EVALUATING EDUCATIONAL VALUE IN MUSEUM EXHIBITIONS:
ESTABLISHING AN EVALUATION PROCESS FOR THE
NEGRO LEAGUES BASEBALL MUSEUM

by

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B.A., Monmouth College, 1991
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AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

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Abstract

The role and function of museums in education has been debated along several lines of inquiry. For the majority of museum institutions, the most vital, consistent audience they have comes from the public and private schools in their communities. This is critical for museums trying to maintain relevancy in the national education climate that has increased emphasis on curriculum and testing standards.

Founded in 1990, the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum (NLBM) in Kansas City, Missouri has preserved and taught African American baseball history from the late 1800s through the 1960s. Although the museum had received positive commentary from visitors, and well received attention from the international press, it had not undergone any major changes to its design since it opened its permanent facility in 1997. Of chief concern to the museum was its ability to attract school age learners with their teachers to the institution. The museum had a number of layers by which it presented historical information and each layer needed some level of evaluation. There were a number of informative examples of museum evaluation and assessment available for review, but no tool or model existed specifically designed to assist museums in evaluating exhibition content for educational value.

This study reports on methods by which the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum (NLBM) could improve and enhance exhibitions. It explored the current trends and scholarship involving museums and education, museum exhibition evaluation, and Negro Leagues historical scholarship. A multi-step research processed evolved for use in the study, featuring detailed literature reviews and interviews from educators, historians, museum professionals, and a grant awarding foundation expert. This study targets museum professionals responsible for interpretation and creation of exhibitions, including curatorial staff and museum educators. The study also informs other museum leaders regarding the process by which high quality educational material is created for the museum environment.

A set of important themes and evaluation questions were formed as a result of the interviews and literature review. The study offered critical thinking questions for the evaluation

process and suggests recommendations for implementation. The study also implies action plan strategies for implementation of an evaluation process.

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Dedication

This research is dedicated to the players, owners, workers, officials, and fans that helped to create and sustain baseball for the African Diaspora in America. Institutions such as Negro Leagues Baseball should never have existed. Yet, we are indebted to the contributions it has made to American history.

CHAPTER 1 - Introduction to the Study

Introduction

The role and function of museums in education has been debated along several lines of inquiry. For a number of years, museum professionals grappled primarily with the internal functions of their institutions, such as exhibit development, interpretation, and public programming, in an effort to define their value within the educational realm. Professionals debated the characteristics of the educational experiences in museums (Taylor, 2002), the scope and breathe of learning in the museum setting (Ansbacher, 1998; Falk and Dierking, 1997; Falk, Moussouri, and Coulson, 1998), and museums as facilitators for social action (Hein, 2005). These studies offered valuable insight to educational experiences inside the museum and it is generally agreed upon that museums serve an important educational function in society. There exist several examples, resources, strategies, and practices from museums that have developed a myriad of programming options aimed at school audiences. This is critical for museums trying to maintain relevancy in the national education climate that has increased emphasis on curriculum and testing standards, as well as a more technologically savvy group of visitors entering museums. (Davis, 2008; Popescu, 2008; Robertson, 2008)

For the majority of museum institutions, the most vital, consistent audience they have comes from the public and private schools in their communities. Each year, school tour visits make up a large portion of museum visitor numbers. For example, the Institute for Museum and Library services measured that 11,000 American museums collectively spent over one billion dollars on K-12 educational programming and over 18 million instructional hours in 2000-2001 in urban, suburban, and rural areas (Institute for Museum and Library Services, 2004). These groups represent a sustainable audience and revenue stream for the museums at an average investment of $22,500 annually, or about 12% of surveyed museums annual budgets.

With this investment of capital and manpower, museums offer a wide range of experiences and partnerships to connect with schools. Museums offer printed materials, web based materials, and traveling exhibits to attract the school audiences. Visiting the museum, however, remains the primary activity by which schools connect to museums and their programs. A large portion of museums surveyed attempted to tie programming to school curriculum

standards. They feel strongly that their capacity to help students directly influences school decisions to utilize or visit the museum.

Museums must continue to create opportunities for increased outreach to all audiences, but especially school audiences. History museums in particular have offered unique experiences with multidisciplinary and multicultural content. Among recommendations to African American museums nationally, the Institute of Museum and Library Services (Institute for Museum and Library Services, 2005a) encouraged institutions to deepen partnerships with educators through initiatives such as training teachers to use museum cultural resources and creating teaching materials, including web based materials, for use in the classroom.

Educators across the United States have been implored to embrace a greater inclusion of multicultural history in school curricula. For example, the call for broader emphasis and inclusion of African American history has been boisterous and community driven. Much of the debate centered on the importance and necessity of Black history month celebrations, designations and observances. Proponents of greater inclusion of black history in school curricula grappled with relevancy of the celebrations while bringing attention to the general lack of focus on the cultural subject at other times of the school year (Colon, 2006; Crawford, 2006; McCormick, 2006). Some communities went as far as instituting remedies to perceived overt exclusions through municipal and state mandated policies (Texeira, 2006; Worley, 2006). Creative educators worked around the challenges imposed by curriculum policies, the rigidness of pressures from standardized testing, and segments of community apathy to affect change and improve delivery of multicultural content (Hawley, 2006a; Perry, 2006). History museums such as the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, Tennessee, DuSable Museum in Chicago, Illinois, California African American Museum in Los Angeles, and the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum in Kansas City, Missouri exist as assets for educators in communities who needed to explore issues of diversity.

Founded in 1990, the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum (NLBM) in Kansas City, Missouri has preserved and taught African American baseball history from the late 1800s through the 1960s. In 2006, the museum was designated by the United States Congress as America's home for Negro Leagues Baseball history. A small temporary facility was replaced by a 10,000 square foot exhibition and office space at the Museums at 18th & Vine complex in 1997. This new facility featured a multimedia approach to presenting the history, including film

presentations, interactive video kiosks, and special sound effects paired with hundreds of photographs, artifacts, art and sculpture. On average, the museum has welcomed close to 50,000 visitors annually, with a large contingent of K-12 school groups among them.

Within the cultural study of the Negro Leagues are broad social studies themes exploring issues such as race relations, economics, gender roles, geography, political issues, education, labor, military history, and sports history. The museums exhibitions and programming were designed to explore these issues in detail. The NLBM has also facilitated a flourishing traveling exhibition program along with a number of important international marketing, membership, licensing, and public relations efforts.

In addition, the museum planned to expand its services by creating the John "Buck" O'Neil Education and Research Center. With hopes of final completion by 2010, the proposed $16 million project was a combined historic preservation project and expansion. The Historic Paseo YMCA built in 1914, a historically significant but threatened and abandoned building two city blocks away from the current museum, would be reborn to meet the growth needs of the NLBM. This would include creating publicly accessible library and archives, conference facilities, classrooms and environments to teach math, science, art, literacy, and social studies themes related to baseball history.

Among the NLBM's major accomplishments has been a mutually beneficial partnership forged with the College of Education at Kansas State University (KSU), which focused on developing materials for teaching social studies. (Doswell, Bailey, and Lumley, 2006) Since 1998, the NLBM-KSU partnership produced a number of initiatives and products to assist students and teachers to better understand the social studies themes found in Negro Leagues history. Through this collaboration, the museum discovered that there was great interest among educators seeking resources to motivate students and enhance multicultural content for their classroom lessons. Scholars at KSU subsequently helped develop curriculum materials and lesson plans featuring Negro Leagues history as a platform for teaching American history. The museum facilitated access to a limited number of primary sources for the creation of these materials, which included access to oral history interviews and photography. Scholars also sifted through volumes of secondary source material, publications, and books not designed for use by educators. Secondary school educators were the target audience for lesson plans aligned with regional and national teaching standards as well as national technology standards. The materials

were made accessible through web-based technologies and included resources for diverse learners. (Barragree, 2007; Elliot, 2007)

A great feature of the NLBM-KSU partnership was its fluid nature; easily adaptable so that the resources of the University extend to meet the needs of the NLBM. The benefits of this fluidity were exhibited when a number of important events exposed pressing needs at the museum. In particular, the museum was challenged by key supporters to look more critically at its exhibitions and programs in order to keep pace with innovations in education and exhibition design.

The NLBM had to balance the critique of its exhibitions against the opinions of others and its own self reflection. The staff and leadership of the museum would need to address a number of sobering revelations. Although the museum had reveled in the good will of the National Designation by Congress, positive commentary from visitors, and well received attention from the international press, it had not undergone any major changes to its design since it opened in 1997.

The museum had a number of layers by which it presented historical information and each layer needed some level of evaluation. New information could shift priorities from strictly making an investment in aesthetic changes to something more beneficial for learners in the museum. For example, the exhibition content in the museum, although vetted by national scholars of American history and Negro Leagues history, was written at levels without regard for the broad audience attending the facility. The content was extremely information laden, with heavy emphasis on text and photography. Thus, the full story of the Negro Leagues was not fully reaching a large number of learners who visited. The literature on Negro Leagues Baseball included a number of secondary source materials and folkloric stories. After a decade, the museum needed to reexamine the secondary source material, include new scholarship in the field, and add information gleaned from new primary sources available. The development of the exhibition text benefited from the review of important scholars in the field but did not have the input of teachers and educators. What resulted was an exhibition, expertly crafted, but on an above average reading level that lacked alignment with teaching standards. The deficits in the exhibition content extended to the information available in the computer kiosks utilized by the museum to offer additional information not in exhibition labels. Furthermore, the overall

technology in the museum had worked inconsistently and was becoming obsolete after more than 10 years of operations.

The exhibition and programming efforts of the NLBM described earlier attempted to create opportunities to improve student achievement, increase visitors, and broaden audiences for Negro Leagues history. The museum had worked to meet the challenge set forth by the Institute for Museum and Library Services to position institutions ahead of change and develop strategies that were realistic, affordable, and sustainable in an effort to insure institutional growth. (Institute for Museum and Library Services, 2005a, p.3) The NLBM, however, was beginning to lag behind other institutions with this task, especially as it related to its exhibitions.

The means by which museums attempt to address challenges such as improved audience development and exhibition planning was through formal and informal evaluations. Professional and government bodies such as IMLS, American Association of Museums (AAM), American Association for State and Local History (AASLH), as well as other national and regional associations have created standards for organizational practice to inform museum performance. These bodies also facilitated or offered advice on how to evaluate institutional practices. The evaluation models ranged from informal reviews and visitor surveys, to peer reviewed, accreditation levied formal evaluations on issues of governance, collections management, facilities management, public relations, and interpretive planning. These evaluation tools, however, were limited in offering solutions that assist museums in dealing directly with exhibition content, the core portion of operations that engages audiences directly and would be of chief concern to educators.

Statement of the Problem

There was not an adequate evaluation tool specifically designed to assist history museums in evaluating exhibition content for educational value. In spite of experiencing national success and acclaim, the goal of remaining "ahead of change" was illusive for the NLBM. Since 1997, the NLBM had not undergone any major changes or updates to exhibition content and design. Key stakeholders, most notably foundation donors, challenged the museum to look very critically at the structure of the exhibits in order to maintain the museums appeal as audience demographics change. The museum needed to balance a desire for increased participation from new audiences, such as increased school groups, while maintaining a positive

balanced learning experience for all museum patrons. Tools were needed to evaluate the quality of exhibition content and address the challenges, limitations, and opportunities found in the available primary and secondary resource content of Negro Leagues history.

Purpose of the Study

This study reported on methods by which the NLBM could improve and enhance exhibitions. The study explored current trends and scholarship involving museums and education, museum exhibition evaluation, and Negro Leagues historical scholarship. It was intended to aid the effort by which the museum could continue to attract school aged groups, particularly middle school and high school groups. However, it was presumed that all potential museum audiences would benefit from the attention paid to exhibition and content evaluation.

Target Audience

This study targets museum professionals responsible for interpretation and creation of exhibitions. This includes curatorial staff and museum educators. The study could also inform other museum leaders regarding processes by which quality educational material could be created for the museum environment. The study was prepared primarily to aid in the assessment of exhibition content for the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum's professional staff.

Research Questions

In what ways can the Negro Leagues Baseball improve its exhibitions in both Negro Leagues historical content and content presentation? What are the criteria or questions by which history museums should evaluate content and structure of exhibitions for educational value?

Significance of the Study

As museums struggle to maintain relevancy as attractions and centers for learning, an evaluation of content and presentation are necessary. This study addressed a critical question by which museum professionals and educators could evaluate the value of the museum environment as a place of productive learning. The assessment and evaluation process is critical to the sustainability of any museum institution promoting life-long learning.

Scope and Limitations

This study offered assessment recommendations for history museums to evaluate educational content in their institutions, using the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum as an example. The primary focus was with history museums, but other museum genres, such as art or science museums, may find the information adaptable. The study offered critical thinking questions for the evaluation process and suggests recommendations for implementation. The study implied information on action plans for implementation, but does not include timelines and budgetary considerations. A number of recommendations regarding implementation, planning and other resources were discussed in the conclusion.

Organization of the Study

The dissertation has been arranged in five chapters.

Introduction

Chapter 1 has introduced the study and has included an introduction, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, scope and limitations, organization of the study, and definition of terms.

Review of the Literature

Chapter 2 has reviewed the literature pertaining to museums in education, museum exhibition design and technology, museum evaluation and Negro Leagues historical content.

Research Methodology

Chapter 3 has presented a statement of the methodology utilized, the rationale guiding the study, the method for analyzing the collected data.

Reporting and Analysis of Interview Data

Chapter 4 has presented and analyzed the reporting of information secured through research interviews and literature.

Conclusions and Implications

Chapter 5 has discussed the findings, conclusions, implications, recommendations, and future areas of research found by the study.

Definition of Terms

African American Museum – an institution established for the preservation of African-derived culture. (Association of African American Museums, n.d.)

Afro-Atlantic Culture – construct that defines the societies of the African Diaspora existing between Africa and the United States. These societies exist in countries bordered by the Atlantic Ocean (South American countries, Caribbean countries and the United States) and were created from the remnants of the African slave trade, 1600's-1800s.

Constructivist Museum – museum whose materials are organized on the educational principals of constructivism. "Constructivism represents the view that learning is an active process in which we as learners make meaning—construct concepts—out of the phenomena we encounter." Constructivism also establishes that "the meaning we make—the interpretation of our experience—has validity even if it does not match the accepted truth as presented by any particular culture or profession." (Hein, 2005, p. 357)

Educational Value-"a museums' unique ability to empower visitors to think and learn." (Taylor, 2002, p. 163)

Folklore –"Traditional art, literature, knowledge, and practice that is disseminated largely through oral communication and behavioral example." (American Folklore Society, n.d.)

Formative Evaluation-"a dialogue with the audience is initiated at the outset of the development processes that continues as the exhibition is planned, designed and fabricated. The dialogue provides the information necessary to work toward the goal of creating exhibitions with the maximum level of educational effectiveness, the maximum emotional impact, and a minimum of mechanical and communication shortcomings." (Taylor, 1991, p. 9)

History- "History is an inclusive field that examines what has occurred in the past. Unlike the other social sciences, history is often considered to be one of the humanities because it is open to interpretation." (Dynneson & Gross, 1999, p. 54).

History Museum—A museums whose primary focus is that of collecting, preserving, and interpreting historical information on one or various subject areas.

Historiography- The term has "had to do double duty for both 'historical science' and descriptive accounts of historical writing. (Novick, p. 8)

Major League Baseball – Organized professional business structure for sports teams that began in 1876 with the formation of the National League, then added in 1901 the American League, and continue today as a popular amusement activity.

Multicultural Education – "Multicultural education helps students to understand and appreciate cultural differences and similarities and to recognize the accomplishments of diverse ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic groups. Classroom materials portray these diverse groups realistically and from a variety of perspectives." (Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development, n.d.)

Museum—Institutions noted for "unique contribution to the public by collecting, preserving, and interpreting the things of this world." (American Association of Museums, n.d.)

Negro Leagues Baseball – a business structure representing the highest level of professional baseball available to African American and Afro-Latino athletes during the late 19th century through the mid 20th century. The descriptive term "Negro," now considered archaic, was used in the historical context in names of leagues and businesses (such as "Negro National League"). The term "black baseball" and "African American Baseball" are often interchanged with Negro Leagues baseball. They are used interchangeably in this study.

Oral History—"Oral history is the recording of people's memories. It is the living history of everyone's unique life experiences." (Oral History Society, n.d.)

Outcome Based Evaluation for Museums—"As a systematic measurement of impact, it may be employed at many intervals during and after the delivery of service, providing short and long-

term indications of a project's effectiveness. Outcome-based evaluation is not pure research, nor is it simple data collection. It joins both of those essential processes, however, as a powerful tool in reporting the kinds of differences museums and libraries make among their users." (Sheppard, 2000, p.4)

Primary and Secondary sources – Primary sources are original documents, manuscripts, or objects referenced for historical inquiry. They are attributed someone credible who witnessed are played a role in the historical events. A secondary source is a reporting of these events, usually by someone not associated directly with the event. A well written historical account is typically measured according to balanced use of these sources. "Historians are trained to evaluate all types of information and to seek 'primary' sources when they are available" (Dynneson & Gross, 1999, p. 57-58).

Social studies – "Social studies is an integrated, broad field of learning, drawing upon the concepts and processes of history, the social sciences, and related areas; it features problem-focused inquiry, ethical decision making, and personal or civic action on issues vital to individuals and their society" (Dynneson & Gross, 1999, p.13)

CHAPTER 2 - Review of the Literature

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to report on methods by which the NLBM could improve and enhance exhibitions. Due to the evolving nature of Negro Leagues research and museum education research, resources have continued to be reviewed until the completion of the study in Spring of 2008. The literature review to follow was conducted in two parts; investigating Negro Leagues Baseball historical research and investigating aspects of professional museum practice.

The first part featured a Negro Leagues historiography, or reporting of historical writings and resources on the topic. It was among these available resources from which the NLBM created current exhibitions. A number of new histories have been written since the museum was completed and they were also reviewed. The study identified several types of research materials available on the Negro Leagues. Each type has been listed and their unique nature explained. This scholarship would be analyzed in an effort in an effort to understand available content useable for the NLBM to improve its exhibitions.

The second part of the literature review focused on areas of professional museum practices. This section featured three areas of detailed review on museums and education, museum exhibition design and technology, and museum exhibition evaluation. Each area would be analyzed to find important themes to inform the evaluation of NLBM museum exhibitions for educational value.

Negro Leagues Baseball Historiography

Introduction

The bulk of Negro Leagues baseball scholarship in the last 40 years evolved from oral history accounts, to a quest for statistics, to in-depth analysis of teams and there roles in various communities. (Hogan, 2006; Lanctot 2004). Since the late 1960s, almost a decade after the last teams played, Negro Leagues history enjoyed a slow but steady increase in interest.

The challenge to conducting research has always been the scarcity of primary source material. Primary sources, such as business records, personal letters, and photographic

collections, had been scattered in small collections throughout the United States, Latin America, and Canada. Only a handful of detailed collections are available in repositories such as the Newark Public Library, the National Baseball Hall of Fame, the University of Kansas and the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum. Many of these collections offer rich information, but by comparison to the detailed day to day records of Major League Baseball, a complete picture of the Negro Leagues has been lost to history because it was not saved. The large majority of Negro Leagues Baseball research relies heavily on secondary newspaper accounts, photographs, and oral histories from players.

Much of the coverage of black baseball teams were relegated to the African American weekly newspapers and hidden from the mainstream press until the success of Jackie Robinson and the integration of baseball. Newspapers such as the *Kansas City Call*, *Pittsburgh Courier*, and *Chicago Defender* had national circulation in segregated American during the 1920s-1960s and shared coverage of baseball to all of its readers. In the early years, *Sol White's History of Colored Base Ball*, originally produced in 1907, was a valuable series of articles chronicling black baseball in the late 1800s through the turn of the century, was an early an important secondary source of baseball history. White was a baseball player, team owner, and journalist who supported the promotion of baseball. The Negro Leagues were never completely forgotten after integration, but few detailed books or other scholarship existed that explored the legacy of the teams and players who participated.

The appearance of *Only the Ball Was White* by Robert Peterson in 1970 sparked a renewed interest in the Negro Leagues. Journalist, part time historians, and professional scholars slowly began to collect and build the source material through photographic research, oral histories, and newspaper box scores. The more recent volumes have allowed for deeper investigations in player biographies and team histories. Also, the history and interest in the Negro Leagues increased due to renewed focus on the topic by museums such as the National Baseball Hall of Fame and the creation of the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum.

In reviewing the literature, resources on African American baseball and the Negro Leagues could be categorized by these types--general histories, team/regional histories, biography/autobiography/memoir, reference/statistical histories, photographic histories, and historical fiction/general fiction. These sources include writings and film about the Negro Leagues. Authors and creators employed a number of methods to present the material, featuring

romantic accounts of black baseball or scholarly interdisciplinary analysis. A close review of the material revealed that many sources blended various styles of presentation.

General Histories

General histories have attempted to convey a complete overview of Negro Leagues history. Although a great deal of early secondary materials have existed in the African American press and the collective memories of players and fans, the mainstream public felt they had stumbled upon some forgotten treasure when Robert Peterson's *Only the Ball Was White* debuted in 1970. In many respects, however, Peterson's book was groundbreaking. There had been few volumes of major scholarship on Negro Leagues baseball before Peterson. Among the first detailed volumes on the history of baseball, Harold Seymour's *Baseball: The Early Years*, was published in 1960. Even in the subsequent two volumes that followed in 1971 and 1990, there was only brief discussion of the African American presence in the game. Peterson's work in many ways was a corrective measure to bring attention to an aspect of baseball history that had been overlooked.

Writing for a general audience, Peterson greatly influenced other writers of this period. Peterson took a journalist lens to capturing the story of African American baseball from its early origins in the late 1800s through to the demise of the Negro Leagues in the 1950s. Peterson, however, established important precedents for future volumes on the subject. Peterson was followed by John Holway 's *Voices of the Great Black Negro Leagues* in 1975, and both blended oral history interviews with newspaper accounts, as well as lists and rosters of important individuals and teams. Holway's articles and books were structured for popular consumption and lacked useful research notes and source citations, but featured colorful stories which sparked an interest among baseball fans and historians. Two film documentaries based on the same general framework were produced in the early 1980s. *Only the Ball Was White* in 1980 in Chicago, and *There Was Always Sun Shinning Someplace* in 1984 by Refocus Films allowed viewers to meet the people behind the stories and revel in the oral histories of the many charismatic individuals of black baseball.

Sandwiched between the appearances of those early documentaries, s Donn Rogosin published *Invisible Men* in 1983. Rogosin relied heavily on oral histories, but took great effort to gather information on the connections between teams, players and communities. Rogosin's work

began as an academic dissertation, which began a trend of increased interest in black baseball from the academic community.

In the 1990s, researchers began to create books for school aged audiences, such as Patricia McKissack's *Black Diamond* in 1994. James Riley's *The Negro Leagues*, also published in 1994*,* was a concise history aimed at middle to high school aged audiences that also excelled as useful general history for all audiences.

Into the next decade, interest in black baseball history continued to increase among professional scholars. More rigorously researched and authoritative treatments of Negro Leagues history were the result. Until this time, a great deal of attention was paid by writers to individual profiles of players. The research was a purposeful effort to raise the profile of potential candidates for possible induction into the National Baseball Hall of Fame. The new research material, however, focused on the inner workings of Negro Leagues business affairs and broader connections to African American history. They included Leslie Heaphy's *The Negro Leagues: 1869-1960*, published in 2003, and Neil Lanctot's *Negro League Baseball: The Rise and Ruin of a Black Institution* in 2004. The increased attention among scholars and interest from the general public inspired the National Baseball Hall of Fame to fund a study on black baseball history in 2004, with the hope of building evidence to support inductions to the Hall of Fame of Negro Leagues players. The result was the narrative study *Shades of Glory* in 2006, which also featured a sampling of new statistical data on Negro Leagues game play. This data was used in the 2006 special election by the National Baseball Hall of Fame, resulting in 17 new honorees connected to the Negro Leagues.

A number of new works have also focused on the connections Negro Leagues Baseball has to Latin America. John Virtue's *South of the Color Barrier* in 2007 and Adrian Burgos's *Playing America's Game* in 2007 offered detailed insights to the fluid nature of black baseball players and teams working in Mexico, South America, and the Caribbean. These histories discussed on significant periods of Negro Leagues history across several regions of the western hemisphere.

Team/Regional Histories

By the mid 1980s, scholarship on black baseball history saw less concentration on individual players and their achievements, to more focus on regional studies. These works investigated specific team histories within the context of the communities in which they

operated. The results were a deeper understanding of business structures, community connections, and other important social studies themes relevant to Negro Leagues history.

Significant among the team/regional interpretations was the work of Janet Bruce focusing on Kansas City, Missouri with *Kansas City Monarchs: Champions of Black Baseball*, published in 1987. Robert Ruck followed in 1993 with Sandlot Season, a study of the social and political structures of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and its multiple black baseball teams. Ruck and Bruce served as models for more detailed cultural studies of baseball and black communities which followed. Detroit (Bak1995), Indianapolis (Debono, 1997), Birmingham (Fullerton, 1999) Philadelphia (Lanctot, 2007), and Washington D.C. (Snyder, 2003), all major regions of the country influenced by the Negro Leagues, received authoritative, scholarly analysis and research. With each regional study, the reader was given perspectives of how baseball fit within cultural themes of 20th century African American history such as migration, segregation, economics, industrial, and military history.

Brushing Back Jim Crow by Bruce Adelson in 1998 focused on the integration of baseball after the end of the Negro Leagues. The South Atlantic League, or "Sally League," was a minor league to Major League Baseball with teams in the southeastern United States. Adelson brought into focus the crucial years of the 1950s and 1960s when African American players moved from the Negro Leagues to these previously all white teams of the Sally League. Interviews and news accounts demonstrated the struggles of integration for communities who wanted talented baseball players, but whose community laws and norms prohibited integrated public accommodations, integrated work places, integrated schools, and integrated sports teams.

Reference/Statistical histories

Among the most important offerings in Peterson's, *Only the Ball Was White* (1970) was a set of appendices which featured lists of key player and team affiliations, league standings, abbreviated box scores of Negro Leagues all-star exhibition games and championship contests. It was among the first listings of its kind since the demise of the Negro Leagues and it sparked great interest among baseball researchers to dig further for more detailed information. The challenge, however, as Peterson discovered in his research, was that there was no day-to-day record of black baseball play similar to the decades worth of materials available for Major

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League baseball. The mainstream press did not regularly cover Negro Leagues baseball. The African American weekly newspapers did, but that coverage was often inconsistent.

Creating statistical records and recreating rosters would become extremely important projects to historians hoping to raise the profile of the Negro Leagues to the public. The creation of reference material was also an attempt to legitimize the exploits of the players and teams extolled in the oral histories presented in other volumes. The typical baseball fan had a myriad of measurable data on Major League Baseball through sources such as *The Baseball Encyclopedia, Total Baseball*, periodicals like *The Sporting News*, and more recently, various internet sites. In order for the Negro Leagues players to receive equal level of recognition, many felt that similar source material needed to be developed beyond the oral history accounts that could offer the public some frame of reference about Negro Leagues players' abilities.

A number of significant reference volumes were published since 1990. *The Biographical Encyclopedia of the Negro Baseball Leagues*, by James Riley in 1993 became the most utilized reference book in the cannon of Negro Leagues literature. Riley combined oral history and newspaper research to create the most detailed index and listing of player and team histories. Several hundred biographies included limited baseball statistical information and biographical data, such as birthdates and birthplaces. The majority of Riley's entries, however, featured players who participated before 1955. *The Negro Leagues Book* , edited by Dick Clark and Larry Lester in 1994, provided an additional series of reference tables, lists, and information, including team rosters from the late 1800s to the 1950s. John Holway edited *The Complete Book of Baseball's Negro Leagues: The Other Half of Baseball history* in 2004 with further insight on statistics and information on exhibition games between Negro Leagues and Major League teams. When the National Baseball Hall of Fame commissioned *Shades of Glory*, it was accompanied by what was believed to be the most detailed statistical research study ever produced on the Negro Leagues. However, only portions of the research were released in the book with career information on select players. The full statistical report commissioned by the Hall of Fame had not yet been published.

In spite of the hundreds or reference entries in these volumes, they were not without limitations. Completely detailed entries on every player could not be achieved because of the difficulties in finding the material needed. There were also differing statistical data because each historian employed different methods and philosophies in compiling information. Even with the

detailed information provided by Riley, limited provided detailing players' and league officials' personal lives or genealogical information. Finally, there was an underlying debate among researchers about the historical scope of the Negro Leagues existence. Did it effectively end in 1947 after integration, 1955, 1960, or when the last team folded? What records of players should be included in reporting on the leagues? Most historians stopped their research around 1955, but it was known that the business structure of the Negro Leagues existed until 1960, with at least one team continuing operations into the 1970s. These matters were complicated by the fact that there were a number of the "younger" baseball veterans alive and actively promoting themselves and Negro Leagues history in various communities. However, there was very little reference or research information available to verify their play.

In 1994, a very important anthology was published on baseball journalist. Jim Riesler produced *Black Writers-Black Baseball* as an anthology of articles produced by reporters working for the African American weekly newspapers who covered the Negro Leaguers. Journalist such as Wendell Smith, Sam Lacey, and many others were often overlooked for their contributions of telling the stories of the Negro Leagues. They also gave critical editorials which helped shape arguments for the integration of baseball and society.

An important detailed resource for understanding the integration of baseball has been *Crossing the Line: Black Major Leaguers, 1947-1959* edited by Larry Moffi and Jonathan Kronstadt in 1996. The process of how close to 120 black and Latino baseball players would enter Major League Baseball and in affect, integrate their communities was carefully outlined through a number of brief biographies and statistical records.

Photographic Histories

For all the information that researchers have attempted to gather on black baseball history, the most abundant source material has been photography. A large number of archival photographs survived through private collections, libraries, museums, historical societies, newspapers, and former players who maintained them. Photography proved to be an effective and popular medium for showcasing black baseball history. Photographs were coveted among researchers and collectors for their informational value and commodity value in the sports memorabilia markets. All books on the Negro Leagues baseball include important photographs, but a handful of key books used photography as primary reference sources.

A number of important photographic book collections have been published. *The Negro Baseball Leagues: A Photographic History* by Phil Dixon in1988 included close to 300 images with historical text. It offered a balance of images and documents from various photographers and collections from players, dignitaries. *The Negro Baseball Leagues* appeared in 2005 and featured the photography of Dr. Earnest Withers, Memphis studio and news photographer noted for capturing important images of the Civil Rights movement. Withers paid close attention to the connections of community and baseball, capturing essential and rare images of players and fans enjoying baseball. *Jackie Robinson: An Intimate Portrait* by widow Rachel Robinson in 1998 featured a collection of personal family and baseball photographs compiled by the Robinson family. Jackie Robinson, as the first African American to integrate Major League Baseball in the modern era, had become the most iconic and most written about black baseball player. The book served as a valuable historical resource and touching tribute to Robinson.

Biography/Autobiography/Memoir

The broader story of black baseball history had been effectively narrowed in a number of sources which focused on individual experiences of players and owners. The Negro Leagues in particular received mention in the autobiographies of Jackie Robinson, titled *I Never Had It Made,* and Roy Campanella, titled *It's Good to Be Alive*. Both were among the first African Americans to play in the modern era of Major League Baseball, but each book dealt briefly with each man's experience in the Negro Leagues. LeRoy "Satchel" Paige, the most storied pitcher of the Negro Leagues, treated his life with humor and folklore in *Maybe I'll Pitch Forever*. Substantial biographies would soon appear in the 1980s and 1990s on Negro League founder Andrew "Rube" Foster by Robert Cottrell and pre-Negro Leagues legend Moses Walker by David Zang. Power hitting star Josh Gibson inspired several biographers, including William Brashler, John Holway, and Mark Ribwosky. Popular player and baseball ambassador John "Buck" O'Neil penned an autobiography in 2004 titled *I Was Right On Time.* A number of books written for lesser known players have also been published.

Few individual volumes focused on Negro Leagues team owners and officials. Their stories, however, illuminate discussions on race and class from the Negro Leagues. Effa Manley, part owner of the Newark Eagles, was written about in *Queen of the Negro Leagues* by James Overmeyer. Manley was a unique figure in the hierarchy of the Negro Leagues, as a women and

as a person of mixed racial ancestry. *Barnstorming to Heaven* was published posthumously by Alan Pollock in 2006. The book transcended a number of categories, but was primarily a memoir of Syd Pollock, the well respected Jewish owner of the popular, yet controversial Clowns franchises, and the author's father. The Pollock story illuminated discussion of many important issues in black baseball history such as race relations, stereotypes, folklore, and the demise of the Negro Leagues. The Clowns survived the end of the Negro Leagues, and their legacy of vaudeville like entertainment mixed with baseball greatly influenced the perception of the Negro Leagues, especially in fictional interpretations of the history.

Historical Fiction/General Fiction

Negro Leagues baseball has been referenced to varying degrees of success and accuracy in fiction books, theater plays and film. It is true that many in the general public have been introduced to Negro Leagues baseball through fictionalized accounts. One of the earliest modern interpretations of black baseball came shortly after the appearance of Peterson's *Only the Ball Was White.(1970) The Bingo Long Traveling All-Stars & Motor Kings* by William Brashler in 1973 was a gritty fictional tale of an exhibition black baseball team in the late 1930s. The book was subsequently made into a major theatrical film of the same title in 1976. The film adaptation, however, transformed some of the harsh realities of segregated baseball depicted in the book, into a humor infused heroic story. For several years, it was the only major film adaptation of Negro Leagues baseball, and became the primary interpretation for many baseball enthusiasts, much to the chagrin of many baseball historians and former players (Doswell, 2007). New television features would appear in the 1980s and 1990s, including the docudrama *Don't Look Back: The Life and Times of Satchel Paige on* ABC Television in 1981, and *Soul of the Game* on HBO in 1998, a fictionalized drama focused on Satchel Paige, Josh Gibson, and Jackie Robinson in the 1940s.

Other fictionalized novels would appear in the 1990s. *Hanging Curve* by Troy Soos (1999) confronted a number of historical themes surrounding baseball, race riots, and lynching in 1920s St. Louis. Peter Rutkoff's *Shadowball* (2001) featured a story set in 1920s Chicago, with a hypothetical scenario of Negro Leagues founder and Chicago team owner Andrew "Rube" Foster attempting to help the white major leagues integrate baseball.

Other books and film used Negro Leagues baseball as an important backdrop to understanding characters and issues. A Pulitzer Prize winning treatment was *Fences* in 1985, written as part of a series of plays by Pittsburgh native August Wilson. In *Fences*, the lead character, Troy Maxim, was a former Negro Leagues star who retired to become a sanitation worker. *Finding Buck McHenry* by Alfred Slote in 1993 was a popular youth novel which was adapted for television on Showtime Network in 2003, albeit with major changes to its ending. The main story, however, remained the same; a young man, struggling to learn baseball, discovers that his school custodian may have been a famous baseball star in the Negro Leagues.

Conclusion

This first section of the literature review has established the historiography of Negro Leagues baseball. It has established an understanding of the varieties of secondary content resources currently available for use by researchers and educators. The study demonstrated a wide variety of resources with great potential and challenges to assist with the development of effective exhibitions for the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum.

The next section of the literature review will discuss import museum practices relevant to assessing educational value in history museum exhibitions.

Museum Practice

Part two of the literature review will focus attention on three relevant areas of museum practice; museums and education, museum exhibition design and technology, and museum exhibition evaluation.

Museums and Education

Museums have been viewed justifiably as important to education in society. Museums were viewed as inherently educational by their very existence. The role of museums in education has been debated over several lines of inquiry, but it was universally agreed that museums were educational. (Hein, 2005; Taylor, 2002) As Graeme Talboys explained:

> It takes no great leap of the imagination to see that museums could and should be central
> to good education, just as education could and should be central to all museums. If this is

the case, then people must have access to museums, just as they must have access to their own memories. Without access, memory is worthless; it has no function. Without access, we are denied the experiences that are the foundation of education. Nor is it sufficient that memories be paraded without understanding and interpretation, for what we come to understand of the past (be that personal or social) shapes how we react to the present and shapes the future. (Talboys, p. 8-9)

Allowing access to collections and information has been an important mission for many historical institutions, archives and museums, but what were the most affective means of granting access? Samuel Taylor (2002) described a dichotomy in museum practice in how access to collections was achieved and historical content delivered; the information model versus the experience model:

> The "information model" describes museums focused primarily on their message and their resources--what to say and what to offer to the audience. The challenge is seen as how best to deliver the message and how to maximize the resources available to do this. An "experience model" describes museums aware of their visitors, tuned to their needs, their interests, and their experiences in (and with) the institution. Here the challenge is seen as understanding how to maximize the intersection of these aspects of visitors' lives with the institution's mission. (Taylor, 2002, p. 163)

Taylor favored the experience model, noting that it represented a paradigm shift in how museums conceived their role in informal education. Museums following the information model were locked into imitating school classrooms. Even with the challenges modern schools have faced in promoting student achievement, museums would never be able to teach students as effectively as schools. In Taylor's view, museums needed to shun those comparisons and descriptions, but promote the unique ways museums facilitated intellectual growth and cultural enrichment for learners:

> Museums' educational power will never be fully realized by obsessing on what information visitors should know. Museums will be valued as indispensable educational institutions only when their operational focus takes one step back from information and embraces experience, offering environments where visitors can practice--on their own terms--how (not what) to think. (Taylor, 2002, p. 165)

George Hein proclaimed that there were "moral, social, and political consequences" inherit in accepting museums as educational institutions (Hein, 2005). Of the myriad of ways learners engage knowledge and create meaning in museums, Hein believed a constructivist approach was the most powerful. Constructivist theory applied in museum settings featured two major components. First, learning was viewed as an "active process" where meaning was constructed out of personal experiences for learners. Second, the meaning constructed by learners was valid, no matter how it aligned with "accepted truths" about the subject. According to Hein, this required acknowledgement of different perspectives from different cultural groups and diminished any notions of "absolute truths" about any subject. (Hein, 2005, p. 359) This represented "progressive" ideology for Hein. A constructivist museum was progressive in the theoretical tradition of educational philosopher John Dewey, who believed that a good education built a cognizant, critically thinking citizenry. If museums accept this premise, then they accept their ability to influence social action. Hein believed that "educational work" in museums, which included the presentation of exhibition content and the provision of educational programming and services, needed to be "assessed for its potential contribution to empowering citizens to make informed decisions in a democratic society." (Hein, 2005, p. 361)

In spite of Taylor and Hein's broad and progressive view of the role of museums in education outside the formal realm of schools, there have been a number of pivotal studies which pointed to the power of history museums to facilitate student achievement. These studies also demonstrated the importance of historical study to achieving life long learning among school age students. A definition of history can be simplified to "a written report of the past, and not the actuality of times gone by," but it is commonly believed that the writing of history is not immune to the influence of context and biases of the times in which it is reported. (Paxton,1999). What would seem problematic for teachers, however, created critical thinking teaching opportunities for educators with their students. In studying the needs of history students in special education, Okolo suggested:

> History is more than a collection of dates, people, and events; it is a rich field of inquiry in which a full and verifiable set of facts is rarely available. The historical record on which we base our conclusions is usually incomplete. History could be written from a

variety of different perspectives, depending on the sources on which the author relies. Thus, history is a problem-solving, interpretative activity. (Okolo, 2007)

However, history textbooks and textbook based curricula, the fundamental secondary resource by which teachers train students, have been viewed as limiting and even inhibiting learning in the classroom. Resources from museums could offer remedies to these classroom challenges.

There are many examples of museums providing materials which assist teachers in the classroom to contextualize specific subject matter. Providing curriculum material was often a powerful way to marry the school audience to the museum. In developing and examining historical content from the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum, Barragree (2007) and Elliot (2007) demonstrated examples of tools museums could employ to assist learners. They created handbooks exploring the benefits of museum/school collaborative partnerships and creating cognitively accessible museum lesson plans for teachers. Providing standards-based curriculum materials and lesson plans which featured tools that assisted teachers in reaching the widest range of learners in the classroom, no matter their ability or "readiness" level, were proactive ways in which museums engaged teachers to utilize the rich materials available through archives and exhibitions.

Bell and Zirkel-Rubin (2001) utilized the internet and historical material from the National Baseball Hall of Fame to tackle the classroom problem of inert knowledge. In many subject areas, but especially history, researchers have struggled to find strategies that would improve knowledge retention among students. Inert knowledge, or inert ideas, was information taught in classrooms but not immediately utilized and contextualized in any meaningful way by students. Thus, retention of the learned material fades away. Bell and Zirkel-Rubin, however, pointed to educational models employing "situated learning theory" as effective means for learning retention:

> Situated learning is a theory claiming that knowledge, context and action are essentially intertwined. According to situated learning theory, students best develop their understanding of a domain by actively using knowledge in an environment that allows them to apply what they have learned in multiple ways. Through situated learning, knowledge becomes similar to a set of tools, and students learn the different conditions under which they can use these tools. Knowledge transfer is enhance by practice in

varied contexts; through its application in different settings and situations, knowledge becomes abstract enough that students can detach it from the context in which it was originally acquired and lean to apply it to new problems. (Bell and Zirkel-Rubin, 2001, p. 22).

Museums could, and have in many instances, offered situated learning environments and experiences for learners to engage history and retain the lessons learned effectively. For Bell and Zirkel-Rubin, the reality for many museums was that providing educational programming, directed experiences or some level of instructional modeling was necessary to insure effective learning. This, in some respects, challenges the experience model of museums, suggesting that more structure was needed within the experience to insure a valued learning outcome for visitors.

Several schools in districts nationwide have taken advantage of unique learning environment made possible through collaborations with museums. The Institute for Museum and Library Services has implored museums to aggressively serve the school audience in the hope of creating a culture supportive of life long learning. Education should stand as a core value for museums, and the needs of learners should sit at the center of all educational services and provisions. (Institute for Museum and Library Services, 2005a; Institute for Museum and Library Services, 2005b)

In spite of these examples, Alan Marcus (2008) felt that school museum partnerships were "underdeveloped." He departed somewhat from Taylor and Hein which supported a less formal role for museums in education. Marcus suggested museums rethink approaches to training teachers as adult learners. School/museum collaborations could be maximized if museums taught pedagogical methods, in additional to historical content information, that could serve as tools for teachers with students in inside the museum and the classroom. (Marcus, 2008, p. 55-57). School/museum collaborations should aim for more than simply bringing students through the doors of the facility, but bringing teachers and museum educators together intellectually in the service of students. (Sheppard, 1997)

Museums should become available resources teachers could employ to engage students in interpretive activities within a contextual framework to which they could apply the knowledge gained in the classroom (Okolo, 2007). Marcus (2008)extended this view, explaining the power museums possessed to inspire learning:

Museums can provide teachers and their students with resources that complement the school curriculum with experiences that make history come alive. They engage students with content in a way unavailable in the classroom through the artifacts they display, narratives they tell, and recreations of the past they exhibit. More specifically, incorporating museum visits into the traditional history curriculum can help students to develop more sophisticated and comprehensive historical understanding. Aspects of historical thinking that are particularly suited to museums include the development of historical empathy, the opportunity to interpret the historical evidence that museums present and the support for helping students examine the museums themselves and how these sites make sense of the past. (Marcus,2008, p.p. 58-59)

A concept of great interest to museums attempting to improve presentation of historical content was the perception of a museum as social construct. The museum itself should be viewed as a source to be examined critically. "Students can consider museums as subjective, value-laden organizations that influence and or influenced by society," according to Marcus. What was critical point here was that museums are often perceived by the public as infallible sources of information. Marcus noted research which suggested such:

While Americans visit museums often, their encounters may lack any critical analysis of these sites. They are seen as trustworthy sources of historical information, even more trustworthy than college history professors, high-school teachers, and non-fiction books. It is imperative that teachers prepare students to pursue a lifetime of museum visits intelligently and analytically. (Marcus,2008, p. 60)

Museum content infallibility, however, is a myth. Although authoritative, museums still deserve critical scrutiny. With the exception of Marcus, there was little discussion in the literature on museum programming, such as school collaborations, to suggest that institutions were closely examining their content based on inquiries by teachers and students.

Another important concept described by Marcus was historical empathy. Marcus referred to research focused on how students should frame their thinking when investigating history. The two components of historical empathy were perspective recognition and caring. Perspective recognition allowed for an intellectual exploration of the attitudes, beliefs, and intentions of people of the past as a means for explaining their actions. Caring was described as an emotional connection to people in the past that included connections to modern times.

The ability to facilitate both intellectual and emotional reflections has made museums unique and important places for learning in society. Part of the educational ethos of museums, according to Talboys, must be to allow this level of reflective inquiry to flourish:

> Museums are places for non-rational and intuitive as well as logical and analytical approaches. Each informs the other. Museums have a responsibility to help people acquire the skills to read such distinctive sites as museums, as well as the artifacts they contain. Perception, feeling, and imagination should be fostered just as much as analysis, critical evaluation, and communication. Thinking historically and aesthetically should be encouraged just as much as thinking scientifically. Museums should work to develop these complementary skills in their visitors; in addition, the development of skills should be given precedence over the acquisition of facts. We all know too much. We feel too little. We understand even less. (Talboys, 2005, p. 81)

Museum Exhibition Design and Technology

The design of exhibitions and the methods by which content is delivered requires thoughtful consideration in the museum's efforts to inspire learners. Exhibition design could dictate what resources would be available for use by a museum educator and could set the tone of the intellectual and emotional connections made with visitors. For planning educational initiatives, Talboys outlined what museum educational staff members should be cognizant of within the design intent of museum exhibitions before planning any educational inititative:

> It may be that the museum wishes to present a serious and studious air, which would be at odds with large parties of students wandering around making a great deal of noise. Although you may be aiming to relax such an atmosphere, you will have to start with that situation. On the other hand, you may have an extremely relaxed museum and have to contend with user groups that feel uncomfortable with such informality. Whatever the case, remember that a museum is a place of the muses. And learning to work quietly at appropriate times is no bad thing." (Talboys, 2005, p. 80)

The exhibition atmosphere described by Talboys was often reflected in the way artifacts and resources were placed and contextualized within the exhibition. For example, artifacts presented in sealed cases with little labeling would tend to receive less interest from visitors than items presented with detailed supporting labels. Talboys saw a trend of "over contextualization"

in modern exhibits, but most visitors, especially teachers with their students, gravitated to these displays because less effort was required to interpret and understand them. Even within the experience model of museum presentation, where visitors create their own valid meanings of information, the experience is ultimately shaped by the exhibition's design, choice of presented materials, and interpretive information to launch the educative process for visitors; thus framing the intellectual discussion. It was important, then, to strike an appropriate balance in the presentation of historical content, including factors of physical placement, lighting, exhibition labeling, and other means of delivering content. (Talboys, p. 81)

A major tool in the delivery of exhibition content is technology. Technology is an all encompassing term for museums, describing what might be considered non-traditional means of adding content to exhibitions. Traditional approaches in history museums would include displaying artifacts, photographs, manuscripts and film accompanied by written labels or descriptive narrative. Technology in exhibits often included the use of computers, special lighting equipment, special sound equipment, various fixed and portable devices, and other special effect techniques to deliver information, photography and film. Form many patrons, use of technology in museums is often synonymous to the term "interactive," as the equipment employed either requires interface of some level by the visitor, allowing them to connect with the experience in an active way; more than a passive reading of text labels, looking at artifacts, or watching film. Technology and interactivity can be as simple, or "low-tech," as flip cards with questions and answers, or as complex, or "high-tech," as the use of lasers and holograms to present film images. No matter the spectrum of use, technology adds other layers and dimensions to the delivery of content and has the potential to broaden and deepen understanding of presented materials.

A debate has brewed about the level to which technology and interactivity should be used in presenting historical content. The continuing advancements in computers and other media equipment have expanded the boundaries for museums to use technology in exhibitions. Museums have felt pressured to reach out to audiences attracted to these media in other forms, such as movie theaters, amusement parks, the internet and video games. Younger patrons, especially, have come to expect a certain level of complexity and interactivity, to which many museums have felt they must also provide in order to stimulate learning among this group. Critics have warned that some museums were blurring the line between the educational mission

of the institution and entertainment goals, thus diminishing the intellectual value of the museum experience. The literature mentioned exhibition design firms such as BRC Imagination Arts of California, who were recognized as incorporating the most innovative and controversial uses of technology into their museum commissions in an effort to take the experience museum model to even positive levels that assured museum sustainability. (Clark, 2006; Engle, 2006)

Museum Exhibition Evaluation

Many museums embraced various evaluation processes and measurements to guide decisions about museum practice, including the use of technology or creation of exhibitions. In an effort to address the research question of defining what criteria or questions history museums should evaluate content and structure of exhibitions for educational value, there was no literature which specifically detailed criteria for history museums. However, there were a number of informative sources and studies which addressed exhibition evaluation and interpretation in a broad sense (Taylor, 1991; Weil, 2002), and addressed education criteria with specific guidelines (American Association of Museums, 2005; Brochu, 2003; Talboys, 2005) The importance of utilizing evaluation processes for all aspects of institutional operations evolved over several years.

In discussing the role of evaluations in science museum exhibitions, Alan Friedman (in Taylor, 1991) explained that, historically, the managerial hierarchies of museums were hindrances to the advancement of establishing evaluation friendly culture in museum practice. Traditions from the 18th Century placed curators--or content specialist--in collection-based research museums, at the head of most institutions. As natural history and art museums evolved, curators placed more emphasis on their research scholarship than on educational outreach. As a result, the creation of exhibition content was ruled over by the curator who wrote script for designers to create exhibitions, with no input from educational staff. This approach limited the collaborative possibilities for exhibition designers, museum educators, and other staff to contribute and it completely ignored contributions and opinions from visitors. Curators seemed to inherit a sense of infallibility in their scholarship, designers were seen more as artisan/craftsmen hired to complete specific tasks, and anyone else who served as advocates for the educational needs of visitors had to simply work with what curators presented for interpretation. "The idea that the educational effectiveness of exhibitions could be enhanced

through systematic evaluation was not widely accepted," according to Friedman. Questioning the educational value of exhibitions was seen as an affront to curatorial scholarship and was ignored. Science museums moved away from this structure, incorporating project team approaches to exhibition development. Only recently have history and art museums begun to embrace a more proactive approach to evaluation. (Taylor, 1991, p. 76-78)

One evaluation style that could be employed by museums was formative evaluation. As described by Taylor for science museum exhibits, in formative evaluation "a dialogue with the audience is initiated at the outset of the development processes that continues as the exhibition is planned, designed and fabricated." (Taylor, 1991, p. 9) Teaming among museum staff members, creation of models, and engaging the audiences for opinions were the hallmarks of this evaluative form. Taylor outlined three steps to the evaluation process:

(1) To set objectives that are both cognitive (the facts you want patrons to learn) and affective (attitude change or emotions the exhibit should inspire).

(2) Create a detailed schedule or timeline for exhibit development

(3) Conduct detailed front-end analysis, such as visitor surveys, focus groups, and other strategies to gather audience input in exhibition development. (Taylor, 1991, p. 14)

Weil (2000) noted that museums, like other companies in not-for-profit sectors, were in need of formalizing evaluation processes as an important demonstration of accountability to patrons and donors. There were two reasons why the demand for evaluation had increased. First, museums began to outreach and extend their educational and business interest outside the walls of the institution and have solicited support for these endeavors. Secondly, the public perception of museums evolved to have the expectation of becoming more than just places benefiting from a benevolent public, to productive "social enterprises." A "for profit" company, or "commercial enterprise," differed from a "not-for-profit," or "social enterprise" only in these basic ways summarized by Weil:

(1) in the nature of the bottom lines that they pursue

(2) in how they price the products and/or services that they distribute and

(3) in how they acquire replacement resources to make up for those depleted through distribution." (Weil, 2000, p.12).

In the case of museums, institutions would evaluate a wide range of organizational components; from general business practices, event planning, to the creation of exhibitions. The

point for Weil, however, was that museums must adopt a culture of accountability, which in turn embraced the role of evaluation. "If [museums] are to compete for both public and private funds in an accountability-driven environment," stated Weil, "they must develop evaluation practices that provide the most compelling picture of the impact of their services." (Wei, 2000, p. 10)

Outcome-based evaluation would be the most effective management tool for museums, according to Weil. Outcome-based evaluation measured more than completion of tasks to achieve stated goals, but also measured the effectiveness and value of the exercise as it was employed.

The value of evaluation processes and the establishment of best practice criteria are very important in the museum industry. The American Association of Museums (AAM) exists as a standard setting member organization for museums in the United States. As a means of insuring standards of high museum quality, it developed a set of guidelines for accepted best practices among museums. To be peer reviewed and evaluated as having fully met these guidelines, or "accreditation standards," would allow a museum to be "accredited" by the AAM.

Accreditation is not required for AAM institutional membership, but it was strongly encouraged for museums to consider an evaluation process that insures best practices were met in the industry. The path to achieving accreditation comes through the AAM's Museum Assessment Programs (MAP) review process. Four tracts of MAP Assessment programs have been available to AAM member institutions; Collections Management, Governance, Public Dimensions, and overall Institutional assessments. Each tract followed the same basic format of institutional self review, through a series of questionnaires and interviews, then AAM staff member site visit, and ultimately a peer review from a surveyor selected by AAM. MAP was designed to offer broad, sweeping reviews to assist museums in establishing professional culture and professional practices within their operations.

The AAM listed its Accreditation Standards as a guidepost for every aspect of museum practice. For example, this list notes the criteria for Education & Interpretation standards:

(1) The museum clearly states its overall educational goals, philosophy, and messages, and demonstrates that its activities are in alignment with them.

(2) The museum understands the characteristics and needs of its existing and potential audiences and uses this understanding to inform its interpretation.

(3) The museum's interpretive content is based on appropriate research.

(4) Museums conducting primary research do so according to scholarly standards.

(5) The museum uses techniques, technologies, and methods appropriate to its educational goals, content, audiences, and resources.

(6) The museum presents accurate and appropriate content for each of its audiences.

(7) The museum demonstrates consistent high quality in its interpretive activities.

(8) The museum assesses the effectiveness of its interpretive activities and uses those results to plan and improve its activities. (American Association of Museums, 2005)

Along the same line as AAM Education and Interpretation Standards, Talboys (2005) described seven basic rules for museums in implementing effective educational outreach to the general public and to school audiences. Talboys rules governed several important considerations to be made by museum education staff in conceiving and evaluating the use of artifacts, resources, and exhibitions for educational value:

(1) No educational development of a resource should threaten its integrity or existence.

(2) No educational development of a resource should be made for the sake of mere development.

(3) All educational development should act to instill in teachers and students an appropriate reverence for the resource, the requisite skills for using the resource to its fullest extent, and the confidence to do so. It is no use offering access to the resource unless teachers, students and other visitors are first taught how to use it correctly.

(4) Education is a condition of human existence. It does not take place only in formal, guided sessions, Therefore, every aspect of a visit to a museum has educational potential—from finding the building to the visit to the souvenir shop before leaving. In that case, every aspect of a visit should be given careful scrutiny to ensure that where educational potential exists, it is fully realized in accordance with genuine need.

(5) The educational development of the resource should not be done in an aggressive or competitive manner. At all times there should be maintained an environment of highly informed dedication with an atmosphere of openness. Learned reserve and the maintenance of a mystique is what keeps people away from museums. The intention must be to draw visitors in, make them feel comfortable, and send them away felling enhanced by their visit.

(6) Whatever form of provision you decide to develop, it must have relevance to visitors, teachers and students, and it must avoid replicating anything they can do in their normal

environment. That is, use what is unique about your resource and present it in a unique way. Museums are not three-dimensional text books. What you offer must complement what is done in schools.

 (7)Make all programs of work enjoyable. This works at two levels. On the surface, all work should be interactive and engaging-challenging both physical and mental attributes. However, this must be combined with activities that aim to ensure that those who engage in them learn or acquire something new.   If a visitor or student has such an experience, they leave the museum with a sense of achievement and that, for some, can have a profound affect on their lives. (Talboys,2005, p. 85-86)

Brochu (2003) outlined the role and purpose for providing interpretive services for nature sites that could be applied to evaluation planning for history museums and historic sites. Interpretation was defined as "a communication process that forges intellectual and emotional connections between the interest of the visitor and the meanings inherent in the resource." (Brochu, 2003, p. 2-3) Effective interpretation could facilitate appropriate goals for social action, as Hein (2005) suggested, for the museum or site.

> Although the altruistic nature of most interpretive efforts is laudable, the real reason for providing interpretive services is to build support for the agency and to encourage a sense of stewardship for the resource. In other words, interpretation should go beyond making connections to the next logical step of making a difference. (Brochu, 2003, p. 3).

Brochu listed a number of different approaches to planning for interpretation, driven either by audience, institution budgets, available resources, specific objectives, or overall strategic planning. All of these approaches, however, would have to be married with five essential components of interpretive planning, known as the "5-M" Model:

(1) Management : "nuts and bolts"—mission, goals, policies, issues, and operational resources.

(2) Message: ideas that will be communicated to the visiting public (themes, subthemes, story lines).

(3) Market: audience—users and supports current and anticipated; implications of targeted market segments and market position.

(4) Mechanics: Large and small scale physical properties that have some effect or influence on what is being planned.

(5) Media: the most effective methods, given the mechanics of the situation, for communicating messages to targeted segments in support of management objectives. (Brochu, 2003, p. 4-5)

Conclusion

The second part of the literature review has established import museum practices relevant to assessing educational value in history museum exhibitions. Museums were seen as having an essential role in education, with the use of technology growing in importance to creating educational value. The literature also established the important role of evaluations to insuring educational value in exhibitions. Although criteria specifically written for history exhibition evaluation were not present in the literature, a number of other useful examples were explored. These could be utilized for effective assessment of exhibitions.

CHAPTER 3 - Research Methodology

Introduction

Chapter 3 explains the research methodology used in this study. It will explain the evolution of the research process, the methods by which data where reviewed and collected, and how data was analyzed for this study. A multi-step research processed evolved for use in the study, featuring detailed literature reviews and interviews from educators, historians, museum professionals, and a grant awarding foundation expert.

Professional Context of the Study/Research Bias

This study was a by product of a dynamic educational partnership between the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum (NLBM) and Kansas State University (KSU) College of Education. Since 1998, the NLBM-KSU partnership had created a number of programs and projects designed to assist the NLBM in providing educational services to teachers and students. These included teacher's guides, web sites, and curriculum materials. In addition, scholars at KSU had begun researching, validating, and creating handbooks for use by museum professionals and educators highlighting the work done in the partnership. Among the scholars leading the research efforts and guiding the creation of these products was the Curator and Education Director, a role which I had served since 1995 for the NLBM. My professional background included experience as a classroom teacher, research historian, and museum professional. This study began as a project to develop a comprehensive textbook on Negro Leagues Baseball history.

A great feature of the NLBM-KSU partnership was its fluid nature; easily adaptable so that the resources of the University extended to meet the needs of the NLBM. The benefits of this fluidity were exhibited when a number of important events exposed pressing needs at the museum. In particular, the museum was challenged by key supporters to look more critically at its exhibitions and programs in order to keep pace with innovations in education and exhibition design.

First, the museum experienced a major staffing shift after the passing of its chairman John "Buck" O'Neil in October 2006. The liaison from the NLBM to the College of Education at Kansas State University, the Curator and Education Director, was elevated to Deputy Director and Chief Curator. The duties of the new position caused a strain on time and attention I paid to education and exhibition initiatives, which facilitated a need for increased involvement and assistance from KSU. The NLBM had a staff of nine full time employees and one part time employee. However, like many small to medium sized museums across the country, only one employee was solely dedicated to educational programming, exhibition management, and collections management.

Secondly, the NLBM allocated a significant investment in funds to improve the exhibitions. The NLBM Board of Directors approved close to $500,000 multiphase plan to address several areas of the exhibition in need of replacement or repair. At the time of the allocation, the only perceived needs for the museum were aesthetic and functional changes, such as lighting, new labels, equipment repairs, signage, and adding new artifacts from storage. .

Finally, the museum submitted but did not receive support from a major grant request towards a portion of the proposed Buck O'Neil Education and Research Center project. The grant request was intended to specifically provide scholarship dollars for area middle school students to participate in Center programming when it was completed. The solicited granting organization strongly encouraged the NLBM to reconsider the proposal as the initiative, in their opinion, lacked a level of innovation related to student education. Furthermore, the NLBM should look more critically at its exhibitions and educational offerings to insure that they were not static, but keeping pace with the changing needs and demographics of audiences it served, especially school audiences.

The timing of these new challenges and opportunities, and the need to address evaluation needs at the NLBM, dictated a change in focus for the study. The research began to evolve away from the organization of Negro Leagues historical material for educators, to an investigation to address concerns about the sustainability of the institution and its delivery of educational content and services for the public. The museum had several issues to evaluate in its exhibitions, which had not been thoroughly scrutinized since they were completed in 1997. The allocation of resources to implement change needed reconsideration and new priorities needed to be set for the museum. The purpose of this study changed to address those issues.

Evolution of the Research Method

The NLBM-KSU partnership had established a thorough training in creating educational products using research and development methods. Scholars were employing a qualitative research approach for applying modified versions of the ten-step research and design (R&D) cycle to create and validate educational products. (Borg and Gall, 1989) Part of the R&D cycle included establishing criteria for and identifying experts to inform the research and creation of educational products. Another area of the R&D cycle called for a detailed literature review of the topic to be investigated. These two portions of the research for this study had begun, but were modified as the needs of the museum changed. A different research approach was needed to successfully complete the study.

The study featured qualitative research, influenced by a number of research methods, including research & development, narrative research and action research. (Gay, Mills, and Airasian, 2006) Action research has as its purpose to effect change in an institutional environment being studied, which would very much be in line with the newly established purpose for the NLBM. Narrative research gathers data about people's lives and practices, which was evident in understanding the work of the experts initially identified for interviews in the study. However, the study did not follow any one method, but a combination of methodologies.

Ultimately, the study employed a generalized qualitative research analysis strategy in three steps. This would include a purposive sampling of experts to be interviewed, using a variety of general structured research questions. The questioning, however, was flexible enough to allow for a level of open-ended inquiry and discussion to extract deeper information from the participants. The study identified themes which emerged from the literature review and the interview data. This was a non-linear process, as literature review and interviews were being research at times simultaneously. Finally, the study triangulated the data collected with the knowledge of the researcher to analyze the themes and draw conclusions from the study. (Gay, Mills, and Airasian, 2006)

Steps of the Research Methodology

Step One: Literature Review

In step one of the research method, a detailed review of relevant literature was conducted. The literature review featured two parts. The first part was a Negro Leagues Baseball

historiography, or review of historical writings. This essay was written to offer a detailed review of Negro Leagues Baseball scholarship. The Negro Leagues Baseball Museum (NLBM) relied heavily on many of these secondary sources to create its exhibitions. A thorough review and investigation of new scholarship was necessary in the effort to improve exhibition content at the NLBM.

The second part of the literature review examined sources on museum practice, specifically evaluation practices, museum education practices, museum exhibition design and technology. Among the studies reviewed, attention was paid to various overall evaluation processes and models to assess a museum entire operational structure using formative evaluation techniques. A number of studies also included models for planning, organizing, and evaluating sites and exhibits for science museums and nature interpretation centers. In these studies, exhibition content, exhibition organization/design, and exhibition enrichment through technology were three areas which received a great deal of attention. (Taylor, 1991; Brochu; 2003)

Notes were compiled for each source listed in part two of the literature review, highlighting important discussion topics found in the literature. The study established the primary topics for investigation as museums in education, museum exhibition design and technology, and museum evaluation. The literature yield detailed information on these topics, which were highlighted, organized, and reported in Chapter Three under the three themes identified.

Step Two: Expert Interviews

Step two in the research method included interviews with experts representing four distinct areas of inquiry identifying the criteria for evaluating the educational value in museum exhibitions at the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum: (1) Negro Leagues Baseball historians, (2) Donor/Foundation expert, (3) Museum experts and (4) Teachers. The experts were asked to address broad questions about the role of museums in education, and then asked more narrowly focused questions tied to their areas of expertise. The expert interviews for this research study were completed during the spring and summer of 2007. All interviews were conducted in person using a digital recording. A reporting of the expert testimony is detailed in Chapter 4.

The study established different criteria for selecting the experts to be interviewed. For example, the Negro Leagues Baseball historians were asked to participate in this study because their individual qualifications were known to the researcher through previous research work

interactions and publications. Those experts were Dr. Adrian Burgos and Dr. Lawrence Hogan. However, the rest of the interviewed experts represented organizations or companies whose institutional work or connections with museums and education were either known to the researcher or noted in the research literature. Those companies were The Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, BRC Imagination Arts, The National Baseball Hall of Fame, and Lee's Summit, MO R-VII School District. A detailed description of the expert interviews appears in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: List of Expert Interviews

Name	Expert Category	Institution	Title	Interview Date/Place
Dennis Cheek	Foundation/donor expert	**Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation**	Vice President	May 1 , 2007—Kauffman Foundation Kansas City, MO
Carmel Lewis	Museum practice expert	**BRC Imagination Arts**	Director, Project Development	May 29, 2007—BRC Offices, Burbank, CA
Rich Procter	Museum practice expert	**BRC Imagination Arts**	Senior Writer, Creative Development	May 29, 2007—BRC Offices, Burbank, CA
Larry Hogan	Negro Leagues history expert	Union County College	Professor of History, Negro Leagues author	May 31, 2007—NLBM, Kansas City, MO
Adrian Burgos	Negro Leagues history expert	University of Illinois	Professor of History, Negro Leagues author	June 6, 2007—Doubleday Field, Cooperstown, NY
John O'Dell	Museum practice expert	**National Baseball Hall of Fame**	Curator	June 6, 2007— Hall of Fame offices Cooperstown, NY
Teachers group	Teachers	**Lee's Summit R-VII School District**	Social Studies Teachers	August 29, 2007—Lee's Summit North High School, Lee's Summit, MO

The Negro Leagues Baseball historians interviewed for this study were Adrian Burgos and Lawrence Hogan. These Negro Leagues baseball historians were chosen from among scholars who have numerous publications and have taught baseball history at the university level.

They both have also served in advisory roles for museums or historical societies while working extensively with baseball archives and archival materials. Dr. Hogan was interviewed in Kansas City while visiting the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum in May 2007. Dr. Burgos was interviewed a few days later in Cooperstown, New York near the National Baseball Hall of Fame.

A representative from the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation offered perspectives on the improving museum exhibitions for educational value from the perspective of museum donors or contributors. Dr. Dennis Cheek of the Kauffman Foundation served in an executive capacity at a foundation responsible for grants for education projects and museums. Dr. Cheek's interview was recorded May 1, 2007 and he responded to questions involving museum content presentation and organization, exhibition design, and use of technology in museum exhibits. He also discussed the role his foundation could play in shaping exhibition and education innovations for museums and schools respectively.

The museum experts interviewed for this study represented BRC Imagination Arts and the National Baseball Hall of Fame & Museum. BRC Imagination Arts is a multi-national exhibition design firm identified in the literature among organizations providing innovative work for its clients. The National Baseball Hall of Fame was internationally recognized as a premier sports history museum and the pinnacle of baseball museums. The museum experts were asked to comment on questions involving museum content presentation/organization, exhibition design, and use of technology in museum exhibits.

The study sought final insight from teachers who had familiarity with Negro Leagues Baseball history and the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum. In the immediate region served by the museum, the Lee's Summit, Missouri R-VII School District featured the largest group of teachers meeting this criterion. For close to a decade, the Lee's Summit teachers have worked closely with the NLBM on various education programs and annually visit the museum with their students. They were intimately familiar with the exhibitions and have used Negro Leagues history within their lessons. A group of seven teachers and one administrator participated in a roundtable discussion about the NLBM in August 2007. The teachers responded to questions involving museum content presentation and organization, exhibition design, and use of technology in museum exhibits. They were also asked to comment specifically on areas of the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum that were either effective or needed improvement for working

with their students.   Table 3.2 demonstrates the general structured interview questions asked of the experts.

Table 3.2: General Structured Interview Questions to Experts

Question	Experts addressing the question
What was the role of museums in education?	All experts
Where have you seen effective museum educational programming?	Donor/Foundation expert, Teachers, Museum experts
What questions are foundations and donors asking in regards to museums and education?	Donor/Foundation expert
What are foundations looking for in programs when they are approached by museums for support?	Donor/Foundation expert
Who in the education community should museums reach out to or listen to in an effort to address the needs of the community?	Donor/Foundation expert, Teachers
What is the proper role of technology in museum exhibitions?	All experts
How can museums evaluate their exhibition content?	Donor/Foundation expert, Teachers, Museum experts
What are the appropriate steps or criteria needed for evaluating exhibitions?	Donor/Foundation expert, Teachers, Museum experts
Is there a challenge in designing effective content for history museums?	Donor/Foundation expert, Teachers, Museum experts
What are the steps to teaming process in evaluating exhibitions?	Museum experts
How have you worked with students to utilize museums and archives?	Negro Leagues history experts, Teachers
How would you assess the state of Negro Leagues research?	Negro Leagues history experts
What are the most glaring omissions to Negro Leagues scholarship?	Negro Leagues history experts
What is the proper framework for exploring the history of the Negro Leagues?	Negro Leagues history experts, Teachers
How have you used Negro Leagues content with your students?	Negro Leagues history experts, Teachers
How have you used the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum with your students?	Teachers

Step Three: Analysis of Interview Data

Analysis of the interview data appears near the end of Chapter Four. The interviews were transcribed from digital audio files into digital text files. Quotations from the interviews were read and coded, based primarily on the interview questions, in notes by the researcher. Additional questions and themes emerged from the interviews and were listed in the notes, copied in digital form. Each interview was then summarized and reported in Chapter Four, beginning with the Negro Leagues history experts. Summaries of the organization interviews followed, starting with the donor/foundation expert, then the teachers, and finally the museum experts.

The study triangulated the research interviews, the literature review data, and the researcher's professional experience to draw out themes which emerged from the data. These themes are identified and listed after the interview summaries. Specific examples of quotations and notes from the literature and the interviews were listed and explained by the researcher in an effort to answer the primary research question.

CHAPTER 4-REPORTING OF INTERVIEW DATA

Introduction

Chapter Four offers a summary of interviews with experts identified in Chapter 3 of the research study. The information is reported under these headings: Negro Leagues History experts, Donor/Foundation expert, Teachers, and Museum Experts. Chapter Four concludes with an analysis of common themes from the interviews, illuminating their congruence to, or divergence from, evidence found in the review of the literature.

Negro Leagues History experts

Introduction

Lawrence Hogan and Adrian Burgos are two of the nations leading scholars on Negro Leagues baseball history. They are among the few national scholars who teach and conduct research on the topic. Both scholars also have experienced creating or advising the creation of exhibitions on baseball history. At the time of these interviews, they each had completed the most recently published research on the Negro Leagues and both served on the National Baseball Hall of Fame special selection committee for the Negro Leagues in 2006. Dr. Hogan was interviewed in Kansas City, Missouri at the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum in May of 2007. Dr. Burgos was interviewed in Cooperstown, New York in June 2007.

Dr. Adrian Burgos, Jr.

Adrian Burgos has served as Associate Professor of United States Latino History at the University of Illinois, since 2000. He has taught courses on migration history and urban history. In addition, he has directed seminars in sports history focusing on his primary research interest of Latinos in baseball. A native of New York City, Burgos served as an advisor to the National Baseball Hall of Fame for research on Negro Leagues baseball and Latin American baseball. His most recent publication was titled *Playing America's Game: Baseball, Latinos and the Color*

Line, which focused on the historical, cultural, and economic exchanges of baseball between the United States and Latin American nations.

Burgos routinely encouraged a healthy respect for searching through primary source material at libraries and museums with his students. Among many assignments, students in past seminars had to research newspaper coverage of sports events using microfilm and digital databases of African American newspapers, comparing the coverage of the same events against other contemporary sources. According to Burgos, students overcame their initial intimidation of working with archivist and other scholars to complete assignments successfully. Burgos explained that students did not "think people would want to share their work." Burgos implored the students to be encouraged. "The librarians, the assistants, the graduate students working in the libraries and museums, they hunger for you to show up and ask them questions. They are; that's their job. You know, that's what they prefer to do. They prefer to sit there and help you get through material; find material," he stated.

Burgos learned first hand the experience of working with archivist and museum staff in creating exhibitions through his advisory role at the National Baseball Hall of Fame. "I got to see what went into putting together exhibits and how to create storylines and how to create a flow to museums," Burgos remembered. The experience deepened his understanding of museums and how to instruct students in using material from exhibitions. Burgos explained that he could then "direct students to know these exhibits also are creations of history. They are both influenced by the available artifacts but also the moment in which they are created." Burgos then instructed students to "think about going to museums both as repositories and as history in the making," which encouraged students to think critically about the material collected and how it was presented in exhibitions. Burgos said that critical evaluation of sources was a major skill the history department wanted to nurture at his university and that increasingly museums had become more significant to that training of young scholars

Burgos believed having a variety of sources was very important to producing sound and credible Negro Leagues research. In addition to museum and archival sources, oral histories played an important role the understanding of the times; illuminating information that was not in any printed record. A good deal of what has been chronicled on Negro Leagues history was sourced from oral history accounts. "Just because it's not in newsprint or it's not in the archive does not mean it did not happen," cautioned Burgos to his students. However, the use of oral

history has been problematic in terms of insuring accuracy from the subjects to be interviewed. He has told students "you have to triangulate your sources. You have to talk to those who were around. When you connect memory to printed sources to archival materials you get a lot closer to the truth than if you just go to the newspaper and if it's not in the paper you assume it didn't happen."

Dr. Burgos described the current state of Negro Leagues research to be sound and progressing towards greater public access. The access to sources has reached a critical crossroads in his opinion. On one hand, more and more newspaper collections have been filmed or digitized while, on the other hand, the nation had lost many of its Negro Leagues veterans to time. "I still hold out hope that there are little troves here and there of such rich materials and I know that the story of the Negro Leagues is just so important that family members hold on to those materials dearly," Burgos speculated. "I also hope that they consider sharing some of that material with the Negro League Baseball Museum and with the National Baseball Library and Archive so that researchers can be able to access it and analyze those materials and share those stories," stated Burgos. He concluded that, "it's become even more important as we're losing the living testimony of these ballplayers." A number of these players have been interviewed and their stories could be verified to some degree through archival sources. "The first generation of Negro League's historians--John Coates and the Bob Peterson's and John Holway and others--had to go travel the country and go to local libraries and literally work piece by piece in the newspapers trying to find the stories," noted Burgos. He continued that "it's more accessible now through microfilm and digitized collection which allows us to get more material right out of the newspapers. That has enabled us to recover some of the missing stories; the lag, I would say between the oral testimony and the actual written materials that are out there."

Although he declared the state of Negro Leagues scholarship to be "sound," there were areas Dr. Burgos felt demanded critique. "I think there is a bevy of books on the Negro Leagues and they run the gambit in terms of quality," lamented Burgos. He added that "as a historian I recognize that some books are popular books. They are really trying to reach a popular audience. But, there are also a lot of replication books, and by that I mean, they replicate information that they find in other material and other public sources. They rewrite and then revised the narrative in terms of the actual words but, not necessarily the content of the ideas and they get it

published." This process made the research stagnate; allowing very little new research to emerge and rarely challenging existing research.

When asked if there were omissions in the scholarship on Negro Leagues history, Dr. Burgos pointed to the need for more research into the Latin connections of baseball. According to Burgos, "the story of the Latinos in the Negro Leagues is a story that was missed for the most part early on not by intent but a lack of capability." For example, a language barrier and political barrier prevented American historians writing in the 1960s and 1970s from traveling to places like Cuba to gather interviews from players there old enough to have remembered seeing or participating in the early periods of the Negro Leagues and Cuban baseball. A number of Latin Negro Leagues players were interviewed over the years. However, many interviews were conducted in English and not retranslated back to Spanish. Bilingual scholars like Burgos have talked to Spanish speaking former players with great fluency. "I was able to talk to them in Spanish and again they were able to speak in their native tongue and they were much more at ease and they can tell their story freely," Burgos remembered. "There was no thinking extra [for the player] to get it translated in your head into English."

Burgos believed that to conduct research on the Negro Leagues was to perform revisionist history, and much of the theoretical revisions remained incomplete. Within this revisionist movement, the first wave of researchers had to "revise the traditional baseball narrative" according to Burgos. Now, those early research efforts must be examined for what they missed, and the Latino story in the Negro Leagues was one of the many stories in need of critical review and inclusion. Another area Burgos pointed to as in need for further research was the economics of Negro Leagues baseball. Recent research (Lanctot, 2005) revealed that there were adequate sources to detail this aspect of the story, which was previously thought to have little surviving evidence.

According to Dr. Burgos, the central point of his research was that "too often the story of the color line is told as a story of the two poles." In other words, baseball history needs to be reexamined as not just an issue between African Americans and white Americans, but should include Latinos as well. "Major league baseball always exercised a preference for Latino talent over Afro-American talent," Burgos claimed. "That was indeed part of the way of manipulating the color line. In the 20's, 30's, 40's up until the signing of Jackie Robinson that they [would] rather go to Latin America for more affordable, cheaply acquired players than to break the color

line--their 'gentlemen's agreement'--and pay African-American players for the stars that they were." The so called "gentlemen's agreement" was a tactic of collusion among Major League Baseball teams used as an unwritten rule to discourage any team from acquiring African American talent from the Negro Leagues. Skin color would play a role in this manipulative practice, as a small number of lighter toned Latino baseball players were recruited to Major League Baseball teams. Dr. Burgos's work has implications for understanding the current state of baseball, which has experienced a rapid increase in participation by Latino players and a drastic decrease in participation from American born black players.

Dr. Lawrence Hogan

Lawrence Hogan has served as professor of history at Union County College in New Jersey since 1977, where he has taught Western Civilization and African American History courses. Hogan's lifelong passion for baseball history broadened to interest in Negro Leagues baseball because of his extensive research into the African American press. His most recent published work was editing a major research effort organized by the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum and the National Geographic Society titled *Shades of Glory*. The work culminated an extended research effort to create an official guide to Negro Leagues history for the Hall of Fame.

Hogan recognized the importance of museums and archives to his research and teaching. He discussed taking students to museums and libraries in New York City and how they interacted with the spaces. His classes visited places that "literally [took] you back into an era that you have no other way of getting back into in the ways that you can visually and atmospherically." He hoped to emphasize a sense of place for his students. Hogan believed when students visit historical sites, museums, and libraries, they discover a since of belonging; "that's a place that is theirs too and there are so many other places like that that you might not think of as your place, but it is your place, because you're an intellectual seeking information, seeking inspiration, seeking connective-ness." Hogan's aim in using museums was to inspire students to be excited about history. "I think that visually, museums allow you to do that," he explained, "extend the students beyond their normal perception of what history is about and to see that it is this big, big picture that has connections all over the place that once they are connected to

another, that you only really discover when you start to probe into and look at it. It's something more than just fact after fact."

In addition to museums, themes stemming from his baseball research were introduced in various ways in his classes, often with positive responses from his students. Hogan's research included compiling a number of interviews on film of former Negro Leagues players. When presented to students, they generally responded with great interest to the first person narratives and accounts of those who participated in the Negro Leagues. According to Hogan, students understood that the history of game was "so much more than baseball and it allows you to extend out into the larger community that baseball was a part."

When asked about the state of Negro Leagues research, Hogan felt very positive about the amount and quality of information currently available, but also offered opinions about areas in need of further research. "I think, you know, in terms of the public perception of this topic, the scholarship has been down right miraculous and excellent, I think, and very unexpected," Hogan explained. He continued by stating, "this topic has been done better than most other baseball topics and it's all been in the last ten [years], and been done because we go to the primary sources; to the players themselves." Hogan praised the most recent scholarship, noting that "in terms of the way you more normally measure scholarship, the scholarly books, that's leaped way ahead of where you might ever expect it to go to." Hogan believed, however, that there were still areas of research that demand great attention in order to connect the history of African American baseball to the larger cultural story of African American history. He identified five areas of interest in African American baseball history as the next frontiers for research; (1) baseball during slavery and the 1860s, (2) black baseball and the 1920s, (3) Negro Leagues and small community histories, (4) the economics of black baseball, and (5) black baseball during the 1950s and 1960s. These were also areas Hogan felt the NLBM might explore further in its exhibitions.

The first area of history Dr. Hogan believed needed greater attention was baseball during American slavery through the 1860s. While researching *Shades of Glory*, Hogan found a number of anecdotal references to baseball archived in interviews commissioned by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) writer's program of the 1930s, which chronicled the lives of surviving former slaves. After slavery, a number of African American semi-professional individual players and teams emerged, subsequently reported on in the press. A great deal of earlier research had

focused on the 1870s and 1880s as the beginnings of African American participation in baseball, but Hogan noted that the origins of black players in baseball go back further in history. He explained that most histories start with the connections of black baseball and the Civil war, and then discuss teams in and around Brooklyn or Philadelphia in the late 1800s. "They didn't just come into being in a vacuum; there were other teams, I'm sure, and other, other stuff that's there ahead of them that would be interesting to try and tease out if the record is available," suggested Hogan.

A second area of history Dr. Hogan felt needed greater attention was black baseball and the 1920s. Specifically, Hogan found revealing materials on the connections between black athletes in baseball and other sports, as well as black athletes to the rest of the black community. The 1920s, Hogan remarked, was often seen by historians as "The Golden Age of Sport." This romantic notion would be tested with further investigations into African American sports history. "It's all there in the black papers and somebody really needs to, I think, tell that sports story in a scholarly sort of way," Hogan concluded.

A third area of African American baseball history Dr. Hogan believed needed greater attention was the impact of the Negro Leagues on smaller communities. "The National story had been told pretty well, you know, where the big teams played in the big cities," according to Hogan. However he felt research was needed "to see it on the local level and to see how the teams came into communities and impacted on those communities and left behind memories of baseball that was just so special."

A fourth area of history Dr. Hogan felt should be explored by the museum and other researchers was the economics of black baseball. Hogan was fascinated by the ironies faced by players, owners, and communities involved with the Negro Leagues. "I guess there's ways, you know, to capture the fact that, this is in a world that has an economy of its own, but the resources are always going to be limited, even when they're making the quote 'big bucks' that they're making," Hogan described. However, the irony of their success was that the more profitable and talented the Negro Leagues became, they commanded the attention of the majority population and Major League Baseball. This process pushed integration closer, a positive result, which brought the end of the Negro Leagues enterprise.

A fifth area of history in need of further exploration was the story of black baseball in the 1950s and 1960s. This era featured the integration of Major League Baseball, with a number of African American and Latin born baseball players entering previously all white baseball teams. Hogan felt that an opportunity existed to focus on the legacy of these players by gathering information from their families. "The whole business of that generation after Jackie [Robinson] and the children of the Negro leaguers, and the whole notion of family and where the legacy goes across the generations; I think its an area that nobody has really done anything," according to Hogan. He was also curious about the Negro Leagues veterans from the period before integration and what they were doing after the end of the Negro Leagues. "I really wanted to get at, where the players were with this history when nobody was paying attention to it, you know, in the '50's and into the '60's. In the larger world, nobody was paying attention to it and what it meant for them at that point in time," he stated. Hogan attempted to do this level of oral history research, but found that players had difficulty focusing on memories of those time periods compared to their play in the Negro Leagues.

Dr. Hogan described the experience of visiting the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum in a very positive way. "I've gotten, I don't want to say mixed reviews, but you know, impressionistic," he confessed. He noted that other reviewers felt that the size of the NLBM was small compared to other museums. Hogan disagreed with them. "I see something that is very substantially, logically, in a chronological fashion, very visually touches practically everyone of the important bases that needs to be touched and extends itself in neat sorts of ways," he stated. "I love the Barbershop, that idea; I love the room recreation, that kind of idea. I don't see that done anywhere else, well, certainly not with this topic," according to Hogan. Even with the suggestions for more content inclusion, Hogan felt the museum left a powerful impression on its visitors. Hogan was particularly impressed with the Field of Legends exhibit, featuring the life sized bronze sculptures of players in a mythical baseball game. "The fact that you've got this game going on with these wonderful guys right in the middle; I think that works and then you walk around and every once in a while, you peak over and they're still out there playing the games, you know, so I like that a lot. And, you know, I'm sure you're going, you know, do some revising and some rethinking and some restructuring, but for me, you got a winner."

Donor/Foundation Expert

Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation

The Kauffman Foundation is the leading philanthropic organization in the Kansas City region. Established in the mid 1960s, the Foundation was led by Kansas City business man, philanthropist, and baseball team owner Ewing Marion Kauffman until shortly before his passing in 1993. Among its industry leading initiatives, the Kauffman Foundation has supported programs dealing with entrepreneurship and education. It also offered support to several museums locally and nationally, including the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum. In addition, the Foundation has bestowed grants up to $30 million dollars annually to focus on K-12 learning initiatives in mathematics, science and what Dr. Dennis Cheek, Vice President of Education, described as "the future of learning;" the application of new and emerging technologies in education.

Dr. Cheek had employed an extremely diverse background of experience to his work at the Foundation. He has worked on several levels in professional education, from classroom teacher to school district and state level administration, including serving as superintendent of schools. He has also served as an administrator for science corporations and foundations.

In discussing the role of museums in education, Dr. Cheek believed that museums held a special place in society as institutions for learning. He noted that museums were "not a part of the formal education system, and yet they are a venue at which many, many people do interact with knowledge and with various subject matter areas, and in that sense, they have a public education mission, I suppose to educate people about various kind of topic or issues and doing it in a way where the person who is there, is there by choice, so that makes it quite distinct, I think, from formal educational settings." Because learners, for the most part, had chosen the experience, this, in Dr. Cheeks opinion, "puts museums in a somewhat unique category in terms of their ability to reach across the needs spectrum usually to people who are choosing to be there and who may elect to return for future visits." Cheek felt that museums were "adjunct to the formal education system," creating an "iterative relationship" where museums attempted to be "responsive to what they see as emerging needs or what they hear from constituency groups in education." This proactive stance often placed museums "at the vanguard sometimes of thinking about how to approach traditional subjects in new and in more engaging ways." Cheek thought

that "museums are seen as kind of thought leaders sometimes in the formal education sector in terms of new ways to approach old topics."

Museums needed to be mindful of their audience's needs while remaining flexible to change. According to Dr. Cheek, "there's that level of engagement which is merely about getting the museum on that person's radar screen and helping them understand how that museum could help take them where they want to go." However, the organic nature of museums or other non profits, centered around promoting a cause or singular topic, could hinder objective reflection on audience needs. Dr. Cheek explained that "the difficulty often with non-profits is they want the wider world to key into what they are interested in, but it doesn't work that way. You have to key into what they are interested in; figure out whether you can or cannot help them to get to where they want to go. What role can your museum play to help them achieve something they want to achieve?" A level of sober reflection could reveal that there was nothing that could be contributed, requiring an evaluation of the museums mission and purpose. However, museums must be guarded against "mission drift," as Dr. Cheek described, attempting to represent all things to the broadest possible audience. "On the other hand," he stated, "there has to be flexibility in that you cannot just presume that because you have a story to tell, and the way you tell the story, that people see the connection to what they are trying do." Thus, continued self reflection and evaluation was required of the museums.

As part of the self reflection and evaluation process for museums, the institution should carefully examine how stories are delivered to a diverse and rapidly changing audience. Delivering stories through greater human interface, as in the employment of guides or docents, was one way in which museums demonstrate proactive engagement of audiences to their content. The use of technology was another important tool to conveying stories. "I think every museum ideally wants to take its visitors somewhere they've never been in their imagination," stated Dr. Cheek. However, Cheek warned that museums that do not incorporate some use of technology risk loosing emerging new audiences. He explained, "Museums that just purely thrive on the literate culture are in decline because we live in age that is just so supersaturated with media. And, it's not like we don't have the means to tell these stories in these fresh innovative technologically enabled ways."

In Dr. Cheek's mind, the strictly narrative centered museum would continue to be effective with an older demographic of learners, and less affective with younger learners because

the experience expectations of each group were dramatically different. "So, the more reading intensive a museum is" Cheek speculated, "the older the audience that actually engages with it. And, its only older people that go through a museum like that and actually read a lot. Younger people whiz through it and they read the caption at most as they fly by. Unless, you figure out a way to change that; so, one way of changing that is clearly technology." Cheek believed that museums must "think about multi-modal, multi-sensory methods" for conveying stories. Whatever the final method would become, the goal was to get learners engaged in the story. "Because," according to Cheek, "if you don't get the person engaged they miss the story, and fundamentally, for history museums especially, it's about telling a story."

The addition of technology enhancements were among the most expensive multi-sensory elements museums could use to engage learners. However, stakeholders like the Kauffman Foundation were willing to support museum endeavors towards technological inclusion if they had relevance to the "future of learning." Cheek explained that the Foundation sought to support projects exploring "the application of more cutting edge kind of technologies to classic things we're trying to teach people." Cheek continued, "So, when I'm thinking about museums; I'm thinking about; well, can we pour some of your materials into mobile devices like I-Pods and cell phones? Can we figure out ways to create virtual gaming simulation environments where somebody can experience these things?" Having content delivered by these specific tools or other forms of technology may not directly improve learning. They would, in Cheek's opinion, help illicit excitement and "emote experience," especially for younger learners. Grant applications and projects under his review had to meet the following litmus test; "Is it taking us somehow to the frontier in terms of learning? Is it tapping into or in some way exciting or likely to excite youngsters in some captivating manner? Because if you don't excite them they will never engage; if they never engage they will not learn."

Cheek conceded that certain technological enhancements to delivering exhibit content won't attract every audience. History museums in particular must find the balance of blending new methods with what was at the core of there existence; the presentation of historic documents and artifacts. "In many respects," Cheek explained, "it's simply a blend of different *technologies*. Because writing of course is an old technology; and paper and pencil is an old technology; but, it's still a technology. So, all you're really doing is your multiplying the array of technologies that you employ to tell the story."

Any changes a museum considered must affect the bottom line of building the audience for the institution. In building up the school audience, Dr. Cheek felt that museum leaders should take time to understand the challenges of each stakeholder in the school system that could influence whether students will be allowed to visit the museum. Dr. Cheek outlined, in his view, who those stakeholders were; district administrators, school principals, and teachers.

The first group museums must connect with to ensure museum/school collaboration were the district administrators, which include the superintendent and school board members. The superintendent sets the priorities for the entire district. According to Cheek, if the museum does not have the superintendent tuned into "the importance of the museum as part of their broader strategy and what they are trying to achieve in the educational reform efforts in which they are engaging across the district; they are not going to appropriate money for field trips." The superintendent could foster a culture enabled by the school board that supported museums as important to the enrichment of students. Establishing this culture was important because superintendents and board members changed rapidly and agendas may change with new people. Cheek warned that "there is nothing worse than a superintendent who wants to do it and a school board that's adamantly opposed to it."

The second group of stakeholders museums must connect with to ensure museum/school collaboration were the school principals. Dr. Cheek stated that, principals are the people who actually say 'Yes' to a teacher leaving the building with a class. "And, it's the principal who has to deal with all the things that happen when classes are pulled out of school; which we often don't tend to think of when we're in the museum side of it," he said. The issues to be dealt with represented a large investment of time and detail for a principal. Dr. Cheek explained that "many times they have to cover other classes for a teacher who now is not available and sometimes they juggle the needs of this teacher versus some other teacher who wants to do some other field trip." At other times, the principal would be forced to make a decision about which classes experienced field trips in a given year. Thus, museums needed to think carefully about how the learning experience was packaged and presented to the principal by a teacher who wanted to bring students for a visit. The teacher needed to be armed with materials that could clearly and concisely make the case and answer the questions of "why should I as a principal release this

teacher and these students to go to the museum during school time." Cheek concluded, "If you don't make that case, the principal can just close this whole thing down really-really quickly."

The final, and most pivotal, group of stakeholders to engage in museum/school collaborations was the teachers. Dr. Cheek explained "if the teacher doesn't see how taking her class to that museum during school time is actually going to help their instructional objectives; then, that's a non-winnable proposition." He continued his point, noting that "field trips these days have to be justified in terms of the learning objectives; in terms of how it fits within the curriculum in terms of what standards are going to be addressed as a result of this visit. What are students actually going to learn? What are they going to do?" Furthermore, Cheek believed that a museum field trip "can't just be something that merely is intellectually engaging. "What is that school trying to achieve? What is that teacher trying to achieve in their subject matter? How is the museum helping with that?"

Cheek recognized that there was little research done evaluating educational experiences in history museums. More recently, art museums and science museums had the advantage of institutional funding or rising public support to investigate the effectiveness of educational initiatives. This research biased the information we know about the relationships between schools and museums. "I think one of the dilemmas in this area is that when you actually ask for hard evidence; what hard evidence do we actually have that museums actually matter, and, that they actually result in some cognitive learning on the part of a student. I think the evidence for that is a lot slimmer," stated Cheek. In Dr. Cheeks view, museums were not generally designed as research institutions that have as their mission to attempt this level of inquiry about their operations. However, he noted a trend in European nations where great attention was being paid to asking questions and doing research on schools and museums through government funded studies. The emphasis here was connected to the great financial support those museums received from their governments, which sought to measure the return on its investments.

Teachers

Lee's Summit, Missouri R-VII School District

Experienced social studies teachers with extensive knowledge of the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum were sought to contribute to this study. Teachers in the Lee's Summit, Missouri R-VII School District were the largest group of educators meeting these criteria. Lee's Summit is a large suburban school district located outside of Kansas City, Missouri. The district serves a population of approximately 95,000 people, including close to 17,000 students and 2,700 teachers and staff. Data from the 2007-2008 school indicated the district had three high schools with 5,400 students, four middle schools with 2,700 students, and eighteen elementary schools with 9,000 students. At the time of this study, the grade level and course in which students in Lee's Summit would cover the historical period of Negro Leagues Baseball was set in the curriculum at 9th grade American History.

Since 1998, the NLBM has worked with teachers from the Lee's Summit district through the educational partnerships at Kansas State University. This included teachers serving an advisory role in the development of exhibition tour material, development of web sites, the use of Palm PDA devices with students, and collecting oral history interviews with former Negro Leagues players. The district has also annually brought students to the museum from the middle schools and high schools. A group of seven teachers and one administrator from the Lee's Summit school district were interviewed in August 2007 at Lee's Summit North High School. The group included middle school and high school teacher, many of whom have worked with the NLBM on past projects or had within the last five years visited the NLBM with their students. The group revealed how they used the NLBM and other museums in their work with students. The group also shared observations about challenges and opportunities inherent in trying to incorporate museum resources into their school curriculum. The study reports on the consensus opinions and specific observations from the group.

Teachers in Lee's Summit combined tours of the NLBM and use of Negro Leagues historical materials in a number of interesting ways with their students. One instructor taught English and American History for middle schools in the district, incorporating Negro Leagues history into Summer school units. She recalled that in creating a language arts teaching unit on

civil rights, Negro Leagues history fit perfectly. "Then when I switched to history, I found out nobody [among her colleagues] was using it there," she stated. "So, my 'A' students have gone [to the NLBM] and my regular classes don't go on a regular basis, we kind of change off and on." The educational unit she created started with the Civil War and ended just before discussion of the Civil Rights movement. This is prepared the students for the beginning of materials they would encounter once they reached the district high schools. "It's just a beautiful transition," she stated.

Another teacher led an Ancient Cultures courses to 7th graders in the district, but incorporated lessons he learned from working with the NLBM and the oral histories into discussing character ethics with his students. He also managed a "club program" at the middle school. Merrill explained, "the way our middle school program works, before the academic day starts, [students] can sign up for a club of their choice. So, if they sign up for me, we meet twice a week, about 35 minutes and then each teacher kind of picks an area that they're interested in and hopefully they get enough kids to sign up." He created the Negro Leagues club with about 18-30 students in different years. They conducted research on the internet to locate baseball player biographies, team information, and timelines to create graphic organizers of information. Club members often worked in pairs and then shared there research with the rest of the group. Field trips to the museum become part of the club experience as well, although he had not been able to bring a group in the last couple of years. According to the teacher, "those who signed up loved it and I've had some in the past say, 'are you guys going to offer that again?'" However, some changes in the club program forced him to put the Negro Leagues lessons and trips on hiatus. "I haven't been able to do it because our school now requires a club program to have remediation with certain kids that I work with and I've done that for the past two years," Merrill noted.

Teachers have developed a number of preparation strategies in anticipation of museum field trips. One strategy employed by members of the group was advanced personal tours to area museums by teachers and students. For example, one of the history teachers assigned her gifted students to choose museums and prepare presentations about various facilities in class. Students could then choose which museum they wanted to attend as a group. This allowed for a wide variety of area museums to be included for consideration of field trips. The rationale for

conducting advanced tours was straightforward; "we're going to take all these kids down there, we're not just going to turn them loose for a day. We need to come up with some type of an activity that's a gradable item, that they're looking for certain things, that they're actually paying attention to what they're seeing, and also as a way of helping them to actually maybe start to draw some connections to what they're seeing with what's been spoken of in class." Although a number of museums, like the NLBM, have prepared teachers' guides and other materials available, teachers who go on their own to museums ahead of the field trip often chose to create customized materials for their students. Properly designed this could insure that students were focused on the connections to information presented in class.

Another advantage seen in conducting advanced tours of the museum sites by teachers was the coordination of the physical logistics of the tour experience. Logistical planning of field trips was a major concern for this group of teachers. Logistics often forced choices about which students got to experience museums. As one teacher explained, "even though we might all agree that it's good for all [students] to go, we end up kind of limiting who it is that does get to go, because we take gifted kids because we know they're going to be better behaved and all that other stuff that goes along with it."

The teachers expressed a desire to learn more about materials and strategies other educators used to engage their students with museums. In summarizing experiences with other regional museums, one teacher wondered if area museums gathered samples of what teachers used or prepared for there students as part of lessons at the museums. "If you could get a collection of how other teachers use your museum, what worksheets they have; because I think as a teacher we like to have a starting point and I'm not creative enough to come up with my own idea, so it's always nice if I could look and see, 'Oh, wow this teacher did this.' It doesn't fit exactly, but I can use this idea," he explained. Material like this could be made available before a visit via web-sites or some form of printed material.

Teachers were increasingly challenged with a number of factors impeding their use of museums with students. One group member noticed that "there are teachers in my building who feel more pressure not to leave and not to take time out of their classroom because they're so tied to their lock-step curriculum." Other teachers in disciplines outside of social studies were also concerned about how field trips with other teachers affected their class attendance. Another teacher added, "We have issues with elective teachers. They don't want us pulling the kids to go

on field trips. In our building they're trying to limit us on how many you can take." These developments alarmed many in the group. "If other departments continue to kind of go in the direction that our math department is going in where every teacher is teaching the same thing on the same day," a group member explained. "I think it's going to get harder. If science ends up going that way, and it seems like they kind of are, before too long, and they'll try to make us do that." These trends reflect the realities of schools nationwide dealing with movement to improve student achievement in meeting curriculum standards.

The teachers suggested some solutions which the school district and museums could employ to combat the trend of teachers moving away from using museums. Teachers have found programs such as loaned traveling displays or "trunks" with lessons and materials in them that can be borrowed or sent to schools as very effective tools to at least introduce students to museums. Films, computer, and web based materials were also extremely useful in this effort. Teachers also suggested that museums should improve their communications to teachers about special programming, such as guest speakers or lectures. They would encourage their students to attend these programs, report on them and offer extra credit for their participation.

From the perspective of the school districts, a group member suggested that the districts incorporate the field trips into the curriculum and establish a tradition of attending museums. This would allow for schools to conduct better planning and avoid other potential class or testing conflicts. She also pointed to examples of materials that could be handed to teachers that demonstrated how exhibits or programs met teaching standards.

Another proposed strategy for use by museums was to work with teachers in other disciplines and develop customized materials that would be relevant for that field trip in their class. For one field trip to a Native American historic site, a teacher explained "one of the things that I'm doing is creating a math worksheet because we're kind of setting it for the end of February, March, not too close to the standardized testing period. We're going to look at what the math teachers are covering then and I will make up math worksheets in history but it has to do with math." She explained the concept as an effort to "sweeten the pot" for math teachers not to impede students participating in the field trip.

The group was asked specifically how the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum content was used in there work, how they have interacted with the museum, and what suggestions they could

make to the museum for strategies that would be useful for teachers. They then introduced their unique ideas and experiences.

One of the history teachers thought the museum could support the teaching of historical analysis and methods to students. He suggested a partnership between the museum and his school that would be ideal for his International Baccalaureate (IB) high school history classes. He had not brought students to the museum before, but had experienced the exhibitions several times on his own. The Negro Leagues time period does not directly fit the IB curriculum he has taught, but as he explained, "where I see the museum being something useful is, you know I like to tell my students, 'I'm trying to help you become historians.' So, I can see taking them to the museum and creating something, or hopefully someone has created it for me so I don't have to be creative, but something where the students - It's not just a matter of, 'Go find this, go find that'--but in some way, shape, or form they have to find pieces of evidence and create stories; write a history themselves."

A group member described the creation of a similar experience to the work done with the math teachers and the Native American site, by using the NLBM in partnership with a language arts teacher. The language arts teacher in her team block assigned a novel which discussed a family visiting Birmingham, Alabama during the Civil Rights movement. Birmingham had a prominent Negro Leagues baseball team during that era, the Birmingham Black Barons. She noted that "in my class we were doing the baseball angle of it and then we were writing a diary from the perspective of being a baseball player and being on the road and how they were treated." She remembered, "When we were able to get to the museum then for our finale, our culminating activity, it meant a lot more [to the students]."

She also voiced the challenges teachers face when visiting the NLBM of getting students to focus on exhibition content and not racing through the space quickly. The NLBM exhibition is arranged with photographs, artifacts, and timeline as a perimeter to the Field of Legends, which features the life sized bronze sculptures of former players. "The kids don't take the time--these are seventh graders--do not take the time to read the timeline and you know, go through the story," she lamented. She further explained that students "walk in and you whet their appetite with the baseball field and they can't wait to get to it. So they are flying through there and I'm like going, 'Hang on! Look at this, look at this!' And they're like, 'Yeah.' So I'm always trying to pull them back. But I've got two other teachers, so there are three of us and 65 kids and we're

not always very successful with it." The Field of Legends display is the end of the exhibit with the least amount of information. However, it is an expansive space that has proven too enticing for these young patrons. In spite of her best efforts at pre-visit preparation with films, guides, and presentations, she could not get students to slow down and focus on content. "I try to set it all up, try to make them look for certain things; [but] they race through it." Because of this, and sometimes a time crunch for visiting the museum with a large amount of students, no assignments were given to evaluate their understanding of what was learned at the museum.

The Field of Legends was also the most compelling aspect of the museum for another teacher, and the meaning of being on the field should be emphasized to students, in his opinion. He was impacted by the fact that "you're separated from the field on purpose and you have to go through and learn the history in order to earn the chance to be out there, and if there's some other way to really bring that point home to the kids before they get there--that they are doing something important in learning, in respecting what happened--in order to earn that spot on the field." He believed, before entering the Field, visitors should consider these reflection questions; "What have you learned? What have you done? Do you deserve to go out there with those statues?" The historical timeline that flows through the exhibit added context to the baseball history that was presented, but students who race through the exhibits miss it, and do not take time to reflect on the critical thinking questions and historical context of Negro Leagues history.

Another group member suggested that hiring tour guides and more interactive exhibit opportunities could be helpful in getting students to slow down and engage more of the NLBM content. He noted that there were already many tangible kinds of experiences students enjoyed, from the exhibit design as an old baseball stadium to the bleacher seating in the introductory film. He suggested more "hands on" experiences such as access to replica baseball equipment students could touch and feel, or an opportunity to test there base running speed on the Field exhibit could be very engaging for students.

The teachers were asked to also discuss the use of technology in museums. The teachers responded to questions regarding the importance of technology in the NLBM exhibits and what enhancements help create authentic experiences for visitors.

The group was asked, "What was the real draw for visitors to the NLBM?" Was it the computer interactive displays or general history? The teachers reflected on the fact that technology was an important tool to connect with modern students, who are largely immersed in

various digital mediums outside of school, but that emotional stories resonated with learners. Technology was tool to help facilitate the delivery of those messages, but not necessarily the primary part of the attraction. Teachers recalled having seen emotionally moving static exhibitions at facilities like the National Holocaust Museum that did not employ computer technology but were very effective. A variety of presentation methods were seen as important to delivering content successfully. As one teacher elaborated, "I still think that you need to differentiate. You're going to have kids that learn differently even with technology. You're going to have kids that are very visual, kids that are auditory, kids that are, you name it. So, I think you have to, to some extent, have a variety of things available." Enhancements with technology may be the hook to get students and other visitors interested, but having exhibits that create an authentic experience for visitors, would keep them fully engaged in learning.

The group was also asked to discuss how they assessed aspects of museums that appeared to have elements of entertainment. If an experience seemed more entertaining than educational, did that turn them off to using it? One teacher explained his evaluation process; "if it's entertaining and educational but the students only see it as entertaining, that's fine with me as long as I know they're actually getting something out of it. The problem is if I go and I look at it and I say, that's really entertaining, you know, but it doesn't do anything, then it's worthless." Another group member, however, offered cautions for the NLBM as it evaluated exhibitions. "There are so many really important, good lessons to be learned at the museum. I would feel awful if the focus got away from that. If somehow, in trying to make it entertaining you lose part of that lesson. That would be just horrible," he warned.

Additional queries to the educators at Lee's Summit were about other themes that had not been discussed which they noticed in using content from Negro Leagues baseball. For one example, the group elaborated on the use of character studies in the middle schools. A group member explained that character traits were explored as part of home room exercises; traits such as integrity, honor, and perseverance. A baseball figure like Jackie Robinson could be used to demonstrate integrity. Another teacher noted that students could be interested in more biographical information on baseball players. Students would learn could learn how overcame certain obstacles and experiences to achieve success in life. Finally, a group member suggested exploration into more sociology and economic themes. With the Negro Leagues historical

content, he recommended that the museum help teachers draw parallels between various communities, both modern and historical, in exhibit presentations.

The final questions to teachers at Lee's Summit centered on designing exhibitions to meet teaching standards. How far should museums go in connecting curriculum standards to creating exhibition content? The consensus of the group was that the fluid nature of national and regional curriculum standards would make it difficult for museums to achieve touching upon all standards through its exhibitions, and that museums should not change to do so. However, it was important to help teachers identify which teaching standards were achieved through exhibits and programs so that teachers were more aware of how to align lessons plans and museum tours in their practice. The museum should use whatever means it could, such as web sites or literature, to insure the awareness of standards being met through the incorporation of museum content in lessons.

Museum Experts

Introduction

The study for evaluating educational value in exhibition content sought information from organizations identified as having unique experience and expertise. An exhibition design firm and a world renowned museum emerged as having unique practices and experiences to best inform the studies research. Carmel Lewis and Rich Proctor represented BRC Imagination Arts and were interviewed together at their offices at Burbank, California in May 2007. John Odell represented the National Baseball Hall of Fame and was interviewed at his office in Cooperstown, New York in June 2007.

BRC Imagination Arts

BRC Imagination Arts (BRC) was a multi-national exhibition and thematic experience design firm established in the 1980s by Bob Rogers, a former design executive for Disney Corporation. Their domestic clients have included General Motors, the Empire State Building, Texas State History Museum, the Johnson Space Center, and the Abraham Lincoln Museum & Library. The Lincoln project, in particular, was among the most recently completed and thoroughly scrutinized; viewed as a vanguard to non-traditional methods of museum presentation and utilizing a number of special effect devices such as holograms. Ms. Lewis and Mr. Proctor had over 20 years of combined experience in museum exhibition design with BRC. Ms. Lewis

was Director of Project Development. Mr. Proctor's position was Creative Lead and Senior Writer for Brand Experiences.

In discussing the role of museums in education and society, Procter and Lewis emphasized the importance of telling stories. "The role that museums play in education is to light a fire inside people," noted Procter. "We live by the stories that we understand, know, and take into ourselves, into our souls, and museums can tell those stories. They can literally gain entry points into people's lives that make them live in a more inspired and better way," according to Procter.

Ms. Lewis extended the discussion stating that "entry points" often occurred for people during their formative school years. "We often talk to museum experts when we're working with content experts, museum directors. We ask them what their entry point was into a life long passion; sparking a lifelong passion that has resulted in the career that they now hold and, and to a person, the answer always comes back to some kind of museum experience that they had as a child," Lewis explained. The 6th-8th grade range was proven the key target entry point and, when working on exhibition design projects, was the audience for which BRC shaped content. What appealed to and stimulated this group, "the sweet spot" she explained metaphorically, could extend to other audiences for the subject in focus. "If you make a fantastic experience that really turns on a 6th or a 7th grader to content subject matter," Lewis continued, "we believe that same kind of experience will be extremely gratifying and rewarding for 30 year olds, 60 year olds, experts in the field, and people who are novices who don't understand anything about it." The materials need not be presented in an overly simplified way that would only appeal to that specific audience. "It's not about dumbing down the material to a 7th grade level," according to Lewis. "It's about reaching that audience that has an extremely high standard, actually, of what they find interesting and what they find to be dull and boring." To achieve success, museums must embrace the notion of becoming innovative storytellers.

Innovative storytelling to young audiences was the philosophical cornerstone of their design work. What is innovative storytelling? Innovative storytelling has many characteristics. Lewis noted, "That it's about delivering a mountain of content in a very short amount of time." She would ask clients "do you really need to give a lifetime supply of your subject matter in one visit, or are you trying to intrigue; are you trying to spark an interest that will go on?" Innovative storytelling also represented a departure from traditional presentation and teaching methods in

museums. Mr. Proctor added, "It is innovation of important and intensive research." The curators and content experts working for museums who have spent years applying accepted research methods to a particular subject were challenged to drill down and commit to a core story narrative or theme. "This is how people understand the world, and I think that very often experts struggle with that," Procter explained. "We'll sit down across the table from them and say 'yes, but let's get more to the heart of it.' What does that mean? What is the right story [motive] to really get your content out there in a way that is compelling, emotional, intriguing, engaging, [and] memorable?" Learning in museums, perhaps more than any other form of informal learning, could evoke and move people through these experiences because of the museum's ability to combine information with real objects.

BRC staff members described a philosophical process achievable for museums to affect visitors, no matter their knowledge or interest level, into becoming deeply engaged in a museum's mission and message. It was described as moving a museum learner from "A to A-Prime."(Rogers, 2000) Mr. Proctor explained, "if the audience walks out [of a museum] unchanged [emotionally]--they walk out the same as they walk in--why do it? And so the change you want to make is the same change when you study great films, great plays, [and] great books. Those people write them, not because they want to make money, because they want to make a change in the audience." Ms. Lewis added that when visitors make those emotional connections to a topic "they develop an insatiable appetite for the subject matter and for really drilling down on their own time, in their own way into that subject matter." When working with museum clients, BRC focused on establishing the proper "approach, attitude, [and] action, [to achieve] applause. How people feel about the experience once they come out of it; [making sure that] it's something that makes them feel really good." BRC carefully explained this process to clients in hopes of mining museum content for those themes that could produce the desired emotional connection for learners in the museum environment.

For BRC, museum artifacts were tools for rendering compelling stories, but should not be viewed as the main attraction. Successful innovative story telling contextualized artifacts to enhance the stories. Ms. Lewis argued that some museums were "practically drowning in artifacts and the story gets lost. That was a way of describing what happens when you saturate with things; it stands in contradiction to one of the principles that I think, we talk about a whole

lot, which is, we think you should *tell less and intrigue more*. We think you should contextualize artifacts before you just put a case full of artifacts out there." Procter added, "The artifacts are the least of it, you know, if you do it right." Compelling stories were the factors which drive visitor interest. Proctor continued to explain that museum visitors "would come back and they would bring their friends because other people want to experience that feeling; that's a theatrical experience. You're creating a moment of theatre there, but you own that moment, and if you had an artifact that would be great. That would validate the experience, but the [artifact] isn't the experience." In much of their exhibition design, artifacts were "revealed" to the museum learner only after they have been contextualized by narratives, presented through various media intended to draw the learner emotionally into the subject.

Use of technology was another tool available to museums that, if employed affectively, enhanced the "A to A prime" effect, but should only be viewed as enhancements and not the main attraction. "The technology for us is a part of it, yes, but we try to really make the technology invisible," states Ms. Lewis. By invisible, she referred to uses of technology that did not require a direct interaction or effort by the museum patron to make it work, but elements such as light, sound, film that were meant to elevate the emotional connection to the story. "We don't think that just putting computer kiosk's out and having buttons that you can push is going to change a kids life and make them a life long [learner]; to spark, to light that fire," Lewis explained. She expanded her remarks further, "We spend a lot of time watching people in museums [using] technology for technology's sake, not delivered in a compelling way, not sort of taking that content and elevating it to, to a much more visceral or sticky level." Much of what had been designed for interactive technology in museums was limiting innovative story telling for BRC. "You know, we don't find those things very compelling and when we sit in museums and we watch people interacting with those kinds of things, we don't see any prime to the audience. We don't see any change in the audience; we see them come up and, they'll press it and they may look at it for a couple of minutes, and it's like, it becomes, like okay, 'check,' you know and then they move on to the next thing," stated Lewis. Lewis concluded, "That's a failure [in design] if that's all that you deliver."

For museums to achieve innovative storytelling and avoid design failure, they must come to grips with the changing environment in which they operate. Proctor and Lewis implored

museums to embrace change. They must embrace change primarily on two fronts; broadening the view of their competition and broadening their view of the audience. The general notions involving the philosophy of A to A Prime were not new. Hooking audiences emotionally had been a primary tenant depended upon in the entertainment industry—theater, films, amusement parks, the internet, video games, television. Potential museum patrons have a myriad of choices for their time, all of which have unique learning experiences. The competition for museums has gone beyond other museums and includes these other sources. Lewis and Proctor believed, "it's not that museums need to be those things, but, there is a method of communication and understanding that we theorize that contemporary modern audiences have. There's a level of expectation that they have of what they, what they get out, what they get as a reward for having invested time," according to Lewis and Proctor. Museums must be mindful of these outlets for entertainment and learning, and then borrow ideas from them if necessary, because modern audiences often expect to have a certain level of engagement similar to what these alternatives to museums offer.

History museums in particular suffered two fundamental impediments to becoming successful innovative storytellers and embracing change. First, history museums needed to manage cursive knowledge. Proctor explained that cursive knowledge was possessed by "people that know a lot about something don't know how to get people that know nothing about it in the front door." He added that "museums are often done by people who know too much about the subject to be able to look at it from the standpoint of someone who knows nothing about it." Thus, artifacts and information were often presented with the assumption of general interest by the public, but no context was offered to shape an understanding to the significance of the presented materials. Second, most history museums were challenged with too many options for telling their stories. "They often have almost an infinite number of choices and they have a difficult time winnowing out those choices," noted Mr. Procter. "They have a hard time coming up with the core story because they know when they do, it means they can't tell these other nine stories." Proctor would ask clients pointed questions, such as "how much do you [the museum] want to get people interested in this?" He explained that museums "need to discipline [themselves] and tell one story in the most compelling way possible."

BRC facilitated a comprehensive evaluation process to gather museum clients and content experts to meet as a team to bring out the core stories of focused topics. BRC prefers to distinguish "brainstorming" from more specialized teaming in an effort to foster higher level thinking and open ideas about design choices. It is about "coming up with a concrete plan; figuring out what you're going to do. You make decisions; everybody has to make decisions; everybody is on an equal playing ground for those two days, and everybody has to make decisions," noted Lewis. Organizational hierarchies were minimized in the process so that no one opinion weighed more heavily than another and choices were made by consensus.

In the view of BRC, museums have struggled traditionally with change in the way they present themselves and their content, but they must overcome this in order to insure sustainability. Ms. Lewis explained "a hundred years ago, museums were all about a building and a collection, and in the last hundred years our society has changed more than it has probably in the last five or six hundred years." What BRC advocated was moving "museum experience a couple of steps further down the line in terms of creating immersive experiences in environments; the kinds of things that we believe are great storytelling approaches and great storytelling techniques," she added. Pushing boundaries in design and storytelling would make museums more attractive to learners. As patrons moved from "A to A Prime" when visiting exhibitions, the results could be measured in increased attendance, increased shop sales, increased membership and other tangibles that demonstrated audience growth. "What that signals is you're reaching that audience; you're having that impact on the audience and from a business viability and sustainability model, in terms of the museum keeping itself, not only alive, but able to regenerate itself every 8-10 years." Lewis noted.

BRC described their overarching approach to exhibition design as "scholarship meets showmanship," and it was not without its critics. Ms. Lewis countered that "we'll take all the criticism in the world if we're upholding that scholarship, we're delivering that showmanship in a way that is reaching people, having impact, and allowing these museums as institutions to sustain themselves financially."

The National Baseball Hall of Fame

The National Baseball Hall of Fame was founded in 1939 to preserve and honor the history of baseball, welcoming on average 250,000-400,000 visitors annually. Each year since, the Hall has recognized, through induction and awards, former players, officials, writers and broadcasters associated with professional baseball. The Hall has assembled a collection of approximately 36,000 baseball artifacts, 100,000 baseball cards, 400,000 photographs, and 12,000 hours of recorded film and audio media. These materials are housed in the A. Bartlett Giamatti Research Library, on display in gallery exhibits at their site in Cooperstown, New York, and showcased in national traveling exhibitions.

John Odell has served as Curator of History and Research at the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum since 1999. He spent 12 years in the Curator's office of the United States Senate before coming to Cooperstown, New York.

John Odell viewed museums as having a very special role in education. He explained that it was not enough just to present historical material as an academic exercise. "Where the museum curator really earns their stripes is when [visitors] say 'okay it's nice to know [about that historical topic], but *so what*' in the 20th century or the 21st century; and the '*so what*' is for people to look at these elements and then draw parallels and draw lines to themselves in this day and in this place." An element for achieving successful learning in the exhibition was to create a "wow" factor, he described, through presenting original artifacts. "The reason for having a museum and showing the original artifacts," Odell explained, "is that there is a real connection between people and the authentic thing. If you just have, if you only have reproductions, they can be nice on an intellectual basis, but they don't have the same connection with people's hearts when they're saying 'this really is an old' whatever it is." Odell continued, "These are the kinds of things that people when they see, 'oh, somebody really used that,' it allows them to project themselves into possibly being able to use that. If it's just a reproduction, you know, then it's neat to hold but it's all in the present and you lose the connection to the past; you also lose the connection to projecting to the future and what am I suppose to do with this information now that I've got it?" The hundreds artifact and archival choices available at the Hall of Fame would give Odell and his staff a myriad of opportunities to create engaging stories for learners in the museum.

Among the challenges faced by the Hall of Fame staff in creating meaningful lessons for museum learners was the age of their exhibits. There were a number of exhibits that have not been evaluated or changed in a number of decades. The staff convened regularly to discuss methods and approaches to improving exhibitions, but evaluations were not done simply for the sake of making changes. Primarily, exhibitions needed change because they were "looking tired" or worn, but other cultural factors influenced how and what changes were made. "We're pleased that we have these artifacts and we'd like to share them with our visitors; that's the reason they're coming here," Odell explained. "But theories about education and learning have changed and our society has changed. So if all these other things are changing and we're not, then it's not changing for changes own sake, but changing because the world has changed and we need to be a part of that. *We are* a part of it, we need to stay up with it, or else our message isn't going to get across."

Odell described the role of the curatorial team as "very exhibit orientated; focused very much on who people we view as our end-users, who are the visitors to the Baseball Hall of Fame" and subsequent traveling exhibitions. Odell worked with a team of four curatorial staff. They rotated leadership roles to manage and research the Hall's collections and develop exhibitions from them. "So we are on a daily basis conceiving of and then researching and writing the exhibits," noted Odell. "My time will be spent pulling artifacts from our collection storage area, photographing, measuring them, and comparing them against the story that they are supposed to be telling to either confirm or disprove the alleged story behind it. Sometimes it's to find out [the story], because there may be almost no story that was attached to the item when it came in, but we want to know a little bit more [about it]."

With a mountain of materials dating more than 60 years old, the curatorial team has often faced choices regarding research evidence about items in the collection, especially on items that are in the collection with little documentation. Odell mentioned that the team needed to determine "why [an item] was there or why we can use it today. Those are two very different questions," Odell added. "Artifacts can be used to tell a story from the past, but the person who is looking at them is always stationed in the present. So it's always a vehicle for looking into the past and you have to figure out how to position that artifact so it will tell a meaningful story for somebody who is coming to visit."

The attention to detail paid to content research by the Hall of Fame was propelled by the museums audience. In Odell's opinion, history museums, like the Hall of Fame, face unique content challenges in sustaining the educational appetites of patrons. "It's not like when they go to a fine art museum where [visitors] graze through until they see a painting that they like and then they'll go up and look at that and maybe the ones on either side," stated Odell. Patrons of the Hall of Fame are "very, very interested in learning and in having the greatest possible experience, and for many of them that means reading every word and often commenting and interacting with their friends and family who are along with them about these artifacts." Furthermore, among history museums, baseball museums host a very "passionate clientele." Odell explained further that "as we've talked with other colleagues in other museums, they talk about the different kinds of museum visitors; the sprinters [who move through exhibitions very quickly], the grazers and [those that] devour every single thing. The only sprinters, so to speak, that we have in the Baseball Hall of Fame are the people who love the people who love baseball; it's the wives and some of the kids who come with Dad or older Brother, and, who don't really have an interest in the game, but the other people in that group do have a tremendous interest in the game." Yet, with the majority of Hall of Fame visitors categorized as those who devour the history, a conscious effort was made not to design content exclusively for them. The staff challenged itself to outreach, through content, to the rest of the audience instead of the more passionate fan. "We actually, try to bias away from [the devouring visitor] a little bit," Odell confessed, "because there's no way of filling them up. But museums aren't about filling up. They are about inspiring people and using the genuine artifacts of the past to teach stories about the past and to inspire people to understand their own past better, and perhaps understand their present a little bit better, as well." The goal was to have all visitors take something meaningful away from the museum experience, even if they did not expect to make such a connection.

The opportunity to tell compelling stories has driven the evaluation and creation of exhibitions at the Hall of Fame, but the design of exhibits was viewed as the primary consideration. "I start with what are the ideas, most of the time this is where I start; what are the ideas, what are the stories that need to be told? Then, what artifacts do I have to tell those stories," noted Odell. "Once I have the overall story then I start looking at the artifacts that I have in that, and usually those artifacts help tell which sub-stories, you know, how does this overall story break down?" Odell explained further that "the artifacts help drive the divisions of

the story, the chapters of the story." Then great attention was paid to the presentation of the artifacts. "The presentation is so essential," Odell insisted, "because if it's not visually engaging, not even visually, if it's not engaging from a design standpoint, then it doesn't matter how good the artifacts are and how well it's written because if it's a visual turnoff, people won't want to spend any time with it." Odell continued his point about design by noting, "that's what hooks people to come over and take a look at this artifact that the Curator thinks is really important. The designer says 'oh, let's figure out ways that we can highlight that so that people can know they should come over and look at this'."

Philosophically, Odell and the Hall of Fame have been cautious with the inclusion of utilizing technology as part of exhibition design. "We're aware that we have a lot of kids who come to our museum and some of the feedback that we've gotten from visitors over the years' has been that we don't have enough interactivity," lamented Odell. "They are usually talking about a couple of different kinds of interactivity; one of them is the computer interactive, which are very popular now." The reasons for limiting their use by the Hall were many. Odell noted "they're very expensive, they're expensive to develop, they're hard to develop well, they are time consuming to develop and to develop well and they don't age particularly gracefully and the equipment that they go on can be sensitive."

The Hall of Fame, however, was not completely devoid of "hands on" and computer enhanced exhibits. Odell explained, "We have some of these interactives, because sometimes that's the most effective way to present a lot of deep information about, that our visitors want to have about Hall of Famer's and their stats and their bio's and that kind of information." Odell expressed concern about challenges inherent in maintaining certain types of interactive exhibits. "We would like to have more hands-on kinds of things going on in our exhibits. A problem that we have is of the 350,000 people who come here every year, I don't know how many, 300,000 I'm going to pull out, you know, come in July and August. It's a lot of young children with baseball teams and they're hard on what's going on," stated Odell. "It's different than when they come with their parents, in a group of four, than when they come with twenty on a ball club and they're turned loose by their coach." Odell explained that the Hall of Fame was "aware of what can we realistically do [and] what can we realistically not do with interactivity."

Among the Hall of Fame's stated educational goals was to "connect generations." Odell explained, "we're always looking for new ways to increase the discussion between adults and children, grandparents and grandchildren and one of the ways that we can do that is the kind of interactivity that allows more than one person to do something and that's something that we like to be able to do."

Patrons, however, have also suggested that the Hall include even more interactive activities, such as batting cages and speed pitching machines. In spite of this pressure to change, the museum stood firm in choosing to establish an environment without these physically intense interactive activities. Space and liability issues were primary deterrents against inclusion of these elements, but there were other environmental considerations. "For better or for worse," Odell explained, "that ends up being more of a carnival kind of situation that within the confines of our space we can't do very well and after having thought about it a lot, we feel like it might also introduce a different kind of expectation for the rest of the museum." Odell admitted it is difficult not to meet visitor expectations regarding interactivity, but weighted against everything else, the staff at the Hall of Fame decided the appropriate choice was not to include these elements.

The teaming process was very important to the Hall of Fame curatorial staff for evaluating, creating and interpreting content for exhibitions. Curators were assigned an era or topic to research related objects from the collections. According to Odell, team leaders "propose to the rest of [the team] the artifacts that [they] think best tell the stories that we want to tell after we've already gotten together and say 'what are the stories that need to go into this exhibit?' Then [they] move forward with the additional research necessary to tell those stories, and write the exhibit labels up." The teaming process focused the researchers on gaining as much detail about objects as they could to ensure capturing all possible story angles.

Odell credited the leadership of the Baseball Hall of Fame for embracing the need for change and fostering a culture that recognized the need for evaluation and examination of exhibitions. "That has not always been the case at this museum," according to Odell. "We're in a very fortunate time where this idea of new exhibits and of evaluating and re-evaluating older exhibits is one that is very much supported by our current administration." Odell recognized that not every museum can afford the level of restructuring that the Hall has attempted annually. "I

think every museum, every good museum within whatever budgets it has, strives to do that kind of thing and to not be satisfied with where you are right now, but figure out 'how can we tell our story better," Odell insisted. "Hopefully by telling our story better, you know, more people will get a chance [to] enjoy it."

Analysis of Interview Data

It is important to identify the evidence in the interview data that aligns with themes found in the review of the literature. Figure 4.1 demonstrates the answers to questions aligned with the emerging themes from the interviews.

Table 4.1: Important Themes Found in Interview Data

	Theme #1:	*Museums have played an important role in education*
Examples from Interviews		Researcher's Observation
"think about going to museums both as repositories and as history in the making" "extend the students beyond their normal perception of what history is about and to see that it is this big, big picture that has connections all over the place that once they are connected to another, that you only really discover when you start to probe into and look at it. It's something more than just fact after fact." "these exhibits also are creations of history. They are both influenced by the available artifacts but also the moment in which they are created." "puts museums in a somewhat unique category in terms of their ability to reach across the needs spectrum usually to people who are choosing to be there and who may elect to return for future visits." "adjunct to the formal education system," "museums are seen as kind of thought leaders sometimes in the formal education sector in terms of new ways to approach old topics." "The role that museums play in education is to light a fire inside people," "Where the museum curator really earns their stripes is when [visitors] say 'okay it's nice to know [about that historical topic], but *so what*' in the 20th century or the 21st century; and the '*so what*' is for people to look at these elements and then draw parallels and draw lines to themselves in this day and in this place."		There was great consensus and confirmation to the role of museums as important function of education in society. Although influenced by a particular time and context, museums offer a valid sense of place and context to the past for learners who endeavor to understand it. Generally, the interview subjects agreed with the premise that museums are educational by nature and offer a proving ground for independent thinking and creating individual meaning in society (Hein, 2005). Museums must also decide the overall structure, or ethos (Talboys, 2005), to govern the types and limits of the educational experience they felt would be most affective to learners.

Theme #2:	Exhibition content drives educational outreach and interest in the museum
Examples from Interviews	Researcher's Observation
Museums "literally [took] you back into an era that you have no other way of getting back into in the ways that you can visually and atmospherically." "if you don't get the person engaged they miss the story, and fundamentally, for history museums especially, it's about telling a story." "I think every museum ideally wants to take its visitors somewhere they've never been in their imagination," "if the audience walks out [of a museum] unchanged [emotionally]--they walk out the same as they walk in--why do it? And so the change you want to make is the same change when you study great films, great plays, [and] great books. Those people write them, not because they want to make money, because they want to make a change in the audience." "You're creating a moment of theatre there, but you own that moment, and if you had an artifact that would be great. That would validate the experience, but the [artifact] isn't the experience." "The reason for having a museum and showing the original artifacts," Odell explained, "is that there is a real connection between people and the authentic thing. If you just have, if you only have reproductions, they can be nice on an intellectual basis, but they don't have the same connection with people's hearts when they're saying 'this really is an old' whatever it is." "Artifacts can be used to tell a story from the past, but the person who is looking at them is always stationed in the present. So it's always a vehicle for looking into the past and you have to figure out how to position that artifact so it will tell a meaningful story for somebody who is coming to visit." Visitors are "very, very interested in learning and in having the greatest possible experience, and for many of them that means reading every word and often commenting and interacting with their friends and family who are along with them about these artifacts."	Connecting learners intellectually and emotionally to accurate stories of the past that can enhance understanding of the present should be the goal of every history museum. The course by which the museum influences and shapes meaning for visitors, however, could take divergent paths. For example, representatives from BRC and the Hall of Fame both agreed that presenting and shaping stories for learners in museums was effective. Their practice also aligned with the experience model over the information model in creating exhibitions (Taylor, 2002). The experience model describes museums aware of their visitors, tuned to their needs, their interests, and their experiences in the institution. By contrast, the information model describes museums focused primarily on their message and their resources--what to say and what to offer to the audience. However, BRC and the Hall of Fame differ philosophically on shaping the learning experience. The Hall of Fame sensed from its learners a desire to take in as much information as possible. BRC would insist on drilling down to a handful of story points under an umbrella of a concise thematic approach. The Hall of Fame believed the passion for baseball by the majority of its visitors inherently ties them emotionally to the learning opportunity. There then is little need for additional enhancements beyond the original artifacts, objects and photographs. The experience model in pure form has its limitations. As described in the literature (Bell and Zirkel-Rubin, 2001; Talboys, 2006; Marcus, 2008), and as demonstrated by the Hall of Fame, the reality for museums was that educational guidance was needed in order to insure rich learning experiences for visitors. This, at least, remained true for history museums.
Theme #3	Evaluation and change are essential to effective museum exhibitions:

Examples from the Interviews	Researcher's Observation
"the difficulty often with non-profits is they want the wider world to key into what they are interested in, but it doesn't work that way. You have to key into what they are interested in; figure out whether you can or cannot help them to get to where they want to go. What role can your museum play to help them achieve something they want to achieve?"	The evidence of this study suggested that museums must create an atmosphere of professional practice which listens to its audiences, is unafraid of change and flexibility, promotes assessment through teaming and collaboration, and is accountable to donors and stakeholders. Especially as it related to providing educational programming and evaluating exhibitions for educational value, museums must be sensitive to the needs of their constituencies in the education community; the teachers, administrators and students.
"there has to be flexibility in that you cannot just presume that because you have a story to tell, and the way you tell the story, that people see the connection to what they are trying do."	Even as times and methods change, it would be important for museum to establish these core practices, which would allow the museum to avoid a static existence. The study suggested a number of criteria and evaluation tools adaptable for history museums. Systematic evaluation would allow museums to stay ahead of changes anticipated by learners and, perhaps, facilitate learning innovations on topics and teaching methods.
"Is it [education program or exhibition] taking us somehow to the frontier in terms of learning? Is it tapping into or in some way exciting or likely to excite youngsters in some captivating manner? Because if you don't excite them they will never engage; if they never engage they will not learn."	
"museums are often done by people who know too much about the subject to be able to look at it from the standpoint of someone who knows nothing about it."	
Museums "often have almost an infinite number of choices and they have a difficult time winnowing out those choices," They have a hard time coming up with the core story because they know when they do, it means they can't tell these other nine stories."	
"coming up with a concrete plan; figuring out what you're going to do. You make decisions; everybody has to make decisions; everybody is on an equal playing ground for those two days, and everybody has to make decisions,"	
"a hundred years ago, museums were all about a building and a collection, and in the last hundred years our society has changed more than it has probably in the last five or six hundred years."	
"theories about education and learning have changed and our society has changed. So if all these other things are changing and we're not, then it's not changing for changes own sake, but changing because the world has changed and we need to be a part of that. *We are* a part of it, we need to stay up with it, or else our message isn't going to get across."	
"We're in a very fortunate time where this idea of new exhibits and of evaluating and re-evaluating older exhibits is one that is very much supported by our current administration."	

Theme #4	*Effective presentation of content could be achieved for multiple audiences in multiple ways:*
Examples from the Interviews	Researcher's Observations
"the more reading intensive a museum is the older the audience that actually engages with it. And, its only older people that go through a museum like that and actually read a lot. Younger people whiz through it and they read the caption at most as they fly by. Unless, you figure out a way to change that; so, one way of changing that is clearly technology." "If you make a fantastic experience that really turns on a 6th or a 7th grader to content subject matter, we believe that same kind of experience will be extremely gratifying and rewarding for 30 year olds, 60 year olds, experts in the field, and people who are novices who don't understand anything about it." "I still think that you need to differentiate. You're going to have kids that learn differently even with technology. You're going to have kids that are very visual, kids that are auditory, kids that are, you name it. So, I think you have to, to some extent, have a variety of things available." "think about multi-modal, multi-sensory methods" "we're always looking for new ways to increase the discussion between adults and children, grandparents and grandchildren and one of the ways that we can do that is the kind of interactivity that allows more than one person to do something and that's something that we like to be able to do."	Museums like the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum and the National Baseball Hall of Fame have featured a blend of presentation styles with elements of the information model and experience model as part of exhibition structure. Museums, however, can still offer "multi-modal" learning opportunities within either style. It is important for the museum to determine which style best suited their goals and needs for the audiences they served before committing to particular modes of content delivery. The discussion from the teachers, in particular, demonstrated the value of offering differentiated methods of learning for students in the museums setting. Effective content for teachers and students can appeal to other learners who visit museums as well. The ultimate goal is to delivery engaging stories and experiences in as many reasonable ways as possible.
Theme #5	*Technology is primarily a tool for delivering exhibition content, but not the main attraction:*
Examples from the Interviews	Researcher's Observations
"Museums that just purely thrive on the literate culture are in decline because we live in an age that is just so supersaturated with media. And, it's not like we don't have the means to tell these stories in these fresh innovative technologically enabled ways." "if it's entertaining and educational but the students only see it as entertaining, that's fine with me as long as I know they're actually getting something out of it. The problem is if I go and I look at it and I say, that's really entertaining, you know, but it doesn't do anything, then it's worthless." "We don't think that just putting computer kiosk's out and having buttons that you can push is going to change a kids	Systematic evaluation allows the history museum to rationally consider the inclusion of technology in delivering exhibition content. The study suggested that the use of technology in exhibitions deserved careful consideration because of the great resources required to effectively include its use. Technology best served a supporting role in shaping the learning experience for visitors within the ethos established by the museum. Technology can also enhance emotional connections to the subject being presented. However, the attraction to the history museum should always be the core story to be presented, and not the technological advancement of its delivery. Stories can be perfected through research and scholarship, but there importance to the museum will be the constant feature of the institution. The best

life and make them a life long [learner]; to spark, to light that fire,"	approach for museums should be to commit to assessing innovation in the way it delivers its stories.
"You know, we don't find those things very compelling and when we sit in museums and we watch people interacting with those kinds of things, we don't see any prime to the audience. We don't see any change in the audience; we see them come up and, they'll press it and they may look at it for a couple of minutes, and it's like, it becomes, like okay, 'check,' you know and then they move on to the next thing,"	
"they're very expensive, they're expensive to develop, they're hard to develop well, they are time consuming to develop and to develop well and they don't age particularly gracefully and the equipment that they go on can be sensitive."	
"We have some of these interactives, because sometimes that's the most effective way to present a lot of deep information. . ."	

Theme #6:	*The NLBM should strongly consider the inclusion of new historical topics and presentation methods to enhance educational value in its exhibitions and programs.*
Examples from the Interviews	**Researcher's Observations**
"the story of the Latinos in the Negro Leagues is a story that was missed for the most part early on not by intent but a lack of capability."	The interview data revealed a number of very instructive opinions and suggestions regarding both the state of Negro Leagues historical content and how it could be used in the museum setting.
"this topic has been done better than most other baseball topics and it's all been in the last ten [years], and been done because we go to the primary sources; to the players themselves."	Although Negro Leagues historical content was viewed by the history experts as being at its peak, concerns were voiced about the quality of some work, and the need for further investigation in under reported areas, such as baseball during slavery, the pre 1920s period,
(On early African American baseball before the Negro Leagues and baseball during slavery) "They [black baseball teams] didn't just come into being in a vacuum; there were other teams, I'm sure, and other, other stuff that's there ahead of them that would be interesting to try and tease out if the record is available,"	the integration of period of baseball, Latino players, and the economics of the Negro Leagues. Educators concurred, especially on the issue of economics.
(On African American baseball and other sports connections in the 1920s):"It's all there in the black papers and somebody really needs to, I think, tell that sports story in a scholarly sort of way,"	Several areas of the literature noted the importance of museum exhibitions and programs to connect emotionally for audiences. The study confirmed that the current NLBM exhibitions had successfully connected intellectually and emotionally with learners in a number of ways. However, a number of suggestions were made to enhance the learning experiences further. The Field of Legends exhibit proved to be the most appealing learning experience
"to see it on the local level and to see how the teams came into communities and impacted on those communities and left behind memories of baseball that was just so special."	for most observers, so much so, that other important learning opportunities may be missed when touring the exhibition. A number of suggestions were made,

"I guess there's ways, you know, to capture the fact that, this is in a world that has an economy of its own, but the resources are always going to be limited, even when they're making the quote 'big bucks' that they're making,"

"The whole business of that generation after Jackie[Robinson] and the children of the Negro leaguers, and the whole notion of family and where the legacy goes across the generations; I think its an area that nobody has really done anything,"

"too often the story of the color line is told as a story of the two poles. Major league baseball always exercised a preference for Latino talent over Afro-American talent. That was indeed part of the way of manipulating the color line. In the 20's, 30's, 40's up until the signing of Jackie Robinson that they [would] rather go to Latin America for more affordable, cheaply acquired players than to break the color line--their 'gentlemen's agreement'--and pay African-American players for the stars that they were."

"I think there is a bevy of books on the Negro Leagues and they run the gambit in terms of quality. As a historian I recognize that some books are popular books. They are really trying to reach a popular audience. But, there are also a lot of replication books, and by that I mean, they replicate information that they find in other material and other public sources. They rewrite and then revised the narrative in terms of the actual words but, not necessarily the content of the ideas and they get it published."

"I still hold out hope that there are little troves here and there of such rich materials and I know that the story of the Negro Leagues is just so important that family members hold on to those materials dearly. I also hope that they consider sharing some of that material with the Negro League Baseball Museum and with the National Baseball Library and Archive so that researchers can be able to access it and analyze those materials and share those stories. It's become even more important as we're losing the living testimony of these ballplayers."

"I see something [the NLBM exhibit] that is very substantially, logically, in a chronological fashion, very visually touches practically everyone of the important bases that needs to be touched and extends itself in neat sorts of ways,"

"we're going to take all these kids down there, we're not just going to turn them loose for a day. We need to come up with some type of an activity that's a gradable item, that they're looking for certain things, that they're actually paying attention to what they're seeing, and also as a way

including the addition of tour guides, both personal guides and audio guides. The addition of more hands on experiences before going to the field, including interactive components, could help deepen the connections for visitors. The hands on experiences and additional information were also seen as important areas for museum outreach, through loaned displays, computer based programs, and communication to audiences, especially teachers, about educational materials and programs.

The suggestions and advice provided through the interview data on presenting exhibition content was in alignment with recommendations in the literature (American Association of Museums, 2005). Also, the data revealed a number of historical story opportunities to present. These should be balanced against the advice of BRC Imagination Arts to narrow the focus of exhibitions to get core stories for the museum experience.

of helping them to actually maybe start to draw some connections to what they're seeing with what's been spoken of in class."

"where I see the museum being something useful is, you know I like to tell my students, 'I'm trying to help you become historians.' So, I can see taking them to the museum and creating something, or hopefully someone has created it for me so I don't have to be creative, but something where the students - It's not just a matter of, 'Go find this, go find that'--but in some way, shape, or form they have to find pieces of evidence and create stories; write a history themselves."

If we can't get all the kids there, you know, if the museums can provide, again, whether it's some type of resource that can be used in the class. It's nowhere near as good as being in the museum itself, but if there was some type of a CD ROM, or Traveling ball bag.

the Midwest Center for Holocaust Education has their trunk that has all these resources. Teachers, you pay a nominal fee to rent it. You have it for a week or two weeks. Yeah, a traveling ball bag, you know some replicas from the Negro Leagues Museum and all that kind of, with lesson plans

I love it when museums have like guest speakers, guest lecturers. I offer my kids extra credit. I say, you know, "A-Go to the museum. I'll give you extra credit. B-Go hear a guest speaker." When I hear about those things, if there was a way to communicate with teachers, "Here's what we have going on that may be of interest to your students." Those are wonderful resources.

The kids get real excited about, like the videos, and your new videos. The hands on are awesome. I miss – when you first opened up the dugout had something in there that was hands on with a computer. I don't know if it was over used or whatever, it broke down. That was kind of cool, if that could come back. You've devoted such a large space to the playing field with the statues, which I love, but it would be cool if that could be used, if that were interactive in some way. I don't know what that would be. My biggest challenge to them is to get them to slow down to read it.

"something that I thought of with regards to that field, and you guys are going to laugh. But, have you ever been to Graceland? Have you ever been on the Elvis tour? They put you in the headphones and you have your own self-guided. That would be kind of cool actually if you had something about those people, and you're listening to your own. So you're on your own kind of deal so everybody's not listening in.

"The kids don't take the time--these are seventh graders-- do not take the time to read the timeline and you know, go through the story," walk in and you whet their appetite with the baseball field and they can't wait to get to it. So they are flying through there and I'm like going, 'Hang on! Look at this, look at this!' And they're like, 'Yeah.' So I'm always trying to pull them back. But I've got two other teachers, so there are three of us and 65 kids and we're not always very successful with it."

"If you could get a collection of how other teachers use your museum, what worksheets they have; because I think as a teacher we like to have a starting point and I'm not creative enough to come up with my own idea, so it's always nice if I could look and see, 'Oh, wow this teacher did this.' It doesn't fit exactly, but I can use this idea,"

"you're separated from the field on purpose and you have to go through and learn the history in order to earn the chance to be out there, and if there's some other way to really bring that point home to the kids before they get there--that they are doing something important in learning, in respecting what happened--in order to earn that spot on the field." He believed, before entering the Field, visitors should consider these reflection questions; "What have you learned? What have you done? Do you deserve to go out there with those statues?"

I think a guide would be really, really helpful to walk the kids through. Anything that the kids can touch – the chain link fence they're looking through. They get their hands in there. That's good. Going through the turnstiles. That's good. You got your map with the pennants. That's good. Sitting in the bleachers listening to the National Anthem. The kids like that, too. Things like that they really, really dig. I would like to see, maybe, get a replica. You have some old equipment, don't you? A replica that they can actually put their hand in. And some of the boys who play baseball, "Oh my gosh, how can you feild the ball with this?" And the ball's probably heavier back then, wasn't it? And there's a cup made with wood, metal? Let the boys put it on. Things like that, I think would be enjoyable. You guys have a record of the time it took Cool Papa Bell to go around? Is there any way to get some bases set up?

The key is you've got to hook the students in some way, shape or form. Whether it's through technology, whether it's through, you know, like the Holocaust Museum where they give the person, you are this person – biographical information about this person. So, it's not just, I'm looking at all this stuff. I can read about some individual – more of a connection to it. If you can see not just the baseball or the uniform, but maybe you've got video clips,

or the actual person, physical representation of the person. It's nice to hear them talking or something. Since we can't have a Buck O'Neil anymore. Even if you have to have him speaking, but also have that authentic stuff.

I think biographies are, you know, getting the biographical stories, the background. Where did these people come from? How did they get to be? I think its, you know, kids like to hear, see the biography of people they know of, famous people. So-and-so didn't do so well in school. But look at them now. Or they came from a certain background but look where they ended up. I think that's always fascinating for kids. They can see what they were like when they were younger.

You got some character traits, as far as the teacher, that you want the kids to be looking for as they go through the museum. "Where do you see in the museum…that this is demonstrated? Or who showed this character trait very well?"

I think the sociology perspective is really good, too. Just the grouping and economic structures, and just society in general and maybe be able to draw parallels to other societies and to present day society more so than just the straight history stuff.

Or you could have a bank, just reserved for February to go. And so like when that packet comes out, there could be a sheet in there. "Teachers who have been here in the past have...these standards have been met by coming here," or "Support these standards." And just give them a blanket and then they'd go "Oh, you mean I could?" And then they could go look on their own. I don't want you to change your museum to meet the standards.

CHAPTER 5-CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Summary

The study on evaluating museum exhibitions for educational value reported solutions which the NLBM could use to improve and enhance exhibitions. The study explored the current trends and scholarship involving museums and education, museum exhibit assessment, and Negro Leagues historical content. After confirming both the significance of museums to education and the primacy of the evaluation process to museum practices and the creation of exhibitions, this study identified a number of key interrogatories by which history museums should evaluate exhibition content. This was accomplished through a qualitative research process of reviewing relevant literature, acquiring expert testimony, and analyzing these findings to illuminate questions needed for effective exhibition content evaluation.

Conclusions

In this study, a number of important themes emerged from the literature review and interviews with experts to address two primary questions. The first research question focused on the ways the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum could improve its exhibitions in both historical content and content presentation. These themes solidified the important role of museums in education, the primacy of museum content stories to educational experiences, the importance of evaluation processes for museum exhibitions, the need for multiple content presentation methods, and the appropriate use of technology in presenting exhibition content. In addition, the study revealed the need for the NLBM to carefully review the historical literature and consider including in its exhibitions specific examples on early black baseball history, economics of the Negro Leagues, and post baseball integration history.

The second research question attempted to identify the criteria or questions by which history museums should evaluate content and structure of exhibitions for educational value A reflection on the interview and literature data framed a number of useful questions which could be applied to an evaluation process for museum exhibitions. The information gathered could be

synthesized under specific sets of evaluation questions involving exhibition content, (2) exhibition content enhancements, and exhibition content presentation.

This study has established that conveying compelling stories is the key attraction for learners and central to the mission of museums as educational institutions. Although this study focused specifically on the scholarship available for Negro Leagues Baseball historical content, the questions stemming from that inquiry could be universally applied to other subject areas. Exhibition content encapsulates the actual story or message to be conveyed to learners. The following questions should be asked when evaluating or writing new exhibition content for museums; Is the written content or story sound and accurate? Does the content reflect the most current scholarship? Was the content derived from a diversity of sources and perspectives? Is the content compelling and emotionally evocative for the learner?

Museums are unique from other places of learning because of resources such as objects, photographs, documents, film and other historical material they can employ to enhance the content or story. In evaluating or creating exhibitions, the reviewer should then consider the following questions; what historical objects or resources are available to enhance the content of the exhibition? Can various artifacts or historical resource be properly and securely utilized to enhance the exhibition content?

Questions inherent in exhibition content presentation assess the means by which content is delivered to learners. What are the audiences or markets to which the content will be addressed? Can the content be presented so that it is clear, concise, and compelling while always focused on established themes? Is the exhibition content organized logically and in a way that is easily understandable by learners? Is the content presented in an accessible way, both physically and cognitively? Does the presentation of the content welcome diverse learning styles? Are available exhibition enhancements, such as objects and photographs, appropriately used and presented? What technologies are available to present the content that is both useful and compelling?

Implications

The purpose of the study was to report on methods by which the NLBM could improve and enhance exhibitions. It was intended to aid the effort by which the museum could continue to attract school aged groups while meeting the needs of all audiences. Applying the proposed set

of questions to exhibition content evaluation would be of great benefit to institutions like the NLBM in improving exhibitions to help broaden its audience.

The study addressed significant critical questions by which museum professionals and educators could evaluate the value of the museum environment as a place of productive learning. A systematic process of evaluation would allow history museums an effective method by which to assess changes whenever needed. The structure of this review demonstrated timelessness and flexibility to change as the institution's audiences and resources change. Evaluation of the exhibitions can also demonstrate to patrons and supporters the museums' attention to stewardship by employing a systematic method by which educational decisions are made and resources are allocated.

Action Plan for Evaluation

There were a number of beneficial suggestions and ideas specific to the NLBM content which could be applied to affect change in exhibitions. These ideas, however, do extend themselves enough to create a process for facilitating change. Armed with a set of key questions and criteria for evaluating exhibitions for educational value, the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum can establish a plan of action towards addressing the questions forwarded for evaluation. An action plan can be established centered on the evaluation questions developed from the study. These questions could be addressed in five phases.

Phase I would be an Administrative Phase. Here, goals and objectives would be established for the evaluation of the NLBM exhibits. The museum could engage a team of staff, audience advocates, and experts to help shape the parameters of the process for improving the educational value of NLBM exhibitions.

Phase II would address the questions raised on Exhibition Content. The NLBM currently features several hundred text panels and photographs on display, with a number of new photographs and artifacts to be added and interpreted for display. Considering the level of new scholarship since 1995, and considering the suggestions of the Negro Leagues scholars interviewed for this study—such as greater inclusion history of baseball in slavery, the pre 1920 period, Negro Leagues economics, and Latin connections to the Negro Leagues--it could be reasonable to reconsider the entire exhibition presentation and establish a more central theme or core story for the museum. It could take several weeks to complete, but the evaluation questions

could shape a more accurate story to from which to craft exhibitions. The NLBM must balance a critical review of older secondary sources with new research and information gleaned from newly available primary sources it has acquired.

Phase III would address the questions on Exhibition Content Enhancements. This phase could include a detailed inventory of older and newer artifacts which tie to refocused story of the Negro Leagues. It may be better to have vast amount of choices initially that can be narrowed down by team members once themes are vetted and selected for the delivery of Negro Leagues historical content.

Phase IV would address questions on Exhibition Content Presentation. Once the core story is established, the NLBM could then decide the various modes by which the historical content would be delivered. In addition to the hundreds of text panels and photographs, the NLBM has used three theater stations for watching films, two additional short film stations, fifteen touch screen computer kiosks with film and databases, light affects, sound affects, and 12 bronze sculptures of baseball players. The basic content featured in these displays has not changed since 1997. The museum would have to measure, based on the evaluation questions, the usefulness of the computer kiosks, the layout of the text and photographs, and the inclusion of new artifacts within the entire presentation. Of chief concern are the mechanical technologies such as the films and kiosks. Their expense demands that their review take priority. Any potential front-end analysis and testing of proposed changes to the exhibitions could happen at the end of Phase IV.

Phase V would feature the implementation and initial evaluation of the recommendations for the NLBM. The implementation would conceivably be done in several parts. Once learners engage the new features, an outcome-based analysis could be conducted to measure the effectiveness of the changes. Now the NLBM has at least established a means for examining its exhibitions and can return to this process whenever necessity dictates.

The implementation of this action plan could be simplified into a model for change. The museum must be able to measure or quantify the effectiveness and any changes made to its exhibitions. The notion of "A to A Prime" (Rogers, 2000) is a powerful philosophical stance which all museum stakeholders and educators should strive to achieve. Achieving "A Prime" with learners should be a goal shared by all in the education community; schools, museums, libraries and other resources. Properly applied, one could assume that the steps outlined in the

proposed phases for exhibition assessment should help the NLBM achieve "A Prime" for all the audiences who walk through the building. This assumption is worthy of being quantified and tested.

The five phases for evaluation of museum exhibitions could be simplified into an evaluation model using the "A to A Prime" construct as a base. Again, "A to A Prime" theory suggested the importance of establishing innovative stories for a learning experience in order to affect positive change in the audience passing through the experience. By establishing clear objectives, the change to be achieved would be measurable and tangible for the experience provider. If one builds the story experience, a history museum, and seeks to fashion emotional stories, the evaluation questions proposed could help narrow the focus of the content provided in those stories. They, in essence, become the metaphorical building blocks of the exhibition experience.

As demonstrated in the Building Model for Exhibition Evaluation (Figure 5.1), each phase of the evaluation process builds, from the foundation upward, to create the story experience. Phase I, the administrative phase, becomes the foundation by which the other series of evaluation questions will rest. Phases II, III, and IV build the body structure of the experience, while Phase V places a protective "roof" on the successful completion of the built experience.

Figure 5.1: Building Model for Exhibition Evaluation

Phase V:
Implementation

How will the proposed changes be implemented?

Who will have ultimate responsibility for implementation?

How and when will changes be measured based on the established
goals and objectives?

Phase IV: EXHIBITION CONTENT PRESENTATION

What are the audiences or markets to which the content will be addressed?
Can the content be presented so that it is clear, concise, and compelling way?
Is the content focused on established themes?
Is the exhibition content organized logically and in a way that is easily understandable by learners?
Is the content presented in an accessible way, both physically and cognitively?
Does the presentation of the content welcome diverse learning styles?
Are available exhibition enhancements, such as objects and photographs, appropriately used and presented?
What technologies are available to present the content that is both useful and compelling?

Phase III: EXHIBITION CONTENT ENHANCEMENT
What historical objects or resources are available to enhance the content of the exhibition?

Can the historical resource be properly and securely utilized to enhance the exhibition content?

Phase II: EXHIBITITION CONTENT

Is the written content or story sound and accurate?

Does the content reflect the most current scholarship?

Was the content derived from a diversity of sources and perspectives?

Is the content compelling and emotionally evocative for the learner?

Phase I: Administrative

What are the goals and objectives for this exhibition?

Who should be involved in the process of evaluating this exhibition?

What will be the duties of the team members?

Areas for Further Research

The study could not address a number of questions, which could serve as fertile ground for additional research. The study did not suggest specific timelines for implementation of the evaluation phases, nor the funding resources required to conduct the proposed level of evaluation. The investigation of grant opportunities and identifying professional support, such as exhibition design firms and consultants, would be important to successful completion of this process.

Another important component of the evaluation would include measuring audience opinions about the exhibitions and the learning experience. The study suggested a need for audience interaction in assessment as part of any potential front end analysis of new exhibition content. As part of the evaluation model, audience feedback would be an important component of Phase V. There would, however, exist a need to either customize an instrument or investigate available instruments to measure audience opinions and track them demographically.

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