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From Practice to Theory: An Exploratory Research Study of the Relevance of Museum Studies Curriculum to Museum Professionals

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ABSTRACT

This exploratory study provides a comprehensive description of the museum profession and focuses particularly on museum studies curriculum. The purpose of this research is to investigate museum studies curriculum and its relevance to the museum profession in order to determine whether museum studies curriculum is capable of providing the foundation of a standard academic discipline for museum professionals. A survey of museum professionals assessed their attitudes about museum studies curriculum and the extent to which museum studies curriculum “matters” to continuing education for current museum professionals and as an academic discipline for prospective museum professionals.

FROM PRACTICE TO THEORY: AN EXPLORATORY RESEARCH STUDY OF THE
RELEVANCE OF MUSEUM STUDIES CURRICULUM TO MUSEUM PROFESSIONALS

by

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M.A. Syracuse University, 1994
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A Dissertation
Submitted in partial fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Humanities

Syracuse University
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My twenty-year career as a museum professional began when a former undergraduate professor, the late Herbert T. Williams, phoned me in Los Angeles and recommended that I apply to the Graduate Program in Museum Studies at Syracuse University. Although I had never heard of the discipline prior to that call, by the time our conversation ended, I knew it was *the* perfect match for me. So I hung up, applied, was accepted and the rest, as they say, is *her story*. Following my first two semesters of study, I was invited to the *Experimental Gallery*, at the Smithsonian Institution, as a Guest Curator to manage an exhibition that grew out of a collective class project. And, within ten years after graduating, I was hired by a university in New Orleans, as the founding director of the first graduate program in museum studies in the State of Louisiana.

After reading *Making Museum Matter* by Stephen Weil, I began to think, “Why should museums matter to people who don’t matter to museums?” and “Why doesn’t museum studies seem to matter to museum professionals and museums? Especially since, I had relied on my experience with museum studies (books, notes from course lectures, advice from professors, projects, etc.) to launch and guide my career in the museum field. This thought process came full circle when three years into implementing a thriving museum studies program the entire operation, along with all physical evidence of my career, was decimated in the aftermath of a hurricane named Katrina. After surveying the ruins, I turned to museum studies to stabilize both the program and my career. I called former professors; I bought new books, borrowed notes from faculty and students, and set out to rebuild and the concept for this dissertation surfaced in the process. At the core of this work is my lived experience of the relevance, and direct benefits available to museum professionals and the museum field in general, via museum studies.

I am grateful to the people who were instrumental in helping me complete this project, for you all know “the third time was truly the charm” in this case. Thank you, Eileen M. Julian, Christine Tomei, Dr. Roosevelt Wright, Jr., Bradley J. Hudson, Dr. Ben Ware, Dr. Timothy Eatman, and Dr. Dennis Kinsey and to my *soul sisters*, Laura Tateishi Selis, and Kheli Robin Willetts, PhD, Namaste.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my grandmother, Mrs. Redell Patterson Scott who at 102 years of age graciously allows me to share her name and my sense of humor. To my parents, Kathryn Patterson Hearn and the late King Solomon Hearn for providing a diamond-like foundation from which to live my life, and finally to *the* most amazing collection of siblings ever amassed, Donald Rae, Brenda Lee, Dwayne Alvin and Sherryl Lynn, who helped me learn to walk and to Charri Leah who encouraged me to fly.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

The museum profession in the United States of America began in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, an outgrowth of institutions exhibiting artifacts to the public. Conceivably the most fundamental transformation in museums over the last century is their shift from private pleasure to public service (Vergo, Hudson, Weil). This paradigmatic reorientation, however, did not entail a concurrent evolution in the standards for how museum professionals are educated or trained. If the focus of contemporary museum scholarship is, as has been claimed, on educating the public, museum professionals must begin to align their training with the new role of museums as informal public education centers (AAM 4). Museum professionals educate the public so they should have some form of standardized means of training and performance evaluation.

Currently, there is no orthodox academic discipline, which centrally identifies and addresses the complexity of the museum profession. Likewise, the context for developing museology scholarship remains without a consolidated anchor in an established academic discipline. Eileen Hoffman suggests several standards that define a profession and there is consensus that one of the most identifiable is “intellectual activities after long, specialized education and training.” Genoways posed the question “...museum work is essentially intellectual, but is there uniformity of training?” and Weil surmised, “Tomorrow’s museums cannot be operated with yesterday’s skills; museum workers will need to bring to their institutions a new combination of skills and attitudes” (Genoways and Ireland 8 and Weil 46). There is a significant amount of discussion about the museum profession becoming more scholarly, and museum professionals should take on the central role of establishing this scholarly foundation. Genoways noted, for example, that in soliciting essays for a recent publication on

museum philosophy, "...those professionals working for academic institutions were far more willing to participate than working museum professionals" (p.231).

Training and professional development are the keys for museum staff to acquire those skills and knowledge, and a rigorous examination of the roles and relationships between professional education and the field is needed (ICOM 2008). Genoways identifies three important issues that museum professionals need to address in the first half of the twenty-first century: the role of collections in museums, professional ethics, and professionalization of individuals working for museums (Genoways and Ireland 352).

The Committee on Museum Professional Training (COMPT) is one of the thirteen Standing Professional Committees of the American Association of Museums. The Committee serves as a forum for the discussion, study, and dissemination of knowledge on professional training and opportunities/options, provides direction to all museum professionals seeking enrichment, and develops and advocates training standards and ethics (2011 <http://www.compt-aam.org>). The Emerging Museum Professionals (EMP) group provides networking, career guidance, and annual meeting fellowships for those who have been in the museum profession less than ten years (2011 <http://aam-us.org/getinvolved/emp/index.cfm>).

A graduate degree in Museology, which covers the design, organization, and management of museums, is not currently a required part of graduate level academic training for museum professionals. Unlike subject specialized curriculum, museology is a non-objective form of study that allows for an ongoing application of critique of practices, policies, and management and provides a great resource for the comprehensive understanding of the museum and for assisting with the development of a more diverse field of museum professionals. If, as according to Stephen Weil, "museums are quintessentially places that have the potency to change what

people may know or think or feel, to affect what attitudes they may adopt or display, to influence what values they form” (p. 39), then the people who administrate in museums should be adaptable to change as well. While it is always desirable for people in a profession to embrace change, the ability to respond appropriately requires specific preparation.

The research herein focuses on professionals’ perceptions, short-term identification, and possible solutions available within museology curriculum offered at the level of Master of Arts. This research will highlight the necessity for a designated area of study for museum professionals and help describe the current dialogue about the growing relevance of museology for the “evolving museum.” It will also describe the relationship between the literature on museology, museum management, and philosophy. This exploratory study provides a comprehensive description of the museum profession and focuses particularly on museum studies curriculum. The purpose of this research is to investigate museum studies curriculum and its relevance to the museum profession in order to determine whether museum studies curriculum is capable of providing the foundation of a standard academic discipline for museum professionals. A survey of museum professionals assessed their attitudes about museum studies curriculum and the extent to which museum studies curriculum “matters” to continuing education for current museum professionals and as an academic discipline for prospective museum professionals.

Statement of the Problem

Museum studies, sometimes called museology, is the field that encompasses the ideas and issues involved in the museum profession—from the practical, day-to-day skills needed to operate a museum to theories on the societal role of museums. (SCEMS <http://museumstudies.si.edu>) The academic programs falling under the term “museum studies”

prepare students for professional positions within museums (Genoways and Ireland). In their broadest definition, museum studies programs may include subjects running the gamut from applied history, arts management, conservation, decorative arts, historical administration, historic preservation, nonprofit management, public administration, public affairs, public history, and public horticulture. Perhaps it is no surprise that museum studies programs currently do not have a common core curriculum, leaving assessments of their effectiveness not well understood and their collective value not yet determined empirically.

Currently the lack of consistency in the way museum professionals perceive professionalism in the field is fueled, in part, by the unpredictability of how museum professionals are educated. For example, from an academic point of view, there is no cohesion in the naming, content, and academic outcomes of museology programs. Unifying museum studies curriculum, if done judiciously, could ensure the provision of critical program content, provide a basis for academic research, and help to improve communication in and about the museum field, from the classroom to the boardroom, providing a tangible benefit to students and emerging professionals. This might also help seasoned professionals, as a theoretical unanimity might yield greater consensus concerning professional practice. A more unified museum studies curriculum could potentially contribute to establishing the discipline both academically and professionally.

The American Association of Museums (AAM) has established guidelines for museum studies curriculum, yet the field seems to lack consensus concerning its value, inevitably leading to a dearth of critical analysis focusing on museum studies and the application of AAM guidelines. Furthermore, AAM has not been involved in the monitoring and accreditation of programs.

The shift in modern museums has made a study of museology necessary to identify the needs of the curriculum vis-à-vis the changing field, which would allow for an analysis of the match of curriculum to practices, policies, and management. Such a study would provide a great resource for the comprehensive understanding of the museum and for assisting with the development of a more complex field of museum professionals.

Definition of Terms

Museum: American museums are infinitely diverse and according to the AAM *Code of Ethics for Museums* (2000), their common denominator is making a “unique contribution to the public by collecting, preserving, and interpreting the things of this world.” (<http://www.aam-us.org/museumresources/ethics/coe.cfm>) The International Council of Museums (ICOM 2007) defines a museum as: A non-profit making, permanent institution in the service of society and of its development, and open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits, for purposes of study, education and enjoyment, material evidence of people and their environment." (<http://icom.museum/who-we-are/the-vision/museum-definition.html>)

Museum Education: Education and programs are blanket terms used for everything that impacts the museum’s public---on-site, off-site, and virtual---including but not limited to lectures and performances, brochures, teacher’s resource kits tours, websites, workshops and demonstrations, and exhibitions. (Schlatter 2008)

Museologist: One who researches and teaches about the systematic study of the organization, management, and function of museums.

Museology and Museum Studies: Genoways and Ireland identify these terms as academic programs designed to prepare student for professional positions within museums (p.9). In their broadest definition, museum studies programs may include applied history, arts management,

conservation, decorative arts, historical administration, historic preservation, nonprofit management, public administration, public affairs, public history, and public horticulture.

Museum studies, sometimes called museology, is the field that encompasses the ideas and issues involved in the museum profession—from the practical, day-to-day skills needed to operate a museum to theories on the societal role of museums. The Smithsonian Center for Education and Museum Studies (SCEMS) <http://museumstudies.si.edu/>

The Smithsonian Center for Education and Museum Studies (SCEMS): -The Smithsonian Center for Education and Museum Studies (SCEMS) assists the museum community in acquiring and strengthening its understandings and practices of museology. This website is one of the Center's tools for serving the educational and informational needs of the field.

(<http://museumstudies.si.edu/>)

Purpose of the Study

This exploratory study provides a comprehensive description of the museum profession and focuses particularly on museum studies curriculum. The purpose of this research is to investigate museum studies curriculum and its relevance to the museum profession in order to determine whether museum studies curriculum is capable of providing the foundation of a standard academic discipline for museum professionals. Specifically, this study is a critical analysis of museology curriculum and the evolving needs of museum professionals.

As museum professionals increase their educational roles with visitors, they must become more cognizant about their own education. Surveying museum professionals provides a sense of how they feel about the role museology has played and/or should play in their professional lives. This study serves as the first comprehensive analysis of museology curriculum to provide a foundation for proposing a standardized curriculum for training future museum professionals.

There are three main threads of this research. First, to help identify the status of museology in the context of students and museum professionals, second, to provide a basis for students, museum professionals and instructors to develop a better understanding of museology programs and the curriculum encompassed by the term museology and third to provide the information necessary to begin researching the effectiveness of standardizing museology curriculum. This study may also assist future and current museum professionals address one key area impacted by the rapidly changing field. If museums are to remain a relevant part of society, they must find ways to adjust to their expanding purpose in the best ways possible. This calls for a general response from the whole profession. Museum professionals must establish a body of scholarship that makes available the best practices of the present and the basis for the research of future generations. Museology scholarship also needs expansion in the professional literature meaning that more than the four or five journals available today are needed (Genoways and Ireland 352). The museum profession must rise above the current level of largely subjective orientation and present a more scholarly orientation, where ideas are published, reviewed, criticized, contemplated, revised, restructured, and published again.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is its focus on what has been identified in current museology literature surrounding the challenges affecting contemporary museums and what they need to do to survive. One benefit will be to provide future scholars the groundwork to establish long-term collaborations between museology literature and museums. This study will also be of interest on an international, national, regional, and local scale as it is the first attempt to identify a core curriculum in museum studies. Finally, the results should offer practical examples of how to implement what the AAM has been suggesting in conference panel discussions for the past

decade.

The focus of this study, creating a unified core museum studies curriculum, has an entirely different nature than the existing research in museum studies, which largely addresses the visitor's experience in the museum. Rather than supposing that the visitor's experience has a common basis, the present study reorients the focus on the training of the creators of the museum experience to see what set of specific skills are needed to bring the modern museum into current relevance. The premise of this research is that museology curriculum is central to the broader museum profession in ways that are similar to the Master of Business Administration being a gateway degree into business. The impact of museum curriculum on the modern museum has yet to be empirically demonstrated and this study may be used by future researchers to determine identify themes or patterns in the curriculum that could demonstrate evidence of the value of museology and to identify new avenues of improvement and may even reveal ways to enhance museum studies curriculum.

The significance of this research extends to future and current museum professionals, students and faculty in museology programs. Museum professionals and museology students will benefit from an academic curriculum with a cohesive core derived from their professional needs, provides an academic background for professional development, and is adaptable to current needs of the field.

Theoretical and Empirical Context

The American Association of Museums has sanctioned guidelines for museology programs. This section provides a theoretical foundation for the design of a core museology curriculum, which can be taught across programs on the assumption that the "practice" of museum work should derive from the "theory" of museology curriculum. Data were collected

from two surveys of emerging and established museum professionals concerning museology curriculum vis-à-vis museology curriculum, which consists of the design, organization, and management of museums.

Perhaps not everyone pursuing a master's degree in museology should be expecting a career working in a museum as some of these highly trained individuals should be encouraged to seek work in academia where they can continue to conduct research and analysis about museums and help develop museology. It is quite possible that the lack of a standard museology curriculum itself impedes continuous investment in research and critical analysis in the field. Museum training can be either too focused or too broad and the state of the art does not necessarily support research at all. Presently research is dominated by museum visitor studies, which by definition misses the issue of professional preparation and presents a problem of ex post facto experience serving as the indirect assessment of a museum professional with evaluations not regulated by peer review or correlated to academic standards.

Paradoxically, the practical nature of museum work acts to contribute to museology not serving a larger role in creating a stronger academic front. This has been the case since at least since 1917 when, in the summer, the University of Iowa established the first continuously operating museum training program in the United States. In the same year, an article was presented at a meeting of the American Association of Museums titled "Training Museum Workers." Homer Dill, credited with creating the first continuously operating museum education program in the United States, wrote, "At the present time the work deals entirely with the science museum...The first essential is a comprehensive knowledge of the work. In order to direct, one must know the technical side. It is upon this principle that a training course should be based." (Genoways and Andrei 265)

The term “training” is illustrative and it remains a divisive factor in the field today. When training focused mainly on science museums, the compulsory background was in science, but when art museums gained prominence, the preparatory academic study for museum work became art history. Furthermore, the idea that training or apprentice work was the most effective route to professional museum practice prevailed through the decades due to the practical nature of the work. Given the diversity of current museums and their need to remain relevant in society, it is increasingly clear that people entering the museum profession need proper and coordinated academic training and, subsequently, increased mid-career retraining (Genoways and Ireland 352). Still, most of the arguments for professional development remain pro-discipline and, while not explicitly anti-museology, focused elsewhere:

Some are less skeptical of the need for an increased role of museology as its purpose in higher administration. Museum consultant and author Elaine Heumann Gurian, argues: Members of the field have long debated the qualifications required for assuming certain jobs. Some posit that to gain legitimacy; staff must be academically trained with advanced degrees either in a content area or in museum studies, museology, and museum management - all working from the assumption that training has value... I disagree only with making museum-based advanced degrees a prerequisite for leadership positions. (4)

Still others are more skeptical and, while acknowledging the needs for museums to change (AAM), they do not consider the extent that the training of museum professionals has on museums. Rather, they argue, museum studies programs, as shown in an AAM report about museum studies programs, “are not and should not be considered the only or necessarily the best

routes into the museum profession.” (AAM 21) While some regard the process of “professionalization” as generally positive or at least benign and a means of merely raising the standards in a particular field, others have seen it as having a distinctively negative aspect (Weil 58). Museum studies would help establish accountability among museum stakeholders for the dearth of diversity in the field. For example, if the training ground were leveled, one would not necessarily have to ascribe to the Western ideal to gain professional acceptance in the field. Perhaps another reason why the scholarly perspective has been largely overlooked may be directly linked with its lack of priority due to more pressing financial circumstances such as funding and managing collections. Also, scholarship itself is inherently correlated with not just conversation but debate, often bringing progress in the subject to a standstill and leaving experts unsatisfied as so much of it relies on theory instead of hard evidence (Vergo 1989).

Assumptions

This research is not about museums, it is about the people who work in them and more specifically how those people are educated. For example, there is no career map, which provides a structure to advancement in museum management. It is assumed that museum professionals are academically trained in a discipline specific area, such as art history, anthropology or history. However, more and more museums are hiring people from outside of any of those academic areas to run museums. Among other things, conflicts can arise in museums due to its hierarchy, or conflict of interest or other reasons (Genoways and Ireland 68). One of the hallmarks of good educational preparation is the ability to identify and defuse conflicts. Furthermore, a training program can be implemented that would not prejudice one area of practice over another. Museum studies curriculum provides a broad perspective of the entire museum, as opposed to the narrow function of one department.

Adjusting the perspective of the epic question posted by the late Steven E. Weil, former Scholar Emeritus in the Smithsonian Institution's Center for Education and Museum Studies, Steven E. Weil, "Making Museums Matter," this research slightly alters the perspective and asks how to make museum studies matter to the people who work in museums. Weil's overarching concern that museums be able to "earn their keep"---that they make themselves "matter"---in an environment of potentially shrinking resources. Similar to the financial concerns of museums are those of museum studies students, who are seeking more pointed academic training and entrance into the rapidly changing museum profession.

These critical components can provide a framework for fostering scholarly discourse in Museum studies, which in turn, could help to legitimize the degree. Granted, a degree of interdisciplinary study is necessary for the field, given the exceedingly wide variety of museums, but this only supports one reason why museum studies museology should be recognized as a possible base for the core academic curriculum for educating those entering and seeking professional development in the museum profession.

The Committee on Museum Professional Training (COMPT) is one of the thirteen Standing Professional Committees of the American Association of Museums. The Committee serves as a forum for the discussion, study, and dissemination of knowledge on professional training and opportunities/options, provides direction to all museum professionals seeking enrichment, and develops and advocates training standards and ethics. The Emerging Museum Professionals (EMP) group provides networking, career guidance, and annual meeting fellowships for those who have been in the museum profession less than ten years.

In order to access the survey, participants were required to be current members of COMPT. Participants were asked to click on the link provided in order to complete the survey,

which took approximately twenty minutes. The survey did not ask participants to identify themselves by name, therefore, no personal identifiers appeared anywhere in the analysis of the results. All answers to the questions were kept completely confidential and discussed only in the broad context of analyzing the data for inclusion in this dissertation. Some information was discussed with the dissertation committee members per their request. In any articles or presentations made using the data, distinctions will be made based on ‘current professional’ and ‘emerging professional.’

Limitations

This study may present some limitations because of the current lack of comprehensive research on the subject matter. Acknowledging this fact is relevant as it inevitably affects the findings and conclusions drawn from the study. In order to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the museum and to address the changing needs of visitors, it is important to establish a standard set of instruction and training for professionals and museum studies is best suited for the task. There is some bias in this survey because of the sampling size and specificity of one organization in particular. However, this is intended as an initial investigational study that can perhaps lead to a larger study for future researchers. Like the COMPT study, this survey will produce data that can be used to indicate the general directions in which training is perceived to be needed within the museum community. In the COMPT, Pilot Surveys noted that “various museum training topic details and the specifics of individual preferences were not explored in the questionnaire in interest of brevity” and that “additional research is needed to clarify these types of details.” It is hoped that this survey will continue the discussion of professional development by providing museum studies curriculum as a viable tool for professional development.

Summary

This research study is descriptive and the results are not appropriate for drawing inferences from the data. A sampling of a larger percentage of museum studies students and professionals would yield a stronger consensus of how the museum field feels museum studies. There may not be acceptance from those in the museum field who believe that museum studies curriculum is not a valid training route into the field may present a problem in curriculum development. Museum studies programs have their detractors among who are those who believe there is no substitute for experience. There is strong residue from the past when the primary route into the museum profession was not academic; individuals with disciplinary expertise would be hired by museums and allowed to “work their way up through the organization,” learning the profession as they progressed in their careers (Genoways and Ireland 9).

CHAPTER II: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

With respect to the paradigmatic reorientation in museums over the last century, the standards for how museum professionals are educated or trained did not evolve concomitantly. Museums rely on museum professionals to educate the public; however, there is no orthodox academic discipline, which centrally identifies and addresses the complexity of the museum profession and encourages an increase in museology scholarship.

In writing about the role of the museum in contemporary British society, Peter Vergo compared their position to the coelacanth, a creature still living in defiance of evolution. He writes: “Unless a radical re-examination of the role of museums within society - by which I do mean measuring their success merely in terms of criteria such as more money and more visitors - takes place, museums in this country, and possibly elsewhere, may likewise find themselves dubbed *living fossils* (Vergo 3). The need for museums to adapt to contemporary developments implies the need for professionalizing the museum workforce.

This chapter is organized chronologically in order to provide historical context for the establishment of the museum profession and the resources for education and training of museum professionals. This chapter provides an overview of the history of museums in the US and discusses the research related to the museum profession, museum professional training and museum studies programs, and curriculum.

History of Museums in the United States of America

The origin of the museum as we know it in the United States of America (US) is often traced back to the Ptolemaic *mouseion* at Alexandria, which was principally a study collection with a library attached, used by scholars, philosophers, and historians (Genoways 81). The first museum established in US was the Charleston Museum in 1773, and the first contemporary style

museum was the Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences in 1812 (Genoways 81). During their initial expansion, museums in the US represented repositories of and for the upper echelons of society. They were privately funded and heavily subsidized by the wealthy socialites of the major cities in which they were built. Their primary role was to impart European-based cultural models to the wealthy people who used these establishments to build their social status.

Today's US museums do not operate solely on the histories and philosophies that helped to establish them; neither do the skills required of museum professionals rely entirely on knowledge and skill sets of previous eras as well. The perpetuation of museums depends on museum workers bringing their institutions a new combination of skills and attitudes (Weil 46).

While the focus was once on collections and exhibitions, it has now shifted to addressing a significantly diverse audience who demands a more relevant reflection of themselves in the museums they visit. The skyrocketing costs to maintain museums and the shrinking pool of donations earmarked for the arts; museums are now seeking the input of the communities they serve and far beyond mere financial support. Perhaps even more powerful in impact, has been the shift in philanthropy from the arts to promoting healthcare which has eroded the façade of the wealthy dominating the arts and replaced it with the perception of museums for the people. Many museum visitors today aren't even aware of the former role of the museum, and so feel that they it be accessible to the public and conform to all aspects of their existence, from how well the buildings fit into the landscape of the communities to what is collected and how it is interpreted to the visitors.

Origins of the Museum Profession

The museum profession in the United States began in the late 19th and early 20th centuries as an outgrowth of institutions exhibiting artifacts to the public. The discrepancy regarding a

uniform acceptance that a museum profession exists dates back to at least the 1930s with musicologist Victor J. Danilov outlining a problem that was elaborated on by Alexander G. Ruthven who wrote:

A museum man is a professional zoologist, botanist, geologist, archeologist, businessman, teacher, editor, taxidermist, or some other kind of specialist, working in a museum and having knowledge of methods of gathering, preserving, demonstrating, and otherwise using data, which should be saved. He cannot be a professional museum man, for his institution can only serve the world through the efforts of specialists, in particular fields of knowledge (Genoways 221).

Laurence Vail Coleman countered the notion in 1939 when he argued that museum work was an independent discipline, a similar notion expressed in the 1950s and 1960s by Albert E. Parr. In 1979, Edward P. Alexander surmised that the museum profession held “common cause and goals.” Yet, less than ten years later, in 1988, Stephen Weil again asserted a question about the very existence of a museum profession:

Some believe that American museum workers have already succeeded in achieving this status. Others doubt that they ever can. Most, including myself, think that significant progress has been made but that much remains to be done. I think that almost everybody, however, would agree that many important improvements in American museums themselves have come about as a by-product of this struggle by museum workers to gain professional identification. (Genoways 222)

The use of the term museum studies is relatively recent and dates from the setting up of university departments in the field of study in the 1960s. In general, the discipline of museum studies embraces both museology and museography as the study of all aspects of the theory and practice of the museum operation. Both terms have long established usage, as noted by a reference to the term ‘museographers’ in a 1776 journal article written by Mendes da Costa (Woodard and Stansfield 1994). In 1972, the International Council of Museums (ICOM), also the international organization of museums and museum professionals, defined the term as follows:

Museology is museum science; it has to do with the study of the history and background of museums, their role in society, specific systems for research, conservation, education, organization, relationship with the physical environment, and the classification of different kinds of museums. In brief, museology is the branch of knowledge concerned with the study of the purposes and organization of museums. Museography is the body of techniques related to museology. It covers methods and practices in the operation of museums, in all their various aspects. Museology is a field of enquiry so broad as to be a matter of concern to almost everybody (Vergo 1988). Simply defined, it is the study of museums, their history and underlying philosophy, the various ways in which they have been established and developed, their avowed or unspoken aims and policies, their educative or political or social role.

In the 21st Century, the situation is changing at an even greater pace, due in large part, to the use of technology in museums and the ever-changing cultural make up of the population. Some resistance to professionalizing the field in general affects the acceptance of museum studies. Some museum scholars regard the process of “professionalization” as generally positive or at least benign - a means of raising the standards in a particular field. Others have seen it as having a distinctively negative aspect (Weil 58).

Nathan Hatch has described three criteria by which professions can be defined. The first two of these---an occupation that is based on a body of knowledge requiring “extensive academic training” taught at universities and a commitment to public service---certainly fit the museum profession. The third criterion involves a relative autonomy of setting and enforcing professional standards. Although museums and museum organizations have been involved in some setting of standards, little of this effort has been promulgated by working museum professionals. Genoways argues, “The museum profession may be in its early stages of development, but it is established and there should be no returning to the pre-professional days” (Genoways 222). Hilde Hein who wrote, “Such controversy notwithstanding, a professional structure is now in place with national and international representation, numbering thousands of institutions and individuals who communicate regularly among themselves through publications and programs and it has resulted in a de facto profession” (Genoways 222), echoes this sentiment.

Museum Professional Training

In many ways, the efforts to professionalize the museum field, thus embracing museum studies, is similar to the resistance of some to professionalizing the field in general. The failure to talk publicly about bad museums may be an unfortunate by-product of the museum field’s long and generally successful quest to professionalize itself, although most observers regard the process of “professionalization” as generally positive or at least benign---a means of raising the standards in a particular field---others have seen it as having a distinctively negative aspect (Weil 58). Museums rely on museum professionals to educate the public and a great deal of contemporary museum scholarship focuses on how museums educate the public, with some scholars going so far as to define the role of museums as informal public education centers. However, as early as 1917 the notion of professionalizing the museum workforce arose:

The expert of the museum has an account to render with future generations, and no excuse will avail him for not keeping up with the times. During the last five years, the authorities of the leading museums of the country have awakened to these facts, and consequently the demand for trained men and women in this line has far exceeded the supply (Genoways and Andrei 266).

Although museum work as a profession has garnered a significant amount of conversation, it has generated little to no research and scholarship about the state of museum studies. Museum work may or may not be looked upon as a profession, depending on one's interpretations, but there appears to be little doubt that many aspects of museum work are professional in nature and require specialized training and experience.

Demand for a highly trained museum workforce will place increased pressure on the existing museum studies programs and will provide opportunities for the creation of new educational programs. It will become important in the near future to assure that these academic programs are providing a high-quality education. To assure these highest professional standards, an accreditation process almost certainly will be needed. The AAM has set standards for museum studies programs, but it has been slow to enforce these standards. However, this task should be initiated by an organization of museum professionals rather than an organization focused on museums. In addition, as Hatch indicated, would bring museum workers toward the last step of professionalization.

Leadership in museology is an "elusive concept" that has generated considerable discussion within museology literature, particularly as concerns the role of education and

experience in leadership (Genoways and Ireland), yet the survival of the museum profession depends on it becoming far more scholarly. The profession must move from the current, anecdotal phase of passing information to an academic approach in which ideas are published, reviewed, criticized, contemplated, revised and restructured, and published again. This process is critical for further progress within the museum profession.

Ongoing debates about museum studies take place at museum meetings and more recently on museum websites concerning what is the best way to enter the museum profession. One group will argue strongly for the status quo, that is, through experience in taking a series of positions in museums with increasing levels of responsibility until one is considered a professional. The second group will argue with equal vigor that the route to take includes academic training through one of the existing museum studies programs.

The American Association of Museums has not taken a leadership position in this scholarly discourse, producing only the trade magazine *Museum News* and books. Enhancing scholarly work concerning museums and museum work should be the top priority for a new organization of working museum professionals. This would ensure the continued professionalization of museum work. According to Genoways, “museum workers should take charge of their profession and its future rather than leaving these issues to museums as institutions or organizations representing museums. He goes on to identify some of the actions, including forming an international professional association, establishing an accreditation process for museum academic programs and taking a more academic approach to the profession (Genoways 232).

Museum Studies Programs and Curriculum

The growth of the museum field in the past century has focused attention on how museums are organized, the functions they perform and the setting of performance standards, and this, in turn, has led to increased opportunities for research and professional training. Writing for *Museum International* magazine in 1998, Kenneth Hudson argued:

...the most fundamental change that has affected museums during the [past] half-century...is the now almost universal conviction that they exist in order to serve the public. The old-style museum felt itself under no such obligation. It existed, it had a building, and it had collections and a staff to look after them. It was reasonably adequately financed, and its visitors, usually not numerous, came to look, to wonder and to admire what was set before them. They were in no sense partners in the enterprise. The museum's prime responsibility was to its collections, not its visitors (Weil 1999)

Weil surmises that in order for a change on the scale of the one above to happen, “new sets of skills will be required of its staff” and he identifies those three skill sets, in particular, that would anchor the transformation. First, staff who are trained in public programming; Second, staff members with a thorough training in audience research and the techniques of program evaluation; third, staff members who are trained to work collaboratively, both within the organization and beyond its boundaries (Weil 4-5).

Museum studies programs are multifaceted and multidisciplinary academic programs developed by universities in consultation with museum professionals to prepare people for the

museum profession. The programs vary on degrees offered, disciplinary association, relationship between museology and discipline, and specific requirements, and museum professionals agree that diversity is desirable. They further recognize that museum studies programs “are not and should not be considered the only or necessarily the best routes into the museum profession.” (AAM 1978)

In the summer of 1917, the University of Iowa established the first museum training program in the United States. The main intent of the program was to provide a comprehensive “knowledge of the work” taking place in natural history museums (Genoways and Andrei 265). Although the training had an extensive practical component, it was supported by a broad academic education that led to a baccalaureate degree. According to an article excerpted from the proceedings of the American Association of Museums meeting that same year, Homer R. Dill wrote:

The expert of the museum has an account to render with future generations, and no excuse will avail him for not keeping up with the times. During the past five years, the authorities of the leading museums of the country have awakened to these facts, and consequently the demand for trained men and women in this line has far exceeded the supply (Genoways and Andrei 266).

Despite the relative newness of the discipline in the United States –its roots go back to 1908– museology as a profession is experiencing a growing dissatisfaction with the “old” museology, which is seen as an overemphasis on museum methods and not enough focus on the museum purposes, which must be on the qualities of the collections (Vergo 1988). A similar

sense of dissatisfaction has evolved both within and outside of the profession with community members and museums visitors also perceiving the “old” in museums in a negative manner. The combined uncomfortable experience serves to highlight the increasingly complex training requirements for contemporary museum professionals who must respond somehow to overcome this trend (Edson 1995).

Museum studies curriculum provides an interdisciplinary curriculum centered in museology; so perhaps, within the curriculum of museum studies there is a base for establishing a standard academic curriculum for museum professionals. By museum studies curriculum I mean a coherent, sequential set of core academic courses, focused on specific content knowledge and skills to direct students toward a future cognizant of the needs of the modern museum and able to contribute to its scholarship. The academic discipline of museology is concerned with the design, organization, and management of museums.

In 1973, the American Association of Museums established the Museum Studies Curriculum Committee (MSCC), which “suggested curriculum, among other things, for programs offering degree credit in undergraduate junior and senior years and at the graduate level.” In addition, in 1981, the MSCC presented “Minimum Standards for Professional Museum Training Programs followed by the international Council of Museums Committee for the Training of Personnel’s minimum standards for university-based training programs that same year. Also in 1981, the Professional Practices Committee of the AAM was directed to “examine the feasibility of accrediting graduate museum studies programs. According to the AAM report derived from this study, the Committee “discussed the information that would be necessary in order to make a recommendation regarding the accreditation of museum studies programs. In addition, while the Committee came to agreement about what a feasibility study should consist

of and that one was indeed “extremely important” it was determined that a “full study of accreditation was considered too large an undertaking for the ‘ephemeral’ subcommittee and that the financial cost was too high.” The Committee did, however prepare a self-study outline identifying what they felt were the “essential components of a museum studies program and criteria for assessing them. The Committee noted:

“Museum studies programs are multifaceted and multidisciplinary academic programs developed by universities in consultation with museum professionals to prepare people for the museum profession. The programs vary in degrees offered, disciplinary association, relationship between museology and discipline, specific requirements, and museum professionals agree that diversity is desirable. They further recognize that museum studies programs are not and should not be considered the only or necessarily the best routes into the museum profession” (AAM 1981).

Such sentiment has left museum studies in the position of “catching up from in front.” In other words, the academic discipline is best equipped to lead the museum profession into the 21st century, in terms of academic diversity and adaptability, and yet it is being overlooked by the museum field, which is still focused on academic disciplines that fed the field a century ago.

According to the Museum Studies Committee’s report, museum studies programs were growing at a rate that caused concern among museum professionals, particularly with regards to “content, direction, quality and effectiveness” of the programs. In response, the American Association of Museums established the Museum Studies Curriculum Committee, in 1973, to make recommendations about curriculum, and other program-related criteria, for programs

offering “degree credit in undergraduate junior and senior years and at the graduate level. (AAM 1973) Several years later, AAM established the Museum Studies Committee, which presented a ‘Minimum Standards for Professional Museum training Programs in 1978. The same year, the International Council of Museums Committee for the Training of Personnel also developed minimum standards for university-based training programs (AAM 1978).

Then president of AAM requested a feasibility study for the accreditation of graduate museum studies programs out of which a subcommittee was established and later concluded, “a full study of accreditation, although extremely important, was considered too large an undertaking for this ephemeral subcommittee.” It was noted by the subcommittee that while they felt an accreditation plan was not economically feasible at the time, the lack of “comprehensive guidelines for developing and evaluating graduate museum studies programs was “serious” enough for the subcommittee to prepare a self-study outline, which could “ultimately be part of an accreditation plan. To this end, the subcommittee drafted the “essential components of a museum studies program were defined and criteria for assessing them developed (AAM 1983). The Council of the America Association of Museums adopted the recommendations of the subcommittee, in the form of the “Criteria for Examining Professional Museum Studies Programs” in January 1983.

Little follow-up has been done on behalf of AAM to conduct evaluation work of museum studies programs since the initial conversations in the 1970s and 1980s. However, the number of museum studies programs has consistently grown and continues to grow. According to a 1998 survey of training programs conducted by the AAM, there were in excess of 180 academic programs offering some form of museum studies curriculum (Genoways and Ireland 9). Today,

museum programs are now offering online courses, which position them to be favored because of the use of new technology alone.

Yet in the academy, museology is still considered a relatively new discipline. Not until long after the foundation of the first museums did anyone think of them, as a phenomenon worthy of study; and it is more recently still that museology has come to be recognized as a field of enquiry in its own right (Vergo, 3). The “new” museology is a widespread dissatisfaction with the ‘old’ museology, both within and outside the museum profession. Some scholars believe that the ‘old’ museology places far too much emphasis on museum methods and too little focus on the purposes of museums. According to Vergo, “that museology has in the past only infrequently been seen, if it has been seen at all, as a theoretical or humanistic discipline, and that the kinds of questions raised above have been all too rarely articulated, let alone discussed” (Vergo, 3).

Building collaborations requires a high degree of insight and creativity: the ability to analyze the nature, needs, and strengths of potential collaborators and the imagination to envision what “fits” with those collaborators might truly be mutually beneficial. Sustaining a collaboration once established requires still further skills: consensus building, tact, empathy, and patience. Although many of those qualities may already be inherent in museum workers, training should be able to further develop and strengthen them (Weil 2002). No matter what position is held in a museum, the person will be expected to perform some administrative duties (Genoways and Ireland 2003). This training, while necessary for work in museums, is not part of Art History curricula. Therefore, for the museum to evolve fully, curricula must address new sets of skills that will be required of its staff (Weil 2002). While it could be argued that Art History curriculum could adapt itself to this task, it is more likely that the place to explore, develop, and

document these administrative skills is through the academic discipline of museology curriculum.

The ICOM Curriculum Guidelines are considered to be evolving in concert with the changing nature of the museum field. Therefore, analysis of the field and its implications for training will be undertaken on a systematic basis. Revisions will be made, as situations require. The theoretical context that frames the present study derives particularly from a new museology theory proposed by Peter Vergo (1989) and expanded by Stephen Weil (2002). Museology must address the skills needed in the new context, “in order for the modern US museum to evolve fully from an inwardly turned institution concerned chiefly with the preservation and study of its collection to an outwardly turned institution primarily devoted to providing a public service (Weil, 2002). Weil identifies three particular skills that the “evolving museum of tomorrow” will require of its employees; training in public programming, audience research, and the techniques of program evaluation and, staff members who have learned to work collaboratively, both within the organization and beyond its boundaries (Weil 2002).

It is not apparent at first glance, whether contemporary museum studies curriculum is aligned with these goals, or whether the academic discipline of art history curricula could adapt to them. The purpose of the present research is therefore to examine core museology and art history curricula to see whether it contains the course content needed to achieve Weil’s goals and objectives for the modern study of museology. It is hypothesized that the results will show that the current curriculum falls short of teaching the necessary skill set needed for the “evolving museum of tomorrow.” The goal of the present study is thus to identify the specific differences and assess whether they can be addressed through changing the curriculum, and if so, how.

In order to represent both sides of this question, that is, Weil's theory and the current curriculum in US educational institutions, I will read the collective works of Weil and related works to identify what elements are needed for the "evolving museum." I will then undertake a detailed examination of core curriculum of museum studies and art history and identify which courses, if any, could be aligned with this theoretical desideratum. Based on course content, I should be able to answer which components indicated by Weil's theoretical framework are present.

In the early 1980s a growing concern among museum professionals prompted the American Association of Museums to convene the Museum Studies Committee of the conducting a survey and published the findings in a three-part study entitled *Museum Studies Programs: Guide to Evaluation*. The intent of the Committee was to provide a comprehensive resource for program administrators to assess the extent to which their respective museum studies programs were attaining their goals and objectives and to assist with strategic planning for future development of programs. The Guide consisted of three parts: criteria for examining professional museum studies programs, a self-study guide and, self-study evaluation questions. The first part of the guide identified the various divisions of museum studies programs and the philosophical rationale for each division. The second part posed a series of questions, based on the established criteria, which required information and analytical responses. In addition, the third part consisted of an Evaluation Questionnaire to assist evaluators of the programs with assigning machine value judgments about the programs. The interest of this researcher is the third part of the Guide, the survey.

Today, the flagship organization for museum professionals, the American Association of Museums (AAM) treats museum studies as a footnote, at best. There is no formal recognition,

yet they established the guidelines for museum studies programs in the US. In all fairness, they have a lot of ground to cover with the number of museums and the activities they currently carry. However, it is not clear how a professional association can place importance on museums without supporting serious inquiry, analysis, and critique of how the education and training people who actually conduct museum work undergo. It is contradictory to promote education of visitors as the priority of museums and not provide equal emphasis on the education of the people who work in museums. For example, in a recent review of AAM Website, in the list of Frequently Asked Questions, the question “How do I pursue a museum career or obtain training in museum studies? Was listed at number eleven and offered the following books where the question could be answered: *Graduate Training in Museum Studies: What Students Need to Know* will help future museum professionals assess the various training options in museum studies. It poses a series of questions to help research graduate training programs and plan a museum career. *Museums: A Place to Work--Planning Museum Careers* provides descriptions of more than 30 positions and the skills and education recommended for each one. The importance of ethics, training, and preparation are discussed. It also has information on how to find jobs in the field.

The Smithsonian Institution’s Career Center has brief explanations of the duties and skills needed for a variety of museum jobs. The Smithsonian Institution's Center for Education and Museum Studies has a directory of university training programs in museum studies, historic preservation, public history, and nonprofit management. Graduate Schools offer a directory of graduate programs in museum studies and historic preservation. The directory includes distance learning programs and programs outside the U.S.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics provides Career Guides that describe particular industries, working conditions, training, employment outlook, and earnings. Museums are included in two categories: Arts, Entertainment & Recreation and Archivists, Curators & Museum Technicians. Reading the job ads in AAM's Job HQ will provide an understanding of the education, experience, and skills that museums are requiring for specific jobs.

It is difficult to find one completely satisfactory way of arranging the museum studies subject field. ICOM (447) produced its first scheme for the classification of museum documents in 1946 as an extension of the Class AM (Museums) of the Library of Congress Classification. The scheme has been modified and extended a number of times. The classification, used in the International Museological Bibliography until 1988, listed eight main areas: General Museology, Protection of the Cultural and Natural Heritage, Museums and Society, The Museum (management, personnel, building and design, and equipment), Collections (acquisition, documentation, research, conservation, and security) Museums, Communication and Interpretation (the public, the exhibition, education, and cultural action). Obviously many changes have taken place in the discipline in forty years. One of the major problems of not focusing on museum studies as a growing academic discipline is that the numbers of people earning the degree and applying it to the museum profession. This means some of the old notions about the insignificance of the degree are not being addressed, leaving students and professionals debating the benefits of the degree based on how it was perceived forty years ago and not for what museum studies is teaching in the 21st century.

Studying Museum Studies

Knowing the background of Museum studies in the US is helpful in contextualizing museum studies curriculum today. Which also helps with identifying what is working, to outline

what needs strengthening and improvement and to assess the need to create new areas of study. Just as museums look, feel and function quite different from the way they did forty years ago, so too has museum studies changed in the curriculum content, students, and professors. A main reason for the changes is the diversity of the curriculum and the ability of administrators and professors to adapt to the major changes taking place in museums and the demands of museum studies students.

Museum studies curriculum provides the space for future and current museum professionals to conduct critical analysis of a field, assess what is happening in a more scholarly manner, and begin to establish a body of scholarship that is available for research for generations to come. This offers a means to address Weil's overarching concern that museums be able to "earn their keep"---that they make themselves "matter"---in an environment of potentially shrinking resources. If museums rely on professionals for their status, their needs, and those of museum studies students, who are seeking specialized academic training and entrance into the rapidly changing museum profession, are the same.

New demands call for shifts in the overall design and delivery of professional training offerings. The task is urgent and complex. Experts predict that in the near future successful institutions will be characterized by their flexibility, speed of delivery, quality of knowledge, and ability to create strategic alliances - all attributes dependent upon human relations skills (Genoways and Ireland 330). Training and professional development opportunities are the keys by which staff can acquire those skills and knowledge and a rigorous examination of the roles and relationships between professional education and the field is needed (ICOM 2000).

Research in Museum Studies

There has been a corresponding growth in the literature relating to museum studies. However, the literature is not particularly well organized, and information about some aspects of museums is often difficult to trace (Woodard and Stansfield 1994). The growth in the literature relating to museum studies speaks to the change mentioned above. However, the literature has yet to take on a special direction, and information about some aspects of museum studies is often difficult to trace (Woodard and Stansfield 1994). The root problem with present scholarship is that while it has identified many problems, there has been no consistent research about the subject and no concrete solutions have been proposed. Theoretical studies that frame this topic include the argument that museums are quintessentially places that have the potency to change what people may know or think or feel, to affect what attitudes they may adopt or display, to influence what values they form (Weil 2002).

Most of the works on museum studies are a collection of exploratory essays that address what is happening and discuss what needs to happen. Several works acknowledge the needs for museums to change (AAM 2002). A common theme in progressively more of these works addresses the needs of museum professionals to adapt to the changing needs of museums (Edson 1995). The present work recognizes what has been done and uses them as a point of departure for showing how museology can incorporate all the meaningful areas of study together. Museum studies today reflect two primary but related functions of museums. The first is to collect and care for objects relating to the national and cultural heritage. Closely associated with this is the service by which these collections are made available for public education and enjoyment through exhibition, and educational and interpretive programs (Woodard and Stansfield 1994). Yet eight years later, in reference to the museum profession, Genoways and Ireland wrote,

“Although we talk about the ‘museum profession,’ there is no uniform concurrence that such a beast exists” (Genoways and Ireland 7). They record the known discrepancies as far back as the 1930s.

There is thus good reason to believe that by investigating museum studies curriculum, the museum profession may advance in favor of its standard adoption. In “Training for Tomorrow's Museums” Weil writes, “Museums of today are already richly complex organizations, those of tomorrow will be more complex still” (Weil 10). In addition to the complexity of the museum will be the “training required to provide future museum workers with the skills necessary to address the changes. Just as Weil points out that “the skills discussed” in his theory of change are not intended to represent his belief that they are needed “instead of those that students of museum studies have sought to acquire in the past” but are, rather, “in addition to.” So too are the changes necessary in the relationship between museum studies scholars and students and museum professionals.

In the spring of 2007, the American Association of Museums held its first meeting after celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2006. The theme of the meeting, “Why Museums Matter,” was a play on the question initiated by Stephen Weil’s book, *Making Museums Matter* (2002), in which the author challenges museums essentially to adapt or die. Along with the changing demographics of the US has come a necessary shift in the role and accountability of museums to the public. An overwhelming majority of American museums and museum training programs continue to operate as if World War II had only just ended and as if collections were still at the center of the museum’s concerns (Weil 41). Included in this shift is the increase in the number and variety of new museums that have been developed in the last twenty years.

The guidelines established by ICOM are sufficient. However, there may be areas that need to be updated based on the needs of contemporary museums described in modern literature. There have been several surveys conducted about types of museum studies programs within the past decade. There have been collections of museum studies essays. This researcher will conduct a critical examination of museum studies literature and graduate-level museology.

Museum studies today reflect two primary but related functions of museums. This study assumes that the “museum profession” has been established and is now in need of specific research. The need to change the present museum to respond more to the public was noted by Phillip Wright in his essay “The Quality of Visitor’s Experiences in Art Museums.” This research will examine museum studies programs by comparison with subject specialization using the following focuses: (1) The breadth of museology in providing a comprehensive understanding of the history and function of museums; (2) the need to address the ‘new museology’; (3) The potential for recruiting a more diverse field of museum professionals. This empirical study and to provide a scientific basis for the dialogue concerning the academic preparation for museum professionals and, if my hypothesis is proven, to provide museum professionals, museum studies professors, complementary academic departments and future museum professionals a basis for accepting the claim of the superiority of museum studies based on the evidence.

Why Museums Matter

In the book *Training for Tomorrow's Museums*, Weil writes, “museums of today are already richly complex organizations, those of tomorrow will be more complex still.” In addition to the complexity of the museum will be the “training required to provide future museum workers with the skills necessary to address the changes. In many ways, the efforts to

professionalize the museum field, thus embracing museum studies, is similar to the resistance of some to professionalizing the field in general. “Why Museums Matter,” was a play on the question initiated by Stephen Weil’s book, *Making Museums Matter* (2002), in which the author challenges museums essentially to adapt or die. The academic discipline of museology is concerned with the design, organization, and management of museums. There has been a corresponding growth in the literature relating to museum studies. Writing for *Museum International* magazine in 1998, Kenneth Hudson argued, “The old-style museum felt itself under no such obligation.” The museum's prime responsibility was to its collections, not its visitors (Hudson, 43-50). In general, the discipline of museum studies embraces both museology and museography as the study of all aspects of the theory and practice of the museum operation. In 1972, the International Council of Museums (ICOM), defined the term Museology as follows: Museology is museum science; it has to do with the study of the history and background of museums, their role in society, specific systems for research, conservation, education, organization, relationship with the physical environment, and the classification of different kinds of museums. In brief, museology is the branch of knowledge concerned with the study of the purposes and organization of museums.

The “new” museology is a widespread dissatisfaction with the ‘old’ museology, both within and outside the museum profession. Some scholars believe that the ‘old’ museology places far too much emphasis on museum methods and too little focus on the purposes of museums. This training, while necessary for work in museums, is not part of Art History curricula. Therefore, for the museum to evolve fully, curricula must address new sets of skills that will be required of its staff (Weil 2002).

The ICOM Curriculum Guidelines are considered to be evolving in concert with the changing nature of the museum field. However, it is difficult to find one completely satisfactory way of arranging the museum studies subject field. There have been collections of museum studies essays. This researcher will conduct a critical examination of museum studies literature and graduate-level museology.

The present study assumes that the “museum profession” has been established and is now in need of specific research. The ongoing informal debate about the role that museology should play in training museum professionals has not been supported – or refuted – on the basis of formal research. Analysis of the subject remains at the level of debate and discussion without concrete research about the structure and usefulness of museology curriculum and its competitor, art history curriculum. The need to change the present museum to respond more to the public was noted by Phillip Wright in his essay “The Quality of Visitor’s Experiences in Art Museums.” Wright suggests that in order to improve the quality of visitor’s experiences in art museums, there is a need for more serious attention to be given to, among other things, a change in museum staffing structures and the mixing of non-fine-art disciplines.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

The aim of experimental study is to establish whether there is a fundamental relationship between variables. For topics about which little is known, it is necessary to first ask questions while maintaining flexibility in research methods and exploring different descriptive means for research. According to Del Siegle, “to design experimental studies it is necessary to have enough background information to formulate specific hypotheses.” Once relevant variables have been uncovered, the researcher moves on to descriptive and experimental studies to determine co relational and causal relationships among those variables. The amount of information that is already known about a topic is the major determinant of whether to conduct an exploratory or descriptive study when little is known about the research topic; exploratory search is called for (Routio 2007).

Exploratory research makes use of more qualitative approaches than descriptive research. Descriptive research is designed to address specific questions while exploratory research is more flexible and given the wide variety of academic backgrounds museum professionals bring to the field, it is important to allow a way to collect this data in the survey. Because this study explores the perspectives of museum professionals, exploratory research methods are employed. Exploratory research methods can address more open-ended questions than descriptive research. For example, since the intent was to establish a new inquiry about the relationship between museum studies and museum professionals, a survey was designed to query for this target group. Survey participants were also asked to write in what types of degrees they earned prior to becoming museum professionals. The purpose of this research is to investigate museum studies curriculum and its relevance to the museum profession in order to determine whether museum studies curriculum is capable of providing the foundation of a standard academic discipline for

museum professionals. A survey of museum professionals assessed their attitudes about museum studies curriculum and the extent to which museum studies curriculum “matters” to continuing education for current museum professionals and as an academic discipline for prospective museum professionals. The data collected provide some ideas about how the profession perceives museum studies and how they might matter to prospective and current museum workers.

Research Methodology and Design

Academic programs identified as museum studies are designed to prepare students for professional positions within museums (Genoways and Ireland). In their broadest definition, museum studies programs may include subjects running the gamut from applied history, arts management, conservation, decorative arts, historical administration, historic preservation, nonprofit management, public administration, public affairs, public history, and public horticulture. Currently the lack of consistency in the way museum professionals perceive professionalism in the field is fueled, in part, by of the unpredictable way in which museum professionals are educated. The purpose of this exploratory research is to investigate museum studies curriculum and its relevance to the museum profession to determine whether museum studies curriculum is capable of providing the foundation of a standard academic discipline for museum professionals.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The hypothesis to be tested is that museum studies curriculum is currently not addressing the critical needs of the museum profession adequately, but that a curriculum could be developed that would be capable of providing an adequate foundation for museum professionals. The research questions address two specific issues, first, by examining the existing curricula and

establishing a baseline of the present state of graduate curriculum to see what is currently available and how closely coordinated the various curricula. The need for improved professionalization in the museum field is addressed using the opinions expressed by museum professionals currently working in the field concerning requiring graduate museology courses as the foundation for museum professionals, i.e., should graduate level museology, which covers the design, organization, and management of museums, be a required part of the academic training for museum professionals? The primary research question asks, “Is there a standard museum studies curriculum in the United States of America” The second asks “How does the current standard serve as a basis for museum training in terms of adequacy?” In addition, the secondary questions as “If the curriculum is considered adequate, how does it benefit museum professional? In addition, “If the curriculum is not considered adequate, what elements are suggested to make museum studies adequate?”

Sample

Given the large number of museums in this country and the complexity of museum studies programs, this survey will use the established criteria for museum studies as developed by the American Association of Museums (AAM) and The International Council of Museums (ICOM) in an effort to focus on current industry approved practices. This survey will use the established criteria for museum professionals from the Committee on Museum Professional Training (COMPT), a Standing Professional Committee of AAM. A survey of members of COMPT will be conducted online though QuestionPro, an online research company. The COMPT is one of the thirteen Standing Professional Committees of AAM and serves as a forum for the discussion, study, and dissemination of knowledge on professional training and

opportunities/options, provides direction to all museum professionals seeking enrichment, and develops and advocates training standards and ethics.

The population represented by this research project consists of working museum professionals and museum studies students because the results of this research will directly influence the working careers of both. Both groups could readily identify the major challenges in the field and would be able to identify the most urgent areas of needs and what would be the most expedient measures to address those needs as well. Names of participants do not appear anywhere in the analysis of the results and specific answers were kept completely confidential and discussed only with the dissertation committee members. In any articles or presentations made using the data, a substitute name will be used for any specific comments provided in the survey answers.

Academic offerings can be explored at a macro-level in terms of description and that museum studies can to be viewed on this macro-level as an expression of cultural development in US society. The point of view is that the training that a prospective museum professional may seek may be a clear and viable course in an academic discipline that is formulated to ensure the best results for the museum profession.

Data Collection Procedure

The empirical data collected concerned museum studies curriculum and not museums, in general. In order to investigate the current relationship between museum studies and museum professionals a survey was designed for members of COMPT. Participants were instructed to click on a link provided to complete the survey, which took approximately twenty minutes. The names of participants will not appear anywhere in the analysis of the results and specific answers were kept completely confidential and discussed only with the dissertation committee members.

In any articles or presentations made using the data, a substitute name will be used for any specific comments provided in the survey answers.

Qualitative analysis and interpretation of data and reporting of the findings was conducted as an ongoing process. A set of criteria drawn from the AAM guidelines and suggestions of evidence for assessment of museum studies programs, was used to evaluate the degree of effectiveness and appropriateness of the program and to draw conclusions about it.

This study focuses on what has been identified in current museology literature surrounding the challenges affecting contemporary museum professionals. The benefit to future scholars will be the groundwork of a call to action by museum studies and museums to find some common ground and establish long-term collaborations between museology literature and museums. This study will be of interest on international, national, regional and local scale because of its unique nature and because it is the first. This study is speaking to AAM, in particular, because it offers practical examples of what AAM has been talking about doing in conference panel discussions for the past decade.

The data collection was derived from a survey administered to members of COMPT via their website and current museum studies students via the internet. Given the large number of museums in this country and the complexity of museum studies programs, this survey used the established criteria from the American Association of Museums for membership COMPT and the ICOM criteria for museology content, as a means of narrowing the focus of the participants.

Graduate-level museum studies curriculum in the United States will be examined to demonstrate any coherence within current museum studies curricula used for training museum professionals. The preliminary level of this study is intended to establish whether museology curriculum could be the preferred gateway to the museum profession and the professionalizing of

the museum field. Thus, a method for descriptive exploratory research was needed to provide for the examination of source material to yield the structures, which, when extracted and described, form a rule that governs individual observations to reveal what is not known earlier

<http://www.uiah.fi/projekti/metodi/177.htm>

The data collection methodology utilized for this research was Normative studies eschew the exploratory approach because the normative goal – an improvement in the subject under discussion –generally engages with a known theoretical background, which is taken, as the basis of the study (Routio 2007). In normative studies, the direction of desirable improvement is initially unclear, and the only choice is to start with an exploratory approach. Such is the situation when the present state of the object of study is known to be unsatisfactory but what exactly is wrong in it is yet unknown. Neither are any superior usable substitutes for it initially known. For example, in the preliminary stage of action research perhaps it is acknowledged that the present mode of operation is not working, but none of the known theories seems applicable. Source material for this study consisted of collecting descriptions of museology curricula, and the investigation is a compilation and textual analysis of the same. The analysis then turns to an exploration of the theory (as composed in the elements offered for academic study) with the practice (working in the museum) that is covered in the curricula. The decision to use exploratory research derives from the dearth of earlier models to use as a basis for this study.

This research builds on the survey *Museum Community Training Needs Assessment* conducted by COMPT at the 1995 Annual Meeting of the American Association of Museums. A one-page questionnaire was distributed and of the 191 people, who completed the questionnaire, 165 were practicing museum professionals and 23 were students. The purpose of that survey was to “to begin exploration of the perceived training needs of the museum community,” including

the areas of professional training needs, museum administration and management and, the student perspective on training needs. The researchers felt the survey results indicated the general directions in which “training is perceived to be needed within the museum community” and that various “museum training topic details and the specifics of individual preferences” were not fully explored in the questionnaire and, therefore, recommended “additional research for clarification of such details.” The results of my study can be used by future researchers to cross-compare other programs in order to isolate any themes or patterns that would show future evidence of the value of museology and to identify new avenues of improvements as well. The American Association of Museums (AAM) conducted a formal review of courses in 1998. However, the current research focuses on curriculum implementation, not program development; the AAM study is thus important only for its similarities in the survey proposing guidelines for establishing and evaluating existing museum studies programs.

In order to create a usable model for a future quasi-standard curriculum, a holistic approach was used to examine existing museology curricula with the intention of gathering as much information about museum studies as possible. Any data analyzed were not eliminated as unnecessary until it was clear that they were not relevant for developing a larger study. A pilot survey and then a main instrument were designed to enable a thorough examination of how current and future museum professionals view the role of museology in the training of museum professionals. In order to provide context for the sample and to established future research and testing elements of this survey, a minimal amount of demographic information was collected from each respondent and includes level of education, length of time in the museum field, and type of museum where currently employed.

Instruments

Pilot Survey

A pilot survey was conducted in order to record and then analyze opinions from people working in the museum field with the intent to identify some general thoughts among museum professionals. The decision was made to survey working professionals because the results of the research would most directly impact their work because they were the people who could logically be counted on to identify the major challenges in the field, the most urgent areas of needs, and the most expedient measures to address those needs as well. In light of these intentions, a pilot survey, titled “The Formalization of Museum Studies” was distributed during a workshop at the annual AAM meeting in 2009. The small workshop consisted of an overview of the topic, suggested outcomes and seven “talking points” that were discussed in detail within small groups then in the overall group. Following the discussion, participants were given the survey and asked to return it prior to leaving the room. There were twenty-seven participants in the group and eighteen (18) surveys were completed and returned. Five questions were asked on a four-point Likert scale, Strongly Agree, Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree and Strongly Disagree; two open-ended questions required a one-response answer.

The first question asked: “Should museum studies curriculum be the standard academic discipline for training museum professionals who seek positions of administration.” two strongly disagreed, five somewhat disagreed, ten somewhat agreed and one strongly agreed. The second question asked if “museum studies curriculum could help increase the professionalization of museum leaders, and one strongly disagreed, zero somewhat disagreed, ten somewhat agreed and seven strongly agreed. The third question asked if a doctoral program in museum studies should be established in the United States of America. To this, two strongly disagreed, six somewhat

disagreed, four somewhat agreed and six strongly agreed. The fourth question asked if museum studies curriculum should be the academic basis for developing a doctorate in museum studies. To this, three strongly disagreed, five somewhat disagreed, nine somewhat agreed and zero strongly agreed. The fifth question asked if there was adequate correlation among curriculum of different museum studies programs. The responses were three strongly disagreed, nine somewhat disagreed, three somewhat agreed and zero strongly agreed. The sixth question asked participants to identify the academic discipline(s) in which they had earned a degree. The last question asked participants if they currently worked in a museum.

Survey of Museum Professionals

The survey created for this research polled members of the Committee on Museum Professional Training (COMPT), a Standing Professional Committee of the American Association of Museums (AAM), that was conducted through QuestionPro, an online research company. Participants were asked to click on the link provided to complete the survey, which took approximately twenty minutes. A survey was administered as a self-guided series of questions made available to members of the American Association of Museums (AAM) Committee on Museum Professional Training (COMPT) via their webpage on the AAM website and to Emerging Museum Professionals (EMP) via their listserv on the AAM website.

In order to access the page and the survey, participants had to be current members. Participants were asked to click on the link provided to complete the survey, which required approximately twenty minutes. The survey did not ask participants to identify themselves by name, therefore, no personal identifiers will appear anywhere in the analysis of the results. All the answers to the questions are to be kept completely confidential and discussed only in an aggregate form for the purposes of this single research study. Information be discussed in

committee is kept confidential. In any articles or presentations made using the data, the distinctions made are of “working professional” and “emerging professional”.

Participants were asked to click on the link provided to complete the survey, which took approximately twenty minutes. Names of participants do not appear anywhere in the analysis of the results and specific answers were kept completely confidential. In any articles or presentations made using the data, no names will be used for any specific comments provided in the survey answers.

Data Analysis

Qualitative analysis and interpretation of data and reporting of the findings were conducted as an ongoing process. Although a separate period for analysis was set aside, the process of analysis was ongoing throughout the data collection period. A set of criteria drawn from the AAM guidelines and suggestions of evidence for assessment of museum studies programs was used to evaluate the degree of effectiveness and appropriateness of the program and to draw conclusions about it.

This study focuses on what has been identified in current museology literature surrounding the challenges affecting contemporary museums and what need to they need to do to survive. The benefit to future scholars will be the groundwork of a call to action by museum studies and museums to find some common ground and establish long-term collaborations between museology literature and museums. This study should be of interest because it offers practical examples of what AAM has been talking about doing in conference panel discussions for the past decade. For example, the study focuses on content in museum studies curriculum, which allow for inquiry, analysis and dialogue about the role of academic study in museology. The academically diverse education provided by museology and the opportunity the exposure

can provide for museums, with an emphasis on the critical evaluation and assessment of current museology curriculum and up-to-date research. The data collection was derived from a survey administered to members of COMPT via their website and current museum studies students via the internet. Given the large number of museums in this country and the complexity of museum studies programs, this survey used the established criteria from the American Association of Museums for membership COMPT and the ICOM criteria for museology content, as a means of narrowing the focus of the participants.

In qualitative analysis of empirical findings, two phases can be distinguished simplification of observations and interpretation of results ("solving the enigma"); however, there is some overlap between the two (Routio 2007). In the simplification phase, the material is inspected from the theoretical point of view of the study project, and only the points relevant from this angle are noted. Simplification continues by finding the relationships between separate observations or cases. Some tools for this work are comparison and classification. The goal is to find the general rule or model that is valid in all or most of the observations (Routio 2007). This model can be, for example, development or evolution, causality, or a conscious action to attain an outcome, which is typical in normative research. In any case, the analysis starts from separate cases and aspires to create one or a few general models.

Data were also collected from museology scholarship, books, essays, and periodicals to form the references in the two surveys. The questions on the survey reflect the issues current in the field, in other words, what my peers would ask to find out what the current line of thinking is in the field overall. Next, the empirical data collected from surveys was analyzed with the intent to extricate the significant findings and build a preliminary model from recurring patterns. For simplifying observations on the data collected, only material that fit within the theoretical view

of the study was included. The interpretation of results or “solving the enigma,” does not always mean answering exactly those questions that were asked at the outset of the project. Sometimes the most interesting questions are developed toward the end of the research, when the researcher has become an expert on the subject. It is often said that the “data teach the researcher.” When invariance surfaced, material that was no longer relevant was omitted and the remaining information considered relevant. The empirical observations were converted into concepts and the material arranged so that it disengages from single persons and focuses on common structures.

Statistical Procedure

A web link was automatically generated when the survey was created, which appeared to participants as a regular web page and this link was then used to publish the survey on the AAM website. Standard Question Types for open Ended Text and Likert Scale were located on a link to the survey via email and was able to track survey-related activity such as when the survey was viewed and completed and by whom. Participants who completed the survey received a *Thank You* email, which was sent automatically after their completed survey was registered. While the Address Book provides emailing services for matching responses with email addresses, tracking survey views and completes and sending reminder emails this information is being kept confidential

The survey was hosted on the *QuestionPro* server. Responses were automatically collected and stored on their databases and responses were then made available via the administrative account used to create the survey. This information was accessible with my password and user id and survey responses were collected 24 x 7 automatically and viewable in real time and sent an automated notice as responses were collected, which was a great benefit if

there had been a need to adjust or edit the Survey in any way. There was a *Save and Continue* feature, which allowed respondents to save results and complete the survey at their convenience. Participants were informed of security precautions, including the prevention of multiple submissions from the same respondent and *QuestionPro* guaranteed the protection, privacy, and confidentiality of all respondents. For example, the following notice appeared, “The Respondent Anonymity Assurance (RAA) asserts that once it is enabled on a survey, although computer generated identification numbers for individuals will be generated, the survey researcher will not have access to both the respondent's email address as well as the response data at the same time.”

Line charts were created automatically in real-time while responses were collected and all survey results were displayed on a one-page report. There was also the option of viewing individual responses and deleting any invalid responses, however this was not necessary. An MS Excel data export was generated, which contains email address book stats, raw response data, and basic frequency reports. Reports were created based on how groups of respondents answered the questions consisting of Multiple Criteria Segmentation and Analysis as well. Each survey response is coded with the respondent's location based on an IP address mapping and the Trend Analysis module was used in order to plot aggregated response data over time, which was helpful in detecting patterns in survey responses. There was a Dropout Analysis option, which informed of users who did not complete the survey. The data is represented in a series of charts and tables made available through *QuestionPro*. It carefully describes the types of communication techniques to be used. Graphic aids, tables, and charts used in the next chapter are described here.

Scope and Limitations

This study may present some limitations because of the current lack of comprehensive research on the subject matter. Acknowledging this fact is relevant as it inevitably affects the findings and conclusions drawn from the study. In order to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the museum and to address the changing needs of visitors, it is important to establish a standard set of instruction and training for professionals and museum studies is best suited for the task. There is some bias in this survey because of the sampling size and specificity of one organization in particular. However, this is intended as an initial investigational study that can perhaps lead to a larger study for future researchers. Like the COMPT study, this survey will produce data that can be used to indicate the general directions in which training is perceived to be needed within the museum community. In the COMPT, Pilot Surveys noted that “various museum training topic details and the specifics of individual preferences were not explored in the questionnaire in interest of brevity” and that “additional research is needed to clarify these types of details.” It is hoped that this survey will continue the discussion of professional development by providing museum studies curriculum as a viable tool for professional development.

Summary

The population represented by this research project consists of working museum professionals and museum studies students because the results of this research will directly influence the working careers of both. Given the large number of museums in this country and the complexity of museum studies programs, this survey will use the established criteria for museum studies as developed by AAM and ICOM in an effort to focus on current industry approved practices. This survey will use the established criteria for museum professionals from COMPT. The premise of this research is that academic offerings can be explored at a macro-

level in terms of description and that museum studies can be viewed on this macro-level as an expression of cultural development in US society. The point of view is that the training that a prospective museum professional may seek may be a clear and viable course in an academic discipline that is formulated to ensure the best results for the museum profession.

The empirical data collected was constrained to material concerning museum studies curriculum and not museums, in general. In order to describe the current state of museum studies, a survey of members of COMPT was conducted through QuestionPro, an online research company. A set of criteria drawn from the AAM guidelines and suggestions of evidence for assessment of museum studies programs, is used to evaluate the degree of effectiveness and appropriateness of the program and to draw conclusions about it. The current significance of this study will focus on what has been identified in current museology literature surrounding the challenges affecting contemporary museums and what needs they need to do to survive. The benefit to future scholars will be the groundwork of a call to action by museum studies and museums to find some common ground and establish long-term collaborations between museology literature and museums.

The data collection was derived from a survey administered to members of COMPT via their website and current museum studies students via the internet. This survey used the established criteria from the American Association of Museums for membership COMPT and the ICOM criteria for museology content, as a means of narrowing the focus of the participants. Graduate-level museology curriculum in the United States (US) will be examined to demonstrate any coherence within current museum studies curricula used for training museum professionals.

The data will be collected and analyzed building on a 1996 survey “Museum Community Training Needs Assessment” conducted by COMPT. The American Association of Museums

(AAM) conducted one formal study in 1998. However, the current research focuses on curriculum implementation, not program development; the AAM study is thus important only for its similarities in the survey proposing guidelines for establishing and evaluating existing museum studies programs.

CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS

In this chapter, the results of the data analysis are presented. The data were collected and then processed in response to the problems posed in chapter 1 of this dissertation. Two fundamental goals drove the collection of the data and the subsequent data analysis. Those goals were to provide a base of knowledge about museum studies curriculum and to determine its relevance to the museum profession. These objectives were successfully accomplished and the findings presented in this chapter demonstrate the potential for merging theory and practice museum between studies curriculum and the museum profession.

Response Rate

What follows are the results of a *Survey of Museum Professionals* designed to assess their opinions about museum studies curriculum. The data collection was derived from a survey administered to members of COMPT via their website and current museum studies students via the internet (Figure 1). Given the large number of museums in this country and the complexity of museum studies programs, this survey used the established criteria from the American Association of Museums for membership COMPT and the ICOM criteria for museology content, as a means of narrowing the focus of the participants.

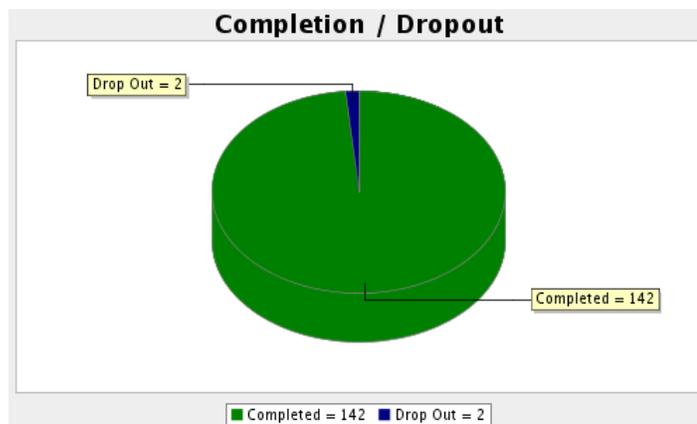


FIGURE 1: Response Rate

When asked if museum studies should be the customary academic discipline for training museum administrators (Figure 2), a small group who strongly disagreed (3.91%), compared to those who strongly agreed (14.06%). Those who remained neutral were at (22.66%), just slightly higher than those who disagreed (17.19%), however, the majority of respondents agreed (42.19%).

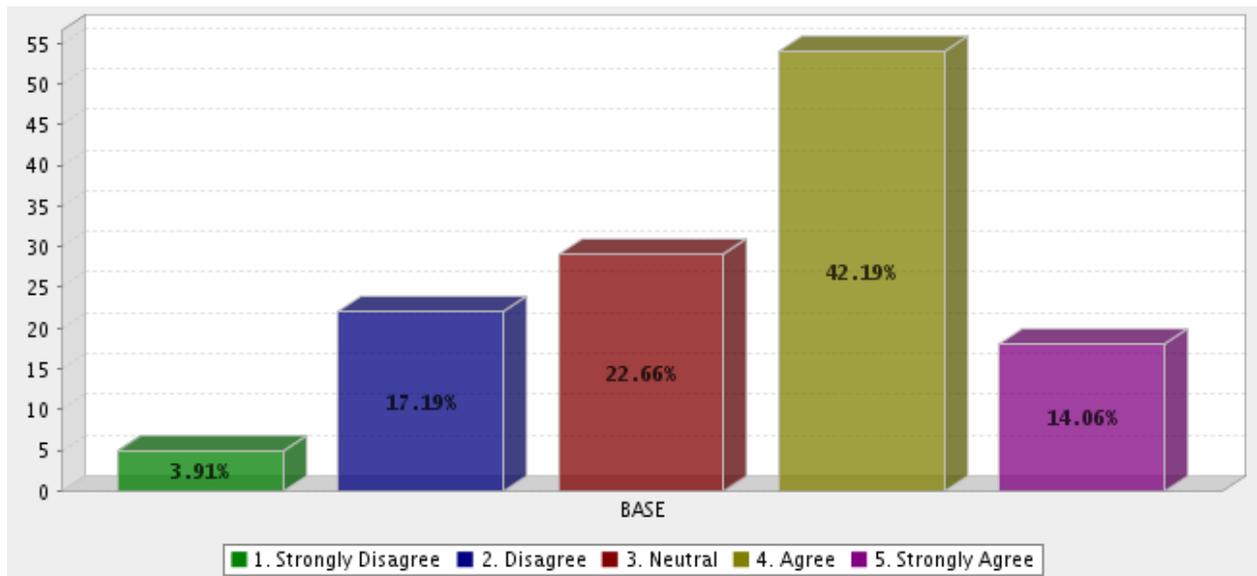


FIGURE 2: Museum Studies Should Be the Customary Academic Discipline for Training Museum Administrators

When asked if they felt that museum studies curriculum enhances the professionalization of museum administration (Figure 3), a minute group strongly disagreed (0.78%), 5.43% strongly agreed, a small group disagreed (3.88%), (24.81%) remained neutral and the overwhelming majority agreed (65.12%). Asked if museum studies curriculum should be included in the curriculum for a doctorate in museum studies (Figure 4), there were (51.56%) who strongly agreed, while only (0.78%) strongly disagree, (2.34%) disagreed, (10.16%) remained neutral and (35.16%) agreed.

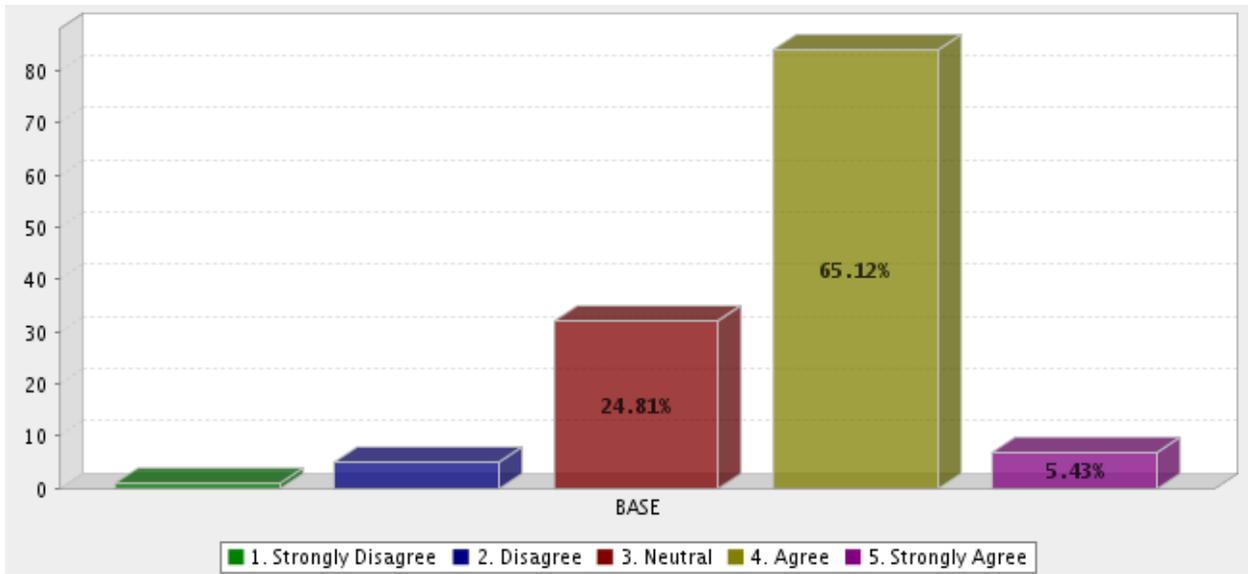


FIGURE 3: Museum Studies Curriculum Enhances the Professionalization of Museum Administration

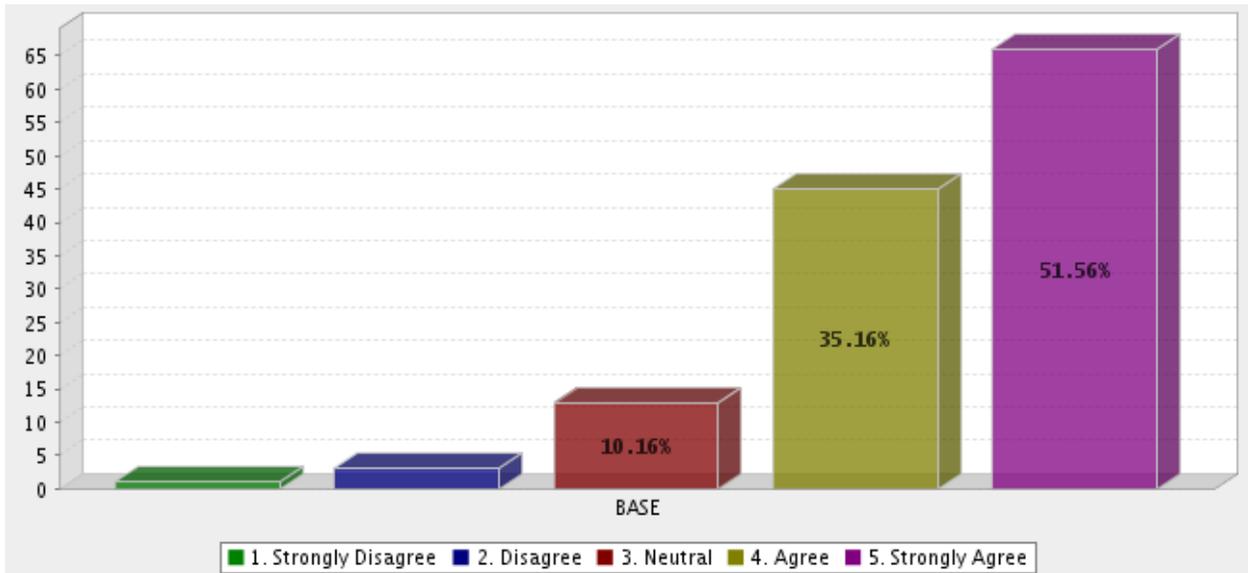


FIGURE 4: Museum Studies Curriculum Should be Included in the Curriculum for a Doctorate in Museum Studies

When asked if there is adequate, academic communication between existing museum studies programs (Figure 5), (13.28%) strongly disagreed, (42.19%) disagreed, (6.25%) agreed, (1.56%) strongly agreed and (36.72%) remained neutral.

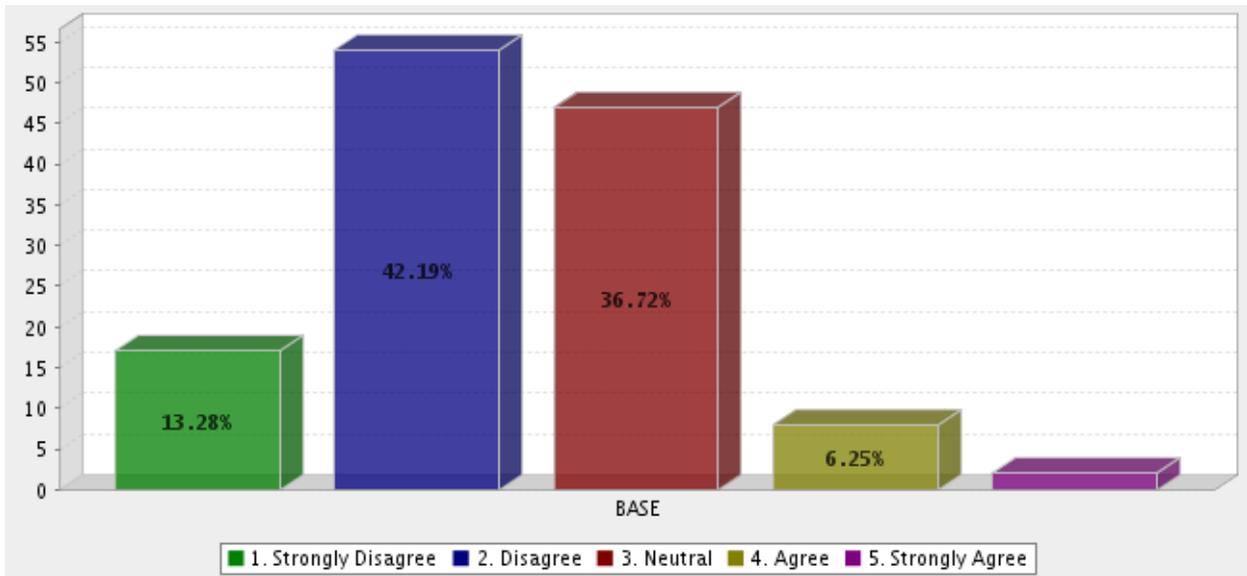


FIGURE 5: There is Adequate Academic Communication between Existing Museum Studies Programs

For less than one percent (0.78%) of participants, an Associate Degree was the highest academic degree earned, while 26.36% earned Bachelor’s Degrees, 51.16% Masters Degree and 21.71% Doctorate Degree. 0.00% High School Diploma (Figure 6). Asked if a museum studies committee should be added to the American Association of Museums standing committees (Figure 7), only 1.56% strongly disagreed, 8.59% disagreed, 17.97% remained neutral, 48.44% agreed, and 23.44% strongly agreed.

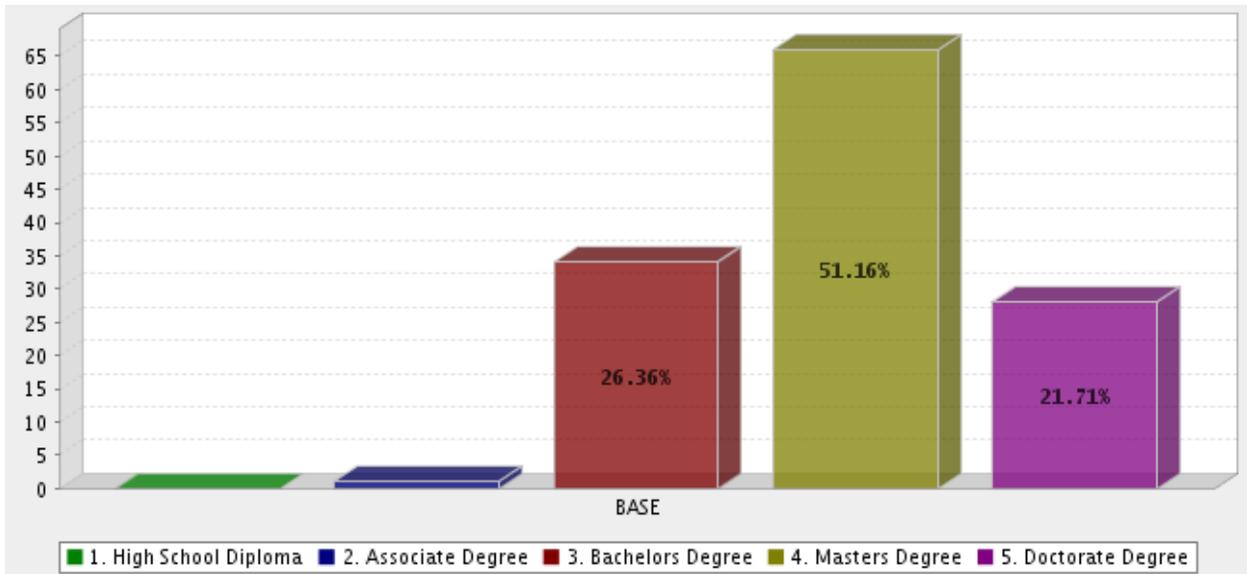


FIGURE 6: What Is The Highest Academic Degree You Have Earned?

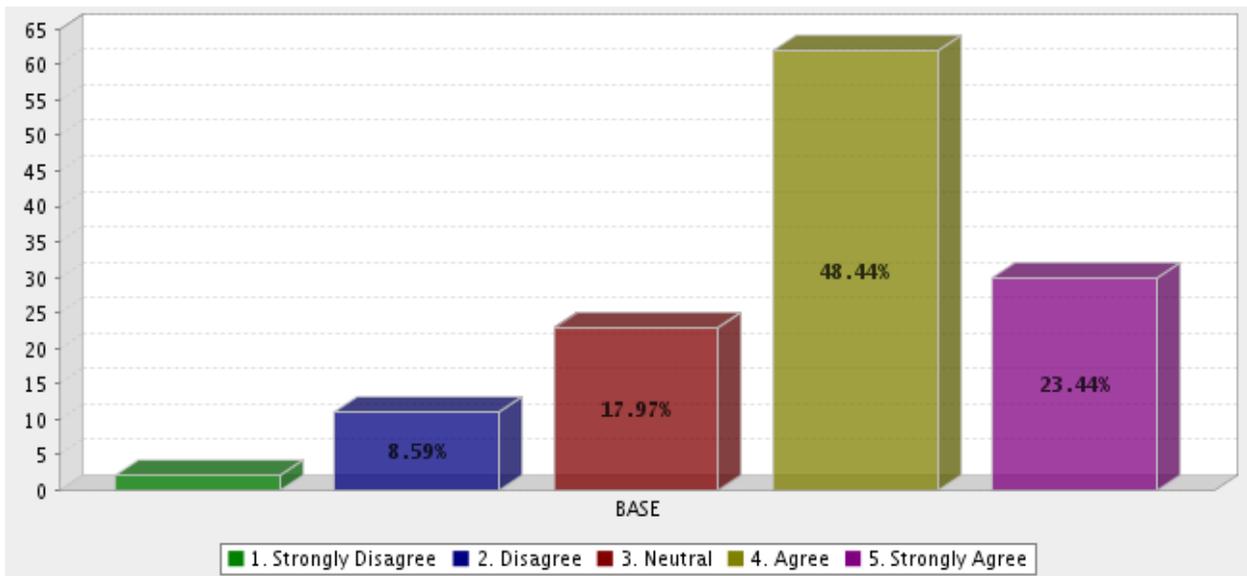


FIGURE 7: A Museum Studies Committee Should Be Added To The American Association of Museums Standing Committees

There were 26.77% of the participants who identified themselves as members of COMPT, 7.09% as emerging professionals (EMP), 22.05% as participants of ACUMG and 44.09% chose no listed affiliation (Figure 8).

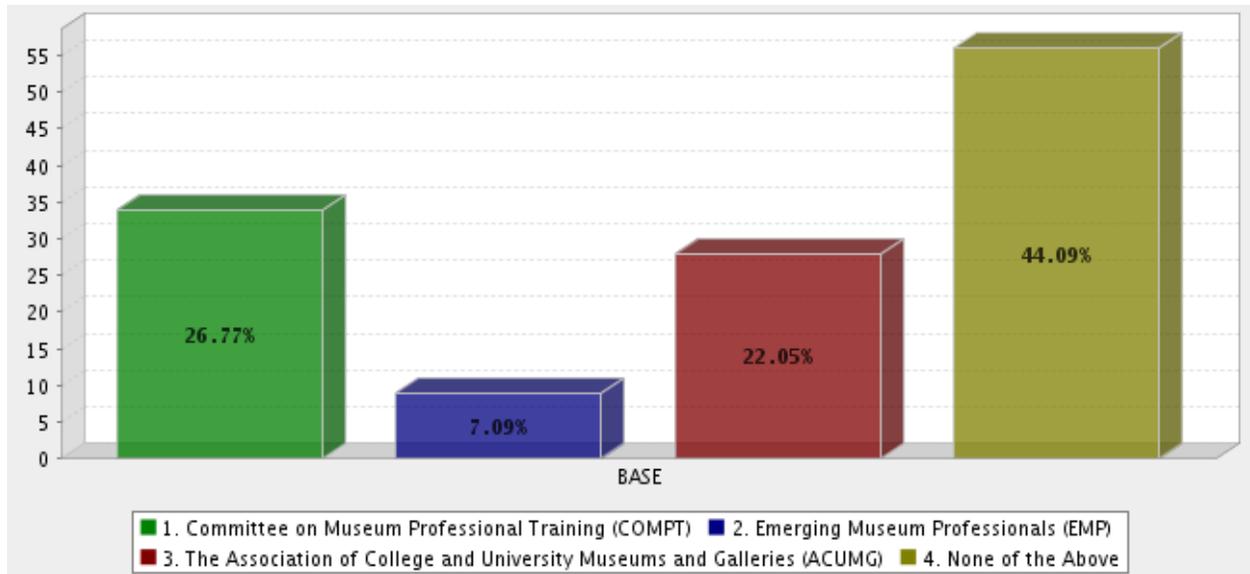
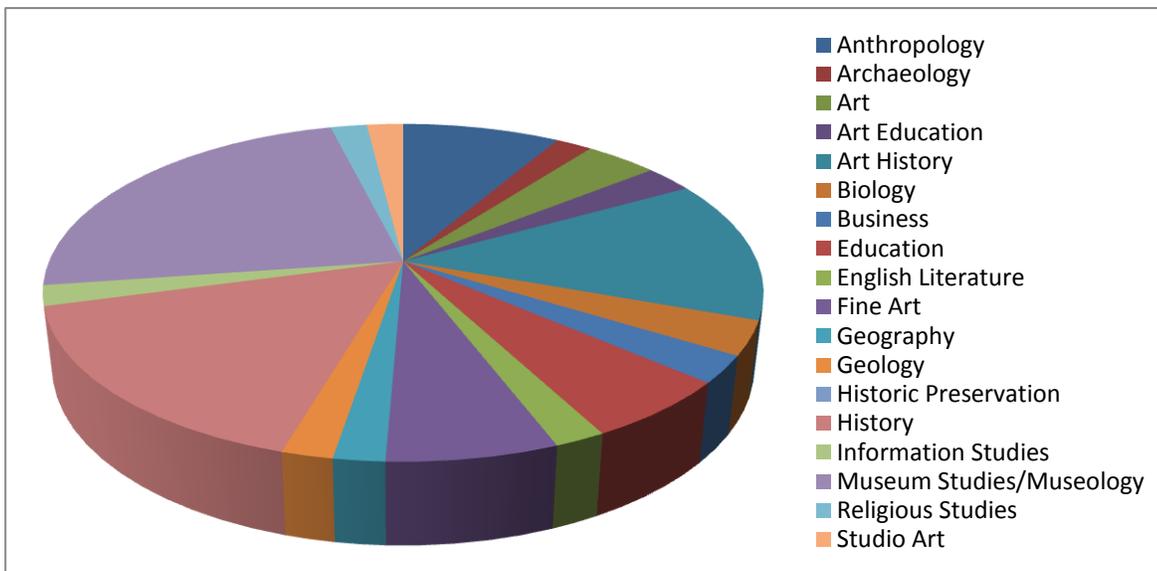


FIGURE 8: Committee Membership

Participants were also asked to identify the academic disciplines in which they had earned degrees (Figure 9). Participants were not asked to differentiate between undergraduate and graduate degrees. This question yielded fifty-eight (58) different degrees, from accounting to zoology. There were several with more than one, Education (9) for example. However there were only five (5) with ten or more and they are Fine Art (10), Anthropology (13), Art History (21), History (25) and Museum Studies/Museology (36).



CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The museum profession in the United States began in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, an outgrowth of institutions exhibiting artifacts to the public and the discrepancy as to regarding a uniform acceptance that a museum profession exists dates back to at least the 1930s. Laurence Vail Coleman argued in 1939 that museum work was an independent discipline, a notion similarly expressed in the 1950s and 1960s by Albert E. Parr. In 1979, Edward P. Alexander surmised that the museum profession held a “common cause and goals.”

The debate is still ongoing in museum studies program, professional organizations, and museums.

Museum studies curriculum enhances the professionalization of museum administration but these programs have their detractors among who are those who believe there is no substitute for experience. This is strong holdover from the past when the primary route into the museum profession was not academic; individuals with disciplinary expertise would be hired by museums and allowed to “work their way up through the organization,” learning the profession as they progressed in their careers (Genoways and Ireland 9). Thus the museum professional has been variously described, for example, by Danilov, who stated: “He cannot be a professional museum man, for his institution can only serve the world through the efforts of specialists, in particular fields of knowledge (cited in Genoways 221), or Weil, who asserts “Some believe that American museum workers have already succeeded in achieving this status. Others doubt that they ever can.” (Genoways 222)

Purpose of the Study

The focus of this exploratory research study was to investigate museum studies curriculum and its relevance to the museum profession, looking at a select group of museum

professionals' perceptions and short-term identification and possible solutions available within museology curriculum offered at the level of Master of Arts. The purpose of this research was to investigate museum studies curriculum and its relevance to the museum profession. A survey of museum professionals was conducted in order to assess their perceptions about museum studies curriculum and associated areas, which provided some ideas about how museum studies matter to prospective and current museum workers. The research questions addressed two separate issues, the current state of graduate museum studies curriculum, and the relationship between museum studies and the museum field. The survey consisted of questions, two of particular interest to the research. First, Should museum studies should be the customary academic discipline for training museum administrators and second, does museum studies curriculum enhance the professionalization of museum administration? The benefit of this research to future scholars is that it lays the groundwork for a call to action by museum studies and museums to find some common ground and establish long-term collaborations between museology literature and museums.

Museum studies, sometimes called museology, is the field that encompasses the ideas and issues involved in the museum profession, from the practical, day-to-day skills needed to operate a museum to theories on the societal role of museums. The academic programs falling under the term "museum studies" are designed to prepare students for professional positions in museums (Genoways and Ireland). The current lack of consistency in defining the relationship between museum studies and museum professionals is caused, in part, by the unpredictability of how museum professionals are educated.

The research data collected concerned museum studies curriculum specifically and not museums in general. The data derived from a survey administered to members of COMPT via

their website and from current museum studies students via the internet. The preliminary investigation of this study was intended to explore whether museology curriculum could be the preferred gateway to the museum profession and professionalizing the museum field.

The sample population represented by this research project consists of working museum professionals and museum studies students as the results of this research will have the most direct impact on the working careers of the same. Likewise, these individuals might readily identify the most urgent areas of need. There were 419 view of the survey. Out of the 144 who started the survey and 142 completed it, yielding a 98.61% completion rate.

The contents of the review of literature were organized chronologically in order to provide the historical context for the evolution of the museum profession and present the resources pertaining to the education and training of museum professionals. This overview addressed the history of museums in the US and discussed research related to the museum profession, museum professional training and museum studies programs and curricula. The review of literature provided background for understanding the state of museum studies but the Pilot Survey instruments for this research were developed along separate lines.

Review of the findings

The study found that in addition to the Committee of Professional Training, many participants still felt that a museum studies committee should be added to the American Association of Museums standing committees. It is indeed possible that this could come under the umbrella of COMPT; however, there is still a distinct desire for some specific dialogue about museum studies. Furthermore, the findings revealed that there were participants who were members of COMPT, but there were also non-members, including emerging professionals, ACUMG and still others with no listed affiliation.

The findings show that another area of concern among participants is the inter-industry discussion surrounding the establishment creation of a doctorate degree in museum studies. Interestingly enough, when asked if museum studies curriculum should be included in the curriculum for a doctorate in museum studies there were (51.56%) who strongly agreed, while only (0.78%) strongly disagree, (2.34%) disagreed, (10.16%) remained neutral and (35.16%) agreed. Museums rely on museum professionals to educate the public and museum professionals should have a standard means against which to compare training and professional development.

The findings demonstrate that for less than one percent (0.78%) of participants, an Associate Degree was the highest academic degree earned, while 26.36% earned Bachelor's Degrees, 51.16% Masters Degree and 21.71% Doctorate Degree. 0.00% High School Diploma. full of people who attended college (70%), but only 11% have a master's degree or doctorate. In a recent analysis of U.S. Census data commissioned by the American Association of Museums, statistics showed that We take a broad view of the "museum workforce," so these numbers include everyone who draws a museum paycheck—from the director of the Met to the custodian at your local historical society—and not just the professional staff. Recent data from the AAM shows that the present workforce is: 80% white, 52% male and by comparison, 87% of museum studies graduates in 2009 were women and 70% were white, which is clearly not a museum workforce that is trending a reflection of the US population now and in the very near future. (AAM 2011)

Currently, there is no established academic discipline, which centrally identifies and addresses the complexity of the museum profession. Likewise, the context for developing museology scholarship remains without a consolidated anchor in an established academic discipline. For example, the findings demonstrate that participants represented fifty-eight (58)

different degrees, from accounting to zoology and several participants with more than one degree, Education (9) for example. However there were only five (5) with ten or more and they are Fine Art (10), Anthropology (13), Art History (21), History (25) and Museum Studies/Museology (36) yet there is no discussion about consensus among the widely varied academic backgrounds that lead to work in the museum field.

This study shows that participants believed that museum studies should be the customary academic discipline for training museum administrators. Museum studies educators and museum policy makers may apply the results to develop a more comprehensive investigation into the needs of museum studies students, alumni, and museum professionals about how to better collaborate museum studies curriculum with the museum profession.

This study found that participants were concerned about inadequate communication between existing museum studies programs. In addition, a recent article about the growth of museum studies programs provided statistic to show that enrollment is at an all time high, yet all six programs referenced were housed in different academic units, highlighting the lack of cohesion and communication between museum studies programs. According to Schwarzer, “Museum studies’ primary stakeholders—universities, museums, and the community of alumni and students—can’t seem to agree on what they want from today’s programs. (Schwarzer 24) a clear indicator that it is time to re-visit museum studies curriculum, which is apparently growing, but in a direction that no one can identify. The time is now for museum professionals to demand a standardized academic tract. It is time to marry theory and practice, first in the classroom, then in the museum. If not, we are operating in defiance of academic evolution on our ways to becoming *living fossils* (Vergo 3).

Limitations

This study presented some limitations because of the current lack of comprehensive research on the subject matter. There was some bias in the survey because of the sampling size and specificity of one organization in particular. However, this was intended as an initial investigational study that can perhaps lead to a larger study for future researchers. Like the COMPT study, this survey will produce data that can be used to indicate the general directions in which training is perceived to be needed within the museum community. In the COMPT, Pilot Surveys noted that “various museum training topic details and the specifics of individual preferences were not explored in the questionnaire in interest of brevity” and that “additional research is needed to clarify these types of details.” It is hoped that this survey will continue the discussion of professional development by providing museum studies curriculum as a viable tool for professional development.

This research study is descriptive and can be further developed by sampling of a large percentage of current and future museum studies students and museum professionals, which would yield a stronger consensus of how the museum field feels museum studies. Finally, the conclusions of this study are limited in that they were derived from a small sampling of museum professionals and students, which could limit the generalizing of the findings to other museum and museum studies stakeholders.

Discussion

It is possible that coupling the desire for communication between theory and practice elements of the profession would enable students to achieve greater success and museums to benefit from this knowledge. It is not possible to know this without additional research and this study provides the information necessary for developing such research. Future research that

includes more in-depth analysis of the interests and needs of students, museum professionals, and museums is also necessary.

Genoways asked, "...museum work is essentially intellectual, but is there uniformity of training?" (p. 8) and Weil concluded, "Tomorrow's museums cannot be operated with yesterday's skills; museum workers will need to bring to their institutions a new combination of skills and attitudes" (46). Furthermore, the entire museum profession must become more scholarly, and museum professionals must contribute more to establishing this scholarly foundation. Genoways noted, for example, that in soliciting essays for a recent publication on museum philosophy, "...those professionals working for academic institutions were far more willing to participate than working museum professionals" (p. 231).

Recommendations

Based on this study's conclusions, the researcher recommends the following. First, a well-planned presentation to museum studies stakeholders emphasizing the benefits of establishing museum studies as the core academic discipline for training museum professionals, the outgrowth of which might surface common ground and shift negative attitudes, beliefs, and assumptions. In this process, clearly define the difference between museum studies and museum education then contextualize both in relation to the role they play in museums. Identify museum stakeholders and museum studies stakeholders, define the roles of both, and then share those roles with each other. Then find a way to "marry" museum theory and museum practice, given the interest among museum professionals for more than a continued surface discussion.

Second, the museum profession needs to establish itself as an autonomous entity using the term museology not museum studies, which can be mistaken for museum education. While other professional degree programs such as specialized associations like the American

Psychological Association evaluate psychology and architecture and the National Architecture Accrediting Board, museum studies is ad hoc, with virtually no outside oversight. Given the “river of loosely configured programs,” that currently represents the field (Schwarzer 25). This also allows for a more direct relationship between museum studies programs and their academic homes. For example, as the Founding Director of a museum studies program, it was difficult to make rational arguments for accreditation with no identifiable professional organization to support and monitor the curriculum. Museum studies programs would do well to support the institutions they strive uplift intellectually. (Schwarzer 53)

Third, establish a cohesive means of quality assessment for the various museum studies programs. Many stakeholders maintain that outside accreditation for museum studies programs would create unnecessary hoops within a relatively small sector. Nevertheless, what is wrong with pushing for excellence and setting higher expectations in such key areas as core curriculum, evaluation, student learning outcomes and competencies? Various professional committees have repeatedly advocated for higher standards, yet the documents they have been generated on this topic remain within small circles. It is time for museums and trainers to come together to articulate and widely communicate the core attributes of a quality museum studies program. (Schwarzer 53) Museum studies curriculum enhances the professionalization of the museum profession. In addition, museum administration could greatly benefit from a dialogue with museum professionals in order to reflect and address current trends in museums. Students who enter museum studies programs should have the advantageous position of knowing what museums need and then utilizing their academic time to discuss, analyze, and review answers to the questions before them. They should be writing papers, conducting real-life projects and exhibit ideas that spill over into their careers. For example, as an undergraduate student one of

my professors gave our class the assignment to apply for an exhibition at the Smithsonian. While just the thought of applying to such a prestigious museum was a bit overwhelming, the museum was actually interested in the exhibit plans submitted by the class. Move beyond the mandatory internship and work to establish more real-life practical experiences. While the shaky job market may drive the unemployed to the safe haven of graduate school, a number of gainfully employed museum professionals may also feel they need a graduate degree in order to advance in their current careers. (Yasko 44)

Fourth, develop doctoral-level studies in museum studies, once we have figured out a cohesive curriculum on the master's level. There should be a concerted effort and collaboration among museum studies programs to establish a doctorate in museum studies based on museology pedagogy. The development team(s) should identify ten core elements common in museum studies programs at master's level in order to establish cohesion in study and communication. They should also take into consideration other variables such as the school or college where the program is housed, student population, areas of museum interest of students, internships, etc. Moreover, while these and other factors are being addressed, evaluation, a partnership between stakeholders is the best approach to being.

Fifth, serious attention and monitoring should be aimed at improving the inter-industry communication between museum studies programs and between the programs and museums. Long-term disagreement should be set aside and realistic, time-specific goals should be established for a curricular academic and professional program designed to provide clear communication between museum stakeholders from the classroom to the boardroom.

Sixth, a major benefit of museum studies is the opportunity to diversify the population entering the museum field. For example, filtering students through Art History ensured a certain

philosophical type. Students had to “buy in” to the notion of Western art and culture as the core of museum worthy ideals and interests. An inspiring, aggressive, and well-planned statewide educational campaign intended to inform museum professionals and museums about the advantages of museum studies should be developed and spearheaded by the American Association of Museums. A similar campaign should be launched to reassure and motivate museum studies students about the benefits of the academic degree they are perusing. In addition, because there are no apparent efforts being made in diversifying museum professionals, this campaign could be a venue for encouraging underrepresented groups to pursue museum studies. Another concern is the relative lack of diversity among program applicants to museum studies programs. The Chronicle of Higher Education reported in 2009 that minority representation in U.S. graduate schools grew from 28.3 percent in 2008 to 29.1 percent in 2009. Yet Sorin warns, “Until both museums and museum studies programs are more focused on looking like and being responsive to those [minority] communities, we will not attract as diverse a group of people as we would like to the profession.” (Yasko 49) In addition, diversity does not necessarily start and stop with race. Gender diversity in the museum field is also a concern. AAM’s Center for the Future of Museums wrote in a blog post, “More on the Future of Museum Studies” (Aug. 7, 2009), that the museum field is not only about 80 percent Caucasian, but also 80 percent female. The report states that this trend “creates two unhappy groups: museums as employers who want more diverse staff and complain they cannot attract ethnically/culturally diverse, qualified candidates, and museum studies graduates bearing large amounts of debt from student loans.” (Yasko 49)

Seventh, more attention should be given to the role of museum studies’ students and the potential for the academic discipline to welcome a more diverse group of future museum

professionals. The programs can serve as a powerful avenue for growth and acceptance, aside from the static 1.5-hour workshop at the annual AAM meeting and create a substantive venue for museum professions who are more reflective of the visitors whom museums are now having to court. Based on the numbers and the variety of academic disciplines of museum studies students, museum professionals are not afraid of higher education, so why not capitalize on the interest in learning by developing a more relevant and inclusive curriculum.

Finally, a museum studies committee should be established within the American Association of Museums standing committees. This would allow for a more expansive platform for discussion about what museum studies teachers and administrators have to say about the actual happenings in their programs, again, aside from the obligatory workshop, but a more inclusive, partnership-type relationship that exists throughout the year and is reflective in all aspects of AAM. For example, while working museum professionals are encouraged to be AAM Peer Reviewers, museum studies professors are not. There are certainly aspects of the museum profession that warrant some reflective thought even in light of it being a practical, hands-on profession.

Future Research

In the review of literature and in the research that was studied, several “gaps” were probably were questionable. Give some thought as what further could be studied in the area of research conducted. When stating what should be studied, also indicate why this is important. Provide a rationale for why the additional research should be done.

Graduate school is in need of a general overhaul so this a good time to re-think museum studies on the graduate level. In fact, I would argue that MS is more adaptable to the changes taking place, such as the use of technology in delivering courses, because it is not an entrenched

academic unit but rather one that has to adapt, by nature of the ongoing changes in museums that focus on serving the public, diversity and funding.

The current research on museum studies and museum professionals should be expanded to include a more comprehensive discussion about the role that museums have assumed in educating the public and how the people who work in museums are educated. For example, museums have been around for hundreds of years from Timbuktu to Greece to the United States of America. Yet, the professionalizing has relatively new concept and discussion is less than 60 years old. Variables or phenomena that could be added include race and ethnicity among those seeking museum studies degrees and those working in the museum profession. What should be re-examined are previous reports about the relationship between museum studies and museum professionals and those could be expanded on to develop an in-depth, profession-wide, years-long study of what is actually happening in the classrooms and the field.

There is an increasing trend among museum hire outside consultants and contract work. This could be a result of shirking budgets but I also think it is a direct reflection of the need for a broader skills set for museum professionals and makes a strong case for centralizing professional training. Given the time and money investing in graduate school, it is reasonable that one of the main questions concerning students is Where do I begin my museum career? What is unreasonable is that that there is no reasonable response to that question. A museum study allows for a point of departure to allow students to identify a point of departure for their careers. What is the benefit of professional degree that cannot answer “the” basic question of students?

Museum studies programs are growing in popularity and number, which means an increase in graduates seeking to enter the museum profession. Yet additional students in additional programs could eventually create a problem. Consider that the Association of

Academic Museums & Galleries currently lists 57 on-campus graduate programs in museum studies or similar subject matter. (Yasko 49)

In an excerpt from a recent analysis of U.S. Census data commissioned by AAM, *The Workforce of the Future Starts Now*, a broad view of the “museum workforce,” so these numbers include everyone who draws a museum paycheck—from the director of the Met to the custodian at your local historical society—and not just the professional staff. The best available data shows that the present workforce is 80% white, 52% male, full of people who attended college (70%), but only 11% have a master’s degree or doctorate. For a useful point of comparison, 87% of museum studies graduates in 2009 were women and 70% were white.

Museums are insular in their teaching, training and hiring. It is time for museums to have an objective look at what they do. In other words, it is time that museums are challenged beyond the “hype” that they create about themselves. For example, when did we start sending our kids to museums and trusting them to instill culture? Is this something that museums perpetuate or is this an actual practice? Museums claim to embrace the public and spend many resources on visitor services yet this is not reflective in the workforce and it would be interesting to see the statistics on visitors, derived from a neutral assessment conducted in a research project that asks when did this become the focus? When did the conversation start? Where is it now? What do MS have to do with it?

On the academic side, one of the basic problems for museum studies programs is accreditation. For example, as the founding director of such a program, it there were clear indicators for academic programs in the college where my programs was housed, but there was none for museum studies. Therefore, we hired museum consultants to provide reviews of the curriculum. This practice would be acceptable, in the interim, if museum professionals played

some role in curriculum development. However, this shows a clear need for an established professional organization that has the input of all stakeholders. With museum studies, students bring a variety of academic backgrounds to their respective study tables, which are far more reflective of what museums have come to represent. Not at the exclusion of traditional Euro-Western art and culture, but with an inclusion of a more comprehensive, and realistic, reflection of what constitutes United States art and culture.

Ethnic and cultural diversity of the museum profession has its most viable avenue via museum studies programs because they are becoming more ethnically and culturally diverse. I would not be a museum professional with a nearly twenty-year career had I not entered thru a museum studies program that focused on the inner-workings of museums and not simply European art, history and culture. In order to remain relevant, museum studies curriculum needs to:

- Establish and develop museum studies pedagogy
- Develop the historical, theoretical, and methodological constructs of museum studies curriculum
- Remain abreast of developments in the museum field and introduce them in the classroom
- Maintain high standards for academic and professional performance
- Utilize new technology tools in order to link museum studies and museums re-time
- Remain active with the American Association of Museums and other professional organizations
- Stay abreast of trends and the needs of museum employers, which inform museum studies curriculum
- Establish Common Pedagogical Strategies for Teaching Museum Studies
- Institute Standard Information Resources
- Expand Museum Studies and Museum Professional Mentorship Efforts
- Train for the specific needs of museums train the people who will work in the museum in the areas of need. Contradictory to produce museum studies graduates who are undesirable to work in museums.
- Museum studies programs should work in conjunction with museums to identify pedagogical goals that link the two entities in theory and practices.

Failure to engage in solution focused dialogue that leads to the development of professional and educational best practices that combine museum studies and museum profession compromises the future of museum studies, the museum field, and the students and institutions it serves. Mandatory assessment and mandatory placement are not consistently enforced across the different institutions and this leads to compromised success for students. Access to museum studies without the academic support programs and assessment methods in place that enable students to become successful museum professionals is a waste of time and resources.

Summary

The intent of this study was to establish whether museology curriculum could be the gateway to the museum profession and the professionalizing of the museum field. The first question asked, what is currently the standard in museum studies curricula in the US? In addition, how does the current standard serve as a basis for museum training in terms of adequacy? The second question asked if the curriculum is considered adequate, how it correlates with museum professional's work. Moreover, if the curriculum is not considered adequate, what elements are suggested to make museum studies adequate?

What is museology and why should it matter to museums? It is now time to form a collective definition and work to integrate it into the vocabulary of museums, museum studies programs alike. Museum professionals should establish a professional association and museology curriculum should be at the center. This allows for a more academic approach to the profession, establish curriculum for academic programs. Practitioners are typically mired in the day-to-day with little time to reflect on or integrate new trends into their work (Schwarzer 24) Museum studies programs should be commended for their contribution to the increased level of intellectual inquiry, research, and community building in the museum profession. However, as

the nation's population exponentially grows more diverse, quality museum experiences are quality education is essential for relevance, stability, and strength. Equalizing access and quality is an ethical, prudent, and proactive commitment.

To achieve a successful outcome to this commitment museum studies programs need a process of evaluation based upon accurate feedback, careful analysis and corresponding adaptations to the programs designed to equalize access and quality. The feedback should include active listening between museum studies administrators and teachers, museum professionals and museum administrators. Comments from this group will help to focus attention on the most pressing needs and how all stakeholders can best implement reform that produces a workforce that consists of insightful museum professionals who can think independently, establish life-long learning skills, creatively problem-solve, and establish personal and professional standards of excellence and service. Second, effectual communicators and change agents who can communicate effectively, and be willing to initiate change. Third, input from those who directly affect the use of technology by museum profession. Fourth, input from individuals who understand and value diversity in their work and actively create a cultural milieu in which diverse perspectives are respected and valued. Finally, museum studies graduates who are able to blend the edges between museum studies and museums and effectively communicate their skills to the museum field at large.

APPENDIX A: PILOT SURVEY

American Association of Museums (AAM) 2009 Annual Meeting
The Museum Experiment, April 30-May 4, 2009
Philadelphia, PA

AAM Career Café™ Idea Lounge
Saturday, May 2, 2009
12:30:00 PM to 1:30:00 PM
Pennsylvania Convention Center
Room 112-A

The Formalization of Museum Studies

Facilitator: Redell Hearn
Founding Director/Assistant Professor
Graduate Program in Museum Studies
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Overview of Discussion

As we reflect on a centennial of museum studies in the United States, this Career Café™ conversation will explore the question "Is it possible to create a standard graduate-level academic discipline for museum studies across colleges and universities?" The informal conversation to follow will foster a dialogue about some of the beliefs among current, and future, museum professionals about the standardization of museum studies curriculum and the role of museum studies in training future museum administrators.

Proposed Outcomes

After participating in this Idea Lounge, attendees will be better able to:

- Articulate a variety of perspectives about the formalization of museum studies curriculum
- Describe a mixture of opinions about the relationship of museum studies curriculum and museum administration
- Apply ideas on the topic of discussion from the conversation to future sessions, workshops or informal conversations with peers

Learning provides a lifelong connection to worlds that were
and futures yet to come. JFK Liberty Museum, PA

The Formalization of Museum Studies, Redell Hearn, Facilitator, AAM Career Café™ Idea Lounge, 5/2/09

Presenter Talking Points

Perhaps the most fundamental transformation in museums over the last century has been their shift from private pleasure to public service (American Association of Museums [AAM] 2002; Hudson 1998; Vergo 1989; Weil 2002). "Unless a radical re-examination of the role of museums...takes place, museums...may find themselves dubbed 'living fossils'" (Vergo, 3-4).

Entwined in the need for change in museums is the need for change within the museum profession. You cannot successfully operate the museum of today relying on the skill set of yesterday; museum workers will need to bring to their institutions a new combination of skills and attitudes (Weil, 46) which will require a shift in the overall design and delivery of professional training offerings.

Training and professional development opportunities are the keys by which staff can acquire those skills and knowledge and a rigorous examination of the roles and relationships between professional education and the field is needed (ICOM 2000).

The museum profession is in need of a comprehensive training program for the people who work in the museum field. Leadership in museology, as elsewhere, is an "elusive concept" that has generated considerable discussion within museology literature, particularly as concerns the role of education and experience in leadership (Genoways and Ireland 2003).

The survival of the museum profession depends on it becoming far more scholarly. In *The New Museology* (1989), Vergo writes:

Contemplating the history and development of the museum profession...the comparison that springs irresistibly to mind is with the coelacanth, that remarkable creature whose brain, in the course of its development from embryo to adult, shrinks in relation to its size, so that in the end it occupies only a fraction of the space available to it (Vergo 1989).

To become better understood, more academic writing will be needed than the four or five journals available today can accommodate (Genoways and Ireland, 352). The museum profession must move from the current word-of-mouth approach to a more academic orientation where ideas published, reviewed, criticized, contemplated, revised and restructured, and published again. One way to achieve this is through enhancing the skills set of museum staff.

27 attendees

18 surveys

Survey Instrument

5
Leading Questions 3 Demographics

1 Museum studies curriculum should be the standard academic discipline for training museum professionals who seek positions of administration.

- 2 Strongly Disagree ||
- 5 Somewhat Disagree ||||
- 10 Somewhat Agree |||||
- 1 Strongly Agree |

2 Museum studies curriculum can help increase the professionalization of museum leaders

- 1 Strongly Disagree |
- 0 Somewhat Disagree
- 10 Somewhat Agree |||||
- 7 Strongly Agree ||||

3 A Doctoral Program in museum studies should be established in the United States

- 2 Strongly Disagree # ||
- 6 Somewhat Disagree ||||
- 4 Somewhat Agree ||||
- 6 Strongly Agree ||||

4 Museum studies curriculum should be the academic basis for developing a doctorate in museum studies

- 3 Strongly Disagree |||
- 5 Somewhat Disagree ||||
- 9 Somewhat Agree |||||
- 0 Strongly Agree

5 There is currently adequate correlation among the curricula of different museum studies programs

✓ Not a clear question

- 3 Strongly Disagree # |||
- 9 Somewhat Disagree |||||
- 3 Somewhat Agree |||
- 0 Strongly Agree

6 In what academic discipline(s) are you degreed?

do have an earned

Demographics

Where ?

~~sex~~
Age Range

7 Do you currently work in a museum?

Museum education / museology / museum studies

APPENDIX B:
INFORMED CONSENT AND SURVEY QUESTIONS



SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

College of Arts and Sciences
Humanities
441 Hall of Languages
Syracuse NY 13244

INFORMED CONSENT

From Practice to Theory: Making Museology Matter in Educating Museum Administrators

My name is Redell Hearn, and I am a Ph.D. Candidate in the Humanities Doctoral Program at Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York. I am asking you to participate in a survey to inform the research for my doctoral dissertation titled, *From Practice to Theory: Making Museology Matter in Educating Museum Administrators*. The purpose of this Pilot Surveys to examine the relationship between museum studies curriculum and museum administrators. In particular, the beliefs among current, and future, museum professionals about the significance of museum studies curriculum in training for a career in the museum field, and the extent to which there is agreement or disagreement about establishing museology as the customary academic discipline for training museum professionals who seek administrative positions.

Your participation in this study is voluntary; however, your participation will aid in shaping the results of my research by helping me compile a broad sampling of data. The survey

will be conducted online through QuestionPro, an online research company. You will be asked to click on the link provided to complete the survey, which will take approximately twenty minutes.

Your name will not appear anywhere in the analysis of the results and your specific answers will be kept completely confidential and discussed only with my dissertation committee members. In any articles or presentations made using the data, a substitute name will be used for any specific comments you provide in the survey answers and there will be no reference to specific institutions. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, or concerns that you wish to address to someone other than the investigator, please contact the Syracuse University Institutional Review Board at 315-443-3013. For more information QuestionPro, visit <http://www.questionpro.com/>. If you have questions for the researcher, please email me at netdell@hotmail.com and I will respond as quickly as possible.

Survey Questions

The purpose of this research is to examine beliefs among museum professionals about the significance of museology curriculum in training museum professionals. Specifically, I intend to ascertain the degree to which established museum professionals and emerging museum professionals agree or disagree about the establishment of museology as the customary academic discipline for training museum administrators.

1. Museum studies should be the customary academic discipline for training museum administrators.
2. Museum studies curriculum enhances the professionalization of museum administration

3. Museum studies curriculum should be included in the curriculum for a doctorate in museum studies
4. There is adequate academic communication between existing museum studies programs
5. A museum studies committee should be added to the American Association of Museums standing committees
6. What is the highest academic degree you have earned?
 - High School Diploma
 - Associate Degree
 - Bachelors Degree
 - Masters Degree
 - Doctorate Degree
7. In what academic discipline(s) have you earned a degree(s)?
8. I am a member of:
 - Committee on Museum Professional Training (COMPT)
 - Emerging Museum Professionals (EMP)
 - The Association of College and University Museums and Galleries (ACUMG)
 - None of the Above

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June 2010 – Present

Adjunct Instructor (Online)

College of Liberal Studies, Master of Arts in Museum Studies Program, University of

Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma

September 2008 – Present

Founding Director/Assistant Professor (On-Site and Online)

Master of Arts in Museum Studies Program, Southern University at New Orleans

New Orleans, Louisiana

January 2002 – May 2009

Museum Curator of History

California African American Museum, Los Angeles, California

November 1998-January 2002

Lecturer

African American Studies Department, University of California, Irvine, California
Course: *Photography as Social Commentary: Women in the Civil Rights Movement*
April-June 2000

Museum Consultant/Provisional Museum Work
California African American Museum, Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the J. Paul Getty
Museum, Los Angeles, California
August 1997-November 1998

Interim Associate Director, Center for Regional Studies, Archives and Special Collections and
Assistant Professor
Southeastern Louisiana University, Hammond, Louisiana
Courses: *The African American Aesthetic in Louisiana*, Visual Arts Department and *Oral
History Techniques*, Department of History and Government
August 1996-August 1997

Teaching Assistant, Syracuse University Department of African American Studies and the
Maxwell School of Citizenship
Courses: *Sociology of Education* and *Images of Blacks in Art and Film*
August 1994-May 1995

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

American Association of Museums (MAP Assessor, Governance and Public Dimension and
OpenMentoring®, online mentoring program), Arts Council of New Orleans Grant
Reviewer, Association of African American Museums, Institute of Museum and Library
Services Field Reviewer FY-2009, Community Folk Art Center Creative Arts Academy
(Advisory Board Member), Southeastern Museums Conference (Past Board Member) and
Louisiana Association of Museums (Past Board member)

PROFESSIONAL PANELS/PRESENTATIONS

Career Café Idea Lounge Session: *The Formalization of Museum Studies*, American Association
of Museum Conference, May 2009, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Achieving Sustained Development in Africa's Sub-Regions through Excellence in Public Policy
and Management, Civic Participation and Economic Empowerment, Sixth International
Conference on Public Management, Policy and Development, Kampala, Uganda, East Africa,
June 2007

Democratic Networking: Using the Web to Connect Museum Professionals, American
Association of Museum Conference, May 2007, Chicago, Illinois

Solving the Diversity Puzzle for Museum Professionals, *Cooking from Scratch: Alternative
Approaches to Museum Careers*, American Association of Museum Conference, May 2005,
Indianapolis, Indiana

Museum Studies and African American Museums, Association of African American

Museums, June 2004, Durham, North Carolina

Museum Studies in the Southeast, Southeastern Museums Conference, September 2003,
Mobile, Alabama

On-air interview, *Half Past Autumn: The Art of Gordon Parks*, KPFFK Radio, October
2000 On-air interview, *Half Past Autumn: The Art of Gordon Parks*, KPCC Radio,
October 2000 On-air interview, *Half Past Autumn: The Art of Gordon Parks*, KJLH
Radio, October 2000

Paper presentation, *The Power Struggle for Culturally Specific Museums*, University of California
at Los Angeles Leroy Neiman Center for the Study of American Society and Culture "Power in
America: The Big Issues" Annual Conference, May 2000

On-air interview, *Black History is Now*, Street Science with Dominique DiPrima, 92.3 The
Beat, February 2000

Paper presentation, *Hip-Hop Culture: Trend or Treasure?* The Association of African American
Museums Annual Conference Panel: *Land of Funk: African American Contributions to Music*,
Detroit, Michigan, August 1999

Discussant, San Jose Youth and Family Summit, San Jose State University, April 1999

Paper presentation, *Birth of a Notion: Caricature, Black Female Images and Rap Music Video*,
Dallas African American Museum, Dallas, Texas, September 1998

Paper presentation, *Birth of a Notion: Caricature, Black Female Images and Popular Culture*,
Graduate Research Conference in African American Studies, Boston University,
March 1998

Paper presentation, *Birth of a Notion: Caricature, Black Female Images and Rap Music Video
1985-1996*, Different Perspectives on Majority Rules: People of Color in Predominantly
White Institutions Annual Conference. University of Nebraska, Lincoln, April 1997

Panel presentation, *The Importance of Mentorship* Southeastern Louisiana University High
School Leadership Conference, Hammond, Louisiana, November 1996

Lecturer, *African American Culture and Counseling*, Counseling, Family Studies and
Education Leadership, Southeastern Louisiana University, October 1996

Paper presentation, *The Representation of Female Bodies in Rap Music Video*, Beyond Schooling:
The Educational Life of the Syracuse Metropolitan Community Conference, Syracuse University,
May 1996

Panel presentation, *Things You Were Never Told about Graduate School*, Syracuse
University Corporate Access Partnership Program, March 1994

Paper presentation, *Images, Heritage, and Black Identity: The Impact of Comic Art on United States Society, 1865-1965*, Syracuse University Graduate Student Association Annual Bridges Colloquium, March 1994

Keynote address, *The Art of Struggle*, San Jose State University Black History Month Conference, January 1994

Paper presentation, *150 Years of North American Cartooning*, Syracuse University College of Visual and Performing Arts, Annual Departmental Symposium, November 1993

On-air television interview, *Cartoons, Caricatures and Comics/Smithsonian Institution Public Program Series, Coffee with Jeff/Today, WRCT (NBC)*, August 1993

On-air television interview, *Strip Tees: Create Your Own Cartoon Strip on a T-shirt/Smithsonian Institution Public Program Series*, Black Entertainment Television (BET), July 1993

On-air radio interview, *Cartoons, Caricatures and Comics/Smithsonian Institution Public Program Series WPFWI/FM Radio*, July 1993

Lecturer, *150 Years of North American Cartooning*, Arts and Industries Building, Smithsonian Institution, August 1993

Lecturer, *The Developing Role of the African American Art Gallery*, JCL Frame and Art Gallery Black History Month Lecture Series, February 1993

Lecturer, *African American Women and the Politics of Hair*, Syracuse Community Folk Art Gallery, April 1993

Panel presentation, *Los Angeles after the Riots*, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Action Knowledge and Awareness Seminar, December 1992

SCHOLARLY AND PROFESSIONAL PUBLICATIONS

Book review, Barr, Alwyn, *Black Texans: A History of African Americans in Texas 1528-1995*, second edition, University of Oklahoma Press, 1996, pp. 294 pp. *Journal of American Folklore*, fall 1999

Conference paper, *Black Female Images in Rap Music Video*, Different Perspectives on Majority Rules: People of Color in Predominantly White Institutions, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, 1996

Research report, *The Representation of Female Bodies in Rap Music Video*, The Educational Life of a Community: Outcomes of a Metropolitan Study, October 1996

Journal paper, *Images Heritage and Black Identity: The Impact of Comic Art on United States Society, 1865-1965, Bridges*, spring 1994

Exhibition catalog, *A-B-C-D-Education: Black Children and the Pursuit of Knowledge*, June 1994

Exhibition catalog *Akinsanya Kambon: an Artistic View of the Struggle*, February 1994

Exhibition catalog *Africa in a Disordered New World: the United States and the United Nations in Somalia*, December 1994

Essay, *Caricatured Images of Blacks in the United States*, Smithsonian Institution Women's Council Newsletter, fall 1993

Exhibition catalog, *Elton Fax: Tribute to a Master*, May 1993 Exhibitions

BOARD OF DIRECTORS/ADVISORY APPOINTMENTS

Advisory Board Member, Community Folk Arts Academy

Board Member, Southeastern Museums Conference, 2004-2005

Board Member, Deaf Arts Council, Beverly Hills, California, 2002

Los Angeles Junior Chamber of Commerce Scholarship Committee, 2001

Riordan Volunteer Leadership Development Program, 2000

Board Intern, Blind Children's Center, 1999-2000

Advisory Council, YWCA of Greater Los Angeles Racial Justice Symposium, 1999-2000

Advisory Council Member, Lower Mississippi Delta Region Initiatives Legislation Heritage Study, US Department of the Interior, National Park Service, LA

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

Environmental Injustice and the Artist Response to Hurricane Katrina, *40 Days and 40 Nights: Photographs by Donn Young and Saving a Collection: Photographs by Gus Bennett, Jr.*, March 3 through April 21, 2007, Community Folk Art Center/Coalition of Museum and Art Centers, Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York

The Art of Ludner Confident, November 2000 – January 2001, Curator, Black Arts National Diaspora, Inc., New Orleans, LA

Half Past Autumn: The Art of Gordon Parks, October-December 2000
Exhibition Project Manager, California African American Museum

Rhythms of the Soul African Instruments in the Diaspora, October 1999 - June 2000
Associate Curator, California African American Museum, University of California at Los Angeles
Fowler Museum of Culture, Los Angeles County Museum of Art

Elk Fitzgerald, Vocalist, February 1998
Curator, California African American Museum

California African American Museum Trunk Shows
Engineering Change: The World of the African American Inventors, *Shoulder to Shoulder: Women in the Civil Rights Movements* (Virtual Exhibit), *Portrayal of the Black musician in American Art*, Varying dates *Memories of Martin: the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*, Curator/Project Manager

A Tribute to the late Dr. Elton Clay Fax, October 1994

Curator, Langston Hughes Memorial Library/Queens Borough Public Library, Corona, NY

A-B-C-D-Education: Black Children and the Pursuit of Knowledge, September 1994 Curator,
Goldstein Auditorium, Syracuse University

A-B-C-D-Education: Black Children and the Pursuit of Knowledge, June 1994
Curator, Southwest Community Center, Syracuse, NY

A-B-C-D-Education: Black Children and the Pursuit of Knowledge, February 1994
Curator, Syracuse University Alumni Lounge, Syracuse, NY

Shona Stones of Zimbabwe, February 1994
Curator, Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Library/San Jose Public Library, San Jose, CA

Akinsanya Kambon: An Artistic View of the Struggle, February 1994 Curator,
San Jose State University Student Union, San Jose, CA

Africa in a Disordered New World, The United States and the United Nations in Somalia, December
1994, Curator, Minority Student Lounge, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY

I Identify/Yo Identificado, November 1993
Curator, Panasci Lounge, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY

Elton Fax: Tribute to a Master Memorial Exhibition, October 1993 Curator,
Lubin House, Manhattan, NY

Cartoons, Caricatures and Comics, May 1993-October 1993 Curator, Smithsonian Institution
Experimental Gallery, Washington, DC
Elton Fax: Tribute to a Master, May 1993
Curator, Shaffer Art Building Lobby, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY

Student Summer Exhibition, May 1993
Student Curator, Joe and Emily Lowe Art Gallery, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY

MFA Exhibition I, February 1993 and *MFA Exhibition II* March 1993 Student Curator, Joe and
Emily Lowe Art Gallery, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY

Annual Studio Arts Department Exhibition, February 1993
Student Curator, Joe and Emily Lowe Art Gallery, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY

Cartoons, Caricatures and Comics, December 1992
Student Curator, Joe and Emily Lowe Art Gallery, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY
Syracuse University Faculty Exhibition, October 1992
Student Curator, Joe and Emily Lowe Art Gallery, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY

Other Images/Other Realities: Mexican Photography since 1930, September 1992, Student

Curator, Joe and Emily Lowe Art Gallery, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY

A Resonant Vision: Photographs by Manuel Alvarez Bravo, September 1992
Student Curator, Joe and Emily Lowe Art Gallery, Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York

Howard Finster: Man of Vision, September 1992
Student Curator
Joe and Emily Lowe Art Gallery, Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York

SELECTED PUBLIC PROGRAMS

California African American Museum:

The Ties that Bind: Women's Stories on Film, March 9-11, 2001, *Bookmarks in the Pages of Life*, art exhibit by Betye Saar and reading of Zora Neal Hurston short stories read by Alfre Woodard, March 22, 2001

Roundtable Series: Searching for Social, Racial and Ethnic Identity: *Black Cuban, Black American: A Memoir*, selected reading from the memoir of Evelio Grillo, February 3, 2001

Growing Up Black in Nazi Germany: Two Stories with Helene Everly and Hans Massaquoi, February 10, 2001 and *Incognito*, a reading of excerpts from the memoir of Michael Fossberg, February 17, 2001

Memories of Martin exhibit, January 2001, Lecture: The global influence of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., CAAM and KJLH Birthday Party (KJLH air personalities, invited community leaders, birthday cake and Broadcast of speeches) and King Film Series

More than a Snapshot, Lecture, and Panel Presentation, October 14, 2000, *Framing Gordon Parks* Lecture Series, October 15, November 5, and December 15, 2000 and The "Reel" Gordon Parks Film Series, November 17-November 19, 2000

The Collector's Series Presents, the *Usage of Stereotypical Imagery in African American Art*, Sunday, August 6, 2000

Forever Ella, exhibit from the California African American Museum permanent collection and Film screening, hosted by of A&E Television

Morphing into the Millennium, panel presentation on Color and Hollywood, February 2000 and *I May Not Get There with You*, reading and commentary by Dr. Eric Michael Dyson