of heightened awareness which leads to a burst of personal growth. As Frick (1987) summarizes, “as we perceive the symbolic dimensions of our immediate experience, we become creative agents in our own learning and growth.” (p. 403). The combination and simultaneity of sensory experiences on a guided walking tour activity is seen by the visitors as having a quality that is greater than the sum of individual sensory experiences such as sight, sound, touch and smell. The tour activity and the importance of being in the space while the during the activity, experiential learning, was described by visitors as having existential value that they struggle to make sense of as they try to put in words the value of the tour activity.

Visitor Learning: Advocacy

I did take a photo of myself and my girlfriends up at the top [of the Public Library] and put it on Facebook and told everybody what a cool library we have and that they need to go visit...I told pretty much anyone I met after the trip. I told my family about it, pretty much all my friends, that they need to go check it out... [going on the tour] really encourages you to go to the library more. -Visitor to the Public Library

Figure 18. Quote from a visitor illustrating advocacy

Telling others about their experience. In keeping with what the program managers had hoped that visitors do, most visitors, 11 out of the 12 visitors interviewed, reported promoting the place in some way. One visitor said, “I did take a photo of myself and my girlfriends up at the top [of the Public Library] and put it on Facebook and told

everybody what a cool library we have and that they need to go visit.” She further elaborated, “I told pretty much anyone I met after the trip. I told my family about it, pretty much all my friends, that they need to go check it out.” Several visitors, at both locations, intended to bring their children or let other mothers know about the opportunity to tour the building. For example, one visitor said that her posts on social media garnered so much interest by “a lot of moms who were interested...so I put the link of where and how to book your architectural tours.”

Returning to use or support. About half of the visitors interviewed returned to use or planned to use the library. Two visitors got their library cards. One visitor felt the value of the tour was “that it really encourages you to go to the library more.” Another visitor said, “I thought that it was a friendly place. I'd like to go back... There was a lot of things available to me as a library card member now [laughs].” A third visitor summarized, “I guess guided tours, when they're great like this, it gives people a sense of ownership about their thing--their great public library.” At the Research Facility, most of the visitors from out of town did not plan to return. Support, for them, took the form of political and economic advocacy, recognizing that the Research Facility, and basic biological science, needed to be funded or supported by the government. A retired pediatrician with a background in science related his tour experience to a sense of responsibility. He connected his passion for science with a feeling that he is part of the community of the Research Facility even though he does not live in the vicinity. After the tour, he made a statement about how current political policies lack support for science and how he connected the tour activity to his sense of identity that not only related to

being part of the scientific community but his advanced age and current mindset about the legacy he wants to leave after his death. He stated,

I think also these tours are helpful in getting the public engaged in the reality that this obviously requires a lot of financial help and with the government decreasing support the public private donations will have to increase. I think it's a good way to help people connect with science and be willing to remember institutions like this when they're planning their legacies.

While this particular visitor didn't recall the guide mention anything about fundraising, he made his own connection based on his current life goals. He said that he made the connection between the tour, his appreciation for science, and a sense of responsibility, "because my wife and I have been revising our wills lately and so we've been thinking a lot about this." Visitors bring their prior knowledge, and construct new meanings through participating in a tour activity

Visitor Insights Beyond Program Goals

After interviewing the visitors who participated on the guided tours, it became apparent many of them learned much more than a basic understanding the size and function of the place. They had more than an entertaining or positive experience and left the tour with more than a feeling of connectedness Above and beyond the goals of the tour activity articulated by the program managers and the information given by the guides on the tour, visitors made new connections and insights spanning a variety of content areas, and concepts at varying levels of complexity and abstraction.

Many forces influence the design of buildings. Visitors learned that buildings are designed to support human endeavors. In addition, they learned that people who are

responsible for creating these buildings, or works of architecture, typically have an underlying design philosophy, theory and intent which informs their choices throughout the design process. There are many factors that shape decisions with regard to form, space planning, and material selection throughout the design and construction process. This process may not be evident in the final product. The story of the ideas or poetic concepts held by the architect, as well as the socio-economic and political forces surrounding the project, constitute the back story that shaped the building. Design intent behind buildings, the unseen, which enhances understanding of what is visible has been grasped by visitors as evidenced in their responses. By listening to the guide explain what the architect was thinking when designing the space, a visitor from the Public Library recalled, “you think, someone was really creative in thinking about putting it together in this way.” A visitor at the Research Facility also expressed this same thought,

a lot of the features of the building make sense in the context of the story or the relationship of the people, how it was to be designed...you wouldn't necessarily pick that up just walking through and looking at it...you can get the aesthetic, you know, appreciation of the building without having the tour but the tour helps you understand more about kind of the problem solving aspect of the design which is, I think, always pretty important to understand.

In addition to viewing the building as a manifestation of a designer's ability to solve problems, visitors spoke about a further level of abstraction such as how the building emerges as an entity that furthers a larger concept, such as a sense of community or collaboration, which comes from an analysis of how the building spaces and individual elements were arranged, and what that arrangement means in the service of the people who use the space. Buildings can be a source of inspiration to the building occupants and

foster collaboration, social interaction and privacy. One visitor described the Public Library building as embodying the design intent as if the building itself was doing something.

I love the sense of community that this library is trying to build downtown. I love the fact that it has so much public access for so many different kinds of events; not just a repository for books and media. So I think the fact that they're trying to create a living, breathing environment here where people can exchange ideas or learn things, really takes a concept of a library to, you know, its maximum.

After the tour, the library became a case for expanding the definition of a public institution, one that is dynamic, and looks toward the future in terms of promoting community, education and social interaction.

Buildings change over time. Visitors realized that buildings are not static structures but dynamic entities. Buildings are products of social interaction, change over time; they age and they are adapted. Visitors learned that buildings are dynamic places which incorporate technology and reflect the times in which they were built in terms of materials, layout, shape, size, technology and budget. They are adaptations and they are adapted. Visitors recalled how technology was integrated into the building. One visitor commented what stood out was “how the library has grown or modernized over time: the conveyance belts for returning books and, just extraordinary.” As a result of seeing something innovative on the tour, her idea of a library expanded. She recalled that the guide’s explanation, in conjunction with viewing the features of the building, added to her understanding of the building as a dynamic entity.

I think what the guide did very well was show how the building was adapted over time and that even though it seems like this sort of monolithic object, it’s always evolving, and it’s always changing.

Visitors also became aware that buildings change by aging. One architect noted the deterioration of the wood on the side of the building, which led him to reflect on the nature of materials, in general, that degrade over time. He poetically stated,

Buildings are living things and they weather and things wear out. You look at the concrete, I guess, on the north side, how it's weathered unevenly and [in an] unattractive way but maybe that's part of the charm of the building.

Some visitors came with a prior knowledge that buildings are an expression of the times in which they are built. When asked why she came on the tour of the Research Facility, one visitor clearly expressed that she viewed culturally significant buildings as an embodiment of the process of history, a socially constructed place that added to her understanding of a geographic location. She stated,

And cities change and the buildings, to me, it's the history of that. It's the history of the city and it's, to me, it's art. Every city I go, I like to see libraries. I like to look at old buildings. Take tours. Because I feel like the soul of where that city started is in its architecture.

Another visitor to the Research Facility summarized her belief that “each building, architecture, tells a story of the times, the political times, of the...culture of what's going on at the time.” These visitors both described themselves as non-experts but identified as people who seek out information through tours to enhance their enjoyment of life through appreciation of a place when they travel. Expert visitors, as well as non-experts, identified the stories of the social, historical, economic and political environment surrounding the design, construction and use of the place as the inherent value of the tour activity.

I think for the non-architect, maybe the back story would be really interesting and important. How it came to be located [here]. And some of the obstacles that had to be overcome in order to bring it to fruition. I found that fascinating, not necessarily as an architect, but just as a human nature component of the whole project.

Sense of responsibility for the future. One insight that emerged from visitors was that public buildings ought to be inspiring or beautiful, that civic buildings or public buildings should be thoughtfully designed so that future urban development is aesthetically appealing. One of the visitors at the Public Library voiced her concern for urban growth without considering aesthetics could lead to a city that the visitor had visited and did not like. She felt it was in the public interest “to keep [the city] looking beautiful as we grow.” She realized, on the tour, how inspired she was by this particular building in terms of the views it offered and the beauty of the building itself. Once she considered the value of an aesthetically pleasing building in the context of other buildings and the fact that their city is growing, she made a connection between urban growth (as a positive thing) and the potential for buildings to be unattractive or have a negative impact on their city. This was considered on a variety of levels from new buildings potentially blocking the view from the building she just toured, to the idea that future buildings could be built in the spirit of the building she just toured. She also realized the value of a public building over private buildings that serve the needs of “regular people” like herself. As she stated,

Because I get inspired by views and it’s so nice that, with all the expensive condos going up, that we have a place where regular people that don’t have an expensive condo can go and read a book and enjoy the view also.

Although the educational goals of the tour program at the Public Library were local to that facility, visitors participating in the activity made new connections to a broader or more global sphere. This aligns with Activity Theory which views the activity as both a discrete, concrete interaction, as well as an opportunity for an event which can have more long-term objective. Engeström (1996) suggests “discovering the institutional anatomy” of a specific activity which would be why people do what they do in the context of the setting, or learn what they learn (p. 263). Engeström also suggests that due to the dynamic concept of action in an activity there is the possibility to exceed the institutional objectives in terms of “the emergence of novelty and surprise” (p. 261).

Visitor Action Following the Tour

Following the tour of the Research Facility, four visitors (three women and one man) volunteered to be participants in this study. Seated in the foyer in a semi-circle around the researcher they shared a little bit about themselves, what brought them to the institute, what they recalled, and what stood out or made an impact on them. There was a woman from the UK who had not known anything about the building but regularly accompanied her husband on architectural tours while on vacation, a retired doctor who also had an engineering background, a local woman, who was interested in the science conducted at the facility, and an architect from Switzerland who had studied the building in school and had always dreamed of taking a tour. Although all four visitors were from different parts of the world and had varying backgrounds in terms of motivation to attend and prior knowledge, they shared a lively discussion of recollections and insights.

At the conclusion of the debriefing session the visitor from the UK said, “Actually what's very interesting is normally you walk away from these things [guided tours] and you just go to your car and you talk about ‘where are we going for lunch?’ and ‘what are we going to do next?’ So it's very unusual to sit down with people from other parts of the world, with Americans and a pediatrician and you [the researcher] to just to talk about something and actually analyze it ‘cause by the time we get to the car we're on to whatever we're doing next. So it's quite interesting to talk about it and to verbalize and actually think what is it that you enjoyed about it, because, normally, you don't, really.” The other visitors nodded in agreement.

In a follow up interview four weeks later, the local woman shared that she had reflected on what the other study participants had said about their experience during the debriefing session. She particularly recollected how the architect from Switzerland had spoken about American culture and its relationship to science and architecture, a perspective which the local woman had not considered before.

Figure 19. Vignette illustrating the importance of talk after a tour

In the follow up interview with visitors, patterns emerged in what they did following the tour. There were three main categories of actions taken after a tour: visitors

shared their experience with others, sought further information about the place, or talked about applying what they learned to their everyday lives.

Engage in dialogue.

The vignette in Figure 19 illustrates how dialogue directly following the tour enhanced visitor learning. Dialogue before during and after the tour activity, especially among people who have no prior relationship with one another, can greatly enhance their experience and learning. In this example, a local non-expert visitor valued conversation after the tour with a non-local expert. Visitors, regardless of their prior knowledge or background, seemed to enjoy these encounters and expressed that it added to their understanding of the place. At the end of a different debriefing session, one visitor said to the group,

I want to add that this is a useful experience, especially for the people that do want to learn. For me, it's interesting to hear what you all have to say, what you learned from it and it would be great if more tours incorporated an experience like this for people who wanted it.

Most participants talked about discussing the place with others prior to arrival, or seeing photos and information on the internet, in school or from others. Many participants asked questions, made comments about what they were seeing or hearing or spoke to each other during the tour. Many visitors also reported talking to others after the tour about their experience. Both expert and non-expert visitors reported seeking out further information after the tour.

In follow up interviews, visitors recalled in detail what had been said by others during that post-activity debriefing, reiterating what they had heard in terms of examples, opinions and general sentiments expressed by others. When asked about what she

recalled hearing, one visitor said, “I had the most interesting experience meeting the others that were interviewed too. That was probably the most interaction. But other than the one-liners and the cracking up and corralling my son...other than your interview I really didn't have too many conversations.” In the follow up interviews, many visitors recalled what they had heard other study participants talk about during the debriefing session, sometimes agreeing, sometimes disagreeing. One visitor felt “a little bit sad” that other people did not seem to get as much out of the tour experience as she had. She said,

Hearing the feedback from the other people who were in that little interview you did, to me, they didn't get as much out of it as I, maybe, I did. I think I related a lot of spiritual things to it, to the tour. Like, oh the shadows, the mysticism of the stones and what does it mean? You know, the connection that the architect had to his work and people who work in that space. What do they get out of it and how does it inspire them. I didn't feel that the other people kind of got that. I guess, to me, that was a little bit sad. But I think that a lot of people maybe need some type of interpretation to relate to things like that. I don't think most people will kind of make those connections, unless they were given the suggestion to do that. Unless it was interpreted for them. To make them see things in a different way.

In some cases, visitors acknowledged that others' opinions and perspectives influenced their own. A few visitors at the Public Library shared their desire for more interaction. One visitor suggested the tour activity include, “maybe like a wrap-up, because, you know, some people don't feel comfortable asking questions in front of a whole group. Even if she [the tour guide] could say, ‘I'm gonna grab a cappuccino here and if any of you want to ask me questions one-on-one.’”

Further inquiry.

After taking a tour of the Public Library, one visitor actively sought her four fellow book club members' opinions about the library. She said, "we went for a glass of wine afterwards so we were further discussing the merits, or lack thereof, of [the Public Library]." Later that evening she sent all of them a follow up email containing articles, both pro and con, about the library and urged them to have further dialogue. When asked what kind of feedback she would give the program manager of the tour program, the woman suggested that there should be a "coffee cart" located in the courtyard where the guide would offer to stick around after the tour and informally engage in conversation with the guided visitors. This visitor clearly valued the ability seek further information after the tour.

Figure 20. Vignette illustrating a visitor's further inquiry after the tour

This vignette in Figure 20 illustrates how visitors valued the ability to not only ask questions of the guide, dialogue with both experts and non-experts, but also seek out additional information on their own following the tour. Many visitors to the Public Library who attended a very interactive tour, shared the value of having an expert docent to answer questions, especially when they noticed that during the tour activity. One visitor said, "it's like stuff comes up that I never would have even imagined I was curious about."

Many visitors did independent research on the facilities by consulting books or online resources. Five of the 12 follow-up visitors reported seeking out further information about the place. Architects tended to consult their own libraries or have a discussion with their colleagues while non-experts tended to seek out additional information on the internet. One visitor explained that she sought out the opinions of her colleagues who accompanied her on the tour activity. In order to promote discussion, she said, "we went for a glass of wine afterwards so we were further discussing the merits, or lack thereof, of [the Public Library]." Visitors who had studied the building as part of their formal education, spoke about being reminded of what they had once learned in class. One visitor claimed:

it was very eye-opening for me. 'Cause it's like...ok...I started looking up other buildings by [the architect]. It's been a while since I've been in school...it was really neat to find and gather other tidbits about the guy that was so innovative.

Another visitor, who had no prior knowledge of the Research Facility, claimed the tour activity inspired her to do further inquiry. She stated,

I came home and I was researching it because I was just fascinated by the whole thing and I just wanted to read about it. Online...Because of that, because of the tour, I could say I'm grateful because it led me to look [the architect] up, to look [the founder] up, to, you know, become engaged with all that. So that was exciting. I'm glad I got to do all that. And it's only because I went on this tour.

Another visitor acknowledged she felt motivated by the experience to seek out further information, especially when the tour guide “recommended some books to look in to. I think it motivated me to look in to those books... and look at the website of [the Research Facility].” Professional architects, in follow up interviews, mentioned how the tour prompted them to consult books they owned. One architect said,

I have an extensive personal library and I'm interested in [the architect's] work so it did get me to go back through some of the resources I have here and just look at it a little more closely from a technical slant.

Another architect said almost exactly the same thing, when I asked her what she did after the tour. She said,

When we got home, we went back to our books on [the architect] to do a little further reading about the building. That's the kind of follow up reading that we did, in the books that we have, and not the website.

Applying what they learned. During the initial debriefing, many visitors spontaneously articulated how they imagined or envisioned applying what they learned on the tour to future situations. Interview questions asked visitors what stood out and

what they remembered, but many visitors responded to the questions by elaborating on why something stood out and made a point of its significance to their future. They reported seeing buildings from a new perspective. One visitor stated,

what I really get out of these tours is, I not only appreciate the space, but then I look at everything else a little bit differently too. So I think rather than remembering the exact details about concrete or the materials, it just makes me look at space around me in a different way.

Visitors who work in a similar location report becoming aware of how this building could inform their own workplace. One visitor said, “I work with a number of very smart PhD chemists and physicists and had been involved in building out lab spaces and I'm going, wow, wish we got to work at a building that was set up like this.”

Teachers talked about creating collaborative spaces for their students in their own school based on design principles learned on the tour. One guided visitor who was a teacher noted,

for me this is a place dedicated to science but there are so many spaces that are, um, designed to inspire and foster creativity, and so for me, as a teacher, I look at those spaces as “how can I recreate this for my students? How can I make the space foster creativity for them instead of just to allow the function and the form to meet?” Whereas right now it's just a space for chairs or whatever, but kind of makes me think how can I better utilize the outdoor space? How can I change the indoor space to change the creativity and optimize the work?

Visitors also reported learning new terminology they could use to express how they felt about other buildings. One visitor said,

When you enter, like, a really ugly building now [after taking the tour], I feel like it really stands out more. And you can get how being in a great space has value to it. You know, and how a well designed space can improve your mood, or collaborating with another person...and then you enter a really poorly designed hotel and you're like, I don't like being here and I think I can articulate why. And just having those tools, I think, has

great value and you know coming on different tours and this tour gives you those tools and lets you figure out ways to articulate yourself in relation to the space that you're in.

Visitors learned new ways of constructing or organizing space which they imagined applying to their own work environments. They learned new terminology that helped them express why a space did or did not appeal to them.

Visitor Describe Themselves

This section begins with a look at the characteristics of the visitors who participated in this study in terms of how they described themselves. Patterns emerged in terms of how visitors expressed their connectedness to the place, prior knowledge about the place, and motivation to attend the tour activity at the place. As proposed by Becker (1998), rather than categorizing participants by types of people such as by age or profession, I looked for how participants described their connection or familiarity with place as analytic categories.

Visitors were categorized by whether or not they described themselves as an expert, familiar with the place or professionally linked in some way, or non-expert, unfamiliar with place or referred to themselves as having little or no prior knowledge or just a visitor. They were categorized as local or non-local depending on how they described where they lived, whether they believed the place was in their community or not. They were also sorted by whether they were motivated by personal choice to participate or whether they were socially motivated to attend by accompanying someone else. I looked at how the visitors identified themselves in relation to the place, whether

they considered themselves part of the community in which the institution was situated, local or non-local.

Feelings of connectedness played a role in the type of insights visitors experienced, especially when it came to advocacy. If the visitor identified as belonging to or having a strong connection with the community in which the institution was located, the visitor had a greater sense of responsibility toward preserving, protecting, supporting or returning to use the facility. However, this connection was not necessarily a geographical one. Eighty-six percent of the visitors interviewed from the library considered themselves local, while only four of the 28 (14%), of the visitors at the Research Facility were local. In the case of the Research Facility, visitors who experienced a strong sense of connection by talking about feeling a sense of responsibility to support financially, socially or politically did not necessarily live in the same community. The majority of these visitors traveled from out of town or from overseas to visit the place, so, in essence, were not local, per se. At the Public Library, the inverse seemed to be true. Even if visitors lived in the same city as the institution, they did not necessarily consider themselves part of the community. Four of the 14 visitors interviewed did not identify themselves as a person who would return to use the facility. Of those who felt they would use the library, none of them talked about donating money or volunteering. Program managers at both locations also distinguished between local and non-local visitors underscoring the importance of grouping these visitors, but it is unclear that there is a connection between physically living close to the facility and feeling a sense of connectedness with the institution, even after going on a tour.

All visitors who participated in the guided tour activity learned something, but visitors who were trained as architects learned about the people who occupied the buildings. Fourteen of the 28 visitors (50%) interviewed at the Research Facility identified themselves as architects. They talked about having acquired prior knowledge about the buildings through images, reading and lectures, and tended to compare their experience on the tour with what they had imagined from viewing photos. The two architects interviewed in follow up interviews, consulted their own libraries to continue to integrate what they had experienced on the tour to further their professional understanding. They described the tour activity as part of a larger picture, as “a missing piece of the puzzle,” in their quest for information about the place itself, the type of place library, as representative of a certain architect’s oeuvre or style of building, or architecture in general. The program manager and guides at the Research Facility both singled out architects as a separate, identifiable group further indicating the importance of looking at this sub-set of visitor for their recollections and insights.

Visitors’ motivation to attend varied from a life-long dream to go on a tour of the place, to having a passing interest, to “being dragged along” by a friend or spouse. Some visitors brought children as their main reason for attending. As part of the initial debriefing, visitors were asked what brought them to the tour activity. The responses fell into two main categories: those who were personally motivated to attend, ranging from a passing interest to life-long dream, and those who were socially motivated to attend.

An equal percentage of visitors at each location, almost 80%, described themselves as personally motivated to attend while the remaining 20% expressed they

initially did not have a personal interest but were surprised to find they learned something interesting. I did not find a difference in learning between these two groups. For example, a couple who was interviewed at the Research Facility introduced themselves. The man said,

I learned about [the Research Facility] because I'm an architecture student and I have one more year left before I become on my way to licensure, so I'm actually a graduate student at Miami University and I learned about this in my undergraduate at Fairmont State which is in West Virginia.

While the woman said,

I actually learned about this because my fiancé is working on his master's in architecture and I, sort of, just tagged along today. But I learned a lot and it was very interesting. I'm also an art teacher so it was interesting for me to see the modern style of architecture and the art that is in the buildings.

Later on in the debriefing session, the woman further articulated what she learned,

One thing that really surprised me coming and seeing the building is that on the car ride here I was talking to my fiancé about the building...he described it as minimalistic and modern and almost brutalistic, and I didn't really know too much about what that meant but I had ideas about other buildings I had seen in the past, and it was a lot more warm and elegant than I expected...For me there was a lot of value in actually seeing the architecture and the art because its different to experience it than it is to see it in two dimensions. It was also really useful to talk to somebody who knows a lot about the building and the history. And also to be with a group of people who are interested in hearing about it because the stimulating questions and the conversation that came from that. So I think that was a better experience than if I had seen it on a video or on a picture.

This description of what she learned was very similar to what many people who had been personally motivated to attend reported learning. Similarly, a visitor at the Public Library described the reason why she came on the tour and what she ended up learning,

I have had very low expectations for the library here today because I really don't know that much about [this city] and my girlfriends convinced me to

come and I'm really, really impressed with what's been done here. It's a beautiful facility and it's, um, top notch. I can see myself coming back to do a lot of lectures and perhaps using some of the community rooms... I'm here mostly because [of] my girlfriends and I'm really glad I came.

Later on during the debriefing session, this visitor reiterated that she had not been personally motivated to come and elaborated on what she learned,

I wasn't too excited about coming to this library today. But my girlfriends talked me into it and I don't think I could have conceptualized from a website, this structure... Whereas I generally respond to buildings that have more history in them, I still respond to this building. I'm not usually happy when I see a great deal of metal and glass, but I think that this has been constructed in such a way that the glass and metal retract to leave for a beautiful really open area. I just couldn't have seen that in my mind's eye if I'd have done it on the web.

All visitors, regardless of motivation, seemed to have left the tour with new awareness.

Linking Visitor Expectation with Learning

While all guided visitor participants attended for a reason, there seemed to a continuum along which visitors categorized the tour activity or attributed meaning in relation to their lives. At one end of the spectrum a visitor viewed the event as a form of entertainment which could have been selected from a variety of settings such as a museum or a candy factory. At the other end, visitors viewed the event as significant to their life-schema or as part of the career goals or life journey. For them, this tour exemplified a culmination of a life-long dream, as expressed by use of the term “Mecca” or that this place is on every architect’s “bucket list.” In the middle of this range I identified a group I termed having a “more focused” interest which could center around the visitor’s particular interest in significant buildings as reflection of urban culture, or a focus on a particular type of building such as a library.

Singer, Blagov, Berry and Oost (2012) linked memory specificity, “the generation of specific imagistic memories” with meaning-making “the companion process of linking recollected experiences to the conceptual structures of the self.” (p. 569). They defined three levels of how episodic memory translates into the conceptual self, a hierarchical model that stores experiences at different levels of abstraction, similar to how Schank (1990) refers to indexing stories. Their three levels were: (1) event categories (people who viewed an activity as a singular experience and categorized it with similar one-of-a-kind activities), (2) longer segments of the life story (people who group activities in similar life trajectories such as what they tend to do when on vacation) and (3) life-story schema (people who categorize their experience as meaningful in terms of a career of life-long pursuit). In this study, I adapted the levels established by Singer et al. to suit the sub-sets of visitors in term of how they categorized the tour activity as (1) eclectic, (2) more-focused and (3) passion-based. Visitors to the Research Facility, who were experts in content knowledge such as architects or scientists, who considered the tour activity as part of a life-long dream or a potential life-changing event, fell under the latter category. As Singer et al. (2012) stated, “Life-story memories are linked to long term goal pursuits, and they are more affectively intense, important, well-rehearsed and detailed than other less significant autobiographical memories.” (p. 572).

All of the guided visitors interviewed in this study had been on tours in the past and many of them identified themselves as someone who goes on tours (whether personally motivated or socially motivated to attend) or who typically likes this kind of activity as opposed to others they knew who did not enjoy this kind of activity. As

Schank (1990) noted, scripts, such as a guided activity, make mental processing, or learning, easier because they allow us to focus more on the content and less on the process and useful for helping to structure, encode, index and store new knowledge. Schank (1990) linked script-based understanding to how people organize and index a life experience which creates “a memory structure... a kind of storehouse of old experiences of a certain type in terms of which new experiences of the same type are encoded.” (p. 8). When asked to compare their experience on this tour with prior experiences passion-based visitors, such as the architects, tended to compare this tour activity with tours of buildings by the same architect or similar building types such as comparing the Public Library with the Library of Congress. People with eclectic interests compared their experience to a tour of another kind of building or place, such as a candy factory, a famous house, or a museum. The act of going on a tour (a tour activity script) was seen as similar rather than the content of the tour itself.

Eclectic interest and visitor learning.

I think most people that sign up for a tour have a certain level of sophistication. They've probably been on other tours and if they're like me, they want to go through why this is important – a visitor to the Public Library

I'm not a history buff, nor... a person who is really outgoing in terms of wanting to find out new stuff... I've been to places like factories for candy, candy factories and I've been to museums and things like that, but this [Research Facility] probably is remarkable in terms of what it can do for the world and how it needs to be supported and stay with us to accomplish something. – a visitor to the Research Facility

Figure 21. Quotes from visitors with an eclectic interest

In the Figure 21, both visitors expected an entertaining, educational event, which they compared or contrasted to what they considered similar tour activities such as candy factories and museums. The visitor to the Public Library categorized people who go on

tours as having a level of interest which she describes as “why this is important.” She expected that the tour activity would inform her of the significance and uniqueness of the place, and that is what she wants to get out of the tour. These visitors tended to recall beauty, awareness of facts that were relevant to their life, and left with a sense that the institution or building was important or significant but did not report a change in opinion or a change in perception. Both of these visitors recalled people who were using the space (homeless, elderly men and scientists, respectively). They recalled details about the funding sources and the function of the buildings. Neither of them took photos nor told others to visit the facility they toured. Even though both lived in the city in which the building was located, neither visitor considered themselves as part of the institute’s community. Although the visitor to the Research Facility did say that she thought the Research Facility was important and needed to be supported, she did not indicate that she felt personally responsible to give money or volunteer. In terms of feedback, the visitor to the Public Library requested additional interaction with the guide and more opportunity for dialogue with others. The visitor to the Research Facility would have liked to go in to more private areas of the Research Facility. Neither of these visitors went on a tour with a guide who used a storytelling approach to the narrative. I wonder what kind of experience they might have recollected if they had been on tours which featured more stories.

Focused interest and visitor learning.

Well you know lately in the news they're showing the marriage between science and art and science and music, which I think is awesome; which I'm just starting to understand; to get in to... I'm a CPA, very linear, but I'm starting to open my mind to more art and music and beauty in architecture. – a visitor to the Research Facility

I don't have any background in architecture but I've always loved it. I think it's like art, the art of the city. And cities change and the buildings, to me, it's the history of that. It's the history of the city and to me, it's art. Every city I go, I like to see libraries. I like to look at old buildings. Take tours. Because I feel like the soul of where that city started is in its architecture and this just reminded me of that. –a visitor to the Research Facility

Figure 22. Quotes from visitors with focused interest

Visitors who viewed the tour activity as part of a more focused interest such as art, science, music, or architectural landmarks, as mentioned by the visitors in Figure 22 tended to talk about feelings of connectedness to the place before and after going on the tours. Both visitors quoted in Figure 22 had connected with the place prior to attending the tour activity. One visitor had heard about the Research Facility through postings on Instagram. She said:

I had never heard of this place until a couple months before we came. I actually saw a picture of it on Instagram; of that courtyard. And I have always felt that building and architecture, the shapes of how they can make things look, I've always been rather fascinated by that. And I thought that the lines of that picture were so amazing.”

The other visitor had heard about the place through her sister, and had prior knowledge about the founder of the facility who was a famous scientist. At the initial debriefing, she introduced her connection and motivation as part of a focused interest in science which, in turn, led to an interest in the architecture. She said:

When I looked online at the tour, I was more interested in the fact that I would meet a scientist because I have a sister-in-law who has a debilitating disease and I wanted to know if they were doing any work on it. But much to my surprise I thoroughly enjoyed the architectural part and

look forward to reading more about the concrete forms and how it was poured.

In her follow up interview this visitor said her main expectation regarding the tour activity was to learn because, “each building, architecture, tells a story of the times, the political times, of the...culture of what's going on at the time.” She had plans to return with her husband, to show him the place, and did extensive follow up inquiry on the Internet into the life and work of the architect of the building to continue to learn about the place.

Passion and visitor learning.

And as I said it's a site that I have long wanted to visit and just circumstances didn't make it possible 'til now and I talked to one of my students who wasn't able to take the tour. They were able to only wander around the exterior, outside the fence and kind of view it that way, but I really think, you know, being able to sit in that central courtyard is a magical moment for many people and certainly for architects. I think back about the building and that experience frequently so I think, yeah, I think it was a very special opportunity. – an architect who visited the Research Facility

The mastery of this architect, the simple details, the structural ideas that were consistent and yet developed, got richer from building to building. So, to have not seen it, is, you know, a missing piece of the puzzle. It was a missing piece of the puzzle... You know, that knowledge, there was just this big hole in it without seeing that building and it's just a fabulous building, sophisticated in certain ways because of its typology. It's this research lab. But once again, just a fabulous story about a client and an architect. That was just great. – an architect who visited the Research Facility

Figure 23. Quotes from visitors with passionate interest

Visitors who categorized the tour activity as a part of their life-story schema, reported parts of the tour as a “magical moment” and that the tour activity was “a missing piece of the puzzle” in terms of their body of knowledge about a certain subject. The two visitors quoted in the vignette above were both architects who taught at prestigious mid-Western universities visiting nearby for a professional conference. They both reported learning about the story behind the place although they knew aspects of the story, about the physical building, prior to coming on the tour. They learned about context, scale, and

the dynamic nature of buildings as they change over time to adapt to the needs of the people who work in them and as they age naturally due to weather. In the initial debriefing one architect registered his initial surprise at the difference in what he had learned from book and pictures versus his experience of the building. He said:

I pictured this site in a completely different way than when I arrived here and I couldn't find a parking spot because there were hundreds and hundreds of cars on a busy street, just across the street from a university because if you just rely on just the images that everyone sees in architectural history classes I had this much more sylvan sort of setting in mind.

In his follow up interview over a month later, this visitor still vividly recalled what he had learned:

all the architectural photographs, in my mind, at least, gave me the impression that this was an isolated building. And it's when you arrive and you see that it's, you know, a densely developed area, surrounded by overflow parking and all kinds of cars. It changed the context, in my mind... That was a revelation to me, that it was not this isolated set of structures in an idyllic coastal setting, but, in fact, woven into, or surrounded now, by developments of various kinds. The university I didn't know was in such close proximity to this and some of the houses. And, certainly, the traffic issues. And it was interesting to see the new additions, having heard some of the controversy when they were first proposed. And to see how they did, and did not fit in, with the original building.

For this visitor, learning came in the form of comparing the image he had in his mind which was produced by looking at photographs taken by architectural photographers and learned about in the context of a formal class about architecture. Most architects learn about famous buildings through photographs and lectures and reading. Experiential learning through a tour activity enables formally trained architects to gain a different

perspective. Another architect at the Research Facility also noted, “you just imagine it to be this place, sort of off by it itself in this pristine setting. And it's not that.”

For visitors who had been familiar with the buildings through photos and books, the importance of being in the space was described as magical, a lifelong dream, or Mecca. A visiting architect confirmed that “despite all the photos and videos you see there's just no substitute for actually being there and experiencing that first-hand...being able to sit in that central courtyard is a magical moment for many people and certainly for architects.”

Architects interviewed as part of this study expressed that they became more aware that people worked in the building. As one architect stated, “In most of the photographs I've seen you don't get a good sense that it is a working lab. So that was really great to see.” They also became champions of the organization that was housed in the buildings, even though they did not live near the facility. During the initial debriefing of one of the tours at the Research Facility, four architects discussed their experience on the tour. One of them elaborated on the idea that what the buildings house became more important to him after the tour. He supported the ongoing existence of the organization that occupied the buildings. He said, “You want to hear that it's been successful. You want to hear that people still give money and people still raise money and that it's an ongoing experience.” During this particular debriefing session, the idea of an addition to a famous icon came up and it was apparent that additions to these kinds of buildings were controversial among architects. After a lengthy debate, one expert visitor summed up his revelation:

We need to be careful about creating shrines that can't be expanded, in particular when an organization, a client, has been a successful. And these buildings represent the [Research Facility]'s success in the scientific community and we should be able to celebrate 'em for that.

Visitors whose prior knowledge, and personal motivation led them to have a very passionate expectation for the tour experience talked about contrasting their tour experience with what they imagined, and how their experience of the place challenged the prior knowledge or opinion. Common to all of these visitors was a sincere gratitude for access to the place that they had been longing to see, and a guide to give them the back story. Even though many of these visitors had known bits and pieces of the story of the place, they enjoyed hearing it told by someone who was “local” to weave together their technical knowledge with a more humanistic perspective. Passionate visitors, regardless of where they lived, felt a connection and sense of responsibility to preserve and protect the building.

Summary of Visitor Learning

Visitor recollection of the tour activity aligned with institutional goals of awareness of the attributes and unique nature of the place, a positive affective experience and feelings of advocacy in terms of support or future use. Based on what visitors recollected seeing, hearing and touching, they became aware of the size of the place, the existence and location of features and resources, and how the building's features and design supported human activity. Visitors compared what they experienced to their prior knowledge or expectations, expanding their awareness of what that cultural setting could be, and how it fostered collaboration, inspiration or innovation. Visitors felt awed, inspired, and a sense of appreciation for beauty. Visitors enjoyed feeling special, as part

of a group, with a guide who told them stories and answered questions, if they arose. Guided visitors connected their initial sensory and affective experiences to awareness of the importance of the place, a desire tell others about their experience, return to use the place or support the continued existence of the place, financially or politically, or both. Many visitors posted pictures or comments on social media about their tour experience

In addition to meeting the institutional goals, the tour activity provided opportunity for visitors to make connections beyond information given. Visitors talked about the thoughtfulness behind the design of the building, what the architect intended, and realized the nature of design as problem-solving. Many visitors connected the importance of thoughtful and aesthetically pleasing design to future urban development. Visitors became aware that buildings age, wear out and are constantly being modified, expanded or adapted to the needs of the people who occupy them.

After the tour visitors engaged in dialogue about their experience and expressed an interest in further dialogue with the expert guide as well as other visitors who had participated on the tour. Many visitors conducted further inquiry through consulting their own libraries or online resources. Many visitors also talked about applying what they had learned such as using new terminology to articulate good design, and how they could redesign their own workplace.

Differences in expectations of visitors emerged during the course of analyzing the transcripts. Visitors who viewed the tour activity as simply an entertaining, educational event recalled beauty and facts. More focused visitors emotionally connected to the spirit of the place. Passionate visitors, especially the architects on these tours, who viewed the

tour activity as a life-goal, described the experience as “magical” or as “a missing piece of the puzzle.” While all visitors recollected new awareness, appreciation and connection, how they described their experience varied with how they tended to categorize the event. Differences in visitor expectations in relation to program goals and guide strategy will be discussed in more depth in the next chapter.

Chapter 8 Intersection of Institutional Goals, Guide Strategy, and Visitor Learning

Sitting at the third floor information desk, the program manager at the Public Library tells me that volunteer tour guides represent the “face of the library” for new attendees. She hopes, during the tour activity, the guide is “talking up the library; how great it is; what a great resource it is” so that visitors “feel like they learned something, they had a great time and want...to come back.” She tells me how, when she first started working here, a tour guide named Jacqui gave her a tour of the building that changed the way she viewed the library.

Jacqui, a retired college instructor, has been giving guided tours at the Public Library since the building opened several years ago. After observing her give a Sunday afternoon tour, I sit down with Jacqui to ask her about what she intends visitors learn. Jacqui’s main goal is to “enthusiastically share what this building's got.” Jacqui believes her role is to orient and advocate, so that the public learns about what is available and will spread the word, and, hopefully, with a tour, “I tell those ten people all the things that can be done in this building. They go and tell two more people, and I've done my job. I'm getting people in here.” She also makes a point to adapt the tour to the interests of her audience. Jacqui said, “if you have somebody who goes, ‘that's cool artwork’ then, I'll focus a little bit more on the artwork. If I have somebody with grandkids, I'll make sure they know how to find the schedule for what's going on in the children's area...and if someone says, ‘what are those venty looking things?’, they want to talk about architecture.” She believes that she does her job best when she feels visitors leave feeling, “that I was able to answer all of their questions.” When asked what is the central message or theme of her tour, she responded, “Sharing what was built by this community to this community.” She takes her role as advocate very seriously by handing out bookmarks which explain what is located on each floor. She views being “enthusiastic” and “dependable” as the most important qualities in a tour guide.

A few weeks later, I sit down with Kay, a professional woman in her mid-50’s who lives near the library, as she recollects a variety of things about Jacqui’s tour. She had planned that day to take the tour after doing some research in the historical records and maps section on an old house she just bought. She invited her friend to “beat the heat” with her at the air-conditioned library for an hour-long guided walking tour of the building. Often leading tours as part of her job, Kay seemed most impressed by tour guide’s ability to communicate information in an engaging manner and the guide’s willingness to listen and respond to her questions. When asked what she remembered seeing, Kay recollects building features and spaces in the order the guide had shown them: the auditorium, the bricks in the courtyard, the lobby, art gallery, rare book room and reading room with the “blue” furniture. Although Kay had been to the library before she only became aware of many of these features after the guide pointed them out. She stated, “The first moment when we went in to... the lobby, and when she said, ‘now look up’. And when you see all that space. I don't think I had looked up last time I was there.” When asked what she thought most people would get out of the tour, Kay responded, “Overarchingly, I think most people would be, like, this is a space to spend some time...What a great way to spend the day.”

Figure 24. Vignette illustrating the intersection of program manager, guide, and visitor

The vignette in Figure 24 illustrates how an experience of a visitor, the intentions and actions of a guide, and the expectation of the program manager intersect. I observed Jacqui give an expository tour with interpretive moments. This discourse strategy matched Kay’s expectations of the tour to familiarize her with the services available to her as she considered herself part of the community and lives nearby. She particularly

appreciated the expertise of the guide and the ability to have all of her questions answered, which Jacqui considered an important part of her tour. The program manager set a fast-paced, fact-based tour in the official tour documents and hoped that the combination of Jacqui's expertise in communicating the numerous resources, in an enthusiastic manner, would encourage visitors to return.

Analyzing their interview responses through the lens of Activity Theory led me to understand how members of the community of practice of the tour program at each site interact with each other to construct a sense of the place. One might think the process would be a linear one: the program manager sets the tour script, the guides conduct the tour using the script, and the visitors learn what is in the script. But the findings in this study indicate the process to be much more complex and dynamic.

Program managers craft an official script and guidelines with extensive input from the guides, influence of other staff, and feedback from past visitors. Using this document as a starting point, guides interpret, add to and adapt the official script. Guides have different ways of presenting the tour narrative based on what they intend visitors to learn, and what they believe the visitor's interests to be. They plot a course through a series of spaces, which visitors recollect in the order they were shown. Guides use attention-grabbing building features along the way as mnemonic devices to anchor salient facts or moments in the visitor's memory. Guides draw on their personal experience, and interpretive quotes they have collected to inform visitor opinions, enhance the visitor understanding or attempt to change visitor perception. Guides also sometimes perform meaningful gestures for dramatic effect or for the emotional impact they imagine their

actions have on the visitor. Guides can tell stories to make visible what is not visible, illustrate main points, or connect or build on visitor prior knowledge.

Visitors bring varied expectations, motivations and levels of expertise to the tour activity as well. As expected, visitors get different things out of the tour activity in terms of what they bring to it. But these learning outcomes also vary with how their expectations intersect with the type of tour they went on, expository, storytelling or interpretive presentation styles of the guide, and the meaning the visitor attached to the tour activity. In the world of guide-mediated tours, which range from candy factories to zoos, wineries to construction sites, visitors desire guidance through unfamiliar territory. At one end of the spectrum, visitors may view the tour as an informative yet entertaining event, as part of an eclectic interest in learning something new in a guided format. Beyond that, a visitor may be more focused on the tour content in a personal pursuit to develop a particular area of expertise. Visitors with a more narrowed focus attend a tour that is part of a longer term interest, or trace some kind of learning trajectory through a series of guided tour experiences. Finally, there are visitors who view the guided tour of that particular cultural setting as an essential component to a career goal or personal life-long passion. These visitors want a tour experience limited to that place, specifically. It may be helpful to guides, when choosing their delivery strategies, to be aware of the existence of these kinds of sub-groups of visitors and be prepared to accommodate them. This implication for practice will be discussed in the next chapter.

In this chapter, I discuss three concepts related to the way the three participant types in this study understand and engage in the activity: (1) Visitor expectation of the guided tour activity varies along a continuum of interest level which may be related to

previous conversations, photos they have seen, or prior knowledge, but not necessarily to their age, where they live, or motivation for attending. (2) The presence of a central message in the tour narrative, and the way the central message was conveyed to the visitor, related to visitor learning. I argue that a clear central message helps organize visitor learning. Findings from this study also imply that a storytelling delivery strategy using the central message as its theme allows visitors to make their own connections, regardless of prior knowledge or expectation. Visitors who left the tour with a more personally meaningful construction of a sense of place tended to go on tours led by guides who incorporated the official, adapted and personal stories. These story types will be explored further in the text. (3) Talk plays an important role in the activity. Social interaction among visitors about the place begins before a visitor arrives at the setting. There is varying degrees of formal and informal conversation that occurs during the activity between visitors and between visitor and guide. And conversation about the place, a continual construction of a sense of place, continues after the activity. Guides can answer questions about the place just after the activity ends for visitors who have questions. Opportunities for sharing the tour experience after the tour can help visitors rehearse their memories or compare and contrast their experience with others.

This chapter starts with a look at how the institutional goals shape the central message and how that message is enacted by the guides and perceived by the visitors. The chapter continues by discussing how the visitor self-descriptions compare and contrast to the way the program managers and guides view or differentiate the visitors. I offer a new way for guides and program managers to view visitors based on how the visitor may categorize the tour activity rather than age, gender, area of expertise, or

whether they are local residents or tourists. The chapter concludes by showing how social interaction before, during, and after a tour activity can enhance visitor experience as well as help guides match their discourse strategy with visitor expectations. Talk among visitors can help visitors recall their experience and enhance understanding. Providing opportunities for conversation, and facilitating those conversations after a tour, can help program managers evaluate program educational goals, and influence overarching policies.

According to Engeström (1996), Activity Theory looks at the agency of actors operating within a social structure of a community of practice. It allows us to focus on the integration of artifacts and narrative in the production of an objective, in this case, a memorable experience which leads to advocacy. Activity Theory allows us to view interactions both locally and globally. Locally, the tours at the two sites were each framed by institutional rules, the guides who mediated the activity and the visitors who participated. Globally, one can see through the lens of Activity Theory, that the tour took place within a larger societal context, beyond the start and end of the activity and over time in the participants' lives. Visitors continue to construct a sense of place long after the tour has ended. Guides lead a new group of visitors through the building, perhaps slightly changing their emphasis or route over time. And program managers respond to visitor feedback, guide input and staff concerns. The study was framed using Activity Theory which looks at the "individual actions" as "embedded in concrete local collective activities" to determine why actors do what they do (Engeström, 1996, p. 262). Findings from this study led to a new conceptual diagram to illustrate the role this activity had in the visitor in an ongoing construction of place. Adapted from Ingold's (2011) model of a

place as an intertwining knot, Figure 25 illustrates a conceptual model of the tour activity in an attempt to unify the official story of the place set at the institutional level, the role of the narrative strategy employed by the guide, visitors' prior knowledge, their participation in the one-hour tour, and their insights and actions after the tour.

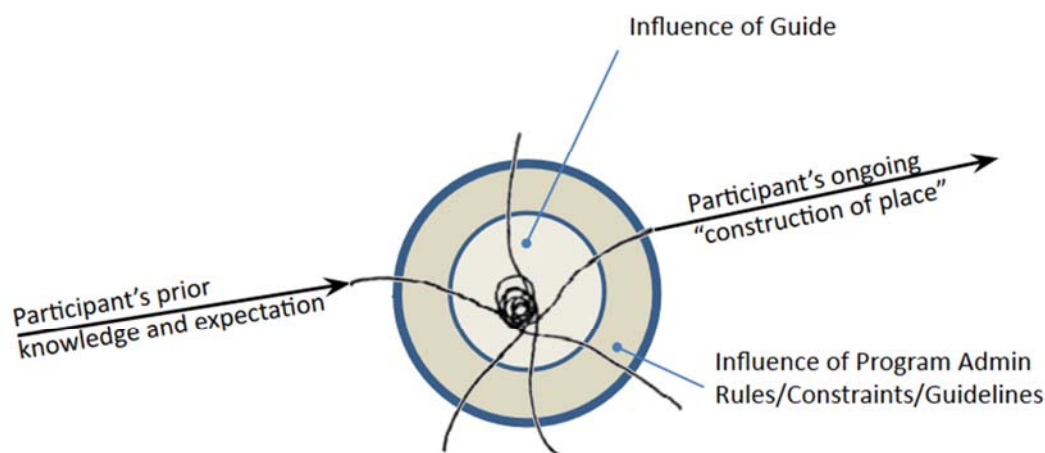


Figure 25. Illustration of the tour activity as a knot of intertwining pathways, adapted from Ingold (2011)

In this model, a person is visualized as a point in space. Their movement through the space is represented by a line. The knot of intertwining lines represents the multiple visitors participating in the tour activity during the one-hour time period at the cultural setting, interacting with one another as well as with the guide and the building's features. The inner ring represents the direct influence of the guide during the tour activity while the secondary or outer concentric ring represents the influence of the institutional constraints or physical boundaries of the facility. In this model the "construction of place" occurs within the visitor as a continuous and ongoing process of understanding that involves the expectations or prior knowledge of the individual visitors, the social interaction between the visitors and guide during the tour activity which expands upon or

changes the participant's perception of the place, or their connection to it. The arrow at the end of the line represents the continued evolution or trajectory of understanding which takes place after the tour through visitor reflection or subsequent inquiry to seek out more information. This model is shown as an attempt to expand upon the Activity Theory model that has framed the study.

The Importance of a Central Message and Discourse Style

The central message of the tour and discourse style seemed to be really important to the tour activity because the sites differed. The Research Facility represented a private workplace that allowed visitors to get a glimpse of the place during the tour activity while the Public Library represented a public building that used the tour activity to encourage visitors to come back and use the facility. Each setting used the tour activity as a way to incur public support but employed different strategies to connect the visitor to the location. The nature of the institution shaped the purpose of the tour and the restrictions or guidelines which, in turn, influenced the strategies employed by the guides to foster a sense of connection in the visitor.

The differences between the two sites included how the central message at each of the two institutions was set by the program manager, interpreted by the guides and understood by the visitors. While all guides used the official script outlined in the tour guide training documents from the program manager, each guide interpreted the central message differently and enacted that central message with combinations of different discourse styles: expository, storytelling and interpretive. Visitors seemed to enjoy the authoritative voice of the guide while walking, differentiating between an audio-guide and a live guide with the added ability to ask questions if any arose during the tour.

Throughout observations I noted side conversations that occurred among the visitors and occasional between a visitor and the guide. While both documents included some directed action such as touching or walking through building features, and interaction such as having guides ask visitors questions, neither program manager talked about encouraging social interaction as part of the tour activity.

The overall purpose of the tour at each location was similar: to garner public support by creating a memorable, immersive, affective experience of the building which would promote visitor connection to the place. However the goals of the tour activity differed at each location. The Research Facility sought to create an experience which would inform the visitor about its past, its present function and create a connection based on the universality of its contribution to humanity. The tour path traced a limited sequence of spaces, including the lobby, courtyard, auditorium and corridors along which visitors could briefly peer into the labs filled with working scientists. Visitors were not able to go in to the work areas, studies or library due to the private nature of the facility. In contrast, the tour activity at the Public Library allowed visitors to enter both public and back-of-house work spaces. One of the main goals of the library tour was to encourage the guided visitors to return to use the facility. The central message of each tour differed based on these differing goals. The central theme of the Research Facility was based on a story of a relationship between the founder and the architect in designing the building, and the relationship between the building and the current scientists who occupy the space. The official script of the Public Library tour defined the tour as a “sneak peek” which would encourage visitors to want to explore more on their own. The central theme was interpreted by the guides in various ways, including “community outreach,” “highlights,”

and “sharing what was built by this community for this community.” By coding and sorting the learning experiences of the visitors at each location, it became clear that while visitors at both locations learned something about the place, visitors to the Research Facility described their insights using more abstract concepts, and made more emotional or personal connections. Perhaps a combination of limited physical access to the private spaces, and stories employed by the guides allowed visitors to connect to the place in their own way, using their imagination, and leading to more personal connection and a higher level of abstraction.

Clear central message helps organize visitor learning. Visitors in this study accurately perceived the central message of a tour. Visitors also noticed when the theme was implied or weak. Public Library tour documents did not explicitly state a central message other than suggesting guides say the tour is a “sneak peek” to encourage the visitor to explore more on their own. This phrase or concept was interpreted by two of the guides that the tour intends to be “a community outreach effort” and “a snapshot of the place—just the highlights.” The third tour guide at the Public Library added a little more of an interpretive spin with her own poetic phrasing, “sharing what was built by the community to this community.” As noted in Chapter 7, visitors to the tours of the first two guides perceived the central message to be, “I didn’t see one central theme other than ‘hey, look at this wonderful resource that our taxpayer money has done. You should go take advantage of it [laughs]” and “what does the library consist of and what's available on different floors.” In both cases, the visitor recalled the central message accurately but did not necessary make a positive emotional connection with the place. In contrast, a visitor who went on the expository tour with interpretive moments conducted by the third

guide summarized what he felt was the central message, “a library is not just paper books. It's an area that has community outreach... There's more than what meets the eye.” In this comment, we can see that the visitor makes an insightful leap into the meaning behind the tour rather than laughing at the idea of a library as an expensive undertaking, as the first visitor implied in her response. By experiencing more than factual description on the tour narrative, a visitor who listened to interpretive moments expanded his view of what a library could be and commented on its connection to the community. Further responses during the follow up interview with this visitor revealed that he not only felt part of the community, but appreciated all of the resources shown to him, and then returned to use the library.

At the Research Facility, program managers, tour guide documents and guides all aligned with a clear central message. The program manager stated the central message as, “Science happening at the site is important and the building is unique in its role in providing a creative and supportive place for science work to happen.” The tour documents suggested guides use “[the founder’s] vision of science as a creative, collaborative, endeavor and how his relationship with [the architect] satisfied those needs in an innovative, timeless, supportive series of buildings” as the central theme of their narrative. Each of the three guides stated, “the architecture is there to inspire the people who work there,” “the role the building plays in the science,” and “what they [the scientists] do and about the building and why it is so timeless.” Visitors on this tour perceived the central message as a “collaborative place...the architecture combined with the collaborative idea of [the founder] wanting the scientists to be together,” “the feel and the ideas and the spiritual place that the creativity came from...That connection with the

building,” and “the features of the building make sense in the context of the story or the relationship of the people, how it was to be designed.”

The findings from this study suggest that there are multiple ways guides conduct a tour of the same building, using the same official script. An expository tour in which the guide lists facts about the building, points out the resources available, and shows visitors where these services are physically located in the building may establish trust in the guide as an expert, and fulfill baseline educational goals such as awareness and navigation skills, but does not necessarily create a sense of connection with the guided visitors. Visitors who made a personal meaningful connection during the tour, and who felt part of the community the institution served, seemed to appreciate its resources, and its existence more than those who did not feel connected. A feeling of connection was more likely to be achieved through a central message that related to how the institution served the community, told in a way that allowed visitors to make that connection for themselves, through the use of fact-based stories and interpretive moments.

Storytelling narrative strategy to enact central message. Since visitors discern an underlying message, there is an opportunity for the institution to evaluate and carefully craft that message. Since visitors tended to recall fewer facts and more of an overall gist or emotional connection, the central message may prove more important to the tour narrative than quantity or quality of facts. In fact, the central message can help visitors organize facts and content knowledge around a theme to help them remember key points. In both sites, there was a connection between the perceived central message of the tour narrative and visitor learning. Visitors tended to recall facts, functions and make new connections which aligned with the central message of the tour narrative. While a fact-

based tour seems to yield visitor learning in terms of function and scale, visitors expressed that they wanted more in terms of the back story. One visitor who went on a strictly expository tour wanted to know, “the history if there is history in it” and the other offered:

maybe if the docent was to say, for example, ‘this came about because the [donor] had a cup of tea and decided we didn't have a good library. Some interesting little tidbits about the making of it, always enriches, sounds good on a tour. You understand what I'm saying?...‘I have a story to tell you.’ Something like that... The back story. Why this became, why this thing, what we had to do to get this here. You know, reason for the impact on the space.

When asked what kind of feedback she would give to the program manager or tour guide, she summed it up as, simply, “Add some stories. That's what I would say.”

The storytelling strategy employed by two guides at the Research Facility was more successful at achieving insights in a broader range of visitor expectations as discussed in Chapters 6 and 7. According to Schank (1990), stories allow visitors to more easily associate new learning with prior experience. In the initial debriefing, almost all visitors led by guides who told stories reported enjoying the feeling of walking and having stories told to them. One visitor stated, “it was nice to be able to walk it and hear about it, how he [the architect] was thinking about designing the building, in that time. The thing you don't really learn about in history is the relationship between the two people.” Another visitor confirmed, “I liked hearing about the process of creation and the partnership between [the founder] and [the architect].” Visitors made connections between the built environment and the story of how it took shape. One visitor said, “a lot of the features of the building make sense in the context of the story or the relationship of the people, how it was to be designed.” When the tour guide emphasized stories about the

people who were responsible for design and construction, visitors recollected those relationships and personalities. They saw the building as a manifestation of human interaction over time. They recalled, in detail, how the building was funded, why it was located in that particular place, and made a personal connection to its significance and how it could change over time. This line of thinking led many visitors to feel a sense of responsibility for the building's preservation.

In follow up interviews from this type of tour, visitors expressed appreciation and gratitude for the founder and architect and encouraged others to go there. "I would just say that, these wonderful men gave a tremendous gift. And go with an open mind and enjoy the gift." What visitors seemed to learn in this type of tour was that a building is a product of social interaction between client and architect and the economic and political forces that surround them. The building itself was understood as serving the public and the people who worked there, primarily how the building solved problems typically found in a building of its kind. There seemed to be a difference in priorities between the two locations. For the library, the public was primary and the people who work there secondary; for the research institute, the people who work there were primary, and the public secondary. However, visitors reported learning about design intent, history, and back story at both locations. Understanding a building as a product of history was succinctly stated in a follow up interview of a visitor who was not an expert, nor had ever been there before. She stated, "each building, architecture, tells a story of the times, the political times, of the...culture of what's going on at the time." Visitors also expressed appreciation for the way the tour was conducted. One visitor said, "I enjoyed hearing her personal experiences with the building." And another visitor agreed, "She was fabulous,

just fabulous. So personal and she was just a great storyteller. So always make sure guides are great storytellers.”

Program managers, tour guides and visitors all talked about the role of storytelling or stories. During their interviews, both program managers, and many of the guides and visitors used the word “story” when they talked about what they expected, intended or experienced, respectively. The program manager at the Research Facility stated:

I think people like...to hear the stories of... like the scientists roller skating up and down, and how the buildings used to be empty. [One of the tour guides] has her own personal stories of her daughter getting married here and those kind of humanizing stories, it makes the building feel, like, lived in and more homey--an actual place where people had histories and stories that have happened in it.

The program manager at the Public Library said, “As a guide, they're giving informative information about the whole story behind everything.” One of the guides at the Research Facility said, “every great piece of architecture, and this certainly is, has a got a great back story.” His statement closely matched what one of the visitors on his tour later said, “each building, architecture, tells a story of the times, the political times, of the...culture, of what's going on at the time. You need to know all that.” There seems to be recognition among participants that stories are engaging and a welcome part of the tour experience. The word story, as opposed to history, implies a sense of imagination or fiction or, at least, a subjective view of the place rather than an objective one.

According to Schank (1990), a story might have more effect on the listener than simply stating historical facts. A story typically has a theme, goals, actions and an underlying lesson. Stories are entertaining so they capture the guided visitor’s attention, and allow the guided visitor to make their own connection with any aspect of the story

such as the main character, the struggle or problem that person faced, how they overcame the problem or agreement with the underlying message. Schank (1990) used the word “indexing” to describe how listeners tend to file stories they have heard with previously heard stories that they consider similar, or past memories they believe are linked in some way. Storytelling by the guide, in addition to telling facts, during a tour activity may help visitors link new knowledge to prior experience by allowing them to index the story in this manner. Stories can be indexed by any type of visitor along the continuum of how the visitor categorizes the event, allowing them to form a vivid memory regardless of expectation or motivation to attend, as discussed in the previous chapter. As one visitor recalled, “what I loved about the way the tour was handled, it was that thing that appeals to all of us, as people on this planet, and that has to do with the story. It wasn't just a fact-based tour.” The story provides a means to learn in a flexible manner, allowing for individual interpretations and connections to past experiences regardless of visitor expertise or reason for attendance. An analysis of the interviews suggests that when visitors connect emotions to stories or index new stories to stories from their past experience, they feel more connected to the place. Adding personal stories or engaging stories based on historical facts with characters, themes, plots and lessons allows the listener to connect the story to their own interpretation of what the story reveals about their own beliefs and what they feel they can learn from the story.

Eclectic, Focused, or Passionate: Dimensions of Visitor Expectation

Program managers and guides at both locations talked about the visitors in terms of types of visitors, usually referring to groups who they considered having similar characteristics. They talked about groups of school children, families, and retirees, to

name a few examples. They also mentioned groups of visitors in terms of status, for example VIP's or elected officials such as the mayor, or affiliation with clubs (e.g., Rotary Club). Institutional agents at the Research Facility differentiated visitors into further groups: locals versus tourists, and groups with areas of expertise such as architects and scientists. At the Public Library, guides differentiated between people who love the library and skeptics who question the need for the building, or those who will use the facility versus those who just have an interest in the architecture.

The analysis of the interviews in this study suggests that there are other ways to categorize visitors, not as groups but along a continuum of expectation related to their interest level. Similar to how Singer et al. (2012) talked about memory specificity linked with visitor identity, visitors can be grouped by how they categorize the tour activity in terms its role in their life. Once this dimension of meaning became apparent, I wondered at the possibility of a visitor's movement along the spectrum from eclectic to focused or passionate based on a particular tour experience. For example, if a visitor who categorized a tour activity as an eclectic event had a transformative experience on that tour, he may follow a more focused interest trajectory in the future, seeking out tour experiences with a similar thread in terms of content, such as art or architecture, or the work of a certain artist or architect. After further tour experiences and follow up inquiry through reading or formal education, the visitor may come across a place that stands out as a "missing piece of the puzzle" of his understanding. At that point, he might categorize the tour activity of that particular place as essential to a life goal, and would then be a passion-based visitor.

Talk and the Tour Experience

In addition to setting the tour route, pointing out building features, directing attention to certain areas and talking, guides also initiated social interaction or responded to questions during the tour activity. Most guides took a leadership role position at the beginning of a tour, typically underscoring their authority with an introductory statement about their professional background or how long they had been giving tours. Visitors in this study recollected this kind of information about the guide, and used it to gauge the level of expertise and trustworthiness of the guide. When visitors asked a question, they usually recalled whether or not they were satisfied with the response from the guide. Visitors who were not happy with the level of enthusiasm compared the tour to other tours in which the guide seemed to think they had a good or interesting question. When guides did not answer a question to their satisfaction, visitors felt guides did not know the answer or were not interested in their question. Visitors were observed talking informally in groups among themselves before the tour began and having side conversations with other visitors who accompanied them. After the tour, I observed the visitors continuing to talk about the tour experience as they wandered around, took photos or left the venue.

Talk before the tour.

Typically visitors arrived to the tour activity with some prior knowledge of the place. Some had heard about the place through friends or family members who had visited in the past. Some saw photos or postings online through social media or on travel-related websites. Others had driven or walked by and were intrigued by the appearance of the exterior. Others had read about the place in books or newspapers, or had learned about the building through films or formal lecture classes. At a most basic level, the

construction of sense of place started with visitor prior knowledge as they engaged in social interaction or some kind of mediated experience prior to the tour activity.

At the start of some tours, I observed the guide asking a few preliminary questions, such as where the visitors were from, or if they had been there before. At the Research Facility two of the three guides specifically asked if there were any architects present, as part of their introduction. Guides used these questions to help determine the expectations and interest level, or how they may want to customize the tour to suit the needs of the visitors. Three of the six guides expressed the importance of getting to know who was on their tour. Two guides talked about asking visitors questions, while the third guide tended to listen for questions from the visitors to gauge what they were interested in.

Talk during the tour.

While visitors engaged with other during the tour activity, it was typically limited, as one visitor expressed, to “one-liners and the ‘cracking up’ and corralling my son.” Visitors seemed to be aware of reactions such as surprise, beauty, and laughter from fellow visitors during the tour activity. In addition, I observed interaction between people who arrived together such as side conversations, holding hands or interacting with their children.

Guides varied in terms of how often they encouraged interaction by asking visitors questions along the tour route, depending on their intentions. Two guides at the Public Library did not ask any questions, while one guide asked questions almost continually as part of her delivery style. She would tell a fact, point to a feature and describe it, and then immediately follow up with “what do you think?” Over the course of

the hour-long tour this strategy seemed to encourage visitors to give their opinions and ask additional questions. As part of her strategy this guide thoughtfully considered and responded to all questions visitors asked. Visitors on her tour expressed appreciation for her willingness to answer their questions. At the Research Facility, two of the guides asked very few questions, while one guide asked a question at either the beginning or the end of many of the stations, such as “what do you think this is for?” or “does anyone know who is pictured on this plaque?” Even if there were no responses from the visitors to a particular question, the guide set a tone that welcomed interaction. I observed more people on her tour asking questions than on the tours conducted by the other two guides.

Talk after the tour.

Although not addressed by program managers and only mentioned by two of the guides that some visitors tend to “hang around” after the tour to ask more questions, visitors overwhelmingly indicated the importance of dialogue after a tour to increase their understanding. Many of the visitors mentioned that “a wrap-up,” or an opportunity to ask the guide questions after the tour, would have been beneficial. Some visitors said they felt uncomfortable asking a question in front of the whole group, which prompted ideas about having a “coffee cart” located in the facility where guides would welcome questions from the visitor in a more intimate, informal environment. While conversations between visitor and guide seem like an obvious addition to the tour activity, results from this study indicated that informal conversation among visitor participants following the tour also enhanced visitor experience of the place, as evidenced in the debriefing sessions. In these sessions, four volunteers from each of the tour groups observed were led to bench seating in a foyer or table and chairs in a semi-public place. After each visitor introduced

themselves with brief background information and what brought them to the tour activity that day, they began to talk about what they recollected and what stood out. For approximately 15 minutes, visitors engaged in a lively discussion, and seemed to enjoy sharing their experience, recapping the adventure and offering differing points of view on the place they just toured. In follow up interviews, some visitors recalled details of these conversations, as they said they appreciated and reflected on what others had said. It seemed that “hearing the feedback from the other people who were in that little interview you did” allowed them to compare and contrast their own experience.

Summary

The intersection of the visitor expectations, the guide’s discourse style and the program parameters are visualized in a revised version of Ingold’s diagram (Figure 26) to illustrate more accurately the dynamic nature of the tour activity. This diagram shows the influence of the guide as authoritative expert and how that role intersects with the value of social interaction over the hour-long activity. Before the tour begins, visitors engage in dialogue about the place. At the introduction, the role of social interaction is limited to initial questions of the visitors by the guide, but the primary role of the guide is to begin the story or give information. During the tour, there is more of a balance between giving information and encouraging visitors to engage verbally. By the end of the tour, the guide encourages more talk from the visitors. After the tour, ideally, the guide is available to answer questions.

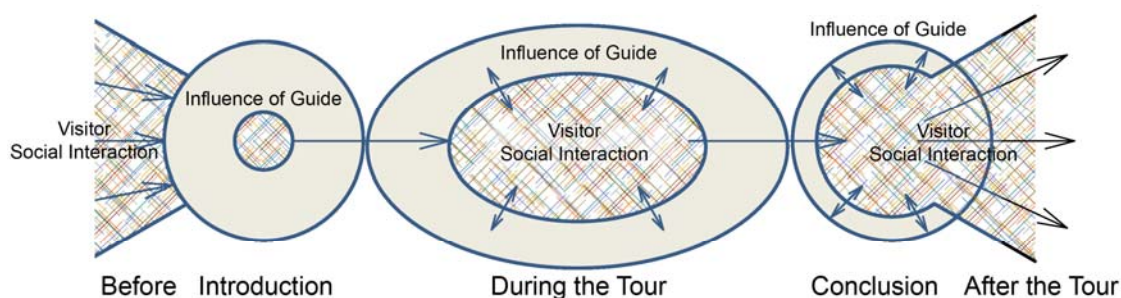


Figure 26. Illustration of role of guide and social interaction on a tour activity

In this figure, tour participants are represented as fields of potential rather than fixed points. Social connection and expectation of interaction with an experienced narrator forms a kind of structure, reinforced by the check-in process in which visitors are identified as belonging on the tour with a clip on badge. At the beginning of each of the tours, I observed an attentive silence and respectful social distance from the guide. Typically, the group of visitors followed the guide, walking and pausing, looking and touching, as instructed. As the tour progressed, prompted by questions or encouraged to ask questions by the guide, the group of visitors became more interactive with the guide as well as amongst themselves. Visitors engaged in side conversation with other members of the group. Toward the end of the tour, visitors generally asked more questions. At the end of the tour, visitors often lingered to ask a few questions from the guide, or remained near the guide to talk in small groups. In the debriefing sessions, some visitors expressed disappointment if they did not get an opportunity to ask questions. And many visitors said they appreciated the interaction with other visitors when they participated in the initial debriefing as part of this study.

In the interviews, guides talked about how they noticed that visitors often lingered to ask additional questions. From this confluence of evidence, it is clear that interaction

between visitors and tour guides are an important part of the educational aspect of the tour activity.

In terms of pace, visuals and accompanying narrative learning in this non-formal environment can be metaphorically envisioned as a “storytime for adults,” similar to what one would expect as a child being read to from a picture book. Visitors were able to interact with a trusted expert “storyteller,” when stories were present in the narrative. Visitors who attended expository tours compared their experience with past tours and tended to want more stories. According to Schank (1990), a story used for teaching contains a theme or topic, characters who engage in a plot or series of actions, a result or outcome and an underlying lesson or message for the listener to learn. This study found that there is a theme behind every guide’s narrative, even if not explicit, and that theme was perceived by the visitor and influenced their experience of place. For most visitors, access to the place was key, followed by access to someone who could answer questions, gaining additional knowledge from insider perspective. While all visitors sought a guided experience to enhance their understanding of the place, some visitors were more connected to the content than others. A storytelling discourse style seemed to connect more visitors with a sense of place. Visitors at both locations commented on the importance of the guide to their experience. They first recalled the guide’s level of expertise, then the guide’s level of enthusiasm. Then visitors perceived the guide as being a good storyteller, and finally they talked about the ability of the guide to answer all of their questions, if they had them.

The tour activity allowed visitors to enter a state of directed sensory awareness in a non-formal atmosphere. For some, it was a form of entertainment. For others,

participating in the tour activity was a life-long dream. Visitors felt special in that they were able to get access to a place which is normally off limits to the public. They noted the added value of being led by an expert guide, and potential for interaction with other visitors. The experience allowed individuals, both experts and novices, both personally and socially motivated to attend, to construct or reinterpret a sense of place, with a potential for that experience to have a transformative effect. Visitors having a passing interest in the subject matter could suddenly decide to follow a longer-term pursuit in a certain area. For others, the tour activity could inspire them to pursue a life-long endeavor. The combination of visual, tactile, aural sensory experience evoked salient emotional connections to prior knowledge which lead to new connections and insights among visitors engaged in a guided tour of a culturally significant setting.

Chapter 9 Conclusion

As an experienced docent who has personally guided thousands of people on architectural tours over the past ten years, I was interested in finding out what visitors were learning as a result of participating on a guided tour. As a formally trained architect and design educator, I was particularly curious to find out what visitors were learning about the building itself, or about architecture in general. Past studies of adult learning in non-formal settings tended to look at satisfaction surveys to understand what visitors wanted from tours. Other studies conducted a pre-test and post-test to determine what factual knowledge was retained by visitors. In contrast, this study explored what visitors learned on guided tours by encouraging them to describe, in their own words, what they recalled and what insights or new connections they made using a broad sense of learning as new connection to prior knowledge. I wanted to see, beyond entertainment value or retention of facts, how the tour experience impacted their life in producing salient memories, awareness or new connections.

Through the lens of Social Practice theory and Activity Theory, this study addressed the overarching question: What do adult visitors learn through participating in a guide-mediated tour of a culturally significant setting? In order to understand the learning objectives within the community of practice and cultural tools at each setting, additional research questions addressed were: (a) What are the educational goals of the guided tour as expressed by program managers and tour guide training documents? (b) What do the guides intend visitors learn on their tours? (c) And, how do the beliefs, practices and experience of the three participant types intersect to produce learning?

Using Activity Theory as a theoretical framework, this study examined tour programs at two sites: a Research Facility and a Public Library. I analyzed the official script and tour guidelines provided by the program manager at each location, and interviewed each program manager. I observed guided tours and interviewed with guided visitors immediately following the tour. Approximately a month later, I interviewed 12 visitors to follow up on what they recollected about the tour activity, and what they did following the tour. In addition, I interviewed the guides, three at each site, who conducted the observed tours to find out what they intended visitors learn on their tours.

This study yielded four main findings. First, institutional program goals of the tour activity included visitor awareness, positive affective experience, and advocacy. Secondly, in general, the guides' intentions matched program goals but varied from each other in terms of discourse style, which I classified as expository, storytelling and interpretive. The guides also varied in degree of social interaction with the visitor. A third finding was that visitor learning aligned with program goals. However visitors reported insights which went above and beyond information given during the tour activity. And, finally, visitor learning related to visitors' expectation of the tour activity, delivery strategy of the guide, and social interaction with guides and other tour participants. Implications of this study are intended to inform institutions which host non-formal education programs, formal educators who incorporate field trips to culturally significant settings into their curriculum, and add to the body of knowledge on non-formal learning.

The primary research question, what do adult visitors learn on guide-mediated tours of culturally significant settings, was answered by this study on a variety of levels. In terms of meeting the program goals of awareness, visitors recollected the size of the

place in relation to human scale or in comparison with how large or small they imagined the place to be. They also recalled the function of the spaces and features of the building, typically in the order they were shown them on the tour, as if they were mentally walking through the spaces again. Visitors recalled other people using the space, such as staff or other visitors, becoming aware that the building supported multiple functions for many types of people such as children, elderly, homeless at the Public Library, and scientists at the Research Facility. In terms of a positive affective experience, visitors recalled beauty and stories. They were inspired by views, the natural environment such as the sun and ocean, tending to associate these attractive or pleasing features with the entire experience, making comments such as, “it was just a beautiful day.” Visitors recollected eye-catching elements of the building itself or how it framed views, especially on the roof at the Public Library or in the courtyard at the Research Facility, where visitors took photos.

These striking visuals served as memory anchors for the facts and stories that visitors heard the guide say. Visitors enjoyed hearing stories about what they were seeing. They reported feeling lucky or special to be included in the group and learn about the history of the place or behind-the-scenes interactions of people who had been there before or worked there. Stories told by the guide, particularly ones that were personal stories about the guide’s own experience, served to connect visitors with this “insider” knowledge. Stories also allowed visitors to personally connect with the sense of place.

Visitors expressed overwhelmingly that there was an inherent value of being in the space, rather than viewing it in “rich media” online or through still images or reading about it. Visitors talked about the “atmosphere” or “vibes” and the way being there “integrates all the senses.”

As expected, what visitors learned depended on their own prior knowledge and expectations. Visitors had a broader range of insights when they could connect the story of the place with their own prior knowledge and build or contrast to what they had known about the place. They also had insights which changed their perception about the place itself or places like the building they toured. Architects tended to see the tour activity as part of “a larger piece of the puzzle” which expanded their understanding of what they learned from their formal education, from books, lectures, drawings, films and photographs. Visitors who connected with the sense of place and felt part of the community left with a sense of responsibility to advocate for the continued existence of the place through social, political and economic means. Visitors told others about their experience, posted photos and comments on social media, got a library card or considered returning to use the space as a direct result of their tour experience. They also followed up with independent inquiry and continued conversation about the meaning and importance of the place among their friends, family and colleagues following the tour.

Past studies had not included program managers as participants, viewing them mainly as recipients of study findings rather than a source of data. But looking through the lens of Activity Theory, it was clear that program managers form an integral part of the tour experience as they are part of the division of labor in a community of practice who are responsible for setting institutional goals and guidelines for the tour activity. This realization led me to the sub-question, what do the program managers want visitors to learn? This study found that program managers wanted visitors to appreciate the unique function or history of the building, to feel a connection with its mission and leave with a sense that the institution should be protected and preserved. This finding aligned

with the basic principle of the objective in Activity Theory, that the institutional goals of any educational activity are based on the continued existence of the institution.

What the guides intended visitors to learn also aligned with the role of mediator of the activity in Activity Theory, as they enacted the institutional message within the guidelines to produce a memorable experience which resulted in salient learning objective in the guided visitor. The pivotal role of the guide had already been established in previous studies. Guides at the Research Facility viewed themselves as “pioneers” exploring unfamiliar territory with the visitors and “conduits” to the past, and to the unseen design intent. Guides at the Public Library viewed themselves as “bridges” to awareness as well as “enthusiastically sharing” what the building has to offer. Guides see themselves as both navigators and cheerleaders to inform the visitor of the variety of services and make them want to return to use the library.

Limitations

The limitations of this study lie in the small sample sizes of the participants, the short duration of the study, and only two sites as case studies. These three factors limit generalizability. However, this qualitative research study offers an in-depth description and discussion of two microcosms of social practice that, I believe, answer my research questions, and contributes to the body of knowledge of non-formal adult learning. This study focused on the guided visitors’ learning experiences, allowing them to describe what they experienced, in their own words. These experiences were analyzed in terms of how visitor learning intersected with what the guides intended and the institution’s educational goals for the tour program.

Connections to Prior Research

Findings from this study build on previous studies discussed in the literature review in Chapter 2. This study used a socio-cultural approach, concerned with the way human interaction takes place within a setting and how learning occurs through mediated interaction. Aligning with Social Practice Theory, as espoused by Holland and Lave (2001), Lave (1996) and Lave and Wenger (1991), the practice of the tour activity unfolded in a meaningful sequence, an effective pedagogic situation that helped construct a sense of place for all participants. There was a particular emphasis on “an inclusive focus on all participants equally.” (Lave, 1996, p. 162). Through the lens of Activity Theory we can see a more structured, yet dynamic framework. The visitor entered a world of a community of practice comprised program managers, guides and visitors as actors using tools such as a tour script and route through a physical building. The visitors participated in this short, one-hour guide-mediated experience of walking and talking in which guides introduced memorable visuals, new terminology, concepts and stories which the visitors recollected, reflected on and applied to their own environments.

Findings in this study confirmed and expanded on foundational studies in non-formal learning about what visitors learn, that learning is contextual and varies with personal context variables (Falk & Dierking, 2000). However, this study focused on a guide-mediated experience rather than free-choice environment museum, which confirmed that these theories hold true for more structured activities as well. Falk and Dierking (2000) recognized that “learning does not occur merely within the limited temporal and physical envelope” of the cultural setting (p. xv). However, they were referring to the context of the greater society. I identified more concretely that learning

took place beyond the scope of the activity through formal education experienced by the architects, conversation among visitors and independent inquiry through consulting reading Internet-based sources and books, before and after the tour activity.

Findings in this study also concurred with those uncovered by Anderson, Storksdieck, and Spock (2007). They found that three factors emerged as most important to creating a vivid, lasting memory: conversation about the experience, emotional affect related to the experience and whether the visitor's agenda was fulfilled or frustrated. Anderson et al. (2007) found that when visitors express their subjective experience after a tour, they rehearse memories which are likely to create sustained memories. While talk may be used to rehearse memories, findings in this study point to the value of talk among visitors after a tour as an opportunity for them to listen to other interpretations or experiences from a variety of different visitors with diverse backgrounds, perspectives and levels of expertise. Visitors in this study recollected, in detail, what other visitors had said, comparing and contrasting their opinions and experiences with their own, claiming that this kind of social interaction enhanced their understanding of the place.

This study also builds on Anderson et al.'s (2007) conclusion that "transformative experiences" can occur as a result of a single visit to museum or other culturally significant setting when the visitor's prior knowledge, personal interest, and agenda align with "the opportunity to make personal connections" (p. 200). In this study, visitors are viewed along a continuum of interest level from eclectic to passionate. A transformative experience could be defined as when a visitor moved along the continuum from eclectic to passionate. This shift in interest level can be seen as a result of an alignment of visitor expectation, setting guidelines and guide strategy in fostering this kind of visitor

engagement. Visitors in this study reported a new found or further interest in content of the tour. Visitor actions taken as a result of going on the tour including further inquiry and practicing what they had learned. Bamberger and Tal (2008) also found that engagement and enjoyment of a single visit can have a long-term effect to begin lifelong journey for children. I argue that a transformative experience, which shifts the dimension of interest from general to focused, or from focused to passionate, can happen with adults as well. Leinhardt, Tittle, and Knutson (2002) noted that purpose and intentions of adult visitors related to what they learned. However they found this varies in terms of age. I did not formally analyze learning in terms of age. However, my impression is that variation of purpose related more with how the visitor cataloged the event in terms of their life-goals. Visitors who had an interest in enriching themselves through a tour experience in any field, a more focused area of interest, or a life-long passion could be any age.

Findings in this study offer an explanation that the variables of visitor expectation, central theme and guide discourse style need to align for a transformative experience to occur. The potential for a transformative experience may be enhanced by two factors: when guides use more of a storytelling approach in their discourse style, and a strong central message to link the stories told during a tour. Storytelling may allow a broader range of visitors to connect with the central message of the tour and allow them to experience a salient moment which could lead to a transformative experience. If participating in a storytelling tour experience, a visitor who had a passing interest in a subject matter introduced on a tour could connect to a more focused interest which could lead to a life-long passion.

Findings from this study confirm the pivotal role of the guide in a tour activity and studies that looked at the agency, expertise and effectiveness of delivery strategies of the guide (Grenier, 2009; Neill, 2010; Taylor, 2006). Taylor found that guides use humor and anecdotes to keep attention of adult learners in non-formal learning environments such as demonstrations in home improvement stores. This study builds on the entertainment value of the guide's narrative to understand that guides can create a storytelling narrative that is shaped by the theme of the institution as central message with characters, plot and lesson. Findings in this study support Grenier's findings that guides typically see themselves as educators and ambassadors of the institution they serve. Guides rely on verbal and non-verbal feedback at beginning, middle and conclusion of tour to gauge level of interest or familiarity with subject matter. Neill (2010) found that a guide's use of open-ended questions and interpretive strategies helps foster a positive, transformative experience and influence future behavior. Findings in this study agreed with Cohen (1985) that guides provide both "geographic and spiritual" guidance for the guided visitors (p.8). This study builds on his study's findings in that a guide's role changes over the course of the activity, morphing from a "navigator" through unfamiliar territory, to an authoritative expert "storyteller," to more of a "facilitator" by encouraging interaction among visitors. In terms of delivery style, Barrett (2008) found that visitors prefer an authoritative voice and the "right" answer while Stone's (1997) findings were inconclusive as to whether a lecture-based guided tour or a constructivist approach led to increased visitor learning. I argue that a guided tour activity ideally uses a combination of both, sequentially. Lopez (1980) found that "authoritarian" leadership style had an initial higher satisfaction rate with tour participants on shorter tours. In

contrast, she found that over time, especially on longer tours, participants preferred guides who were less structured, more personal and who fostered a more “democratic,” interactive and supportive environment (p. 22). She concluded that, in the beginning, tour-goers may look for clear guidelines from the guide to order an unfamiliar territory, but that as tour-goers get accustomed to the place, a more flexible guide style which encouraged them to explore the environment on their own, was preferred. This study supports her findings, but shows that the transition from authoritative to interactional can occur in a one-hour tour. A guide can begin with an authoritative approach in order to introduce new terminology and concepts, allowing visitors to become familiar with the sense of place. Toward the end of the tour, the guide can encourage more social interaction so that visitors have an opportunity to use the newly acquired terminology or rehearse their subjective experience, or begin further inquiry through asking questions.

Finally, this study added to the field of non-formal learning by including program managers as participants of the study. Findings in this study suggest that the role of the program manager can be understood as a dynamic intermediary between the public face of the institution and private, or internal, needs of the institution. Program managers at both locations wanted to provide a safe, memorable experience for visitors to foster community advocacy. They varied, however, in how clearly they embedded a central message in to the tour guide training documents. Program managers’ initial expectations of what visitors learn are shaped by what they first experienced on a guided tour. They rely on the expertise of the guides, feedback from staff, and visitors to continually shape the guidelines of the community of practice. I believe more in-depth research needs to be done on what shapes the practice and beliefs of program managers.

Implications for Further Research

Results from this study suggest that the role of the program manager, guide and visitor are dynamic and therefore it is more helpful to look at this interaction rather than the roles individually. Future studies could look more closely at the relationship between program manager and guide in how it shapes the guidelines, central message and delivery strategies found in the official tour script. While this study found that guides and program managers were very familiar with these guidelines, further study could reveal what factors influence the content of the official story found in the tour script. This study found that guides and program managers categorize visitors. This practice leads to an implicit model of differentiation that affects the official script and the enactment. A question that remains is what happens when program managers and guides look at visitors not in terms of age, affiliation or professional expertise, but in categories related to life-goals. How would a change in perception of visitor lead to different discourse styles or level of interaction during a tour? This may be more of an implication for practice, as discussed in the next section.

This study also suggests that a storytelling approach during a guided tour reaches a wider range of visitors than an expository or interpretive strategy. Visitors varied in terms of expectation, expertise and feelings of connection, but all visitors appreciated and connected to stories told by the guide. In terms of visitor learning, it would be interesting to explore the idea of storytelling in more depth. Does it matter who tells the story or what kind of story is told? While most tour activities are assumed to be for transfer of factual data, perhaps a question could be how the addition of personal stories and

interpretive activities add to the retention of facts, or further feelings of connection in the visitor.

While this study provides an argument for incorporating opportunities for social interaction before, during and after a guided tour, we need to know more about how to design and implement these interactions. Additional research could look at how different opportunities for social interaction before, during and after influenced visitor learning. For example, while visitors are waiting for a tour to start, perhaps some kind of pre-tour activity could be designed to have visitors ask questions, or make comments about what they know to determine how eliciting prior knowledge before a tour can enhance visitor experience of a tour. In addition, what is the impact of small groups of visitors rehearsing their tour experience following the tour have on their understanding of the place?

Finally, I would suggest expanding the population of the study to include children and mixed age groups, such as families. During the observation portion of the study, I noted that many families, and groups of mixed ages, attended the tour. In the debriefing session, visitors who brought children cited that one of the motivating factors for attending the tour activity was to bring their children. They talked about what they wanted their children to learn. A limitation of this study was that I was unable to interview children. A next step for this research could be to include children as participants to see what they learned from the tour, in their own words, and how their learning aligned with the expectations of the adult who brought them.

Implications for Practice and Policy

Guide-mediated tours of culturally significant settings such as public libraries or scientific research facilities provide free or low-cost valuable educational experiences to

the public. These types of learning experiences in the form of field trips can complement a formal classroom curriculum. Physical access to a place can be desired by visitors to create a sense of specialness, behind the scenes and sense of belonging to a group without fear of trespassing or violating institutional rules. But physical access is not enough. On guided tours with a knowledgeable and responsive person, visitors can learn about history and design intent which may not be visible by just wandering around a culturally significant setting. The guide can serve as navigator, interpreter, and can tell stories about the history of the people and ideas that formed the spaces and materials. Stories allow visitors to connect to the place, and enhance their experience when they are looking at areas of the building to which they are not allowed access. Stories can allow them to mentally go inside of an area, creating a sense of connection without them physically being in the space. This strategy was particularly successful at the Research Facility when visitors could not enter the laboratory spaces. Guides told stories while visitors passed by the windows of the lab so they could catch a glimpse of the working scientists. While visitors noted they were not allowed access, they appreciated the stories.

While most tour guides ask question to gauge basic interest level of visitors, becoming aware of these eclectic, more focused and passion-based dimensions of visitor expectation may help guides target their strategies to increase the tour effectiveness. Perhaps some specific questions about other tours that visitors had been on would elicit information about how they classified the tour event. For example, if visitors shared that that they had been on a tour of a museum, or at a similar building, or if they had been to other work by the same architect, the responses could spark a brief conversation about what they hoped to get out of this tour experience. Visitors might relate this tour

experience to other educational entertainment, could speak of this tour adding to a more specific content area, or could let the guide know that they viewed this tour as a life-long dream. Interaction between visitors might inspire some to adjust their interest level based on the way they hear more passionate visitors respond. Program managers can incorporate these concepts into the tour guide training documents. Formal educators can frame a guided tour as a part of a field trip as a more focused experience for students by initiating a sense of place prior to the arriving at the cultural setting and continuing the construction of place after the tour activity. Teachers can also schedule similar or related tours to promote a consistent thread for students so that the individual tour activities become a part of a larger educational pursuit.

This study confirmed that the power of a guided tour lies in telling stories that allow visitors to make their own connections to an institution. For buildings that allow extensive public access, an expository tour narrative is not enough to generate a sense of connection by the visitor to the community. If the goal of the program is to create a sense of belonging, more stories should be integrated into the official tour narrative, and allow the guides more time to tell them.

Visuals serve as mnemonic devices to anchor emotional and intellectual learning. Guides should be encouraged to use the architectural and natural features of the setting to serve as memory cues. Guides need to present the information in a way that allows visitors to feel connected to an institution, especially if the institution is typically closed to outsiders. Since visitors appreciate a good story along with physical access, an institution could create educational strategies that center more on affective states such as feelings of connectedness rather than just navigation or telling facts. A story for a tour

narrative must be factually accurate but also include a theme, characters, plot and result in a lesson, or bit of advice. Stories should be crafted in such a way as to allow visitors to index these stories according to their own prior knowledge to enable them to make their own personal connections or conclusions. The program manager and guide, as institutional agents, should not presume that just because visitors live locally, that they will feel part of the community, or just because visitors are from out of town that they will not have a personal connection by the end of the tour. By encouraging the guides to tell more stories, go at a slower pace, encouraging social interaction before, during and after a tour, all types of visitors may leave feeling more connected to the place.

Final Thoughts

When I was a child, my parents took me to the Edison Center at Menlo Park in New Jersey to participate in a guided tour. I had read a biography of Thomas Edison and I was very excited to see his workshop. While walking through the various spaces, looking at the artifacts, and listening to the guide talk about the past, I began to make a connection between the space and its function. I became interested in how the design of the building allowed for creative invention. At various points along the tour, the guide asked us questions such as “does anyone know why Edison was deaf?” and “what was the material of the first successful filament?” My hand immediately went up. Empowered by answering the questions, I began to see myself as a contributor to the tour experience, rather than a passive listener. This experience prompted me to want to learn more, and to someday lead my own tours. In fact, this particular tour experience sparked a life-long interest in the design of spaces which support human activity. Years later I

studied architecture, became a practicing architect and am now a post-secondary educator in the field of design.

Having conducted this study, I can now see that past experience as an interaction of processes that aligned to produce a salient transformative memory. I had some prior knowledge which led to a focused expectation of the tour activity. The tour guide's narrative had a central message about how the spaces and features supported Edison's work, and her delivery strategy was to tell stories and encourage visitors to answer questions. Although I was only a child and a tourist, I left the tour activity that day with new awareness, a positive affective experience, and a sense of connection to the place that fostered advocacy. Beyond these basic realizations, I experienced further insights which shaped my career goals. It is my hope that this study, about what people learn in culturally significant settings, contributes to the body of knowledge on non-formal learning experiences, and helps institutions and guides lead their visitors to similar transformational learning experiences.

Appendix I: Post-Tour Debriefing Interview Outline for Guided Participants

Thank you so much for participating in this study and sharing your experience. I'm really interested to hear about your experience today. This interview consists of three questions, each with several parts, which should take approximately 20 minutes. As we discussed, I'm going to audio record the interview, as it will help me to make sense of it later. If you would like me to pause, stop, or erase any of the recording at any time, please feel free to let me know. Of course, anything you share with me today is confidential and will not be used for any purpose other than informing my doctoral dissertation.

1. Topic: Background

Sample Questions: So, tell me a bit about yourself.

- a. How did you find out about the tour?
- b. What made you decide to come here today?
- c. Have you been on other similar tours or at places similar to this one?
- d. Prior to coming here today have you _____ seen photos, _____ read books about, _____ seen video of the place _____ been to the institute's website? _____ other?

2. Topic: Talk about experience

Sample Questions: Tell me about your experience here today.

- a. What stood out or surprised you?
- b. Now that you've been here, how would you describe it to others?

3. Topic: Prior Knowledge of Place

Sample Questions: What do you think was the value of coming here rather than looking at photos or seeing a video? [I will use examples of what they noted as prior knowledge from question 1 d.]

- a. What do you know about this place that you hadn't known before?
- b. What else would you like to say about your experience here today?

Thank you so much for participating in this study today. I would like to follow up in a few weeks to get some additional information about your experience today. May I get your contact information in order to follow up with some additional questions in the future?

Appendix II: In-Depth Interview Outline for Guided Participants

Thank you so much for allowing me to follow up with additional questions about your experience at [name of institution] a few weeks ago. This interview consists of four questions, each with several parts, which should take approximately 35 minutes. As we discussed, I'm going to audio record the interview, as it will help me to make sense of it later. If you would like me to pause, stop, or erase any of the recording at any time, please feel free to let me know. Of course, anything you share with me today is confidential and will not be used for any purpose other than informing my doctoral dissertation.

1. Topic: Recall

Sample Questions: So, now that you have had a few weeks to reflect on your experience touring [name of institution] a few weeks ago, what do you remember about your experience that day?

- a. What do you remember doing?
- b. What do you remember seeing?
- c. What do you remember hearing?
- d. Was there anything else that you remember?

2. Topic: Learning

Sample Question: How would you say your experience on the tour changed (or added to) your understanding of the place?

- a. What do you think most visitors get out of this tour?
- b. Suppose a friend mentioned to you that they were thinking about going to [name of institution]. How would you describe this place to a friend?

3. Topic: Activity Features

Sample Questions: What would you say was the central message or theme of that tour?

- a. What were some important details or features or moments during the tour?
- b. What kind of feedback would you give to the people who run the tour program? What would you say to the guide about your experience?

4. Topic: Broader Educational Program Features

Sample Questions: This place offers visitors a lot of different types of events, activities and resources such as those found on the website.

- a. What other resources or activities have you used, if any?
- b. What other activities have you engaged in (if any)?

Is there anything else you would like to tell me about your thoughts or feelings about your experience?

Appendix III: Interview Outline for Tour Guide

Thank you so much for participating in this study and sharing your experience. I'm really interested in hearing about your experience as a tour guide here. This interview consists of four questions, each with several parts, which should take approximately 45 minutes. As we discussed, I'm going to audio record the interview, as it will help me to make sense of it later. If you would like me to pause, stop, or erase any of the recording at any time, please feel free to let me know. Of course, anything you share with me today is confidential and will not be used for any purpose other than informing my doctoral dissertation.

1. Topic: Background

Sample Questions: So, tell me a bit about yourself.

- a. How long have you been giving tours?
- b. How did you get started?
- c. Have you been a guide at places similar to this one?

2. Topic: View of Purpose of Tour

Sample Questions: This place offers visitors a lot of different types of events, activities and resources. In your experience, why do people go on guided tours here? What do you believe is the role of the tour?

3. Topic: View of Intended Learning/Outcome

Sample Questions: What do you think visitors get out of this tour?

- a. What kind of things do you hear from people who have been on a tour?
- b. If you had to summarize what would you say is the central message or theme of your tour?

4. Topic: Instructional Strategies

Sample Questions: What are the most important parts of your tour?

- a. What do you do to get those points across? Are there certain things you say or do on every tour? Are there some things that are optional?
- b. What makes you decide what to do or not do?
- c. Is there a certain sequence that you follow on every tour?
- d. How do you know what visitors think about their experience?
- e. Suppose a friend mentioned to you that they were thinking about volunteering to become a tour guide here. What advice would you give? What do you feel your role is in this activity, as a tour guide?

Appendix IV: Interview Outline for Program Administrator

Thank you so much for participating in this study and sharing your experience. I'm really interested in hearing about your experience as a program administrator here. This interview consists of five questions, each with several parts, which should take approximately 45 minutes. As we discussed, I'm going to audio record the interview, as it will help me to make sense of it later. If you would like me to pause, stop, or erase any of the recording at any time, please feel free to let me know. Of course, anything you share with me today is confidential and will not be used for any purpose other than informing my doctoral dissertation.

1. Topic: Background
Sample Questions: So, tell me a bit about yourself.
 - a. How did you get started?
 - b. Have you been an administrator at places similar to this one?

2. Topic: Mission of Culturally Significant Institution
Sample Questions: Tell me about [insert name of institution].
 - a. What goes on here?
 - b. Who tends to come here?
 - c. Why do you think people come here?

3. Topic: Educational Mission of Program
Sample Questions: There are many ways people can engage with a culturally significant place such as a museum or library. What kinds of activities, resources and events do you offer here at [name of institution]?

4. Topic: Educational Mission of Activity
Sample Questions: Now let's talk about the tour program.
 - a. Within the broad array of different ways the public can engage with this place, why tours?
 - b. Why *guided* tours (with a human rather than a video or audio-recording)?
 - c. In your opinion, what do you believe is the role or value of the tour?
 - d. How would you describe this tour to a potential visitor?
 - e. What kinds of experiences can someone expect on this guided activity?
 - f. What are the most important parts of this tour, from your perspective?
 - g. What would you say is the central message or theme of a tour?

5. Topic: View of Learning Outcome
Sample Questions: What do you hope visitors get out of this tour?
 - a. How do you know what visitors think about their experience?
 - b. What kind of things do you hear from people who have been on a tour?Thank you so much for your time! Is there anything I did not ask about that you would like to add?

Appendix V: Observation Checklist

Describe Setting:

Describe the guide:

of Attendees:

Brief description of Attendees (gender, approx ages, number in party arrived with...):

Beginning of activity:

Time started:

Location:

What kind of introduction?

Middle:

Actions [Timestamped] (Sequence (path to each “station”), Pace (amount of time in minutes at each station, Movement, Position of guide, Shape of group...):

Facts (number and examples):

Anecdotes/Stories/Opinions (number and examples):

Interactions [Timestamped]:

Questions asked: Guide to visitor? Visitor to guide?

Verbal Reactions/Responses: Visitor to guide?

Nonverbal Reactions/Responses:

End:

Time Ended:

Location:

What kind of Summary or Conclusion?

Visitor actions (prior to departing, as departing)

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