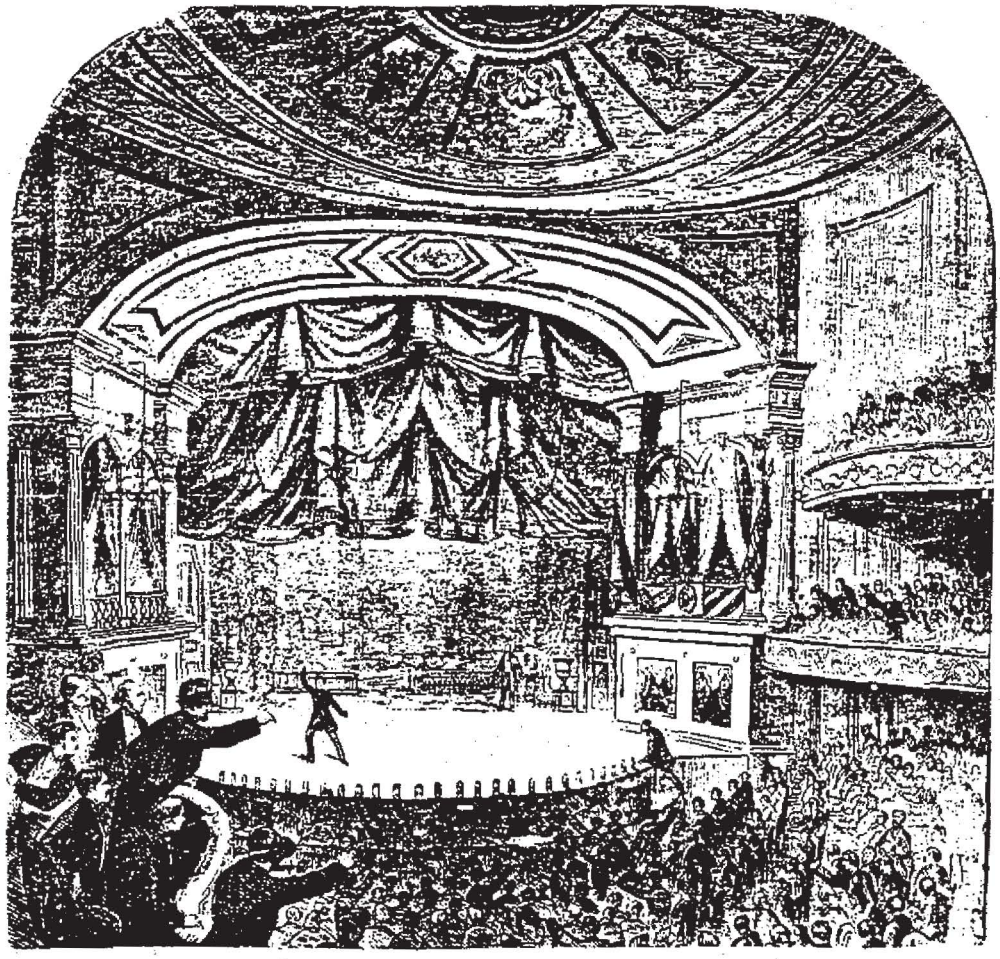
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Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration: Updating Interpretive Practices and Staff Training

The George Washington University Museum Education Program
Ford's Theatre National Historic Site
Friends of Ford's Theatre National Historic Site, Inc.



Report Submitted to United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration: Updating Interpretive Practices and Staff Training

Volume I

The George Washington University Museum Education Program
Ford's Theatre National Historic Site
Friends of Ford's Theatre National Historic Site, Inc.

Report Submitted to United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

by

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Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration: Updating Interpretive Practices and Staff Training

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Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration: Updating Interpretive Practices and Staff Training

Executive Summary

"Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration: Updating Interpretive Practices and Staff Training" was a year-long project drawing on the interest and energy of three partners--The George Washington University Museum Education Program, Ford's Theatre National Historic Site (FTNHS), and Friends of Ford's Theatre, Inc. (Friends). The *Vail Agenda*, a ground-breaking self-study conducted by the National Park Service, was the impetus and inspiration for initiating the project to improve present and future visitor use and enjoyment of this important National Park Service (NPS) site. The collaboration was a response to the call for the NPS to "seek active public and private partners engaged in resource protection, research, education, and visitor enjoyment. . .consistent with the objectives of protecting park values and conveying their meaning to the public." In a model partnership, an academic institution and a volunteer organization joined forces with an NPS site to assure substantial and mutual benefit as they accomplished the following at FTNHS:

- Updating historical exhibits and cultural resources, as well as interpretive materials and public presentations.
- Improving staff training and skills through models and workshops.
- Providing insights into the visitors' experience based on survey, observational, and interview data.

Integrated into GWU Museum Education Program courses spanning three semesters, the project also enriched teaching and learning for graduate students, giving them an invaluable opportunity to translate theory into practice. Students developed and implemented innovative interpretive offerings, participated in and contributed to staff training, and designed and conducted an evaluation study. These efforts exemplified good practice in museum education in the context of a museum setting.

Outcomes

Several recommendations set forth in the *Vail Agenda* materialized in programs for public diversity, integration of research and resource management, and staff training at FTNHS. Highlights include:

- Staff's expanded awareness of current and potential strategies for effective interpretation and training, especially by actively engaging participants or visitors through object-based learning and inquiry.

- Successful collaborations within the NPS (Frederick Douglass NHS) and outside the NPS (local schools, universities, and faculty; local, regional, and national museums and other associations).

- Findings of an on-site visitor study which affect future programming decisions consistent with the *Vail Agenda*.

- Formal training in workshops related to the application of interpretation and evaluation techniques, as well as informal training for using evaluation as a planning, assessment, and reflective process.

- Redefinition of Friends' role as facilitator.

- Reinforcement for faculty and students of the critical role of immersion in day-to-day museum practice.

In addition to assessing the specific contributions to programming, interpretation, and training which were developed during the progress of the collaboration, the partners assessed the strengths and weaknesses of the collaborative process. Most important for the Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration project was the characteristic good will and determination of all parties to broaden the site's educational role in the local community and to enhance training opportunities for staff.

Recommendations

The challenges and strategic objectives set out in the *Vail Agenda* were central to the success of Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration, guiding the development, execution, and assessment of the collaboration. Activities throughout the project period addressed strategic objectives, demonstrating proactive leadership in the following areas: a) outreach to a diverse public through innovative interpretive programs; b) community partnerships and new relationships within the NPS; c) research and evaluation; and, d) workshop and informal training opportunities for developing professional interpretive strategies. Based on this experience, the following recommendations are offered:

1. Ford's Theatre National Historic Site

Additional Visitor Studies

- Conduct further evaluation and testing of the use of collection-based, hands-on interpretive opportunities.

- Build on the observational findings and literature concerning young visitors to develop and test on-site and in-school interpretive strategies.

Outreach

- Establish outreach to the local residents and schools as a priority; make FTNHS a meaningful local as well as national institution.
- Integrate goals for outreach efforts into training, interpretation, and volunteer programs.
- Expand access of all components of the visitor experience to audiences with special needs (e.g., visitors who are hearing impaired).

Staff Training

- Promote partnerships with university-based museum training programs to integrate research and resource management across local and regional NPS and other historic sites.
- Establish on-site training workshops that expand experience of FTNHS, NPS, and other historic site staff with object-based learning and inquiry.
- Provide staff and peer feedback as an essential component of training.

Management

- Draw on cost-effective approaches to training through use of shared training facilities and faculty.
- Incorporate time for problem-solving and discussion of ideas at staff meetings to foster communication among staff.
- Test new programs and conduct visitor studies in off-season months.

2. Friends of Ford's Theatre, Inc.

- Examine ways, in collaboration with FTNHS, to expand a volunteer corps through recruitment; use the volunteer corps in outreach efforts.
- Broaden Friends' role in public and media relations in an effort to address a diverse public as well as to promote fundraising.
- Promote research and resource management by identifying partnerships with NPS and other historic sites, as well as with national, regional, and community organizations and academic institutions.

3. Museum Education Program

- Encourage collaboration and promote the public's education through meaningful interpretation and programming across local NPS historic sites.
- Continue partnerships with museums in research and evaluation as an integral component of theory-based practice and graduate training.

Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration: Updating Interpretive Practices and Staff Training

This report presents the results of the year-long collaboration among The George Washington University Museum Education Program, Ford's Theatre National Historic Site), and Friends of Ford's Theatre, Inc. in the Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration project.

A. Background

The *Vail Agenda*, a ground-breaking self-study conducted by the National Park Service, was the impetus and inspiration for initiating the Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration. The collaboration is a response to the call for the NPS to "seek active public and private partners engaged in resource protection, research, education, and visitor enjoyment. . . consistent with the objectives of protecting park values and conveying their meaning to the public."

The Museum Education Program joined with Friends of Ford's Theatre (Friends) and Ford's Theatre National Historic Site (FTNHS) in a model partnership to improve present and future visitor use and enjoyment of this important National Park Service (NPS) site. Throughout the course of the 1995-96 academic year, these parties collaborated using an interdisciplinary approach to assure substantial and mutual benefit. Academic specialists in historic interpretation, museum audiences, visitor research, communication skills, social studies curriculum development, and material culture contributed their expertise to the following:

> Updating FTNHS's historical exhibits and cultural resources, as well as interpretive materials and public presentations.
>
> Improving staff training and skills through models and workshops.
>
> Providing the FTNHS staff with insights into the visitors' experience based on survey, observational, and interview data.

In addition to drawing on the expertise of these subject area specialists, staff of FTNHS and Friends, the Principal Investigator and Project Director (hereafter referred to as key Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration personnel and listed at the end of this report) were assisted by nine George Washington University (GWU) graduate students. The Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration project was integrated into three courses spanning the academic year and first summer session, thereby enriching teaching and learning for

students in both the MEP and the Museum Studies Program. Seven Museum Education Program and two Museum Studies graduate students were given an invaluable opportunity to translate theory into practice. They developed and implemented innovative interpretive offerings, participated in and contributed to staff training, and designed and conducted an evaluation study. These efforts exemplified good practice in museum education in the context of a museum setting.

The contents of this report include 1) a description of the research and other activities conducted during the project period; 2) an evaluation of these activities; and 3) appendices which provide detailed reports, proposals and other support materials.

B. Chronology of Activities

The description that follows details chronologically the semester by semester activity of students, faculty, FTNHS staff, and Friends. A brief narrative precedes an overview of these activities and specific outcomes of the collaboration.

1. Phase I: Analysis of Current Visitor Programs and Opportunities at Ford's Theatre National Historic Site. Fall Semester 1995.

Six graduate students enrolled in EDUC 223 Museum Audiences, successfully completed course assignments based on analysis of current programming at FTNHS. (See Appendix 1, EDUC 223 Museum Audiences Course Syllabus, Assistant Professor Joanne Hirsch, Project Director). Each course component was designed to build students' understanding of the interplay of the museum's mission and visitorship while addressing the central course requirement: development of programming proposals tailored to FTNHS's mission, audience, collection, and site.

Prior to a formal introduction to the staff and site, the students visited FTNHS individually in an effort to assess the experience of a drop-in visitor from a personal perspective. (See Appendix 2, Museum Experience Analysis, for an example of this assignment.) Then, working as a team and in consultation with staff, the six students identified the audience currently served by the museum as well as potential audiences suggested by mission, local demographics, seasonal visitation, performance schedule at Ford's Theatre, and staffing.

The team of six students used their findings to explore possible explanations for gaps in programming, as well as constraints created by staffing, budget, legal requirements of historic sites, and the physical plant. (See Appendix 3, Site Status Quo Report). Based on their analysis and the feedback from key personnel, the students developed individual proposals targeting specific audiences for short-term, feasible programming. Advice from GWU faculty with expertise in diverse disciplines as well as seminars with museum professionals representing a range of knowledge further contributed to their proposals.

Summaries of the six proposals are provided below. (See Appendix 4, Programming Proposals, for complete proposals.) Each identifies an audience currently underserved by the FTNHS.

- **"FYI"--The Ford's Youth Interpreters Program** proposes programming to train local high school students as volunteer interpreters at FTNHS and in the larger community.

- **Project Perspectives for Ford's Theatre National Historic Site** proposes to survey visitors to gather demographic data and document their perceptions of their experience. Based on in-depth interviews with FTNHS staff, the proposal incorporates staff understandings of a meaningful experience at FTNHS and their desire to find out more about visitors. Specifically, staff acknowledged the need for a mission statement reflecting the educational goals of the museum.

- **Lunchtime with Lincoln** proposes a midday learning series for employees and residents in the neighborhood to enhance their awareness of the opportunities for educational enrichment available at FTNHS.

- **Lincoln Lore: Storytelling Program at Ford's Theatre National Historic Site** proposes programming for family audiences using storytelling as the primary interpretive approach to the FTNHS collection.

- **Recruitment and Training of Volunteers for Ford's Theatre National Historic Site** proposes an expansion of the volunteer program at FTNHS through recruitment and training.

- **Getting the Word Out** proposes a pro-active effort to reach local visitors through the news media, establish a public profile, and expand coverage by maintaining an internal "story bank"--a listing of interesting ideas about FTNHS that can be targeted for journalists when appropriate.

Key FTMC personnel selected two proposals for implementation during the remainder of the grant period. **"FYI"--The Ford's Youth Interpreters Program** was chosen as the central focus of the 1996 spring semester (EDUC 226 Internship and Seminar in Museum Education). **Project Perspectives for Ford's Theatre National Historic Site** was chosen as the central focus of the 1996 first summer session (EDUC 227 Museum Evaluation).

Chart 1 (page 20) presents a chronological summary of FTMC activity during the fall semester.

2. Phase II: Implementation and Development of New Outreach and Interpretive Initiatives. Spring Semester (1996).

One Museum Education Program graduate student was assigned to FTNHS for the spring internship. (The spring internship--the practicum component of EDUC 226--is complemented by a weekly seminar taught by Professor Carol B. Stapp, Principal Investigator. See Appendix 5, EDUC 226 Internship and Seminar in Museum Education Course Syllabus). In consultation with the site manager and Professor Stapp, the intern identified the major tasks to be accomplished during the internship (Appendix 5):

- Lay the groundwork for the youth interpretive program proposed during the fall semester.
- Explore the possibility of implementing an interactive, trunk program in local District of Columbia public schools.
- Conduct preliminary research on building an effective board and volunteer corps.
- Identify key elements of an audience survey.
- Write a grant proposal.

Activities carried out by the intern included the following outreach, research, and staff training initiatives.

(a) **Exploring Outreach Projects:** investigating opportunities for program development with local DC public school specialists and teachers, as well as with GWU faculty with expertise in school-based programming and curriculum. Included in this exploratory phase was a range of age groups and programming possibilities:

- Training junior high and high school youth to be volunteer interpreters
- Developing a hands-on trunk activity program for outreach to elementary school children
- Establishing a debate competition focusing on historic topics for high school students.

During these explorations, the intern became aware of the practical concerns of FTNHS staff and school representatives interested in forming a partnership. These considerations would be central to the decision-making process during the remainder of the internship: the pressures of peak visitation on staff; the need for teacher incentives to participate in any collaboration; and the importance of reaching a young, local audience. Key Ford's

Theatre Model Collaboration project personnel and the intern determined that FTNHS could not commit existing staff to the youth interpretation project as planned. Thus, a distinctive short-term project that modeled and provided training in specific museum education strategies was adopted as the most effective vehicle for achieving the overall Ford's Theatre Model collaboration objective of improving present and future visitor use and enjoyment of FTNHS.

The implemented project--**Memories Take Root: Planting Trees and Preserving the Memory of Two Historic Figures at Bunker Hill Elementary**--served both FTNHS audience and staff by offering outreach to local school children while training FTNHS staff in lesson planning, inquiry, and object-based teaching techniques. Background research included contact with existing school outreach programs at other NPS sites and close cooperation with the partnering school. (See Appendix 6, **Memories Take Root**.)

Memories Take Root was a complex undertaking. The intern melded NPS's interest in the environment, in history, and in education by marrying the planting and care of historic trees to the science and history curriculum of a local elementary school and historic sites. In addition, she facilitated the first collaboration between two local NPS historic sites by drawing educators from the Frederick Douglass NHS in southeast Washington into the two-part program at a northeast Washington elementary school.

The planning and execution of this project provided a model for future outreach programs and a basis for evaluation for FTNHS. A videotape of the classroom lessons conducted by the intern, along with NPS rangers from both sites, and actors depicting Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass was used in the evaluation of the project. (See Appendix 7, **Report on Ford's Theatre "Memories Take Root" Program**.)

(b) <u>Research on Board and Volunteer Corps</u>: review of the literature and consultation with professional associations as well as other museums yielding a bibliography which was submitted to Friends.

(c) <u>Connecting the Mission Statement and Visitor Study</u>: research into staff perspectives on the visitor experience, the Vail Agenda, and an updated educational mission statement on the NPS World Wide Web Page which reinforced the importance of developing a mission statement to reflect site-specific goals. Connections among the FTNHS view of visitors' experience, content of "model" mission statements, and possible objectives of the upcoming visitor study were articulated. (See **Project Perspectives** in Appendix 4 and **Preparation for Visitor Study**, Appendix 8.)

Consultation with the museum evaluation expert and key project personnel helped to identify goals for a visitor study, forming the basis for audience research conducted during the first summer session in EDUC 227.

(d) **Grant Proposal**: development of a grant proposal for funding the production and purchase of audio description narrative tapes, as well as a touch cart with reproductions of objects in the museum's collections, to facilitate more complete cultural access to the site for blind and visually impaired individuals. Enhanced by consultation with accessibility experts in the museum field, the proposal identified two potential grantors--Washington Regional Association of Grantmakers and Eugene B. Casey Foundation. The FTNHS staff's exposure to the *process* of developing a grant proposal provided a model for future efforts. (See Appendix 9, **Audiodescription at Ford's Theatre**.)

Chart 2 (page 21) presents a chronological summary of FTMC activity during the spring semester.

3. Phase III: Evaluation of the Visitor Experience at FTNHS. Summer Session (1996).

Four graduate students enrolled in EDUC 227 Museum Evaluation conducted research on the visitor experience at FTNHS. (See Appendix 10, EDUC 227 Museum Evaluation Course Syllabus, Professor Carol B. Stapp, Principal Investigator, and Museum Evaluation Consultant Randi Korn.) The seeds for this evaluation took root as a result of research in the fall semester on staff perspectives of the visitors' experience. With the guidance and professional expertise of the museum evaluator, FTNHS offered a setting in which students and staff could directly experience the complexities of studying the visitor experience in the museum.

Students and FTNHS staff developed evaluation skills in the process of designing, piloting, and administering a range of evaluation tools. They administered a survey to over 300 visitors; conducted in-depth interviews of eleven visitors; and observed 23 families participating in hands-on activities. Prior to administering the survey, eight rangers on staff and the four graduate students received training from a museum evaluator. Two rangers also participated in the hands-on trunk activity. **Understanding FTNHS Visitors: Demographics, Behaviors, and Preferences** (Appendix 11) details the objectives, methods, findings, and implications of this evaluation effort. Several students continued to be involved in the analysis and presentation of data throughout the summer.

Chart 3 (page 23) presents a chronological summary of FTMC activity during the first summer session.

4. Phase IV: Techniques for Improving the Visitor Experience in a Museum Setting. Summer Session Workshop.

Eighteen MEP graduate students, newly enrolled in their graduate studies, as well as two FTNHS rangers and education staff of the National Building Museum, participated in a two-day, two-part, object-based learning workshop. The workshop provided a model for

developing a museum experience for visitors. (See Appendix 12, **Object-Based Learning Workshop**.) Conducted by the former Assistant Director of the Museum Education Program, it was predicated on the motto, "know one, see one, do one."

During an exemplary object-based lesson, participants were actively engaged in a systematic approach to describing, analyzing, and interpreting a Coca Cola can through the use of inquiry, and then reflecting on the process. The following day, in the National Building Museum, participants applied the previous day's work in a museum setting. The workshops were demonstrated that educational principles are an effective framework for interpretive staff to follow when facilitating museum experiences for others.

Chart 4 (page 24) presents a summary of Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration during the summer of 1996.

C. Discussion

This model collaboration project drew on the energy and interest of three entities--a National Park Service site (FTNHS), a volunteer organization (Friends of Ford's Theatre), and a university (graduate students in the Museum Education Program and Museum Studies Program). GWU faculty participated as well, representing the Museum Education Program, Museum Studies, Teacher Preparation and Special Education, and American Studies. Other NPS sites were partners or resources. Local, regional, and national museums and associations were consulted in the process of conducting research across topics ranging from developing a volunteer corps to marketing strategies, from upgrading site accessibility to initiating an annual debate forum.

The FTNHS and Friends of Ford's Theatre were encouraged that some of the recommendations set forth in the "Vail Agenda" materialized in programs for public diversity, integration of research and resource management, and staff training. Highlights of the Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration project include:

- A successful collaboration with a sister site--NPS Frederick Douglass National Historic Site.

- A pilot outreach program for three classes of fourth-graders at a local public elementary school.

- Necessary groundwork for outreach programs involving elementary, junior high, and high school students.

- A grant proposal for modifying interpretive tools and materials to enhance site accessibility for blind or visually impaired visitors.

- Findings of the visitor study which affect future FTNHS programming decisions consistent with the *Vail Agenda*.

- Models for using evaluation as a planning, assessment, and reflective process for all FTNHS and Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration activities, including:

  A formal evaluation of the visitor experience.

  Self- and professional evaluations of performance of the graduate intern and ranger in the pilot outreach project.

  Participants' evaluations of the object-based learning workshop.

- Informal staff training through models provided by the intern's approach to lesson planning, application of interpretive techniques, and research for identifying potential grantors and developing a grant proposal.

- Formal training for staff in workshops on interpretation and evaluation techniques.

This collaboration also benefited The George Washington University. Participating graduate students gained knowledge from on-site experiences and research related to the range of assignments and projects during the Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration grant period. FTNHS provided the invaluable, "real" context of a museum setting for testing new knowledge and skills. Over an unprecedented three semesters, students

- Witnessed the ways in which complex daily operations pose challenges to translating museum education theory into practice.

- Experienced the impact that the volume of visitors can bring to bear on all decisions--from scheduling staff meetings in shifts to identifying an effective position for an interviewer to choosing a style of interpretation.

- Observed that, primarily due to time constraints, staff had minimal opportunity to meet as a whole group or to discuss broad issues of importance.

- Profited from the insights of staff members, graduate colleagues, and contacts with others in the museum profession, as well as others in community, regional, and national institutions and associations.

- Developed personal working styles while adapting to the work ethic of the site.

- Defined individual roles of team members.

- Attained insights into personal and professional strengths and interests, and identifying areas for future professional development.

D. Evaluation of the Collaborative Process

In July 1996, the Project Director convened a meeting at the university of FTMC representatives from the FTNHS, Museum Education Program, and Friends in an effort to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the collaborative process and its outcomes. Evaluator Randi Korn facilitated the discussion. Those attending were:

FTNHS: Site Manager Suzanne Kelley and Ranger Ricca Sarson
MEP: Graduate Student Selena Connealy (First Summer Session Evaluation Project); Principal Investigator Carol B. Stapp; Project Director Joanne Hirsch

Friends President and the Museum Education Program intern placed at the site during the spring semester were unable to attend. Conversations with both, as well as the intern's evaluations submitted to Professor Stapp as a component of course work for the spring semester (Appendix 13, **Analysis of FTNHS Internship**), provided useful insights. Course evaluations and conversations with students assigned to FTNHS during the fall semester were an additional source of information.

1. Phase I: Current Visitor Programs--Evaluation of Museum Audiences Field Team Experience. The FTNHS team of six graduate students assigned to the site during the fall semester expressed satisfaction with the willingness of staff to share information, participate in interview sessions, and consult with individual students and the team in university-based seminars as well as at the site. Feedback was timely and pragmatic. Students praised the investment in this collaboration by Site Manager Chris Jones--evident in his willingness to provide guidance, information, and insights--and Friends President Gary Crawford's fund of inspiring ideas.

Students were concerned that the energy and interest generated in updating interpretation and training at FTNHS during the proposal development process would be superseded by the overriding staffing and scheduling demands and a focus on the failing physical plant. Such concern was indicative of Museum Education Program students' commitment to the FTNHS's educational goals and visitors, as well as a driving interest in translating museum education theory into practice.

Staff were inspired by the interest and attention FTNHS programs, visitors, and exhibits received. The seminar and museum environments provided both staff and students with opportunities to exchange information, present points of view, and learn from one another.

FTNHS professional staff also found satisfaction in contributing to roundtable discussions with their peers in the National Building Museum and Hillwood Museum. (Two other field teams of students enrolled in EDUC 223 Museum Audiences had been assigned to these museums.)

2. **Phase II: Outreach Initiatives--Evaluation of Internship.** The Museum Education Program intern concentrated energy on developing an outreach program--**Memories Take Root**--that was implemented and evaluated during the spring semester. This outreach program was unique and presented a challenge to FTNHS: the program was conducted off-site at a local school; FTNHS collaborated with rangers from another NPS site; and staff were introduced and expected to utilize new interpretive techniques. The ranger assigned to this project had never worked with children and was uncertain of his ability to respond to children's questions or engage children in any way. The project served as the his introduction to working on a team and collaborating with a colleague from another site.

The challenge was met. Close collaboration of the Museum Education Program intern with the ranger proved mutually beneficial. The intern modeled procedures for planning lessons and using inquiry and object-based instruction. Having tested these newly acquired skills in a school setting during the fall, she passed on her expertise to the ranger with growing confidence and commitment. The site manager commented on the value of this experience for the ranger.

> It was a great growth experience. He had no idea he could work with children. He is now good at working with children, working with another site, and working with another individual. . . .He had the most growth, the most involvement. The whole process (helped him advance). He had to do things that were all new to him and the site.

Videotape of the pre-lessons conducted in the three fourth-grade classes provided a rich resource for evaluative discussion of lesson planning, teaching techniques, and student engagement. It also has potential for the site to use as a training device.

Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration successfully met an equally important challenge by initiating a collaboration with Frederick Douglass NHS, an NPS site with local and national historic relevance to the community. In fact, **Memories Take Root** was itself a microcosm of collaboration from conception through evaluation:

- Integration of history and science curriculum objectives in consultation with school and GWU faculty.

- Collaboration with a sister NPS site.

- Active involvement of school children and teachers.

- Portrayal of Lincoln and Douglass by volunteer and professional actors in period dress.

- Lesson planning and implementation by the Museum Education Program intern and rangers from two NPS historic sites.

- Evaluation of the planning and teaching process.

What long range impact will this successful pilot project have on programming decisions at FTNHS? According to the site manager, it is difficult to schedule any more than two outreach programs a month. Now, however, FTNHS has a model program in place, a ranger with training in and commitment to methods of inquiry and object-based learning, and other rangers eager for similar opportunities. Moreover, the site manager is determined to train a second ranger to carry out the project next year. Further evidence of the substantial impact of Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration is found in the steps already taken to fund the purchase of appropriate period dress for an actor to portray Lincoln.

The site manager indicated that **Memories Take Root** was the most beneficial product of the internship because it involved volunteers, off-site talent, collaboration with a parallel NPS site, and outreach to an underserved audience--local elementary school children.

According to Friends President Gary Crawford, this effort got the two historic sites into the public classroom and community, demonstrated the design of relevant curricular materials, and raised the consciousness level of NPS staff--accomplishments that directly addressed *Vail Agenda* challenges.

3. **Phase III: Evaluation of the Visitor Study Experience.** Students and staff gained a sense of the complexity of conducting a visitor study in a "real" museum setting. They experienced the extraordinary demands on time and energy such research requires. They recognized the critical importance of matching staff concerns and schedules to those of evaluators. They learned to accommodate the needs of researchers to the physical layout, patterns of movement by visitors, and other factors. Some developed skills in unobtrusive observation, administering surveys, or conducting in-depth interviews; some students and staff now feel equipped to conduct a survey, analyze data, and interpret findings with respect to the specific site.

The collaborative effort--of a team of staff and students--was another important and positive component of the evaluation study. Communication, division of labor, responsibility, and dedication figured into the timing and conduct of this extensive effort. Students and staff developed a respect for each other, the process of evaluation, and the

potential outcomes for visitors. Indeed, the research and collaborative training contributed invaluable and practical tools to the professional development of site staff and students.

4. **Phase IV: Improving the Visitor Experience--Evaluation of the Object-Based Learning Workshop.** The workshop on strategies for engaging audiences was mutually beneficial for FTNHS staff and Museum Education Program graduate students. The 1996-97 graduate students were exposed early in the process to the realities of daily operations through contributions of FTNHS rangers during the workshops. They witnessed the enthusiasm of staff for the inquiry and objected-based strategies modeled for them by an experienced museum educator; they confirmed for themselves the value of these active strategies for learners and the participatory approach to designing experiences for any audience.

The rangers' experience in the object lesson was transforming. They had not understood the quality and wealth of information contained in a single object. The richness and value of guiding the audience in the process of creating the object's meaning became clear. The excitement of discovery was evident. Rangers were thinking in new ways: rather than *giving* visitors the information, emphasis was on *asking* visitors to *do* something.

> It made me think more about drawing out what they (visitors) feel about (Lincoln's life mask and hands). . . . Each person will have a different impression of what the hands and face mean to them. It may take doing more research on my part, but it will help me draw things out of people.

Early in the Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration project, the GWU graduate students documented the staff's interest in *providing* an informative and meaningful experience for the visitors. The ranger's comments highlight the transformation in ways of thinking about interpretation. Rather than emphasizing *presentation to* or *giving* the visitor information, there is a shift *to actively engaging* the visitor. This shift is empowering for the interpreter and the visitor.

There is additional evidence of this empowerment. For example, the site manager observed a ranger interacting with family visitors at the hands-on activity table during the visitor study. She noted:

> Before this collaboration (Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration), he would have had visitors line up in a straight line and he would have given instructions to visitors. Now he moves calmly from table to table talking with visitors. Now he is a relaxed, flexible, personable host.

Models appear to have had an impact on future managerial decision-making as well. The site manager's commitment to making object-based learning and inquiry strategies an integral component of rangers' training was strengthened by reports of outreach

programming successes and personal growth of rangers, and observing the impact on the quality of visitors' experience at FTNHS during the visitor study.

E. Lessons Learned from the Collaborative Process

All projects have their weaknesses. This collaboration, while successful in many ways, did encounter a few obstacles and difficulties, some of which were beyond anyone's control. The government furlough during the 95/96 academic year caused problems and frustration for FTNHS. The site manager originally involved in the collaboration transferred to another NPS site midway through the project. Although the Friends president bolstered the model collaboration with his genuine enthusiasm and broad creative thinking, his full time job necessarily took priority on occasion.

Difficulties in coordinating the schedules of the three collaborative partners are not uncommon. More important for Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration were the characteristic good will and determination of all parties to broaden the site's educational role in the local community and to enhance training opportunities for staff. Collaborative efforts take immense energy accompanied by attention to detail while in process; however, the emerging results can be--as in this case--worthy, with implications for future collaborations. Each of the partners benefited.

1. Benefits to Ford's Theatre National Historic Site

Staff expressed appreciation for their expanded awareness of current and potential strategies for effective interpretation and training, especially by actively engaging visitors through object-based learning and inquiry. They were positive about their increased sense of competency from active involvement in the evaluation process and from the results formally documenting characteristics of a quality experience for visitors--from both their own and visitors' perspectives. In addition, staff valued the integration of systematic and reflective feedback on program design, outreach efforts, and effectiveness of teaching strategies.

A continuous focus on diversity--proposals for underserved audiences, targeted outreach to community schools, a proposal for funding enhanced accessibility for visually impaired visitors, and research documenting FTNHS's "missing audience"--encouraged staff in their pursuit of meaningfully activating the goals set out in the *Vail Agenda*.

2. Benefits to Friends of Ford's Theatre, Inc.

Although the outcomes for the other collaborators were more tangible, this partner recognized the potential for involvement of Volunteers in the Park (VIPS) and expanded Friends' membership in substantive, on-site and outreach educational activities. In its role as facilitator, Friends was encouraged that the concepts set out in the "Vail Agenda" took shape in programming for a diverse public, research and evaluation, and resource management through provision of informal and formal staff training in museum education interpretive strategies.

Benefits also accrued to Friends through redefining responsibilities in a continuing partnership with FTNHS: focus and prioritize suggestions for programming; integrate goals for outreach efforts and fundraising; promote research and resource management through partnership with NPS and other historic sites as well as national, regional, and community organizations, and academic institutions; and expand its role in public and media relations.

3. Benefits to Museum Education Program

Museum Education Program faculty found satisfaction in the opportunities the Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration provided to educate graduates in a museum setting that challenged them to develop and test professional tools and systematic approaches to program design and research; structure and guide the individual experience of FTNHS staff with models of programming, interpretation, and research design and implementation; and provoke new ways of thinking, interpreting, and training that empowered FTNHS staff and, ultimately, the visitor.

Furthermore, the Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration experience reinforced for faculty and students the critical role that immersion in day-to-day museum practice plays in graduate studies. Feasibility in terms of cost-effectiveness, Ford's Theatre performance schedule, staff assignment, and demands of seasonal visitorship provided the balance to theoretical and abstract concepts broached in the classroom.

F. Implications for Future Collaborations

The Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration was folded into the regular sequence of core courses that each cohort of Museum Education Program degree candidates pursues every year. Thus, over academic year 95/96, FTNHS was one of the twenty museums with which the 17 Museum Education Program students become familiar through partnerships and internships. During the Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration, students--as part of the Museum Education Program's overarching learning objectives--were engaged in identifying similarities and differences in the challenges facing museums of varying sizes, sources of support, disciplines, visitorship, and commitment. FTNHS was key to their understanding. The site is part of a large Federal bureaucracy committed to exploring an active role in national public education, as the *Vail Agenda* attests. Yet, opportunities for collaboration within its own region and with other nearby historic sites are missed. The cooperation between two NPS historic sites during the FTMC demonstrated the potential for future collaborations in outreach programming and suggested possibilities for training and the expanded role of volunteers.

The site manager observed that "the expanded skills of staff and new ways of doing things" are added motivation for providing more in-depth training. The current interpretive skill training provided by the NPS does not address the full range of methods of interpretation. Results of the visitor study and rangers' experience with new

interpretive approaches learned during the Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration project, will be used to promote FTNHS as a regional interpretive training site for NPS rangers in the region.

The proposed designation of FTNHS as a training center suggests continuing opportunities for conducting NPS staff workshops in object-based learning and inquiry as well as audience research techniques. An ongoing commitment to community outreach to include the underserved local audience should be a component of future training and interpretation efforts. At the same time, such a focus addresses the public education goals of the NPS as a whole.

G. Recommendations

The challenges and strategic objectives set out in the *Vail Agenda* were central to the success of Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration, guiding the development, execution, and assessment of the collaboration. Activities throughout the project period addressed strategic objectives, demonstrating proactive leadership in the following areas: reaching a diverse public through innovative interpretive programs, community partnerships and new relationships within the NPS, research and evaluation, and workshop and informal training opportunities for developing professional interpretive strategies. Based on this experience, the following recommendations are offered:

1. **Additional Visitor Studies**

   - Conduct a visitor study to learn more about young visitors to FTNHS.

   - Conduct further evaluation and testing of the use of collection-based, hands-on interpretive opportunities.

   - Build on the observational findings and literature concerning young visitors to develop and test on-site and in-school interpretive strategies appropriate for this large audience group.

   - Test ways of compensating for the diminished quality of the visitors' experience when viewing Ford's Theatre without a ranger's presentation, e.g., offer hands-on activities.

   - Disseminate description of methods and findings to other historic and NPS sites.

2. **Outreach**

   - Establish outreach to the local residents and schools as a priority; make

FTNHS a meaningful local as well as national institution.

- Build on contacts and collaborations established during the Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration to develop outreach programming and identify new community partners.

- Integrate goals for outreach efforts into training, interpretation, and volunteer programs.

- Expand access of all components of the visitor experience at FTNHS to audiences with special needs (e.g., visitors who are hearing impaired).

- Disseminate results of outreach efforts to other NPS and historic sites.

3. **Staff Training**

- Promote partnerships with university-based museum training programs to integrate research and resource management across local and regional NPS and other historic sites.

- Establish on-site training workshops that expand experience of FTNHS, NPS, and other historic site staff with object-based learning and inquiry.

- Provide opportunities for application and evaluation of these strategies.

- Provide professional and peer feedback as a standard component of training.

- Disseminate description of training workshops efforts to other NPS and historic sites.

4. **Management**

- Draw on cost-effective approaches to training through use of shared training facilities and faculty.

- Incorporate time for problem-solving and discussion of ideas at staff meetings to foster communication among staff.

- Test new programs and conduct further visitor studies in off-season months.

5. **Friends**

- Prioritize suggested programming proposals in keeping with the *Vail Agenda*: emphasize outreach to a diverse public, accessibility of interpretive programming to special needs audiences.

- Examine ways, in collaboration with FTNHS, in which a volunteer corps can be expanded through recruitment and the enthusiasm and talent of volunteers used effectively in outreach efforts.

- Broaden Friends' role in public and media relations in an effort to address a diverse public as well as to promote fundraising.

- Promote research and resource management by identifying partnerships with NPS and other historic sites as well as national, regional, and community organizations, and academic institutions.

6. **Museum Education Program**

- Encourage collaboration and promote the public's education through meaningful interpretation and programming across local NPS historic sites.

- Initiate training through workshops early in the grant period in future collaborations to demonstrate strength of methods favored by museum education professionals and arouse interest of staff at the outset.

- Continue partnerships with museums in research and evaluation as an integral component of theory-based professional practice and graduate training.

- In any future partnership with FTNHS and Friends, formalize the role of the grassroots organization to benefit all partners.

- Provide for increased administrative support in commitment to research of this breadth.

Key Personnel

The George Washington University Museum Education Program

Carol B. Stapp, Ph.D., Principal Investigator
Director
The George Washington University Museum Education Program

Joanne S. Hirsch, Ph.D., Project Director
Adjunct Professor
The George Washington University Museum Education Program

Ford's Theatre National Historic Site

Chris Jones
Site Manager

Suzanne Kelley
Site Manager

Joe Hood
Ranger

Jeff Leary
Ranger

Ricca Sarson
Ranger

Marshall Kessler
Curator

Mike Maione
Historian

Friends of Ford's Theatre, Inc.

Gary Crawford
President

Jared Cohen
Vice President - Development

John Odell
Vice President - Curator

Consultants

The George Washington University

Bernard Mergen, Ph.D.
Professor of American Civilization

Kathleen Steeves, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Secondary Education

Randi Korn and Associates

Randi Korn, Principal
Museum Evaluator

Wendy Calvert
Museum Evaluator

Museum Education Consultant

Judith Landau

Graduate Students

Museum Education Program

Lauren Brownstein

Selena Connealy

Liz Cook

Mia Llarena

Mary Beth McCormack

Wendy Sears

Abbi Wicklein-Bayne

Museum Studies Program

Hsiu-Hsien Lin

Niki Sandoval

Chart 1. Fall Semester 1995: Chronology of Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration (FTMC) Project Activity

Number of Students
5 Museum Education Program
1 Museum Studies

Other Participants	*Activities*	*Products*
Key FTMC Personnel	**Museum Experience Analysis** Assess FTNHS experience from personal point of view (experiential analysis)	**Museum Experience Analysis** Analysis of the intellectual, physical, emotional, and social components of the visit
GWU Professor of American Studies, Bernard Mergen, Ph.D.	Identify current programming at FTNHS	
Museum Audience seminars and workshops involving museum professionals at the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution Accessibility Program, Sackler/Freer Galleries, National Building Museum, Hillwood Museum, Valentine Museum	**Site Status Quo Report** Analyze mission, physical limitations, historic site restrictions, visitorship, demographics, constraints posed by Ford's Theatre performance schedule, etc.	**Site Status Quo Report** including description of programming for current visitors; constraints on programming; and identification of underserved audiences
Museum Evaluator, Randi Korn	**Programming Proposals** Identify potential underserved audience	**6 Programming Proposals** for a range of audiences to
	Conduct background research for developing programming proposal	1) train local high school students as youth interpreters
	Conduct interviews with target audience	2) conduct a visitor study
		3) offer a lunchtime educational series for local residents and employees
		4) use storytelling to interpret FTNHS for families
		5) recruit and train volunteers
		6) develop a "story bank" for journalists

Chart 2. Spring Semester 1996: Chronology of Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration (FTMC) Project Activity

Number of Students
1 Museum Education Program

Other Participants	Activities	Products
Outreach Programs Key FTMC personnel NPS staff working with youth volunteers	**Outreach Programs** Develop background information for future programming:	**Outreach Programs**
DC Public Schools communications and curriculum coordinators		
Volunteer Coordinator, Martin Luther King Public Library	**FYI** Build on "FYI Youth Interpreters Program" proposed in fall	Record of research, contacts
GWU Professor of Secondary Education, Kathleen Steeves, Ph.D.	Identify existing youth interpretive programs, as well as characteristics of successes and problems	
Outreach Trunk Activity NPS Fort Ward Museum and Harpers Ferry staff re hands-on outreach and school programs	**Outreach Trunk Activity** Conduct research on interactive trunk programs in other museum and NPS sites for future use in local public schools	**Outreach Trunk Activity** Record of research; identification of objects for use in the visitor research in EDUC 227 Museum Evaluation
Memories Take Root Bunker Hill Elementary School (DC) children, faculty, science coordinator, and principal Staff of Frederick Douglass National Historic Site	**Memories Take Root** Develop and implement outreach program to model museum education techniques for staff (object-based teaching and learning; inquiry)	**Memories Take Root** outreach project with three classes of 4th graders; lesson plans; videotape of lessons for use in training and evaluation
GWU Professor Kathleen Steeves (curriculum) Judith Landau, Museum Education Consultant	Evaluate **Memories Take Root**	**Memories Take Root** **Report of evaluation** (Judith Landau)

Chart 2. (continued)

Other Participants	Activities	Products
Outreach Programs Key FTMC personnel FTNHS historian and staff Faculty and students at School Without Walls, DC Public High School Representatives of GWU and Georgetown University debate team Debate organizations	**Outreach Programs** **Historic Debate Forum** Conduct background research and consultation for establishing a historic debate forum Identify potential collaborators (schools, students, mentors) Observe high school debate	**Outreach Programs** **Historic Debate Forum:** Agenda and notes of meeting; record of contacts and research Agenda for meeting with teachers, FTNHS site manager and historian
Grant Proposal Key FTMC personnel Accessibility experts at NPS Paul Revere House, (Boston), National Building Museum, National Air and Space Museum, American Foundation of the Blind, American Council of the Blind, Inc., and American Federation of the Blind Katharine Bond, Accessibility Consultant	**Grant Proposal** Conduct research for and write a grant proposal to produce and purchase audio description narrative tapes, a touch cart with reproductions of objects in FTNHS collection Identify funding sources	**Grant Proposal** **"Audiodescription at Ford's Theatre"** for submission to two grantors: Eugene B. Casey Foundation and the Washington Regional Association of Grantmakers
Mission Statements FTNHS staff and contacts with other museum sites	**Mission Statements** Review survey of staff perspectives of visitor experience, mission statements from other sites, and the Vail Agenda World Wide Web Home Page	**Mission Statements** Mission statements from research sources
Preparation for Visitor Study Key FTMC personnel Randi Korn, Evaluation Consultant	**Preparation for Visitor Study** Review findings of staff survey, identify topics for inclusion in visitor study during the first summer session, and prepare agenda for meeting of Key Personnel.	**Preparation for Visitor Study** Agenda for meeting; list of survey questions submitted by site manager to consultant

Chart 3. Summer Session 1996: Chronology of Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration (FTMC) Project Activity

Number of Students
3 Museum Education Program
1 Museum Studies

Other Participants	Activities	Products
Visitor Study Key FTMC personnel Randi Korn, Wendy Calvert, Evaluation Consultants FTNHS staff (8 rangers) GWU statistical consultant Visitors to FTNHS	***Visitor Study*** Observe visitors at FTNHS to familiarize students with site and to provide background for developing research tools Develop research tools: protocol for observation of hands-on activity, survey questionnaire, and in-depth interview protocol. Participate in training Conduct research and analyze data	***Report of Visitor Study***, including findings and recommendations based on the survey, observation study, and interviews

Chart 4. Summer 1996 Workshop: Chronology of Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration (FTMC) Project Activity

Number of Students
18 Museum Education Program

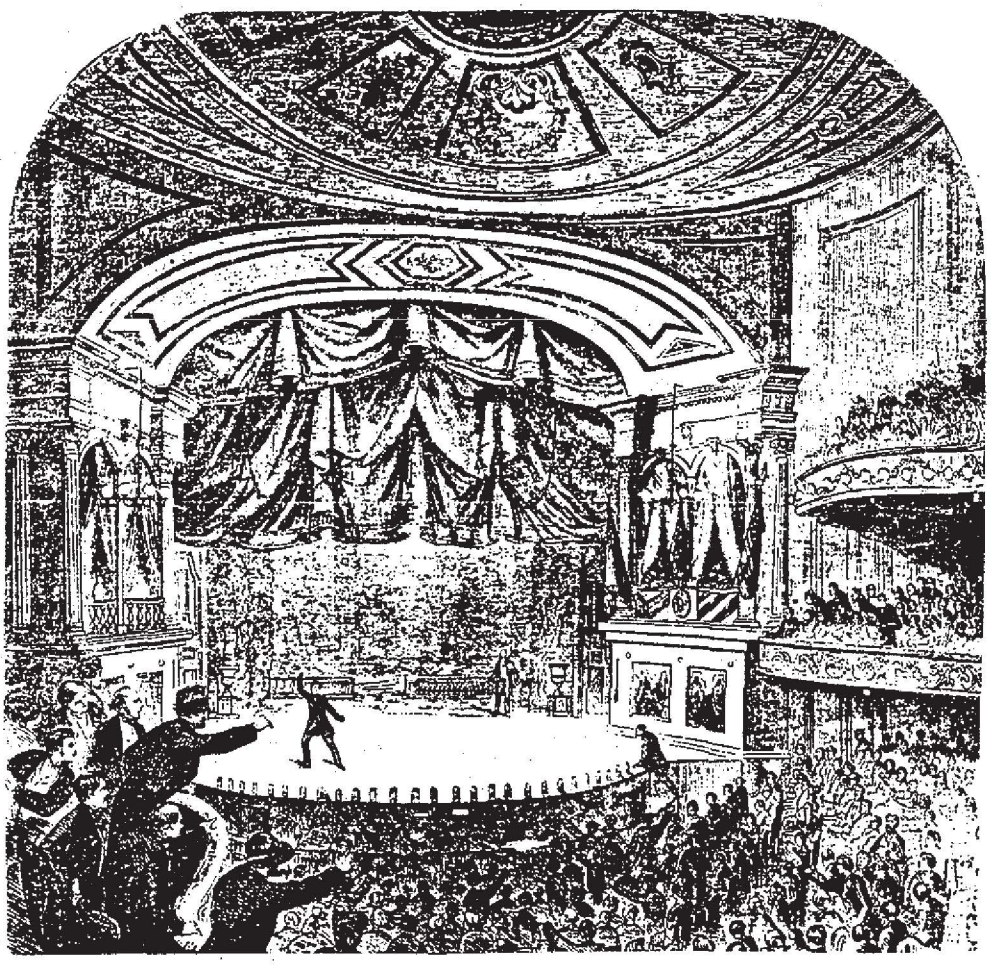
Other Participants	Activities	Products
Object-based Learning Workshop FTNHS rangers (2) National Building Museum Education Staff Principal Investigator Project Director Judith Landau, Consultant	**Object-based Learning Workshop** Actively participate in object-based, inquiry-driven lesson in seminar setting Transfer of lesson to workshop at museum site (National Building Museum)	**Object-based Learning Workshop** Materials distributed to students Lesson plan and narrative of consultant

804/D-6
Appendices

Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration: Updating Interpretive Practices and Staff Training

Volume II: Appendices

The George Washington University Museum Education Program
Ford's Theatre National Historic Site
Friends of Ford's Theatre National Historic Site, Inc.



Report Submitted to United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration: Updating Interpretive Practices and Staff Training

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Appendix 6. Memories Take Root

Appendix 7. Report on Ford's Theatre "Memories Take Root" Program

Appendix 8. Preparation for Visitor Study

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Appendix 11. Understanding Ford's Theatre National Historic Site Visitors: Demographics, Behaviors, and Preferences

Appendix 12. Object-Based Learning Workshop

Appendix 1

EDUC 223 Museum Audiences
Course Syllabus

Museum Education Program
George Washington University

Hirsch
Fall 1995

Education 223: Museum Audiences
COURSE OUTLINE

Objectives:

On successfully completing this course, students will be able to:

* Develop programming proposals tailored to a specific audience, collection, and museum.

  Cite the characteristics of various museum audience groups with regard to implications for effective programming.

  Cite the characteristics of various museums and their settings with regard to implications for effective programming.

* Clarify understanding of the value of independent and collaborative efforts in developing programming.

Texts:

See Required Reading

Syllabus: (See pp. 2-3)

Requirements and Evaluation:

Regular class attendance and participation in the seminar are expected.

1. Readings/Annotation of Readings	10%
2. Museum Experience Analysis and Report	10%
3. Field Team Site Status Quo Presentation and Written Report	15%
4. Summaries of Research	15%
5. Interview Protocol/Summary	15%
6. Final Report	30%
7. Portfolio Materials	5%

Students must request prior approval from faculty for any modifications in fulfilling requirements (seminar attendance, punctuality of assignments, etc.) in order to prevent academic penalty. Flexibility will be exercised within the parameters of University standards, in accord with faculty discretion.

Museum Education Program
George Washington University

Hirsch
Fall 1995

Education 223: Museum Audiences
SYLLABUS

Aug. 29 — Introduction to Museum Audiences
Review pre-assignment: Museums--Missions and Audiences
Preview Museum Audience Experience
Due: Pre-assignment

Sept. 5
GSED
1:30 — Program Development Workshop
Panelists: Elizabeth Bredin (Director of Public Programs, The Hillwood Museum)
Chris Jones (Site Manager, Ford's Theatre National Historic Site)
Anna Slafer (Curator of Education, The National Building Museum)
Due: Readings

Sept. 12
GSED
1:30 — Multiple Contexts of Museum Audience Experience: Analyzing Your Perspective; Finding Out That of Others
Workshop: Developing interview skills and protocols with Randi Korn, Evaluator
Due: Museum Experience Report (Hillwood Museum); Readings

Sept.19 — Programming for Museum Audiences
Site Status Quo Presentation
Due: Site Status Quo Report (Oral); Readings

Sept. 26
GSED
1:30 — Programming for Diversity
Panelists: Susan Badder (Curator of Education, Corcoran Gallery of Art)
Steven Newsome (Director, The Anacostia Museum and the Center for African American History and Culture, Smithsonian Institution)
Due: Readings; Site Status Quo Report (Written)

*Oct. 2*** — *"Conflict Resolution" A Program Sponsored by the Museum Education Roundtable, American Institute of Architecture, 3:00 - 5:00 PM*

Oct. 3
1:30 — Programming for Accessibility
Site Visit: Sackler Gallery
Presenters: Jan Majewski (Accessibility Coordinator, Smithsonian Institution Accessibility Program) and Sarah Ridley (Assistant Head of Education, The Freer and Sackler Galleries)
Due: Readings

Oct. 10
1:30 — Programming That's Interactive: Developing Hands-On Exhibits
Site Visit: American Psychology Association (APA)
Gretchen M. Jennings (Director, Traveling Psychology Exhibition, APA) and Kristen Dill (Education/Exhibitions Specialist, Traveling Psychology Exhibition)
Due: Readings

Oct. 17
GSED
1:30 — Programming for Adult/Child (Family) Audiences
Speaker: Karen Luetjen (Chair, Museum Education Roundtable; formerly, Deputy Director of the Valentine Museum, Richmond, VA)
Due: Readings

Oct. 24
GSED
1:30

Programming Proposals: Open and Small Group Discussion
Due: Tentative proposals in outline form--to exchange in class--and relevant review of audience research literature; samples of proposals

Oct. 25 - 31 Schedule Conferences
Due: Program proposal summary; record of audience research or completed annotations of independent audience research

Nov. 7
1:30

Programming for Volunteers
Site Visit: The Corcoran Gallery of Art
Barbara Matteo (Associate Curator of Education, The Corcoran Gallery of Art)
Due: Readings

*Nov. 10*** *Institute of Museum Services Program on Museum/School Collaboration*

Nov. 14

Programming for "Friends" Organizations and Museum Boards
TBA
Due: Readings; research summaries; interview summary

*Nov. 17*** *"A Day Off for Ideas: A Workshop on Creative Thinking"*
A Program Sponsored by the GWU Graduate Programs in Museum Education and Museum Studies, Museum Education Roundtable (MER), and National Association of Museum Exhibition (NAME) at The Maryland Science Center, Baltimore MD, 10:00 AM - 5:00 PM. (Special student rates)

Nov. 21

Research Day/Site Consultations

Nov.23

Thanksgiving

Nov. 27

9:00 AM: PROGRAMMING PROPOSALS (1 to 2 page summary) DUE FOR REVIEW BY SITE REPRESENTATIVE AND HIRSCH

Nov. 28
GSED
1:30

Informal Professional Evaluation of Programming Proposal Summary
Review Panel: Elizabeth Bredin (Hillwood Museum)
Chris Jones (The Ford's Theatre)
Anna Slafer (National Building Museum)
Due: 6 Copies of Programming Proposal

Dec. 5
GSED
1:30

Informal Peer Evaluation of Programming Proposal
Course Evaluation
Due: Draft of Final Programming Proposal

Dec. 12

NO CLASS
Due: Final Proposal (2 copies) with copy of letter of thanks to site

** attendance recommended

Museum Education Program
George Washington University

Hirsch
Fall 1995

REQUIRED READINGS

8/29 Pre-assignment

Graburn, Nelson. "The Museum and the Visitor Experience." In *The Visitor and the Museum*, ed. Linda Draper, 5-26. Berkeley, CA: Lowie Museum of Anthropology, 1977.

Kinard, John. "The Visitor Versus the Museums." In *The Visitor and the Museum*, ed. Linda Draper, 43-44. Berkeley, CA: Lowie Museum of Anthropology, 1977.

9/5 Program Development Workshop

Blackmon, Carolyn, Teresa LeMaster, Lisa Roberts, and Beverly Serrell. "The Focus on Audience." In *Open Conversations: Strategies for Professional Development in Museums*, 39-63. Chicago: Field Museum of Natural History, 1988.

Gurian, Elaine Heumann. "Noodling Around with Exhibition Opportunities." *In Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*, ed. Ivan Karp, Christine Mullen Kreamer, and Steven D. Lavine. (178-188). Washington, DC: SI Press, 1991.

Weil, Stephen E. "Creampuffs and "Hardball." *Museum News* (Sept/Oct 1994): 42-43 [60].

9/12 Multiple Contexts of Museum Audience Experience: Analyzing Your Perspective; Finding Out That of Others

Falk, John H. and Lynn D. Dierking. *The Museum Experience*, 1-7 and 41-93. Washington, DC: Whaleback Books, 1992.

Munley, Mary Ellen. "Asking the Right Questions: Evaluation and the Museum Mission." *Museum News, 64*, 3 (February 1986).

Payne, Stanley. *The Art of Asking Questions*, 322-45. Princeton: Princeton U. Press: 1979.

Sommer, R. and B. Sommer. *A Practical Guide to Behavioral Research: Tools and Techniques*. New York: Oxford University Press (1980).

Walker, Alice. "Everyday Use." In *In Love and Trouble*, 47-59. Orlando, FL: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1967.

9/19 Programming for Museum Audiences

(See 9/5 Reading)

9/26 Programming for Diversity

Brown, Claudine K. "The Museum's Role in a Multicultural Society." In *Patterns in Practice*, 3-8. Washington, DC: Museum Education Roundtable, 1992.

Duitz, Mindy. "The Soul of a Museum: Commitment to the Community at the Brooklyn Children's Museum." In *Museums and Communities: The Politics of Public Culture*, ed. Ivan Karp, C. M. Kreamer, and S. D. Lavine. 242-261. Wash DC: SI Press, 1992.

Museums in the Life of a City. Washington, DC: American Association of Museums, 1992.

Smithsonian Institution Task Force on Latino Issues. *Willful Neglect: The Smithsonian Institution and U.S. Latinos*. Introductory pages - page 11, 46-53.

Takaki, Ronald. "A Different Mirror." In *A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America*, 1-17. Boston, MA: Little, Brown & Co., 1993.

(Additional readings of interest in: *Different Voices: A Social, Cultural, and Historical Framework for Change in the American Art Museum*, ed. Michaelyn Mitchell. New York, NY: Association of Art Museum Directors, 1992.)

Williams, Arlene. "Museums in Crisis," *American Visions*, (February 1992): 22-25.

Anacostia Packet.

10/3 Programming for Accessibility

Majewski, Janice. *Part of Your General Public is Disabled.* Washington, DC: SI Press, 1987.

Shapiro, Joseph P. *No Pity,* 3-11. New York: Random House, 1993.

Solomon, Andrew. "Defiantly Deaf." *New York Times Magazine* (August 28, 1994): 38. [38-45, 62, 65-68].

Packet of Related Materials

10/10 Programming That's Interactive: Developing Hands-On Exhibits

Feher, Elsa. "Learning Science with Interactive Exhibits." Comments on article previously published in *Curator, 36,* 4 (1993): 246-7.

Friends of the National Arboretum. Proposal for Funding of the "Discovery Cart" Program at the U.S. National Arboretum.

Marsh, Caryl. "The Discovery Room: How It All Began." *Journal of Museum Education, 12,* 2 (1987): 3-5, [13].

Psychological Science Agenda. "From the Laboratory to the Museum: The Transformation of Psychological Research into a Museum Exhibit." (January/February 1992): 13.

_____. "Take a Closer Look. . . . (March/April 1992): 15.

White, Judith. "What Research Says About Learning in Science Museums: What Have We Discovered about Discovery Rooms"? *ASTC Newsletter,* (May/June 1989): 7-8.

Psychology Exhibit Packet.

10/17 Programming for Adult/Child (Families)

Falk, John H. and Lynn D. Dierking. *The Museum Experience,* 42-49 (Review). Washington, DC: Whaleback Books, 1992.

Hood, Marilyn. "Leisure Criteria of Family Participation and Nonparticipation in Museums," *Marriage and Family Review 13,* 3/4 (1989): 151-169.

Kropf, Marcia Brumit. "The Family Museum Experience: A Review of the Literature."*Patterns in Practice,* 222-229. Wash, DC: Museum Education Roundtable, 1992.

Also see Museum Education Roundtable. *Journal of Museum Education 14,* 2 (Spring/ Summer 1989). Special issue on the family museum experience: 3-17.

10/24 Programming Proposals: Open and Small Group Discussion

Review: Friends of the National Arboretum. Proposal for Funding of the "Discovery Cart" Program at the U.S. National Arboretum. (See 10/10 reading)

11/7 Programming for Volunteers

Baldwin, Luke, Sharlene Cochrane, Constance Counts, Joan Dolamore, Martha McKenna, and Barbara Vacarr. "Passionate and Purposeful: Adult Learning Communities," *Patterns in Practice,* 162-167. Washington, DC: Museum Education Roundtable, 1992.

Gélles, Bonnie Pitman. "Volunteers in Museums," *Museums, Magic and Children,* 131-141. Washington, DC: Association of Science-Technology Centers, 1981.

Grinder, Alison L. and E. Sue McCoy. *The Good Guide: A Sourcebook for Interpreters, Docents and Tour Guides,* vii-ix, 3-10. Scottsdale, AZ: Ironwood Publishing, 1985.

Hensel, Karen A. and Merryl Kafka. "Student Interpreters: Narrowing the Gap between Visitor and Exhibit,"

Hiemstra, Roger. "The State of the Art," Selected reprints from *Museums, Adults, and the Humanities: A Guide for Educational Programming," 38-49.* Washington, DC: AAM, 1993

Sharpe, Elizabeth M. "Education Programs for Older Adults," *Patterns in Practice,* 262-267; followed by case studies, 268-275. Wash, DC: Museum Education Roundtable, 1992.

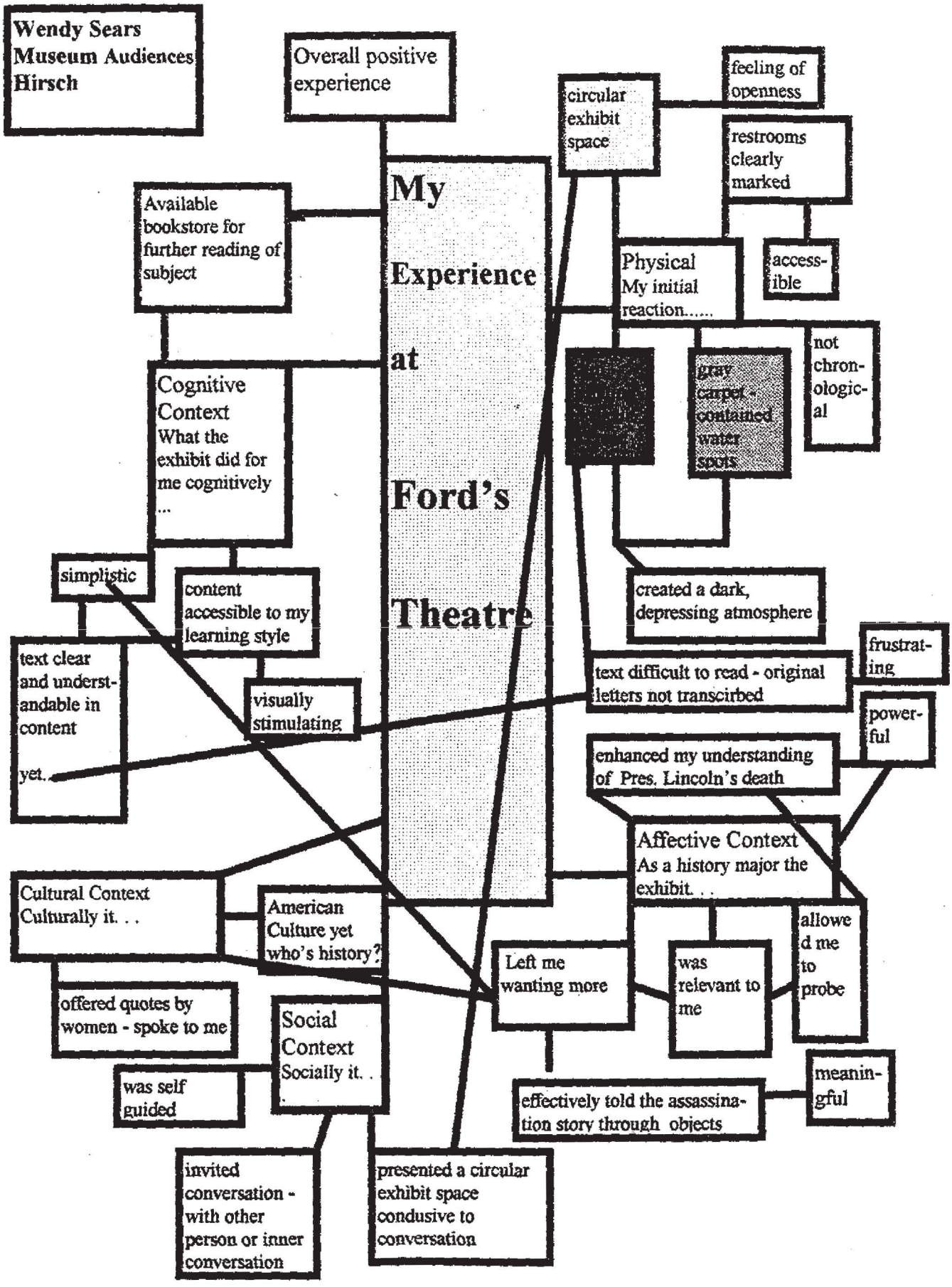
Also see Roundtable Reports: *The Journal of Museum Education 9,* 4 (Fall 1984) Special issue on museums and older adults.

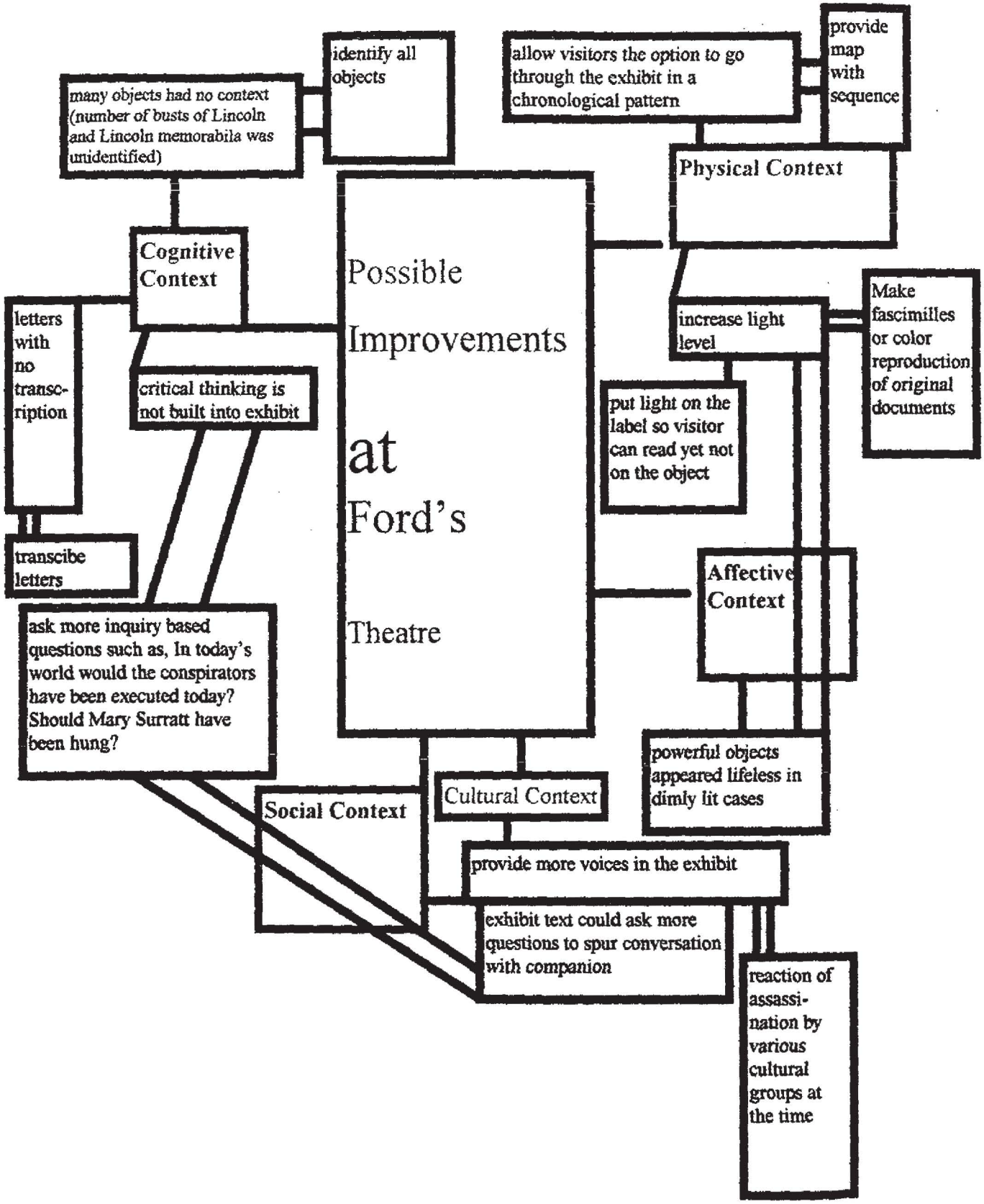
11/14 Programming for "Friends" Organizations and Museum Boards

Readings to be announced and distributed

Appendix 2

Museum Experience Analysis


Wendy Sears
Museum Audiences
Hirsch
Overall positive experience
My Experience at Ford's Theatre
Available bookstore for further reading of subject
Cognitive Context
What the exhibit did for me cognitively ...
simplistic
content accessible to my learning style
text clear and understandable in content yet.
visually stimulating
Cultural Context
Culturally it. . .
American Culture yet who's history?
offered quotes by women - spoke to me
Social Context
Socially it. .
was self guided
invited conversation - with other person or inner conversation
presented a circular exhibit space condusive to conversation
circular exhibit space
feeling of openness
restrooms clearly marked
Physical
My initial reaction.....
access-ible
not chron-ologic-al
gray carpet - contained water spots
created a dark, depressing atmosphere
text difficult to read - original letters not transcirbed
frustrat-ing
power-ful
enhanced my understanding of Pres. Lincoln's death
Affective Context
As a history major the exhibit. . .
Left me wanting more
was relevant to me
allowe d me to probe
effectively told the assassination story through objects
meanin-gful


Possible
Improvements
at
Ford's
Theatre
identify all objects
many objects had no context (number of busts of Lincoln and Lincoln memorabila was unidentified)
allow visitors the option to go through the exhibit in a chronological pattern
provide map with sequence
Physical Context
Cognitive Context
letters with no transc-ription
critical thinking is not built into exhibit
transcibe letters
ask more inquiry based questions such as, In today's world would the conspirators have been executed today? Should Mary Surratt have been hung?
increase light level
Make fascimilles or color reproduction of original documents
put light on the label so visitor can read yet not on the object
Affective Context
powerful objects appeared lifeless in dimly lit cases
Social Context
Cultural Context
provide more voices in the exhibit
exhibit text could ask more questions to spur conversation with companion
reaction of assassi-nation by various cultural groups at the time

Appendix 3

Site Status Quo Report

STATUS QUO REPORT
AND
RECOMMENDATIONS:

FORD'S THEATRE
NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Submitted by :
Ford's Theatre Group
Museum Education Program
The George Washington University
September 26, 1995

Introduction

The following report is based on interviews and research pertaining to the Ford's Theatre National Historic Site (FTNHS) and its surrounding community. The purpose of this document is two fold:

- To examine past and present efforts in terms of audience outreach and programming.
- To recommend ways to expand the audience base.

Except when noted, information found in this document comes by way of interviews conducted with the staff of the FTNHS in September 1995 by me and my colleagues in The George Washington University Museum Education Program.

The report is presented in the following manner:

- Summary of Current Status
- Organizational Goals
- Analysis and Recommendations

If there are any questions or comments regarding any part of this document, please feel free to contact me at 202/237-8019 or through e-mail at miaatgw@gwis2.circ.gwu.edu.

Thank you

Sincerely,

Mia Llarena
M.A.T. Candidate
Museum Education Program
The George Washington University

Summary of Current State

Mission:

Ford's Theatre National Historic Site (FTNHS) officially operates under the mission of The National Park Service (NPS) Federal Organic Act of 1916 which states, " (Properties of the NPS) are to conserve the scenery and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such a manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations." In terms of the FTNHS, the Organic Act translates to telling the story of the Lincoln Assassination and the circumstances surrounding the event, along with the preservation of the site's collection.

Audience:

While no formal visitor study has been conducted at the FTNHS, staff " head counts " estimate visitation at 10,000 people per day. In 1994 approximately 1,290,000 patrons visited the FTNHS with this years number thus far exceeding last year by 11%. The FTNHS' client base consists of mainly school groups and tourists, the majority of who hails from outside the DC area.

Programming:

For the most part, programming revolves around the permanent collection which pertains to the events surrounding the Lincoln assassination. Interpretive programs consist of orientation/ gallery talks conducted by the Park Service personnel, many of whom hold degrees in History, Art History, and Anthropology. Gallery talks are independently researched and thus vary according to the Ranger's area of interest or expertise. Barring production rehearsals, gallery talks are usually held in the theatre house.

Efforts are made to accommodate audiences with special needs. American Sign Language tours are available with advance notice and guide rails were recently installed in the various stairwells. Because structural problems prohibit 100% wheelchair accessibility, park personnel take extra steps to assist wheel chair bound patrons as much as possible.

For foreign visitors, brochures are printed in 13 languages and at the present time, FTNHS has one staff member proficient in a French. Most international tour groups come with their own guide and are always welcome to conduct independent tours at the site.

Surrounding community:

FTNHS is literally and figuratively split between two very different communities. To the south of the theatre stands the ever thriving DC tourist industry. The site is easily accessible by both private (mainly car and tour buses) and public transportation (L2 bus line and the METRO

Red Line) and is within walking distance of other tourist attractions such as the National Mall, the FBI Building, the National Portrait Gallery and the Museum of American Art. Many tourist oriented shops and restaurants, particularly the Hard Rock Café, are also close by. Aside from the tourist industry, the area south of the theatre contains many office buildings made up of mostly law firms, trade associations, and municipal and federal agencies.

At the north side of the site is the declining Metro Center business district. Many of the building surrounding the site are abandoned and/or boarded up. Most of the businesses are small, independently owned clothing boutiques, beauty shops, restaurants, tourist shops and street merchants. One of the areas biggest retailer, Woodward and Lothrop, is set to close within the next year, adding economic strain to an otherwise depressed area. Along with small businesses, Metro Center is home to a number of churches, community organizations such as the YWCA and the Asian Cultural Society, as well as a sizable homeless population.

The theatre's closest residential enclave is the Gallery Place-Chinatown neighborhood. While the area is known as Chinatown and in fact possesses a significant immigrant population (not necessarily Asian), the neighborhood is a primarily African-American community made up, for the most part of families consisting of traditional and single female headed households. The median age of the community is 33.5, with the majority of children falling between the 6-11 age range. 56.6% of those over the age of 25 hold high school degrees while 14.2% possess a BA or higher. While the population has held steady between 31-36,000 people , the US census predicts a 1.5% decline in population by 1998. Like its Metro Center neighbor, the Gallery Place-Chinatown area is also in a state of economic decline. Of the 34,000 plus residents, an estimated 29.7% of households are below the poverty level with unemployment running at almost 40%. (US Census)

Organizational Goals

Friends of Ford's Theatre:

1995 saw the formation of the Friends of Ford's Theatre, a non-profit organization dedicated to the overall improvement of the FTNHS. Once officially incorporated, the primary goal of the friends group will be program development and fund raising.

Audience:

The main goal of FTNHS is not to increase its audience in number but rather in scope. As stated previously, while the FTNHS receives a high volume of visits from persons outside of the DC area, visitation/ involvement of the local community is quite low. The staff of FTNHS strives to foster greater interaction between their organization and the people of DC, particularly that of their immediate community. Because they stand as the majority population in the DC, staff members cited the African-American community as their primary target audience.

Programming:

Outreach is the number one priority as far as programming. While attempts at outreach have been made in the past for the most part have been unsuccessful. For example, last April student from area DC schools were invited to a symposium for the 130th Anniversary of Lincoln's death. The students were pretty much uninterested in the subject matter and the staff deemed the project a "flop". Programs are already in place for African- American History month while plans are in the works to commemorate Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

For the disabled community, FTNHS hopes to develop a Braille tour along with an audio tour for the sight impaired while plans are in the works to create a photographic mock up of the areas not wheel chair accessible.

With the "Friends of.." group , FTNHS hopes to increase its volunteer base, develop a strong interpretive training program, create a period garden in the rear of Peterson House and establish a Lincoln/Douglas debate society. The latter would sponsor an annual student debate competition at the theatre.

Analysis and Recommendation

Analysis - Why Aren't They Visiting?:

Like a number of FTNHS' counterparts, much of the organization's problems stem from the general public's apathy toward cultural institutions. The popularity of television, movies and other more seemingly active" forms of entertainment remain the museum's number one competition. This problem is further exacerbated by lack of funding. Programs for outreach, exhibition upgrades and the like are almost never realized because the money is not available. Perhaps the institution's biggest obstacle in the image of museums themselves. Despite the variety of subject matter, museums are still regarded for the most part as elitist institutions that have no relevance to the public in general and minorities in particular.

To the general public the museum itself, in comparison to other institutions, appears to have little to offer. Unless one is a theatre patron or a Lincoln enthusiast, one could pretty much see the site in one visit. Again, lack of variety in programming is due mainly to funding problems and thus is virtually out of the hands of the site staff.

While FTNHS expresses a strong desire to connect with the local community, it seems very little has been done in terms of basic marketing. Assuming that the general population knows that the FTNHS is located in their neighborhood does not necessarily infer its awareness of the organization's significance or programs. Aside from the lack of marketing, the site must also deal with the area's social problems. As stated previously, census records show that 56.6% of those over the age of 25 are high school graduates with 14.5% with BA or higher, leaving 29.9% of the population with out high school degrees. This statistic, coupled with the shortcomings of the DC Public School system doesn't spell a very supportive system for the FTNHS educational goals. A many in the population are immigrants who may not necessarily know who Lincoln was. Finally, seeing that the bulk of the residents of the immediate community are low income, leisure time may not be as plentiful as of those in the upper echelons.

Recommendations:

Before the any new programs can be created, FTNHS should consider the following:

- Adopt a site mission statement stating specifically it purpose and goals.

conduct a Visitor Study .

institute Diversity Training Workshops for the FTNHS staff.

find alternatives for funding or possibly create a development department geared exclusively to finding funds for museum programs.

- Promote patron loyalty through the "Friends of..." group .

Other suggestions include

•Strengthen ties with community organizations- Outreach is much easier when one has help. The FTNHS should try to work with the local business community, civic groups and the like to promote the Metro Center as a whole.

•Strengthen ties with local schools by developing traveling exhibitions, internship programs, and volunteer programs with local schools.

•Widen the scope of outreach: limiting alternative programming to the African American Community only reinforces the already exclusionary image already portrayed by institutions such as FTNHS.

Suggested Audience Outreach:

Local demographics suggest the following as potential target audiences:

•School Groups

Elementary through Adult Education

•Religious Groups

•Community Outreach/ Social Service organizations

Family programs

Adult literacy programs.

•Civic/Professional organizations

•Local Business community (especially lunch time crowd)

Out of those listed the most viable groups in terms of short-term programs and development are:

•School Groups/Community Outreach/Social Service - Can provide much needed curriculum support and/or serve as an extra-curricular activity

• Families - Promote museum visiting as a family activity.

•Civic Organizations-Fostering partnerships with the local community can only strengthen the organization through joint ventures.

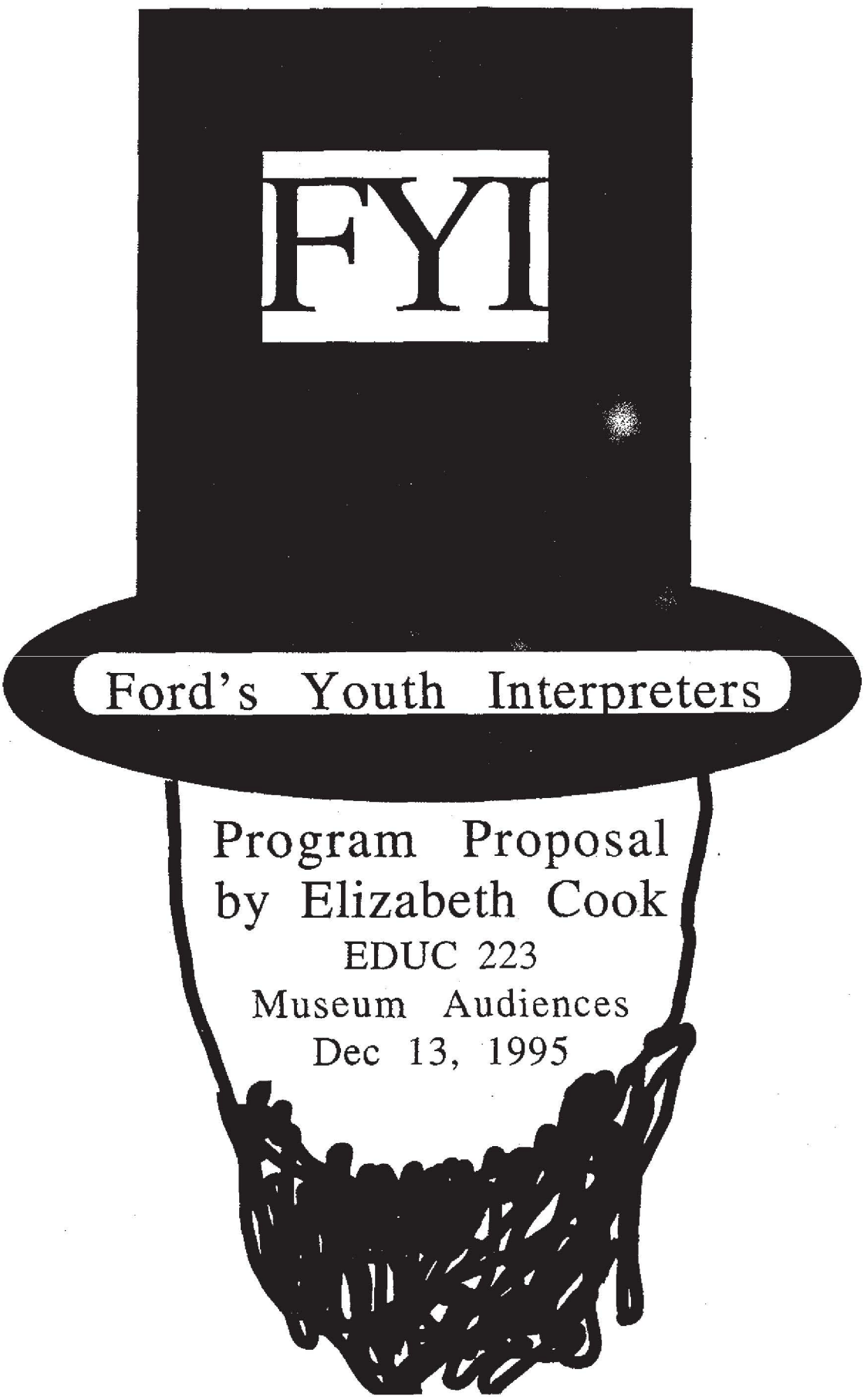
Work Cited

US. Department. of Commerce, Bureau of Census (1994) *1993 General Census: Washington, DC* Washington, DC: US. Government Printing Office

Appendix 4

Programming Proposals

- **"FYI"-- The Ford's Youth Interpreters Program**
- **Project Perspectives for Ford's Theatre National Historic Site**
- **Lunchtime with Lincoln**
- **Lincoln Lore: Storytelling Program at Ford's Theatre National Historic Site**
- **Recruitment and Training of Volunteers for Ford's Theatre National Historic Site**
- **Getting the Word Out**



Program Proposal

by Elizabeth Cook

EDUC 223

Museum Audiences

Dec 13, 1995

Proposal Outline

I. Overview

A. The "FYI" Project
B. Background on FTNHS

II. Needs Assessment

A. Ford's Theatre National Historic Site
B. Proposed Audience: Local High School Students
C. Other Partners: Teachers

III. Goals

A. Objectives
B. Rationale

IV. Project Design

A. Pilot Project
- overview
- participants/resources
- schedule (planning and implementation)

B. Evaluation
C. Long-term Projects
- retaining participants
- expanding partnerships
- exponential programming
- evaluation

V. Conclusion

VI. Bibliography

VII. Appendices

Appendix 1: Suggested interpretive themes, activities and resources
Appendix 2: Research Summaries
Appendix 3: Interview Summaries
Appendix 4: "Youth Volunteer Programs in Museums"

Appendix 5: Fords Theatre National Historic Site Status Quo Report (attached)

I. Project Overview

A) The "FYI" Program

This proposal outlines programming to train local high school students to be volunteer interpreters at Ford's Theatre National Historic Site (FTNHS) and in the larger community. Students will work with classroom teachers, FTNHS staff and volunteers to research and develop their own short interpretive programs. The youth volunteers will then present their interpretive programs at FTNHS and in community settings such as schools, community centers and churches.

In the pilot program, a single high school class will work with FTNHS staff to choose a research theme and create interpretive presentations that will be given at least once at Ford's Theatre and once at the community site.

B) Background on FTNHS

In 1995 Ford's Theatre National Historic Site entered into a partnership with the George Washington University Museum Education Program and the Friend's of Ford's Theatre to develop programming to expand the audience of Ford's Theatre. This program proposal is a result of this Model Collaboration Project.

II. Needs Assessment

A. Ford's Theatre National Historical Site

Sources:

In order to determine the needs of Ford's Theatre, students in EDUC 223--Museum Audiences conducted interviews with the staff at FTNHS and examined the census data from the surrounding area. Potential audiences for Ford's Theatre are listed in the Site Status Quo Report (Appendix 5.)

Needs:

FTNHS wishes to see more people from the surrounding communities (the greater Washington metro area, the District of Columbia and Northwest DC) visiting Ford's Theatre.

Resources:

The resources of FTNHS include personnel (paid staff and volunteers), the Friend's of Ford's Theatre, a museum, the theatre, a meeting room, an historic house, a touch box of props, and a sizable library of material on Lincoln and the Civil War.

Constraints:
Among the important factors limiting FTNHS participation is time. The need to have the Theatre, museum and Petersen House continuously staffed limits the amount of time staff can devote to the project. FTNHS is also limited in the amount of money that it is able to invest in the project. A final limitation is that the staff and volunteers have not had any formal training to work with youth at FTNHS.

B. Audience: High School Students

Sources:
The needs of the audience of high school students, identified in the site report, were assessed through research on youth volunteers and youth programs in museums and through interviews with high school students in the DC Public Schools.

Needs:
Local High School students need activities that help fulfill the community service requirement for school, and skills that will be useful in school and the workplace. They also desire interesting activities which allow them to serve their communities.

Resources:
High school students have varied amounts of free time to devote to community service. More importantly, they have almost unlimited amounts of energy and enthusiasm. Students also have connections to people, organizations and resources within their communities.

Constraints:
Factors that will limit the participation of high school students are time, mobility and money for transportation.

C. Other Partners: Teachers

Sources:
The needs of these partners were identified through informal conversations with several DC area teachers.

Needs:
Local high school teachers need programs and support to facilitate effective learning experiences for their students.

Resources:
High school teachers have teaching skills, creativity and an understanding of their students. They have access to a variety of curricula and the resources of their schools. Teachers have connections to other educators and members of the community.

Constraints:
Time is the foremost limiting factor for teachers who will participate in this project. Teachers may require paid planning days to participate in the project. Money for materials and transportation may also be a constraint. Demands placed on teachers by administrators and the district may necessitate official recognition for participating teachers.

III. Goals

This programming will expand the audience of Ford's Theatre National Historic Site and provide learning and community service opportunities to many members of the Washington, DC community.

A. Objectives:

The FYI Program will:

o Build partnerships between FTNHS and local high school teachers.

o Involve local high school students as visitors and volunteers.

o Bring families and friends of the students to FTNHS as visitors and potential volunteers.

o Take the story of Ford's Theatre, and the expertise of the FTNHS staff out into the surrounding communities.

B. Rationale

Benefits to FTNHS:

o Partnerships with the community.
This project will benefit FTNHS by laying the foundations for partnerships in the community. Similar collaborative projects, such as those described in *Museums in the Life of the City* have led to successful long-term partnerships.

o Increased staff and volunteer awareness of the surrounding community:
By going to the partner school and the community site, and by working with a variety of members of the surrounding community, FTNHS staff and volunteers will gain a personal understanding of these constituents. This understanding can lead to further programs that benefit all partners.

o Heightened visibility for FTNHS:
In addition to broadening the current audience of FTNHS, this project will increase community awareness of FTNHS and demonstrate commitment to the community of the site, staff and volunteers.

o Increased interpretive programming:
The FYI program will add a new dimension to interpretation at FTNHS. Staff, volunteers and FYI participants will focus on interpretive themes that may have not been fully explored or presented at FTNHS. In addition, staff and volunteers will have the opportunity to expand their repertoire of interpretive methods beyond the standard guided tour as they help design programs with the FYI students.

Benefits to student participants:
Deborah Edward provides a list of seven developmental needs of young adolescents (Appendix 4, 22-23.) This program will meet many of those needs, as well as those mentioned by the student interviewees.

o Opportunities for service:
Many of the interview respondents felt that volunteering was important because it contributed to the community. Both Groff (Appendix 2) and Edward (Appendix 4) note that high school students want and need meaningful, participatory activities, and that such activities help create student leaders.

o Increased sense of self-worth.
Edward lists self-definition, competence and achievement among the needs of adolescents (Appendix 4.) These goals will be met as FYI participants choose, design and present their interpretive programs. Working with FTNHS staff, volunteers and community partners who value their participation will further enhance the students' self-worth. Several interviewees noted that their family and friends would support their volunteer work. FYI participants' sense of self-respect will grow as they work with an expanding group of people--adults, other teenagers, children and seniors.

o Models and mentors:
The FTNHS staff, volunteers, partners and consultants will serve as role models. Drum, Edward, Groff, Hamilton and Fenzel (Appendix 2) all note the importance of good adult mentors in youth volunteer programs. In addition, students will have the chance to encounter a variety of occupations and skills that they might not have considered.

o Learning enhancement:
FYI will present students with an opportunity for self-directed learning with non-traditional outcomes and evaluation. Participation in learning and teaching that is cooperative, object-based and on-going will motivate students to define and achieve their own educational goals. By expanding the scope of learning beyond the triad of school-teacher-student, FYI will empower students to see themselves and others as lifelong learners and to view any situation as an educational opportunity.

o Transferable skills:
FYI will not only allow the participants to fulfill the school community service requirement, but will encourage them to develop the research, presentation

and public relations skills that will be attractive to colleges and potential employers.

Benefits to the other partners and the community:

o Access to resources:
Partners will have access to the human and reference resources of FTNHS. The community and partners will also benefit from the resources of the FYI students and teachers.

o Involvement with youth:
FYI partners and consultants will have the opportunity to share their interests and skills with young people. The partners will have the opportunity to work with potential employees, students and volunteers. The whole community will benefit by investing in positive programs for youth, and by seeing such positive programs in action.

o Partnerships with FTNHS:
Partners, consultants and the community will have connections to one of the important sites in the area. Partners can benefit from the prestige of FTNHS, while members of the community will have an alliance with FTNHS, a site that brings many visitors to the area.

o Official recognition:
Teacher partners will gain skill and receive official recognition, such as letters of commendation, that will further their professional development.

V. Program Design

The FYI program will consist of three parts: a pilot program, evaluation and long term follow-through.

A. Pilot Program

The initial program will focus on a specific interpretive theme at FTNHS, for example the upcoming exhibit on African-American soldiers in the Civil War. One high school class will work on interpretive strategies for this exhibit, connecting it not only to the larger story and collections at FTNHS, but also to present day issues and interests in their community.

Overview:

Students will visit the Civil War exhibit and observe an interpretive talk at FTNHS. At the school they will begin to research, develop and practice an interpretive program (a short talk) on the exhibit. FTNHS staff and volunteers will make 3-4 visits to the classroom to assist the students. There will be a final Saturday "dry run/dress rehearsal" at FTNHS, and then at least one Saturday on which students will present their program to the public. Family and friends of the students, and other teachers will be invited to come to this program. Next students will take their knowledge and expertise into the community and will present their interpretive program in the community (e.g. an elementary school).

Participants:

The pilot project will include the following participants:

- o a social studies/history teacher at an area high school
- o one class of 20-30 high school students (possibly a class studying DC history/US history)
- o at least one FTNHS staff member
- o one or more FTNHS volunteers
- o a community partner such as an elementary school, church, community or senior center
- o consultants: Museum educators, librarians, Civil War reenactors, scholars, actors

Schedule:

The suggested pilot project will take approximately 15 weeks, but the schedule can be changed to meet the needs of participants.

Suggested time commitments are as follows:
- o The high school partners: at least one class period/week.
- o The FTNHS staff: a minimum of 4-6 hoursß/week.
- o FTNHS volunteers: approximately 6 hours/month.
- o Consultants: approximately 2-8 hours/month.

The suggested time for each activity is marked where appropriate.
(S= in school/class time, A= after school, W= weekend.)

Weeks 1-3 Planning

- o Create the partnership with a DC area teacher. FTNHS staff can use contacts in area school districts and research on curricula as a method to identify possible partner teachers.

- o Identify teacher needs and incorporate them into the program.

- o Arrange for community service hours for participating students.

- o Identify resources at FTNHS: staff, volunteers, research and interpretive materials.

- o Prepare to work with youth. FTNHS staff and volunteers should familiarize themselves with the research on youth volunteer and interpretive programs (notably Edward, Appendix 4) and should visit programs involving youth volunteers, (see Sources, Appendix 1). Staff and volunteers should discuss the site- specific issues in working with youth and should identify personal goals and concerns in working with youth.

Weeks 4-6 Introduction

- o FTNHS staff and volunteers visit the school and introduce students to the project (S).

- o Students visit the site and observe at least two interpretive activities (A).

- o Students and teachers select an interpretive theme and a possible community partner (S).

Weeks 7-9 Research

o Students begin to research theme (S).

o Students visit FTNHS, staff and volunteers provide research assistance (A, W).

o Other partners/consultants visit the school and FTNHS and assist in research.

o Students present research summaries to class and FTNHS personnel and other partners/consultants (S).

o FTNHS staff and partner teacher finalize arrangements for the community site presentation with the community partner.

Weeks 10-12 Interpretive Training

o FTNHS personnel and consultants introduce interpretive methods (S).

o Students and teacher select an interpretive format (S).

o FTNHS staff and volunteers assist in interpretive training (S, A, W).

o Other partners/consultants assist in interpretive training.

Weeks 13-15 Implementation

o Students do run-through of interpretive program for FTNHS personnel and consultants at school (S, A).

o Dress rehearsal of program at FTNHS (A, W).

o Presentation of interpretive program at FTNHS (W).

o Presentation of interpretive program at community site (W, A, S).

Evaluation

During the pilot project, efforts will be made to evaluate audience response to the youth volunteers, both at FTNHS and at the community site. These results can be used to gauge the effectiveness of the youth volunteers and the specific programs, and to identify areas for improvement.

A summative evaluation by all members of the partnership, including FYI volunteers, teachers, school administrators, consultants and FTNHS staff and volunteers will provide important information for further projects based on the pilot model and will be used develop further programming. The evaluative input of all members is necessary for FTNHS assessment of the program, but will also add to the participants' sense of commitment and investment in project. Commitment and investment will lead to further participation.

B. Long Term Projects

FYI holds a great deal of potential for long-term programming. Several suggestions for the continuation of the program are outlined below.

Retaining Participants

After the pilot partnerships, participating students will be encouraged to continue volunteering at FTNHS on weekends and after school, and at community sites as scheduled. FYI volunteers will be offered further mentorship, diverse interpretive responsibilities and other volunteer opportunities at FTNHS. Other incentives will include social activities (field trips, parties) and formal recognition such as letters of recommendation and community service hours.

Ideally the partnership between the high school and FTNHS will continue and grow. Further teacher participation will be encouraged through teacher support (access to FTNHS library and staff) and official recognition such as letters of commendation to school and city administrator and positive press.

Expanding Partnerships

FYI will grow as the partnerships are expanded to more schools and to more community sites. FTNHS will recruit more teachers at the pilot school and other high schools to be FYI partners: future partners will include other organizations that work with youth (Scouts, YCC, churches).

Community partnerships will also increase as FYI participants present their pilot program in more community sites. Community partners can also be given an expanded role as consultants, helping to select the interpretive theme and serving as resources for research and interpretive methods.

Exponential Programming

The FYI projects can also be expanded to intersect with other proposed programs at FTNHS. FYI volunteers could present their programs at the lunchtime lecture series. They could become storytellers in the family program. FYI volunteers could conduct special "press tours" of FTNHS. FYI volunteers could focus on reinterpretation of Petersen House, and could spearhead the development of the garden behind Petersen House. FYI participants could become actively involved in the Friends of Ford's Theatre.

Evaluation

Continual assessment, both formal and informal, will continue to be a vital and necessary element at every stage of the FYI program. As FYI programs and partnerships expand, the methods and goals of evaluation will expand to reflect the needs and input of the numerous partners.

V. Conclusion

The Ford's Youth Interpreters program has potential not only for expanding the audience of FTNHS, but also for enhancing the life of the community of which Ford's Theatre is a part. Through FYI Ford's Theatre will provide youth the opportunity to serve the community, and will draw new constituents into the site.

The most important outcome of the project is the creation of partnerships. Multiple partners mean more energy, more commitment and more opportunities for growth. Contact with new people and ideas benefits all partners. At the same time, partnerships such as FYI provide a unique set of challenges. Partners often have very different needs and goals, so all participants should be flexible and willing to engage new ideas.

The key to a good partnership is good communication among all partners. Ultimately, communication will be the most enduring result of FYI. The Ford's Youth Interpreters program will help FTNHS staff tell the story of Ford's Theatre to an expanded audience, but equally importantly, it will give the audience an opportunity to share their story with FTNHS.

Appendix 1
Suggested Interpretive Themes , Methods and Resources for the FYI Pilot Project

Themes:

- African-American Soldiers in the Civil War
  (show "Glory" at FTNHS)
- The perception and reality of Washington, DC as a "violent city", in the past and present.
- Life in the District of Columbia During and After the Civil War.
- Reactions to Lincoln's assassination in the District of Columbia
- How the assassination and its aftermath affected DC and its residents.
- What Lincoln meant to different communities (southern, urban, white, black)
- Oral Histories: Then and Now.
- How people who were there that night remembered it and recorded it.
- Larger issues of popularity/unpopularity of the president, then and now
- Other times in US history when people have resorted to violent (vs. non-violent) protest
- Why are people today so interested in the Civil War and Lincoln OR
  Why are people today not interested in the Civil War and Lincoln

Interpretive Methods:

* inquiry-based interpretive talk
* informal interaction with museum visitors, using hands-on objects
* first-person interpretation
* play/ re-enactment
* performance of poetry or music
* a debate
* presenting an original or prepared speech

Resources/Model Programs

Explainers Program, National Air and Space Museum
City Visions, National Building Museum
The Hands-On History Room, National Museum of American History
The Discovery Theater, Smithsonian, Arts and Industries Building

Appendix 3
Interview Summaries

Objectives:
The interviewer and the staff at Ford's Theatre National Historic Site will have better understanding of:
• DC area high school students' attitudes about museums and museum volunteers, Ford's Theatre, volunteering, after school activities, US history and/or life in DC.
• the practical issues that influence high school students decisions to volunteer.
• other possible issues, ideas and concerns about youth volunteering and leadership that may not have appeared in the written research.

Interviewees:
Six students in a world geography class at Cardozo High
#1 9th grade, female, African-American
#2 9th grade, female, Latina
#3 9th grade, female, African-American
#4 9th grade, male, African-American
#5 9th grade, female, African American
#6 9th grade, male, African-American

Three students at Wilson High
#7 12th grade, male, African-American
#8 12th grade, female, European-American
#9 10th grade, male, Latino

Findings
•Attitudes about museums/museum volunteers
The respondents generally had positive memories of museums. Most students mentioned specific museums; four named the National Air and Space Museum, one named the National Museum of Natural History, and one named the B'nai B'rith--Klutznik Museum. Only one respondent said that she visits museums A LOT

Factors that contributed to good museum experiences included: connection with family ("My father was in the Navy and knew about the planes," #5), connection to own heritage (#3), and interesting subjects (#8, #9.) Other positive associations with museums were freeze-dried ice cream, interactives (a phone where visitors talked to and learned about elephants) and puppet shows. Several students recalled negative experiences with guides: "they talk too much"(#5). Guides are viewed as "perky, happy, talkative white women telling you about stuff-what's to change"(#7), and one student observed that guides have two modes: "Kid mode and adult mode, and they use kid mode with teens, and it's kind of insulting" (#8).

"Good" guides allowed students to ask questions and not feel afraid. (#9). Four respondents felt that it might be fun to work in museum, however two mentioned that it might get boring to look at the same things over and over again and one respondent (#7) gave this as the reason he would NOT work in a museum.

• Attitudes about and general knowledge of Ford's Theatre

Four students (#5, #7, #8, #9) recognized Ford's Theatre by name and could identify at as the site of the Lincoln assassination. Four students (#1, #2, #4, #6) did not immediately recognize the name, but when Lincoln and/or the assassination were mentioned they were able to identify it. One student (#2) had recently moved to DC and had did not recognize the name nor the event.

Associations with Ford's Theatre included attending to plays at Ford's Theatre (#4, #9), descriptions from friends or relatives who had been there (#5, #6), and participating in class field trips (#7, #8). Several students recalled specific images of Ford's Theatre: the balcony, red curt[redacted] the bed. Several students also mentioned that "Lincoln was shot in the head."

• Attitudes about volunteering/after school activities/community service.

Students generally had positive feelings about volunteering because it "helps your community, makes it a better place"(#2). Another student stated that "I believe it's my purpose in life to help other people" (#5). Nearly all students mentioned volunteer activity in the context of school-mandated community service. Student #7 felt that community service in school was unconstitutional--"involuntary servitude."

Other volunteer activities mentioned were cleaning up an elementary school, a bake sale (#3), interning with a grassroots group, and helping with a Therapeutic Riding organization (#8). Those who will be doing community service in the near future identified specific projects such as helping the homeless and the hungry (#5).

Several respondents felt that they did or would enjoy volunteering because they liked to work with kids (#1, #8).

Nearly all students participated in some after school activity, among them JROTC, sports, school clubs, For the Love of Children (FLOC) and community programs. Friends and family in the activity, trips, games, movies, a chance to learn things, discipline, student control and specific interests were given as reasons why students participated in these programs.

• Attitudes about DC and US history

The 9th grade students were about to begin a course on DC history, and did not comment much on the history of DC. Two of the older respondents noted that DC used to be a swamp (#7, #8). When asked what they would tell tourists about DC History, #7 replied, "that the mayor used to be appointed by Congress then they got home rule and people flocked here during wars, like the Civil War and World War II and there were shanty-towns." #8 felt that

tourists and elementary school students should know about the planning behind the city of DC, that it is very well laid-out.

When asked about their attitudes towards history classes in general, the three older students all mentioned experiences with specific teachers (positive and negative.) #7 and #8 gave boring teachers primarily interested in memorizing dates as negative indicators. #8 and #9 felt that history could be interesting because of energetic helpful teachers and because it "was sometimes like a story" and "it's good to learn about other cultures and how people live."

• Attitudes about life in DC.

The two most common concerns about life in DC were violence and drugs (#1, #3, #4, #5, #6, #9), although many students felt that it was important for visitors to DC to know that not all of DC had these problems (#3, #7, #8, #9). Students rated good neighborhoods and schools, concerts, museums and monuments among the positives of living in DC. Two students said that they felt that DC was too crowded (#2, #8), although #8 and #9 felt that the landscaping and the general cleanliness of DC made it a good place to live.

One student felt that visitors to DC should know that "real people live here... people have always lived here. That we are real people and not everyone works for the government (#8).

• Practical Issues

Students identified weekdays after school and weekends as potential times for volunteering and community service, but did not express a preference for either. Several respondents said that they were comfortable riding the Metro (#5, #6, #8, #9) although getting home before dark was an important issue for some.

Students in after-school activities or community service spend from an hour a week to 1.5 hours a day involved in that activity. Nearly all students mentioned the 100-hour community service requirement. Student #7 felt that 100 hours was a difficult time commitment for seniors who have several AP classes and jobs to balance as well. Two (#3, #5) said that their mothers would be pleased if they were somehow involved in the community and doing something worthwhile after school

• Other issues raised by students

<u>Students would want to participate this program because...</u>

* it's "good to pass on good information" (#6)
* students want programs that involve teens of all races (#2)
* a chance to meet other people and learn about new stuff (#9)

<u>Advice about what NOT to do...</u>

* Several respondents said that they did not like to be talked at.

"White teachers sometimes don't understand where we are coming from.." (#5)

Advice about what TO DO...

* Figure out what kids like to do, think about culture gaps (#5)
* Tie in with history classes (#8)
* Make it interesting (#8)
* Give an incentive, like money or community service hours (#7)

Potential Problems

* Many students visit in elementary school so they may have the attitude that "I've already been there, and done that."(#8)
* Getting people to listen to you (#6)
* People won't treat you well because of mistakes, or laugh at you (#9)

Implications for Program Proposal

The altruistic desire to "help other people" is clearly present in students in DC, although it may not be enough to insure commitment to participating in the program. From these interviews, it seems clear that a program to train and utilize teens from DC should:

- allow the students to address the larger community issues in a tangible (not necessarily direct) way.
- bring the volunteers and their work out into the community.
- be interesting to the students.
- have some sort of payback, either for class, community service hours or monetary.
- encourage active student involvement and control.
- include a diverse group of volunteers/kids from different schools.

Project Perspectives

for

Ford's Theatre National Historic Site

Prepared by Wendy Sears - EDUC 223

December 12, 1995

Abstract: Ford's Theatre National Historic Site (FTNHS) currently serves 90,000 visitors per year. Although the staff of FTNHS has made conjectures about the demographics of their visitors and the visitor experience at Ford's Theatre, the museum has never conducted a formal visitor survey. Project Perspectives proposes the design and implementation of a visitor study. The proposal includes six components. The first component involved in-depth interviews with the staff of Ford's Theatre, conducted in the developmental phase. The remaining components include: developing a visitor study; identifying volunteers to conduct interviews; designing pre-test interview protocol and visitor interviews; conducting audience interviews; and evaluating the interviews. The results of the visitor interview and the staff interview will be synthesized. Based on these findings recommendations will be made for a revised educational mission statement to guide FTNHS into the twenty-first century.

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Project Perspectives

Statement of Purpose:

Project Perspectives is designed in response to a desire on the part of the staff at Ford's Theatre National Historic Site (FTNHS) to document characteristics and behavior of their current visiting audience. Although the staff of FTNHS has made conjectures about the demographics of their visitors and the visitor experience at Ford's Theatre, the museum has never conducted a formal visitor survey. An institutional profile report conducted by students of the George Washington University's Museum Education program indicated that FTNHS's staff wanted to better serve their current audience as well as attract new audiences from the local community (See Appendix A). In addition, in-depth interviews with staff revealed their desire to implement a visitor survey and develop a mission statement reflecting the educational goals of the museum (See Appendix B). FTNHS welcomed the opportunity to collaborate with the directors and students of George Washington's Museum Education Program and an audience researcher to achieve these goals. A collaboration of these forces will bring to bear the expertise of museum educators and audience research specialist to guide the staff.

Project Perspectives proposes the design and implementation of a visitor survey based on staff interviews. The proposal includes six components:

1. Staff interviews conducted during developmental phase of project.
2. Develop visitor study.
3. Identify volunteers to conduct interviews.
4. Design and pre-test interview protocol and visitor interviews.
5. Conduct audience interviews.
6. Evaluate data from interviews/recommend revisions for a FTNHS site specific educational mission statement.

Target Audience:

Project Perspectives targets the current visitor of FTNHS. The interviews/survey will target the following audiences:

- adult/child
- weekend visitors
- weekday visitors
- peak-season attending visitors
- off-season attending visitors

Overall Goals of Project:

1. Conduct a visitor survey to establish a new understanding of how each group perceives the visitors' museum experience
2. Synthesize findings from visitor and staff surveys of visitor experiences.
3. Identify criteria to be considered by staff in developing FTNHS an educational mission statement based on information gained from the staff and visitor surveys.

Objectives of Project Perspectives:

Upon completion of Project Perspectives:

- Staff will serve as advocates for FTNHS audiences.

- Staff will be better able to design programs and temporary exhibits based on identification of visitors' needs, characteristics, and attitudes.
- Visitors participating in the interview process will be able to voice their thoughts and opinions about their experience at Ford's Theatre, including ways to improve museum interpretation.
- Staff will be better able to target specific audiences based on findings of visitor surveys.

Part 1: Developmental Phase

Staff Interviews:

During November 1995 as part of a model collaboration in depth interviews were conducted to provide staff members of Ford's Theatre the opportunity to record and voice their current views on the visitor experience (Appendix B). The survey questions focused on the needs of the staff and their expectation for visitors to the museum/theatre. Project Perspectives was the outcome of the findings from the report.

Rationale:

Creating a meaningful museum experience starts first with the attitudes, perceptions, and dedication of its staff. Conducting a staff survey allowed the staff of FTNHS to voice their attitudes, expectations, and perceptions of the current visitor experience. By listing their needs and goals, the staff was better able to prioritize ways in which they could improve the visitor experience.

Objectives:

- Identify the staff perspectives on the educational role of the museum.
- Identify the staff expectations and impressions of the public experience at FTNHS.
- Identify and prioritize the goals of the staff in terms of re-interpretation.
- Summarizing and categorizing the results of the interview; the results forming a visitor survey and mission statement.
- Design a visitor study based on results of staff interviews.

*See Appendix B for method and findings of staff interviews

Staff Perspectives: What did the staff say about the visitor experience?

The results of the interviews revealed similar concerns among staff members. Staff members generally felt that:

- An ideal visitor experience involved hearing a talk from a ranger and the opportunity to see all of the site within Ford's Theatre.
- Intellectually the visitors should come away with a more balanced view of the past.
- The emotional reaction of visitors should be one of solemnity.
- Visitors to Ford's Theatre most remember first, the bloody pillow (currently off display) and secondly, the box where President Lincoln was shot.

More than half of the staff members expressed a willingness to participate in other programming during the off months, volunteer recruitment, and designing teacher training workshops. (See Appendix B-8 to B-10 for percentages.)

What the staff didn't say about the visitor experience?

Based on museum education knowledge of audiences the following list represents what the didn't say about the visitor experience to FTNHS:

- Staff did not say that an ideal visit experience required a link between the museum and the visitor's life (Csikszentmihalyi, 1995).
- Staff did not explain ways that the museum's exhibit or display of objects sparks curiosity of the visitor or motivates them to learn (Perry, 1994).
- Did not articulate FTNHS's effort to appeal to the various learning styles of their public (Gardner, 1990).
- Staff did not say that an ideal visit involved a visitor connecting with objects (Silverman, 1993).
- Staff did not say that an ideal visit to FTNHS would be one that "cultivated and expressed a variety of cultural perspectives in the presentation and interpretation" of FTNHS's collection (AAM, p. 19).

*A transcript of interviews is provided in Appendix B-3

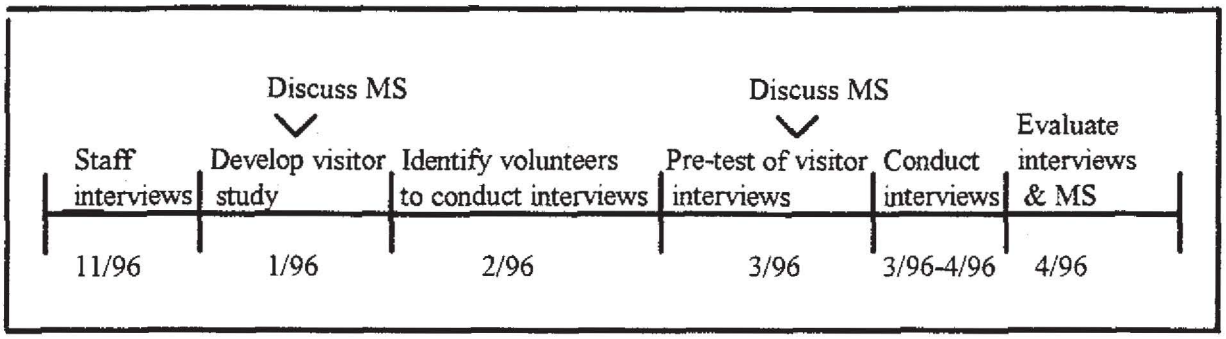
Part II
Why conduct a visitor survey?

Rationale: "Understanding the public's interest and concerns, like and dislikes, needs and wants, is of critical importance in providing successful museums and services" (Ambrose and Paine, p. 17). A visitor study will not only allow the staff to better understand their visitor population demographically but also better describe the ways visitors learn, what makes an ideal experience at FTNHS, and discover audience needs and behaviors. In addition, the staff will recognize those characteristics and components of an ideal experience that were not mentioned in the staff interviews. FTNHS's knowledge of their visiting public can contribute to effectively responding to the needs of their visitors and create the best possible experience.

Objectives: Conducting a visitor survey will allow the staff to:

- Identify the audience they are currently serving.
- Recognize and understand the public's needs and current experience at Ford's Theatre.
- Develop future programs based on audience interest.

Part III
Project Perspectives: Time Line for implementation



MS=mission statement

The following five components constitute the design and planning of Project Perspectives:

1. **November 1995** A staff survey conducted by Museum Education graduate intern, Wendy Sears, administered to the staff of Ford's Theatre.

a. Design of staff survey based on information in the institutional profile report.
b. Evaluation of staff survey protocol by Adjunct Asst. Professor Joanne Hirsch, at George Washington University and Randi Korn, of Randi Korn and Associates.
c. Interview of staff of Ford's Theatre.
d. Report of findings in anecdotal format (Appendix B-3 to B-6).

2. **January 1995** Development of visitor survey with input from Ford's Theatre staff, Randi Korn, and Museum Education program coordinators at George Washington University.

a. Create a visitor survey, based on the information that was said in the staff interviews and what was not said. (For preliminary draft of questions -- see Appendix A-10)
b. Schedule meeting with acting site manager of Ford's Theatre, Randi Korn, GWU supervisors, Professor Joanne Hirsch and Professor Carol B. Stapp, and Wendy Sears to finalize the design, method, and objectives of the visitor survey.

A range of survey approaches may be used. Examples and description of types of visitor survey include:

- **entrance/exit interviews:**
  Interviews conducted with visitors upon entering and exiting the museum.
- **object based interviews:**
  By using objects from the trunk or reproductions of the permanent collection, interviews can be conducted which will allow the visitor to answer questions based on objects associated with the Lincoln assassination. The survey would determine the effectiveness of more participatory learning in the museum and the power of object oriented learning versus a straight lecture.

c. Visit sites within the National Park Service which have completed visitor surveys, i.e. Arlington House/Robert E. Lee Memorial, Virginia.
d. Contact Dr, Gary E. Machilis, Sociology Project leader, Cooperative Park Studies Unit, College of Forestry, Wildlife and Range Sciences, University of Idaho to obtain

information and examples of visitor studies at NPS sites. Dr. Machilis has conducted over fifty visitor studies at NPS sites.

e. Determine materials needed to design, conduct and implement the visitor study.

f. Initial discussions focusing on the development of an FTNHS educational mission statement at staff meeting. Wendy Sears, graduate spring intern, will present materials to facilitate this process (see Appendix C).

3. **February 1996** Identify volunteers who will conduct the interviews

a. Volunteers of Ford's Theatre and Friends of Ford's Theatre.

b. Students of the Museum Education program enrolled in EDUC 227: Museum Evaluation (Summer Session I, 1995) and Wendy Sears, museum intern.

c. Second meeting with site director of Ford's Theatre, Volunteer Coordinator, Jeff Leary, GWU faculty, Joanne Hirsch Carol Stapp, and intern Wendy Sears.

4. **March 1996** Pre-test of visitor survey as established in first group meeting

a. Training for staff and others conducted by Wendy Sears with help from Randi Korn.

b. Testing will be conducted by either a ranger of Ford's Theatre, Wendy Sears, and or a student of 1995 museum education program.

c. Number of test surveys to be distributed or conducted will be determined during first meeting.

d. Third meeting with site director, Randi Korn, Joanne Hirsch, Carol B. Stapp, and Wendy Sears to discuss findings from test questions. Agenda of meeting will discuss:

- Modification of survey content
- Analysis and of findings
- Evaluation of interviewing process, i.e. effectiveness of interviewers

e. Presentation of initial findings at Ford's Theatre staff meeting during which time staff will be able to express their opinions and make suggestions. During staff meeting a second discussion of FTNHS mission statement. Staff will develop the content of the report.

f. Staff feedback in regard to pre test of visitor survey and mission statement.

5. **March/April 1996** Conduct visitor Exit/Entrance interviews

a. Volunteers who were previously appointed to conduct surveys will conduct five minute interviews using the survey that was designed and tested in the pre-test portion of proposal.

b. Method:

- Twenty-five, five-minute interviews to be conducted two days a week.
- Surveys will be randomly distributed using a systematic selection process known as a probability sampling method.
- Surveys distributed two days a week, one weekday and one weekend day. Surveys will be conducted over a two month period. Since the months March and April represent the busiest time of the year for FTNHS in terms of visitor attendance, interviews can be conducted while visitors wait in line. (directly in front of entrance)

c. Materials required:

- Clip board
- Writing utensil
- Computer to analyze results of study.

(approximately 50 interviews per week)

Conduct object based interviews

a. Graduate intern, Wendy Sears will conduct 15 minute participatory interviews with single adults or adults with families using objects from the trunk and reproductions of the permanent collection. Object based questions will allow visitors to interact with the object and aid museum staff in discovering the effectiveness of their current interpretation of objects in the museum and most importantly the power of the object to convey information.

b. Method:

- Ten, seven to ten minute interviews to be conducted on one week-day and one week-end day.
- Participants will be randomly selected using a systematic selection process.
- Interviews will be conducted over a two month period and will take place in the FTNHS conference room and or backyard of the Petersen house.

c. Materials required

- Desk or cart to place objects on
- writing utensil
- objects from trunk or reproductions from the permanent collection
- computer to analyze results of the study

(Approximately 20 interviews per week)

6. Evaluation of both entrance/exit interviews and object based interviews -- findings will result in FTNHS mission statement.

April 1996

a. Both the staff or volunteers who conducted exit/entrance interviews and Wendy Sears, who conducted the object based interviews will evaluate the findings on a weekly basis.

b. At the conclusion of the two month period, interviewers of both surveys will consult with Randi Korn to discuss and prepare the results of the report.

c. Bi-weekly staff meetings will be scheduled during the two month period of audience interviews. During the meetings the interviewers will report to the staff.

d. The discussion of the FTNHS mission statement will occur at all meetings. Data from the visitor surveys can be incorporated into the objectives and goals of FTNHS's mission. A final draft will be completed by the staff at the end of April (See Appendix C).

e. Staff feed back

Part IV
Concerns/Constraints:

- FTNHS experiences a large influx of visitors during the months of March and April. FTNHS receives eight to ten thousand visitors per day. The enormous number of visitors could prevent effective interviews from taking place.
- Visitors may be reluctant to participate in object based interviews due to the limited time of their visit to the museum and visitors could find the interviews intimidating.
- Staff meetings which include the entire staff are difficult to schedule. Twenty minute briefings are conducted every morning by the acting site manager; however, this amount of time would not be conducive to planning and developing a mission statement.

Conclusion:

> History museums have a great opportunity to stake their claim to being the best tellers of accurate stories based upon real people and real objects and to being the best at producing quality experiences that add up to educational benefits.
> (G. Donald Adams, director of external affairs at Henry Ford Museum & Greenfield Village).

The first step in creating an educational experience for visitors that is both participatory and fun is for the staff of FTNHS to become better acquainted with the audience. Museum audiences' perceptions, attitudes, and experiences are constantly changing and growing. In order for the FTNHS to create an experience that will "empower" the visitor and fulfill their diverse needs, the staff must first discover the visitors' needs and experiences. Conducting a visitor study will provide FTNHS staff with insight into the complexities of visitors' behaviors and life experiences. By synthesizing staff and visitors surveys, that reflecting the "real stories" of both groups, it is possible for a revised FTNHS mission statement to emerge form the process that builds upon the strength of the museum's resources" (Adams, pg. 31).

Appendices

Appendix A	**A-1 to A-8**	**Institutional Profile**
	A-9	FT census Data
	A-10	Sample Interview Questionnaire
Appendix B	B-1 to B-7	**Presentation and Analysis of in depth interviews of staff at FTNHS**
	B-3	Transcript of Interviews
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	B-8 to B-10	Graphs
Appendix C	C-1 to C-8	**Criteria for FTNHS Mission Statement**
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Appendix A

Institutional Profile:
Site Status Quo Report

Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to relate the current status of Ford's Theatre by providing a description of the site, an overview of potential audiences currently underserved by the museum, and recommendations for improvement.

Background

Purchased by the Federal Government in 1866, the Ford's Theatre National Historic Site is administered by the National Park Service and encompasses four edifices: the Ford's Theater (includes museum, theatre, and staff offices), the Star Saloon (box office), the dressing rooms for the theatre, and the Peterson House (house where Lincoln died). According to the NPS mission statement of 1916, Ford's Theatre's purpose is to "conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generation." In addition, Ford's Theatre's purpose is to relate the story of President Lincoln, his assassination, and the cultural history of Washington, D.C. through its buildings and collections. The museum collection consists of over 15,000 objects and 3,000 photographs relating to the presidency and assassination of President Abraham Lincoln. While approximately 500 items are currently displayed in the museum and Peterson house, the remaining collection is stored in a facility located in the Greenbelt.

The Ford Theatre receives an annual budget of $533,000 from the federal government. Twenty thousand is used for supplies and material, $25,000 for repairs and services, $27,000 for the operation of the HVAC system, and the remainder pays for staff salary and benefits.

The 21 member staff consists of a site manager, historian, curator, clerk, an eight member interpretive staff, and an eight member maintenance staff. Each member of the interpretive staff undergoes a training period and is required to research the assassination of Lincoln. They serve as an information source to visitors, direct traffic flow, and provide visitors with periodic talks detailing aspects of the Lincoln assassination. The curator is involved in the maintenance of the permanent collection and in the installation of temporary exhibitions.

Events/Programming

Programming consists of symposia and lectures. Ford's Theatre is rented out for various cultural functions. For example, last year the Theatre hosted a lecture series on Martin Luther King and a program celebrating the seventieth anniversary of the nineteenth amendment. Thus, many functions occur at the Ford's Theatre but are not generated by the museum.

Audience

Based on anecdotal information provided by the staff, Caucasian, English speaking tourists represent the largest group of visitors to Ford's Theatre. Foreign visitors, primarily from Japan and China, constitute the second largest audience. The Theatre receives the majority of visitors in the spring and summer months; family groups constitute the majority of visitors in the summer. Winter months, January through March, are low periods in terms of visitor attendance; convention participants represent the largest group during these months.

Local community surrounding theatre

As stated by Chris Jones, Site director, "Ford's Theatre is the second most visited Civil War historic site, receiving 1,29,000 in 1994, but, we cannot get visitors from the local community." The immediate area surrounding Ford's Theatre is composed of businesses and churches. Local businesses and community centers include restaurants, a convention center, homeless shelters and government buildings. Based on information from the Federal census, African Americans constitute the largest group surrounding the theatre. The theatre staff conjecture that they receive 1% of the African American population. The median age is 33.5. Some of the population receive a high school diploma while 14.2% receive a BA or higher. (Further Demographic information can be found on page 8 of the report)

Accessibility

Ford's Theatre is covered by the ADA under Section 310 (7) (H) "a museum, library, gallery, or other place of public gathering." While the Theatre meets all of the requirements which include an accessible entrance, a clear route, and accessible bathrooms, accessibility is minimal at best. Individuals in wheelchairs have access to the museum but do not have access to the box office or Peterson House. Other accessibility issues include low light levels and labels that do not meet ADA codes. The theatre has made improvements for the hearing impaired. Plays performed at the theatre are signed and one staff member conducts tours in American sign language. Also, they have recently installed rails in the hallways of the museum for those individuals who are physically impaired. Currently the theatre is working with a consultant to improve the theatre for visually impaired individuals and are in the process of producing brochures in Braille.

Ford's Theatre provides brochures in fifteen different languages to accommodate foreign visitors.

Groups associated with Ford's Theatre

Ford's Theatre Society

Ford's Theatre has a cooperative agreement with the Ford's Theatre Society. The society stages five plays a year. Its productions look at the wide range of American cultural and ethnic diversity and seek to produce the best examples available from the diverse heritage.

Friends of Ford's Theatre

In January of 1995 the Friends of the Ford's Theatre was established to increase the educational components of the museum and to improve the physical site of the theatre by raising funds. The founding members are currently unpaid, however, once certified as a non-profit organization, paid positions will become available. Projects include planting and cultivating a garden in the back lot of the Peterson house for aesthetic purposes and to serve as a solution to visitor traffic. Also the group would like to develop the Lincoln/Douglass debating society, a debate society for local High School students.

Daughters of Union Veterans

A group of women who provide financial and volunteer support for Ford's Theatre.

Shortcomings of Ford's Theatre

Currently, Ford's Theatre lacks a mission statement. Under the auspices of the National Park Service, the only mission statement in place was generated by the National Park Service in 1916 and does not meet the individual needs or goals of Ford's Theatre.

Limited financial resources prevent the theatre from making necessary improvements to the exterior and interior of the structures. Currently, access to the museum involves walking down a narrow hallway which is difficult on a crowded day. Also, the floor of the museum contains water spots and presents a poor impressions to visitors. Chris Jones, site manager, stated that Ford's Theatre is in the "demolition by neglect" category. Prevented by Congress from charging fees, the theatre does not have the resources to make needed structural improvements.

Lack of human resources requires many of the staff members to engage in activities not listed on their job description. The curator is not only responsible for her regular job duties but is also involved in janitorial work including vacuuming the floors and cleaning the restrooms. The myriad of responsibilities prevents her from concentrating her efforts on the design and implementation of temporary exhibit and maintenance of the permanent collection -- activities which are necessary for the long-term preservation of the objects and the inflow of people into the museum.

Programming has been unsuccessful in the past as a result of the staff's failure to know their audiences' needs. For instance, last year the museum developed a symposium for a local high school. The museum hosted visiting scholars who lectured on the assassination of Abraham Lincoln. The symposium was unsuccessful in that the museum staff did not research the audiences wants or needs or relate the content of the symposium to the students' school curriculum.

ADA requirements are fulfilled however persons in wheelchairs do not have access to the Peterson house or the theatre box where the Lincoln assassination occurred. Only one ranger is trained in ASL, thus a hearing impaired visitor can only receive the tour if the ranger is on duty.

Underserved Audiences

Based on the information obtained from interviews with the staff of Ford's Theater, the demographics of the area surrounding, and the ADA requirements the following are three audiences which are currently underserved.

I. Residents of Washington D.C. including:

a. Afro American population

b. Junior High and High school students

II. Disabled population

Analysis of Underserved Audiences

Based on the interviews and census data the failure to attract the local community--particularly the African-American population--can be attributed to the lack of : consistent programming, interest in the subject area (the museum focuses on a very specific area in time - the assassination), leisure time or competition with other leisure time activities among the underserved audiences. Also it is probable that the local area residents are not familiar with Ford's Theatre or what it has to offer. Thus, a lack of awareness among the underserved audience could be a factor in low attendance by the local community.

While the Theatre receives several school groups outside of the Washington, D.C., local junior high and high schools do not attend. Four high schools, one middle school, and one junior high school are located in the vicinity of Ford's Theatre. Their lack of attendance can be attributed to the schools limited financial resources and also the failure by Ford's Theatre to actively pursue this audience or create special activities for them.

The disabled population is currently underserved because of the Theatre's lack of accessibility both structurally and internally. Wheelchair users do not have access to the Peterson House or the theatre box where the Lincoln assassination occurred. A handicapped restroom is not available in the museum and a visitor must exit the building in order to use the restroom in a nearby building. With such restrictions, handicapped persons are likely to feel discouraged and less likely to return to the museum.

Recommendations

1. Facilitate development of a mission statement for Ford's Theatre which states the educational goals of the museum and specifies the audiences that they serve or would like to serve in collaboration with Friend's of Ford's Theatre.

2. Conduct an audience survey. In order to target the three underserved audiences, it is first necessary to find out what audiences are currently being served. Conducting a visitor survey will provide the staff with demographic information of the audience being served and the reasons for their visit. This data will provide the staff with an informed basis on which to allocate their resources in targeting new audiences and or better serving existing audiences.

Methodology of Survey

In order to find out who attends the Theatre and during what months, I propose a survey to be conducted by a site ranger or intern over a one year period. The survey should include: visitors' demographic characteristics; visitors' zip code; visitors' perceptions, including how visitors first heard about Ford's Theatre and why they visit Ford's Theatre, and visitors' suggestions for improving the visit. The survey would be conducted twice a month at random times. For example, interviews could be conducted from 9:00am - 12:00pm one day of the month and 12:00pm - 5:00 pm the second day of the month. Thus, the report seeks to record what persons are attending at various times of the day. (A possible sample survey can be found on page 9 of the report).

3. Expand the content of the permanent exhibition to include the activities and rank of the various ethnic groups living in Washington, D.C. in the late 1800's, and their reaction to the assassination of Lincoln. Temporary exhibitions should seek to target underserved audiences. The Theatre should frequently engage in borrowing objects from similar institutions to diversify their collection and attract new audiences into the museum.

4. Develop programming including lecture and film series, symposiums, and concerts to invite the local community to Ford's Theatre and create an environment that makes all visitors feel welcome and at home. Consistent, good programming will build a lifetime local constituency.

FT Census Data
Surrounding Zip Code
20001

Characteristics	*%*
Age	
0-4	6.5
5-9	6.1
10-14	5.6
15-19	6.4
20-24	9.7
25-44	35.0
45-64	17.1
65-84	12.0
85 +	1.6
Education	
High School Graduates	56.6
BA and Higher	14.2
Ethnicity	
White	7.2
Black	87.2
Asian	3.0
Hispanic	5.2

Sample
Interview Questionnaire

Name of Visitor

_____

Zip Code of Visitor

_____

1. Not including the past week how many times have you been to a museum in the past year?

2. How did you hear about Ford's Theatre?

3. Is this your first visit to Ford's Theatre?

4. Why did you visit Ford's Theatre today?

5. What did you like least about the exhibit?

6. What did you like best about the exhibit?

7. What would you do to improve the museum, if anything?

Object Based interviews:

(*Possible prototype of "culturally relevant exhibit or items from the FTNHS trunk could be part of interview process*)

Appendix B

Presentation and Analysis of in depth interviews of staff at Ford's Theatre
By: Wendy Sears
Conducted: November 1995

Staff Survey

Method: The 10 question staff survey was conducted over a two day period, from November 21, 1995 to November 22, 1995. Twelve interviews were recorded, transcribed and analyzed according to the following criteria:

1. How would you describe an ideal visitor experience at Ford's Theatre?

2. What are some of the things Ford's Theatre does to make this happen?

3. What are the weaknesses of the current interpretive program at Ford's Theatre?
or
What do you think is lacking, interpretively, in the current visitor experience?

4. In your opinion, what is the one thing that you feel is most important for the visitor to come away with?

5. What do you think visitors most remember about Ford's Theatre?

6. If you had the funds and the research time what would you do to improve, if anything, the current visitor experience.

7. Other than physical limitations of the space is there anything preventing you from improving the interpretation at the site? If so, what are some of the factors?

8. How willing are you to be involved in the planning and implementation of teacher training workshops?
1 2 3 4 5 (circle 1-5, one being least interested, 5 being most interested)

9. How willing are you to use other kinds of programming during the off months?
1 2 3 4 5

10. How willing are you to establish a volunteer core through the Friends of Ford's Theatre group?
1 2 3 4 5

***Results of questions 8, 9 and 10 on pages B-3, B-4, and B-5 of appendices.**
What do the interviews tell us about the current visitor experience?

- What makes an ideal visitor experience at Ford's Theatre?

- What is the emotional reaction of visitors?
- What do visitors remember about Ford's Theatre?
- What is preventing the staff from accomplishing their goals?
- If money or time were not an issue, what would the staff do to improve Ford's Theatre?

Major Findings
Summaries of Staff Interviews

An ideal museum experience -- Staff members said they would like visitors to

- **hear the rangers talk**
- **have accessibility to all sites at the museum**
- **feel comfortable in their surroundings**

Try to treat [the visitor] as if we were inviting them into our home. Want them to feel welcome and try to make them at ease. (2)

An ideal visitor experience would be to hear a talk with the ranger; this is probably the most important thing. (3)

When they are interested enough to ask questions. They really respond with a feeling of excitement and discovery. Having a ranger be available to answer questions or talk [to the visitor in both] the museum and in the Peterson house. (9)

Want visitors to have a good time and an enjoyable visit; [one where] all the sites would be open. (4)

[The visitor] should come away with an understanding of what happened here, should hopefully be a pleasurable experience--maybe raise their curiosity. (7)

[For visitors] to get that spark -- the "gee whiz" factor. (8)

Intellectual reaction of visitors--staff wants the visitor to come away with

- **"a balanced view of the events leading up to the assassination."**
- **"the ability to put the historic event in context."**

Contemplate "what if" and understand the turmoil of the times...to understand what a crucial moment this was in history. (1)

An understanding of the assassination -- a feel for Abraham Lincoln and Washington D.C. during the Civil War. (4)

A better understanding of why Mr. Lincoln's life was taken and an understanding that the American Civil War was not romantic but violent and bloody. (6)

Try to open people's minds and show them the way it was. [Break them] from the worshipping the shrine mentality. (2)

[It is] most important for visitors to have a really good understanding of the assassination of Abraham Lincoln and his achievements while he was alive. (5)

We try to push that Booth was not a mad man, I think it's important to realize that. It's easy for people to say "oh he was just crazy, that's why he shot the President." (7)

If nothing else give them the facts and let them-- let the visitors decide if they would have like [Mr. Lincoln] or disliked him at the time he lived. Try to be balanced. There's more gray than most people want to think about from the past. (8)

To give the visitor a participatory role in gaining a deeper understanding of the area that they visited, not through just a lecture but a two way conversation. (10)

To tell the story -- how [the assassination] happened; how the theatre was built; what the conditions were like back then; how the chairs were uncomfortable. (11)

Emotional reactions – Staff members said they would like visitors to

- **reflect on the events of April 14, 1865.**
- **understand the solemnity of the place.**
- **imagine themselves back in time.**

They get overwhelmed at what has happened. It's kind of nice to see people touched by history. (1)

I think the most pronounced visitor I ever saw that came here was an elderly women who came inside the room where Lincoln died and said, "Okay, I've seen where the President died, I can now go home and die myself." Now, to me, that's extreme, of course, but that's the kind of reaction I want people to have. I want some kind of emotion to be exhibited.

[President] Clinton comes to the Theatre today, we have a lot of security folds on site and Lincoln didn't have any security...The thought of killing a president was unthinkable -- to get people to understand how things were thought about back then. (8)

If we can make them for fifteen minutes sit down and feel like it's 1865 and they are hearing of the assassination then I think we've succeeded in what we're supposed to do. (4)

Staff believes that visitors remember

- **the bloody pillow**
- **the rangers talk**
- **the gun**

Before I took the pillow out, they always remembered the pillow. (1)

All the little kids could communicate with the pillow. Twenty to thirty years later they would come back and remember it, it stuck in their minds. (3)

The bloody pillow -- the gun. (7)

That's all they want to see, they have no appreciation for what has happened in that house, why? because no one has been telling them the story. (6)

I think the box, even though it's a reproduction it still catches people unaware, the simplicity of it. (8)

The bloody pillow that was on display...Dozens of people commented about how they were here years ago, and remember seeing the pillow. So is the bloody pillow effective? Yes. Is it memorable? Yes. Is it good history??? (10)

Concerns – a lack of various resources is preventing the staff from accomplishing their goals. These are the things which the staff feels are preventing them from improving the visitor experience.

We need more staff. Even if the visitor gets the talk, they want more clarification. (1)

In the spring there are so many people. We fill the Theatre with 700 people and then hustle them out and hustle the next 750 people in (2)

Proper training of staff. (3)

The National Park Service needs to put more emphasis on training and education of the rangers. (5)

One of the things I worry about, is that the tour guides schedule tours of Ford's for 45 minutes, and in this period visitors are supposed to learn the history of the Civil War, politics, and wait in line at the same time. (7)

One of our biggest problems is this is an active theatre and its is closed [to the public] a lot. The visitors are being denied a major part of the scene. We need to present this in a positive way [such as -- by having an active theatre, we are providing] a living legacy to Lincoln and his love for the Theatre. (8)

We're at the behest of the public. The public has been so enamored with this -- "we want to see" -- they come in mass and that takes away form the experience. (6)

The staff we have is so creative and so frustrated -- just the [everyday operation to keep the place running] is stifling. They do not have time to present and develop on a regular basis the fabulous programs that they are capable of. (8)

We need to get more programming and lack of staffing prevent us from being able to give enough programs. (7)

People are hungry for knowledge and we're at such a disadvantage because we can't feed that knowledge and increase it. We don't have somebody [an interpreter] down there [in the museum] to get them when [the visitor] thinks of the questions. If they see you 5 minutes later they are not going to ask you. (10)

Crowds overtax the material and human resources. We can not do an effective job when interpreting to 1500 people an hour. (10)

Improvements to Ford's Theatre. If money and time were not an issue, the staff said they would like to see the following improvements to the site.

Continually changing temporary exhibits. (4)

Like to do more outreach. Go out to schools and take the trunk program. Also having more special programs such as guest lecturers. (5)

I would say open [the Peterson house] to certain visitors, a handful of people every hour, -- 20 people 25 people-- every hour. I would also change the house inside and have the house reflect what it looked like the hour after Lincoln's body was removed. (6)

I would like to have more third person interpretation over at the Peterson house where we get [interpreters] to describe what was going on in the rooms. (7)

Much more visitor contact beyond orientation. 50 percent of our job is [telling visitors] "this is a self guiding tour, here's our theatre, the bathroom is on the lower level." This is a vital part, but to get beyond that -- to make sure the bulk of the people get some sort of interpretation from the ranger. (7)

Have pre-visit planning to heighten the awareness of the school groups as to what it is there going to see, and have follow up programming and continuing outreach to the local schools. (10)

Have an into. panel [somewhere in the museum] with background information of what happened [the night of Lincoln's assassination. (1)

Put in proper elevators for people confined to wheelchairs; people who have disabilities going up and down stairs. (2)

[Interpretively speaking] there is training that is needed in acting. Need interpreters to take a look at themselves. (3)

Do more third person interpretation. Do more living history programs aimed at the assassination. (4)

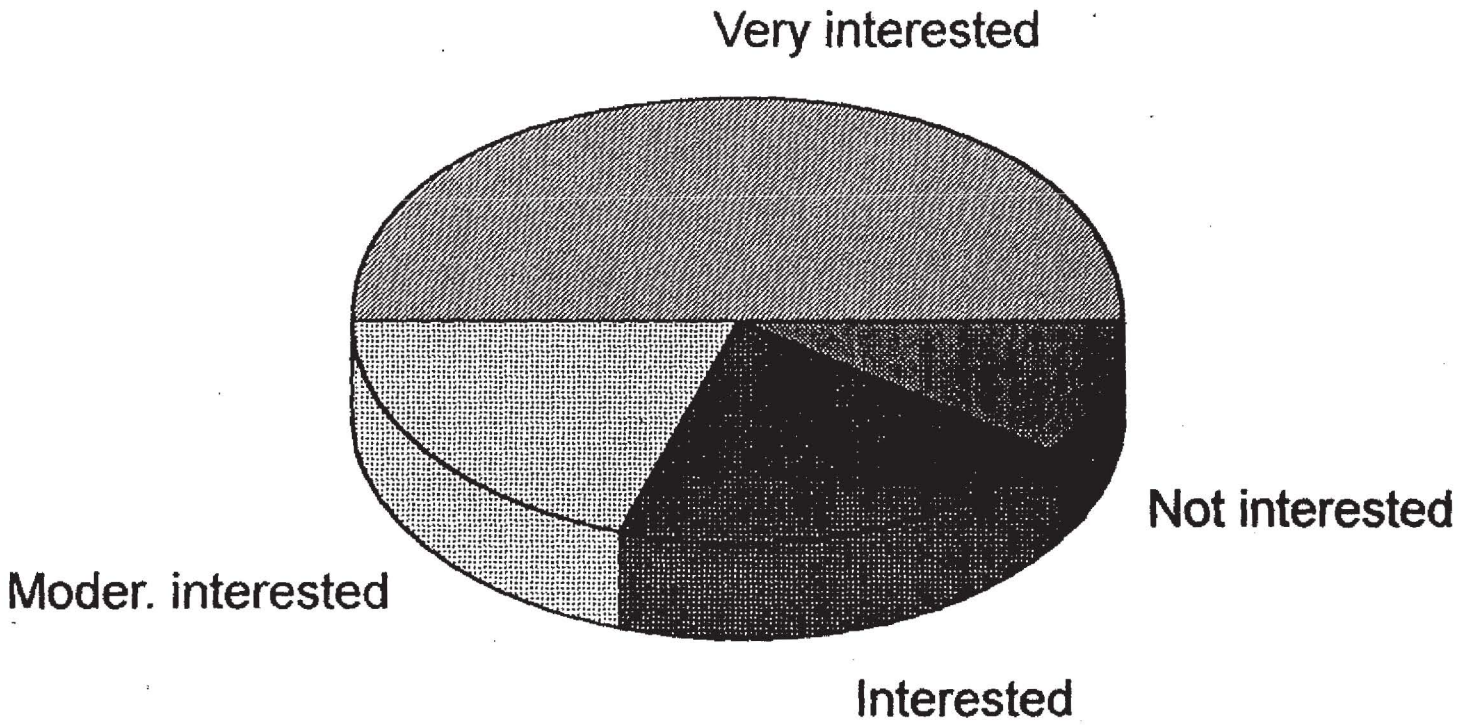
Recommendations

based on interviews with staff .

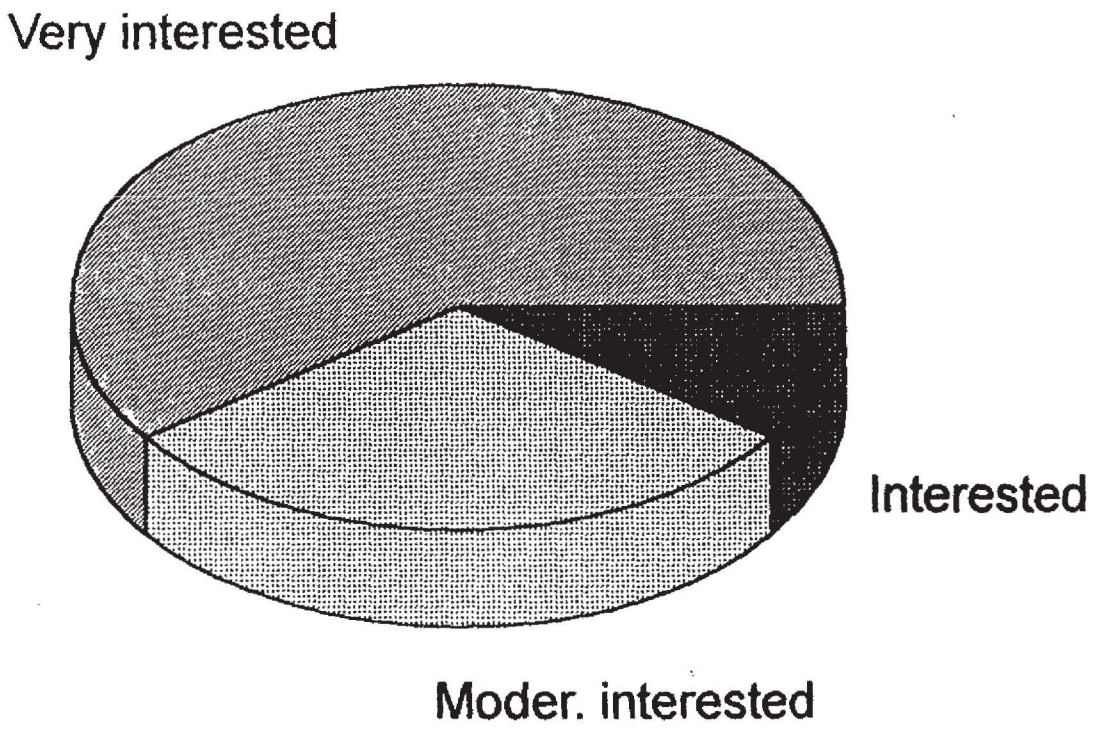
The staff at Ford's Theatre has a complete understanding of the ways in which they would like to improve the visitor experience and the many factors preventing them from achieving their goals and creating an ideal visitor experience. Despite drawbacks such as lack of staffing or adequate funding, the staff possesses an eternal optimism that enable them to keep striving for and creating he best possible visitor experience. Based on the eleven interviews, I recommend the following.

- The staff shares many common goals in terms of creating an ideal visitor experience. A mission statement which expresses the purpose of Ford's Theatre and its educational goals, as prioritized by staff member, is the first step in fulfilling the staff's goals and staying on track.
- All of the staff expressed the need for more staffing. At the same time, most members of the staff were in favor of actively recruiting volunteer. While staff members voiced concern that volunteers should not take the place of rangers , they could use them in areas such as the Theatre box or in the hallway of the Petersen house. Ion this way, the rangers or interpretive guides could act as interpreter rather than as guards of person in chard of crowd control. Also, rangers could have more time to spend on creating new programs, such as more third person interpretation.
- Many of the staff mentioned that the bloody pillow was what visitors most remember. Many thought that removing the pillow from display was a good idea, as it place the focus on other aspects of the museum. But, one staff member said, "Dozens of people comment about how they were here years ago, and remember seeing the pillow. So is the bloody pillow effective? Yes. Is it memorable? Yes. Is it good history???" The comments made by several staff members reflect a shallow interpretation of the pillow. Although the pillow currently evokes negative comments from the staff due to visitor irreverence for the object. The interpretation of the object could be changed to capture the reverential and cognitive story imbedded in the object. Freeman Tilden writes, "Interpretation should aim to present a whole rather than a part, and must address itself to the whole man rather than any phase. It is important to make the visitors contact an appreciation of a whole rather than or any part (Tilden, p. 9). Interpreters could focus their entire presentation on the pillow and the story that it tells. It contains more than the blood of the President, but tells the story of the blood of the war; the feeling the war ignited; and the way in which many individuals felt about President Lincoln. The whole story of the assassination could be told using the bloody pillow as the focal point.
- Almost all of the staff felt that the ranger talk was necessary for an ideal visitor experience. Few staff members mentioned the importance of the visitor connecting with the object in the museum. Since objects are the primary reason behind the existence of museums, rangers talks could incorporate not just concepts and ideals about the assassination but also how the various objects played a part in the assassination; stimulate dialogue from the objects.

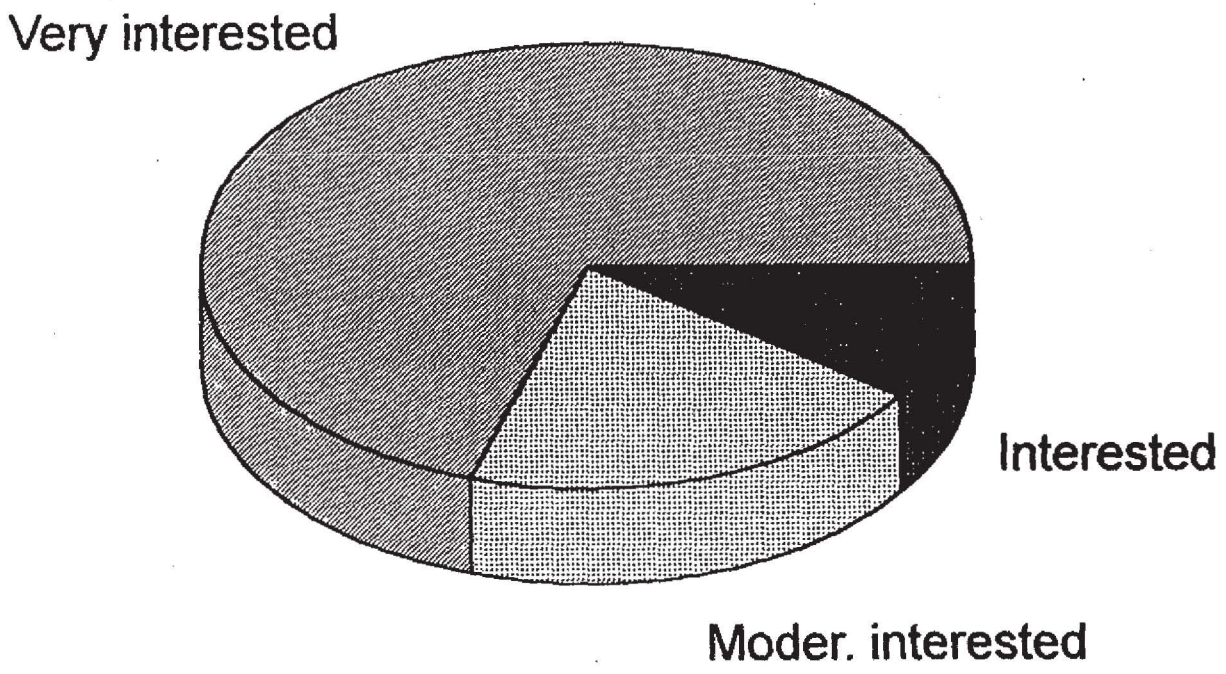
8. How willing are you to be involved in the planning and implementation of teacher training workshops?



9. How willing are you to use other kinds of programming during the off months?



10. How willing are you to establish a volunteer core through the Friends of Ford's Theatre group?



Appendix C

Criteria for FTNHS Educational Mission Statement: List of Resources to be included

American Association of Museums Task Force on Museum Education. Excellence and Equity: Education and the Public Dimension of Museums. Washington, DC: American Association of Museums, 1992

- "Museum missions should state unequivocally that an educational purpose is imbedded in every museum activity" (Excellence and Equity, p. 14).
- "The commitment to education as central to museum's public service must be clearly expressed in every museum's mission and pivotal to every museum's activities" (p. 3).
- "Museum professionals have not adequately recognized that virtually every decision, from collecting and exhibition policies to public relations plans to architectural design and security arrangements, shapes their institutions' public service and educational mission" (p. 13).

Ambrose, Timothy, and Crispin Paine. Museum Basics. New York: Routledge, 1993.
Unit 68, Management Planning and Policy Development.

- The purpose of the museum is to provide a range of high-quality services for the benefit of the collections in our care and for the education and enjoyment of al our users (Ambrose and Paine, p. 234).
- to provide displays and exhibitions interpreting collections of a recognized standard of excellence for the education and enjoyment of the museum's users (p. 234).
- to undertake and commissions research on collection in order to ensure that up-to-date and accurate information is available for use by museum staff and the museum's users (p. 234)
- to provide educational services to formal education group in order to maximize the educational potential of the museum's collection (p. 234).
- to organize informal learning opportunities through events and activities programs in order to encourage public interest in and support of the museum (p. 234)

Mission Statements from surrounding institutions as a Reference:

Hillwood Museum
Mission Statement adopted by the Board of Trustees of the Marjorie Merriweather Post Foundation of D.C.
March 1995
*copy of previous mission statement and revised statement attached.

Decatur House
748 Jackson Place, NW
Washington, D.C.

The Vail Agenda
Friends of Ford's Theatre

National Historic Site, Inc.
*Outlines four goals for Ford's Theatre in terms of: Interpretation, Education, Preservation, and Research. A copy of agenda attached.

HILLWOOD MUSEUM AND GARDENS MISSION STATEMENT

The primary purpose of the Hillwood Museum shall be to preserve its collections, structures and gardens in perpetuity, in a manner substantially representative of the lifestyle of Marjorie Merriweather Post. As a non-profit museum, Hillwood's operations shall be directed towards providing professional care of its holdings, exhibiting them, conducting and publishing ongoing research of its collections and offering attendant educational activities. The principal focus of the museum shall be to encourage the interest and study of Russian and European decorative arts, the Post family, and horticulture for the benefit of America through the years ahead.

Adopted by the Board of Trustees
of the Marjorie Merriweather Post Foundation of D.C.
March 14, 1995

3. FUNCTIONAL AREAS

It is generally agreed in the museum profession that museums have three primary functions: to collect, to research and to educate. The relative emphasis on each of these functions of course varies from institution to institution.

In order for the three primary functions to be carried out successfully, numerous support functions must also be provided, though the relative emphasis on these functions also varies from museum to museum.

The general functions of all museums are described below:

A. Primary Functions

1) Collections (conservation, preservation, collections management, registration, storage, climate control)

2) Research (study, documentation, library, scholarly publications and seminars)

3) Education (group tours, classes, exhibits, general publications and lectures, audio-visual programs, outreach)

B. Support Functions

1) Facilities (buildings and grounds maintenance, security)

2) Management and governance (policies, procedures, financial control and reporting, operations, personnel, planning)

3) Development and marketing (museum shop, food service, visitor services, special events, membership, fundraising, public relations, newsletter, promotional publications)

Hillwood's specific mission and goals are described in the next two sections.

4. MISSION STATEMENTS

The two related mission statements below were adopted by the Board of Directors of the Marjorie Merriweather Post Foundation of D.C. on May 6, 1991:

A. Foundation Mission

The primary purpose of the Marjorie Merriweather Post Foundation of D.C. shall be to preserve in perpetuity Hillwood's Buildings, Gardens and Objects of Art as a non-profit museum for the public good.

B. Museum Mission

The purpose of the Hillwood Museum shall be to preserve its Buildings, Gardens and Objects of Art in a manner substantially representative of the lifestyle of Marjorie Merriweather Post at the time of her death. As a non-profit museum, Hillwood's operations shall be directed toward the preservation and the ongoing research of its collections for the esthetics and the intellectual benefit of future generations.

Friends of Ford's Theatre National Historic Site, Inc.

Preserving and Interpreting the Sites Related to the Assassination of Abraham Lincoln

". . . recognizing that the Service is not alone in its concern for the preservation of natural and cultural resources, the National Park Service should seek active public and private partners engaged in resource protection, research, education, and visitor enjoyment that are consistent with the objectives of protecting park values and conveying their meaning to the public."

National Parks for the Twenty-first Century
"The Vail Agenda"

2000 L Street, NW
Suite 200
Washington, D.C. 20036
(202) 416-1779

INTRODUCTION

Friends of Ford's Theatre National Historic Site, Inc. is an independent grassroots organization dedicated to preserving and interpreting sites related to the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln. Incorporated under the Non-Profit Corporation Act (D.C. Code, 1981 edition, Title 29, Chapter 5), the organization is represented by elected officers who implement the policy of its Board of Directors. The corporation is also forming advisory committees staffed by experts in various relevant fields.

Fords Theatre, located at 517 Tenth Street, NW, was purchased by the U.S. Government in 1866. The Petersen House, located at 516 Tenth Street, NW, was purchased by the U.S. Government in 1898. These two historic buildings were established as Ford's Theatre National Historic Site by enactment of Public Law 91-288 (84 Stat. 322) in 1970. The historic site is administered by the National Park Service (NPS). In 1994, more than 700,000 visitors toured the site.

Ford's Theatre is also a major dramatic and cultural venue. Through a cooperative agreement providing essential support from the NPS the Theatre Society produces live dramatic arts at the theatre and has presented over 100 productions in the past quarter century. While the Theatre Society, through association with the NPS, has fulfilled its special role with outstanding success, no organization has ever been allied with the NPS to support the historical and educational mission of the site. Friends of Ford's Theatre is eager to form that alliance.

Friends of Ford's Theatre, Inc. has realistic goals which are both possible and practical. But success cannot come without the proactive partnership of the NPS. To encourage that relationship, we have adopted certain recommendations from the Vail Agenda as the foundation for our partnership. That document, a remarkable public commitment resulting from the Park Service's 75th Anniversary Symposium in Vail, Colorado, recognized urgent challenges and called for agency renewal.

The message that emerged from Vail was more than a mission statement. It was an effort at self-evaluation expressing - not a mere summons for continued success from an organization satisfied with its record - but a manifesto for the future viability of an organization recognizing fundamental challenges to its traditional role.

INTERPRETATION

The Vail Agenda recognized the National Park Service will be increasingly drawn into debates over how to interpret past events. As our society becomes more pluralistic, a solitary opinion cannot explain history and heroes. Friends of Ford's Theatre, Inc. will work with the NPS site management and staff to obtain funds and other necessary resources to accomplish these goals:

- Design and install new interpretative exhibits in designated under-used areas of the site.
- Produce an American Sign Language video lecture to be installed as a permanent exhibit in the Lincoln Museum.
- Design a Braille Outreach Exhibit to include copies of the Volk life casts of President Lincoln, copies of museum artifacts and selected documents and speeches translated to braille.
- Implement an annual awards program to recognize outstanding accomplishments of the NPS and volunteer interpretative staff.
- Investigate current technology and recommend promising results to improve technical aspects of the interpretative program.
- Establish grants for NPS and volunteer staff to obtain training in interpretation skills and techniques.

EDUCATION

The Vail Agenda identified the need for the National Park Service to revise its philosophy to reflect its role as part of the national public education system by melding the resources of parks and historic sites into the public classroom. Friends of Ford's Theatre, Inc. will work with the NPS site management and staff to obtain funds and other resources to accomplish these goals:

- Convert the under-used "conference room" on the second floor of the south annex building into a multi-purpose classroom and modern learning center.
- Develop a program for special theme field trips for area students with

RESEARCH

The Vail Agenda identified the need for the National Park Service to upgrade the integration of its research with its resource management. A cooperative venture with non-profit groups was recommended. Friends of Ford's Theatre, Inc. will work with the NPS site management and staff to obtain funds and other resources to accomplish these goals:

- Identify and facilitate training opportunities for NPS staff which would encourage rigorous standards of scholarship in the development of exhibits and programs.

- Establish interdisciplinary committees to conduct research at the request of NPS staff. The committees would include experts in the fields of historic preservation, history, museum studies, tourism, architecture, and education.

- Conduct workshops to involve diverse groups in research relative to their cultural experience in order to broaden the public dimension of the site.

Appendix D

Annotated Bibliography

*** Research summaries of these articles below**

Adams, G. Donald. "The Changing Museum Audience: Are We Ready?" History News **49:2 (March/April 1994) 30-31.**
Adams looks at the museum visitor of the 21st century. He challenges museums to clarify their mission statements and realize their potential as powerful educators. He fears that if museums do not take the initiative in articulating their goals, they will loose potential visitors to other leisure time activities. Thus, Adams finds the keys to museums future in "upholding and building upon professional practices, clarification of mission statements, and becoming better acquainted with museum audiences.

American Association of Museums Task Force on Museum Education. Excellence and Equity: Education and the Public Dimension of Museums. **Washington, DC: American Association of Museums, 1992.**
Excellence and Equity is an expansion upon the educational goals described in *Museums for a New Century*. The creators of E&E sought to broaden the educational mission of museums by stressing the two concepts of excellence and equity. Excellence applying to the educational endeavors of a museums and equity referring to the diverse audience which museums should provide programming for and welcome into their museum.
The report is a essential for all museum professionals who are either renewing or re-focusing their educational mission.

Blythe, T. & Gardner, H. (1990). "A school for all Intelligences." *Educational Leadership*, **47, (7), 33-37.**
Blythe and Gardner discuss the theory of multiple intelligences, dispelling the belief that only linguistic and logical-mathematical are important in the school environment. He looks at the theory in four areas: range of abilities addressed, learning environment, assessment measure, and concept of learner. In addition the report focuses on pilot projects which have embraced the MI theory in incorporating all seven intellectual capacities.
The report is applicable to the museum environment since, these environments generally incorporate all seven of the multiple intelligences.

Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly, and Kim Hermanson. "Intrinsic Motivation in Museums: What makes Visitors Want to Learn?" Museum News **74:3 (May/June 1995) 35-7, 59-60, 62.**
Csikzentmihalyi and Hermanson discuss theories of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation in relation to the museum atmosphere. The authors relate the concept of a flow experience as being one that is intrinsically motivated. Museum settings are conducive to the "flow experience" if they provide the necessary components to create such an experience: clear goals, challenges which meet the learners skill level, and a feedback mechanism. Thus, museums have a strong potential of facilitating an experience in which, "all of one's mind and body become completely involved in an activity," however they must first understand the theory behind such an experience.

Tilden, Freeman. ***Interpreting Our Heritage*****, 3rd ed. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1977.**
"A classic in the literature of park management," Tilden Freeman offers practical guidelines for creating good interpretation. His six principles focus on: relating what is described or displayed in a museum to the visitors experience or personality, information as revelation, interpretation as an art form, interpretation as provocation not instruction, interpretation as presenting a whole rather than parts, and interpretation addressed to children as a different approach from teaching adults.

Silverman, Lois. "Making Meaning Together: Lessons from the Field of American History." Journal of Museum Education **18:3 (Fall 1993) 7-11.**
Silverman makes connections between the fields of history and museum education with the idea that the fusion of the two fields can create a more democratic museum. She believes that every person can be actively involved in the history making process by relating their own experiences with the collections and objects within the museum. She discusses the notion of the expert/novice dichotomy and argues that all persons provide information that is on an equal level. Thus, history museums should be about dialogue, not about experts relating truths.

Visitor Studies Research: Resources for Conducting Visitor Studies

***Dodson, Angie. 1995. "National Building Museum: Visitor Survey Report." Unpublished report for the National Building Museum, Washington, D.C.**

***The Getty Museum. 1987. "Insight: Museums, Visitors, Attitudes, and Expectations." A Focus Group Experiment. Getty Museum. Malibu, California.**

***Korn, Randi. 1995. "The Hillwood Museum: An Audience Profile." Unpublished report for The Hillwood Museum, Washington, D.C.**

Korn. "Studying Your Visitors: Where to Begin." History News **49:2 (March/April 1994) 24-26.**
Korn's purpose for writing the article is two-fold. "First, it clarifies and defines evaluation terminology and provides beginners with information about conducting simple visitor evaluation." She discusses front-end, formative, and summative evaluation, stressing that all three are equally important.
Written in a clear and succinct manner, Ms. Korn provides museum professionals with a "good start" in the method of visitor evaluations methods.

Perry, Deborah L. 1994. "The Anatomy of a Museum Visit: What Visitors Really Want."** ***The Source Book**, American Association of Museum's Annual Meeting. pgs. 69-73.**
Roberts, Lisa. "Affective Learning, Affective Experience: What does it have to do with Museum Education?" *Visitor Studies: Theory, Research, and Practice Volume 4.* pgs. 163-168.
Roberts discusses affective behavior in the museum environment. She focus on "factors that have shaped attitudes in the museum toward affective experience; and the role affect plays in the whole learning process. She expounds upon the importance of visitor research as a means to record and document visitors' affective behaviors.
One of the few articles addressing affective behavior, the article should be read by all museum educators.

***The Getty Museum. 1987. "Insight: Museums, Visitors, Attitudes, and Expectations." A Focus Group Experiment. Getty Museum. Malibu, California.**

Developed in 1987, *Insight: Museums, Visitors, Attitudes, and Expectations*, "presents the findings of a research project involving a consortium of eleven American art museums." The art museums participated in the project in an effort to better understand themselves and the visitors they serve. With the influx of museum programming geared towards educating the public, the consortium of museums who participated in the report sought to answer two questions: "How do museums know whether or not the programs they develop are having the effect they intended?" and "How can museums draw on the expertise of their curators, as well as educators, to meet the needs of visitors? The report answers these questions through interviews with the staff of all eleven art museums and focus groups consisting of visitors and non-visitors to each of the eleven art museums.

"The project was conducted using focus group methodology." At the time of the report, focus groups had been largely used in market and consumer research, not in the museum environment. The participants of the project felt that this methodology would be "the most effective vehicle for leaning more about the expectations that museum staff hold for visitors, and for understanding the perceptions and attitudes visitors have about museums." In addition focus group methodology was felt to create a more intimate experience between museum staff and their visitors.

The Focus group consisted of eleven to twelve people who were selected from a target population. The group discussed issues presented by a trained moderator in a room that was equipped with one-way mirrors and audio video equipment for record keeping. This method allowed many of the staff of the museums to become involved in hearing the discussions among the

focus group participants and thus get a feel for the perceptions and attitudes among their visitors. "Five to six focus groups were conducted for each of the eleven museums." The first group consisted of staff members of the museums in order to discover staff expectations of their visitors, and the remaining focus groups consisted of visitors and non-visitors to the museum. The initial discussions among visitors and non-visitors of the focus groups centered around their expectations. Both groups then toured the museum and were asked to keep a diary. Upon completion of the tour the groups met again to discuss their impressions of the museums and how their expectations or perceptions had changed.

The findings from the focus group discussions revealed many interesting data from both staff perspective and visitor perspectives. From the initial focus groups, which consisted of staff members, it was learned that museum workers want visitors "to have positive, meaningful experiences and leave with the desire to return." In addition, it was found that museum staff feel that "individuals should experience museums in whatever way they find most meaningful." The conclusions of the staffs discussions revealed that their perspectives resulted in very vague expectations.

The focus groups consisting of visitors of the museums revealed that, on the whole, visitors are concerned about the following: They are frustrated about the lack of information and the size of type on the labels; they would like to have more audio and video presentations to supplement the art work; and finally they expressed their confusion about the layout of some of the museums and the lack of an appropriate orientation.

The results of the non-visitor focus groups revealed the following. These individuals did not frequently visit art museums because of a lack of interest in art; they perceived an art museum as a place of connoisseurs of art; finally, they were embarrassed at their lack of knowledge on the subject and felt they would not be able to contribute or learn anything from a museum experience.

As a result of the report, all eleven art museums made a commitment to improving their museum and making changes based on the results of the visitor and non-visitor focus groups. At the conclusion of the report each of the eleven museums that participated in the study designed a report that stated the perceived needs, their objective for improving the museum, and a description of how they would make these improvements.

The article is particularly meaningful as it is one of the few reports that I have found that first shows staff perspectives on the visitors experience, and then shows the visitors' actual experience or their perspective of the museum. The report provides a good model for my current study on staff perspective at Ford's Theatre and will later serve as an aid for designing and implementing a visitor study.

***Korn, Randi. 1995. "The Hillwood Museum: An Audience Profile." Unpublished report for The Hillwood Museum, Washington, D.C.**

Designed by evaluator, Randi Korn, with input from the staff of the Hillwood Museum, *The Hillwood Museum: An Audience Profile* "presents findings from a mail-back survey conducted at Hillwood Museum in Washington, D.C." The purpose of the survey was to record "demographic information, information about what visitors do at Hillwood, and an assessment of visitors' experiences." The study was conducted to inform the Hillwood staff about the demographics of their current audience and how they can better meet the needs of their audience.

The methodology and procedure for conducting the survey are as follows. The survey was distributed by volunteers to patrons of the museum upon the conclusion of their tour. To insure that participant selection for the survey was unbiased, volunteers "used a systematic selection process known as probability sampling method." "This method ensures that each visitor in the target sample has an equal change of being selected." Participants of the survey were required to self

address a postcard, which would then be sent by volunteers as a reminder to mail back their questionnaire. "The total sample included 968 complete questionnaires." Questionnaires were distributed during July and October; the majority of questionnaires were given to visitors on weekdays.

The demographic findings of the report reveal the following: Hillwood museum attracts more females than males; the mean age of visitors is 51.9 years; three-quarters are graduates of college, and 1/3 hold a graduate degree; the majority of the visitors are form Virginia; "the annual family income of more than one-third of visitors is 100,000 or more, one-quarter of visitors have an annual family income of 50,000-74,999.

Information in regard to visitor behavior revealed the following: The majority of visitors heard about the Hillwood museum from friends or relatives; "71.2 percent of visitor groups consist of two to four visitors;" "three-quarter of all visitors are first-time visitors while most repeat visitors are live in the local area. The report also revealed why visitors attend Hillwood and how they spend their day. The majority of visitors attending Hillwood come to see the main house and the Russian collection. They spend their day touring the main house, while also eating at the cafe and visiting the gardens. All of the findings were cross tabulated with the month the visitor attend, the day of their visit, and the age of the visitor.

The conclusions form Ms. Korn's research yield important information for the museum staff. The demographic information allows the staff to know where their visitors are coming from and thus "develop long-range marketing strategies." The report indicates that the audience to Hillwood is extremely homogenous which as indicated by Ms. Korn could be helpful to the staff in recruiting new visitors to the museums that "match the current visitor profile." Also, if the staff was interested in reaching new audiences, "data regarding education could be used as an indicator to target other populations less evident in Hillwood's visitorship who may be interested in visiting Hillwood." Thus, the conclusions from the report merit close attention from the Hillwood staff in

their quest to identify their audience, understand their audience's needs, and figure out ways in which to target new audiences.

Concluding Comments

The report's merit lies in its thoroughness and detail. Not only are demographics of visitors included but also their experiences at Hillwood -- what they like to do most and how did they hear about the Museum. Most importantly the report provides visitors thoughts on improving the Hillwood museum. This information is invaluable to a museum staff who is seeking to realize who their visitors are, why they are coming to the museum, and maximize the visitor experience.

The results of the Hillwood study tie directly into my project at Ford's Theatre. Although I am interviewing and conducting a survey of the staff of Ford's Theatre, rather than the visitor, the basis of the Hillwood report was guided by the information provided by the staff. Their interests were incorporated into Randi's questionnaire so that what the questionnaire yielded was important to the staff and provided information on what they wanted to know about their visitor. The staff survey at Ford's Theatre is the first step in developing a visitor survey. The information I will obtain from interviewing the staff will aid me in developing a visitor survey.

***Perry, Deborah L. 1994. "The Anatomy of a Museum Visit: What Visitors Really Want." *The Source Book*, American Association of Museum's Annual Meeting. pgs. 69-73.**

Included in the American Association of Museum's 1994 Annual Source Book, Dr. Perry's article provides a brief look into what visitors want from a museum experience "in terms of current motivational theory." Dr. Perry builds upon the work of Dr. Jerome Bruner, who in 1966 identified four "natural energies to sustain learning" including: curiosity, a desire for competence, the aspiration to emulate a model, and the need for social reciprocity. Dr. Perry in turn establishes six affective variables, based on findings by Thomas Malone and Mark Lepper in the 1980s' and her own subsequent research in 1989 and 1992. She identifies and discusses the six variables

which include: attention, confidence, challenge, control, play, and communication. Within each of these variables, Dr. Perry lists ways of achieving the described variable and thus understanding what visitors really want from a museum experience.

Dr. Perry bases her research on the findings of other noted research studies, namely Dr. Bruner's Toward a theory of instruction and Lepper and Malone's reports, Aptitude, learning and instruction: Vol. 3. Cognitive and affective process analyses; and What making things fun to learn? A study of intrinsically motivating computer games. She focuses her study on six variables that she identifies in her 1989 and 1992 reports focusing on current motivational theory. "The results of the study identified six affective variables that described what visitors really want from a museum experience: curiosity, confidence, challenge, control, play, and communication." "

The conclusions of Dr. Perry's report are summarized in a quote that reads as follows: "What may be challenging to one individual may be intimidating to another. What may stimulate meaningful communication in one cultural group may ignite it in another." Thus she concludes her report with a challenge to museum professionals to build upon these six variables, and incorporate them into the museum environment in ways which will satisfy museum visitors of different backgrounds and varying levels of knowledge and experience. Although a lofty challenge, it is worthy of museum professionals' time and energy in achieving what visitors' want from a museum experience.

The report's examination of what visitors really want from a museum experience not only gave me a framework from which to measure and analyze Ford's Theatre staff responses to their interviews but also provided me with a model from which to think about and form a visitor survey. The article's examination of the six variables needs to be considered when analyzing the staff responses to the interviews. What are their (Ford's Theatre staff) views on the visitor experience? Did they mention any of these variables as they discussed the visitor experience at Ford's Theatre? Most importantly the article's challenge to museum professionals to carefully consider the issues of

diversity and realize the six variables is sound advice to the staff at Ford's Theatre's. A staff committed to widening their audience and trying to serve all of their diverse needs.

***Angie Dodson. 1995. "National Building Museum: Visitor Survey Report." Unpublished report for the National Building Museum, Washington, D.C.**

Prepared by Angie Dodson, the *National Building Museum Visitor Survey Report* was "designed and conducted to obtain, relevant, reliable information about visitors to the National Building Museum." The objectives of the report sought to answer questions regarding visitor demographics and behavior of visitors at the museum. In addition, information was discovered in regard to ways of improving the quality of the museum experience for the visitor and to describe what other leisure time activities visitors engage in.

The visitor survey was given to visitors upon completion of the their self-guided tour through the museum. The survey was self administered and was conducted over a week period. "Sixty-nine percent of the surveys were administered during the week and thirty-one were administered over the weekend." One hundred surveys were completed over the week period.

In regard to visitor demographics, the surveys revealed the following information. Three-quarters of visitors to the National Building Museum (NBM) are over thirty-five years of age; about the same number of women visit NBM as men; most visitors to NBM have completed a college education; eighty-seven percent of the visitors describe themselves as being white; almost half of all visitors reported household incomes in 1994 to be over $60,000; and just under one quarter of NBM visitors work in fields related to the built environment.

In terms of visitor behavior, the surveys revealed the following information. Most visitors hear about the NBM through word-of-mouth; most visitors come to the NBM out of curiosity as they have never been there before; over half of the visitors are first time visitors to the NBM; fifty-

three percent of visitors said they were likely to return and seventy-one percent indicated that they would recommend the NBM to a friend.

Lastly, the report revealed the visitation trend of visitors to the NBM. The majority of visitors reported that they were either residents or visiting the NBM on a repeat visit to the D.C. area; nearly half of the visitors responded that they were residents of the area; fifty-three percent of the visitors attended because of a particular exhibition. When asked the question, "what additional services would they like the museum to provide?" the only significant request was for more exhibitions.

In her conclusion, Ms. Dodson compared her findings with two similar reports, conducted in 1991 by students of American University, in order to compare and contrast the findings between all three reports. She concludes that the only major difference between the reports falls under the, "Why visitors visit" the NBM category. She concludes that this phenomena might be a result of how the questions were posed rather than a change in visitor behavior.

Both well organized and succinct, the design of the report provides a good model for the organization of my *Staff Perspectives* report for Ford's Theatre. Ms. Dodson's adherence to her objectives and goals when designing the questions used on the survey provide a prime example of the importance to sticking to one's stated goals. The questions used for a visitor survey, or indeed any survey, should be based on one's objectives. In addition, the report's careful attention to the proper wording of questions on the survey aided me in formulating questions for my own staff evaluation and suggested visitor survey.



Lunchtime with Lincoln

A Lunchtime Learning Series
at
Ford's Theatre National Historic Site

presented by
Lauren Brownstein

The George Washington University
Museum Education Program

Ford's Theatre National Historic Site is a cultural resource in the heart of Washington, DC. Many Washingtonians, however, have yet to realize the educational enrichment available at the site. Attracting Washingtonians to the site for a lunchtime learning series offers a convenient, educationally diverse way for local residents to develop a relationship with Ford's Theatre National Historic Site. Once employees of local businesses visit the site during the week, they can be encouraged to continue their involvement through family visits, theatre performances, or volunteerism "Lunchtime with Lincoln" offers adults the educational opportunities they need and enjoy and offers Ford's Theatre National Historic Site a way to reach out to people from the Greater Washington area.

"Lunchtime with Lincoln"

A Lunchtime Learning Series
at
Ford's Theatre National Historic Site

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SECTION I
Institutional Profile

Description

Ford's Theatre National Historic Site (FTNHS) consists of Ford's Theatre (including a theatre and museum/exhibition space), Peterson House, the Star Saloon, and the 517 office building. Located in the heart of downtown Washington, DC, it is administered by the National Park Service (NPS). Its efforts are supported by NPS Rangers, Friends of Ford's Theatre National Historic Site, Inc., and volunteers. While it has not adopted a formal mission statement, its primary mission (according to the staff) is to tell the story of the Lincoln assassination. To that end, the NPS works to preserve and maintain the FTNHS and to educate the public about its significance. Current educational programs primarily consist of interpretive talks given by NPS Rangers in the museum or theatre.

Directions for Change

FTNHS has an interest expanding its educational programs, yet it is severely limited by its small staff and budget. In order to improve interpretive programs, FTNHS has entered into a collaborative project with the George Washington University's Museum Education Program, and it is under the auspices of that project that this proposal has been formulated. The proposals formulated by the collaboration between FTNHS and GWU have centered around expanding the site's local audience, since the site has expressed a desire and need to do so. While millions of people visit FTNHS each year, only a handful of visitors live in the greater Washington, DC area. Attracting more of a local audience to FTNHS would expand the site's educational scope and build community support, helping area residents see FTNHS as a local treasure.

SECTION II
"Lunchtime with Lincoln"

DESCRIPTION

"Lunchtime with Lincoln," a Lunchtime Learning Series held at FTNHS...

Consists of: lectures
activities
experiences with objects
book signings
theatre or music performances
other programs related to the museum's collections

Takes place: twice a month during lunchtime

Designed to: attract Washingtonians who work at the downtown offices located near FTNHS

OBJECTIVE

"Lunchtime with Lincoln" furthers the educational mission of FTNHS while attracting a local audience to the site.

RATIONALE

Most people who work in offices near FTNHS live in the greater Washington, DC area. If their interest in the site is piqued during the week, they could be encouraged to return to the site on weekends with their families or friends. "Lunchtime with Lincoln" will meet the adult learners' needs to expand their interests and continue with educational endeavors. It will also meet FTNHS's need and desire to attract more local visitors. Finally, "Lunchtime with Lincoln" can serve as a base for potential volunteers or members of Friends of Ford's Theatre National Historic Site, Inc.

IMPLEMENTATION

In designing "Lunchtime with Lincoln," a number of areas must be considered, including:

- recruitment of presenters
- recruitment of participants
- subject matter of sessions
- methods of presentation
- logistics and timing of the series

The following suggested implementation plans are based on research, interviews with FTNHS volunteers and staff, interviews with potential audience members, and information from the

museum professionals (see Section III -- Research). In creating this program, as with any program, a certain amount of trial and error must ensue in order to find a good match between the organization's needs and the participants' needs. The following suggestions should be taken as starting points:

Recruitment of presenters

FTNHS will recruit presenters for each session. Presenters could include:

NPS Rangers
FTNHS volunteers
professors from local universities
members of historical societies
storytellers
actors
musicians
museum professionals
other individuals or groups who could act as resources to the site

Presenters could also be a part of other FTNHS events -- a session could consist of a book signing or theatre performance, for example. The Friends of Ford's Theatre National Historic Site, Inc. have proposed a speech contest for local high school students. These students could be invited to present their speeches as part of the series. Any other programs that are developed could be considered for inclusion in the series. FTNHS may find that some speakers want to be compensated for their time. Assistance from the Friends group, fundraising, or alternate plans would be necessary if that were the case.

Recruitment of participants

FTNHS could take advantage of a wide variety of opportunities to advertise the series and recruit participants:

television and radio public service announcements
City Paper
Washington Post
Washington Times
neighborhood newspapers
flyers posted in the Metro Center area
government newsletters
The Kiosk (NPS publication)
announcements at theatre events

Methods like these have been used successfully at local museums such as the National Museum of Natural History. (Rothberg, interview) A more concentrated publicity method would be to develop a relationship with human resource departments in office buildings such as the nearby FBI Building. This would enable FTNHS to more closely reach its target audience through internal newsletters, memos, or e-mail postings.

Subject Matter

Preliminary research with potential audience members indicates that the subjects addressed at FTNHS which most interest local employees include the **history of Washington, DC** and the **Lincoln presidency**. These subjects should probably be addressed in the series, but experimentation may show which subjects are of most interest. FTNHS should use the series to introduce participants to **museum's permanent collections**, **temporary exhibitions**, the **theatre**, and **Peterson House**. Many museums that run lunchtime programs try to tie in the subject matter of the sessions with **local or national events**, or things that are **in the news**. Black History Month (February), for example, offers some interesting topics for FTNHS sessions, such as Lincoln's role in the abolition of slavery or the experience of black Civil War soldiers.

Presentation

In order to accommodate various learning styles, "Lunchtime with Lincoln" sessions could include not only **lectures** but **hands-on experiences with replica objects**, **performances**, **discussions**, **films**, **walking tours**, etc. For some visitors, a lecture might constitute a memorable experience. For others, a chance to handle objects in FTNHS's trunk of replicas could make an impression. Other visitors might be better able to understand the magnitude of John Wilkes Booth's actions by going to the presidential box, standing where the shooting of Lincoln took place, and seeing how far Booth had to jump to the stage. Adult learners have a need for discovery -- they want to find something new and be challenged to think. (David Carr, "The Adult Learner in the Museum") A variety of types of presentations must be offered to allow this discovery to take place.

Timing

Sessions should last approximately one-half hour.

The potential audience, employees of local businesses, are extremely busy during their lunch hours. Some, in fact, take less than an hour or no time at all. To accommodate busy schedules, sessions should last approximately one-half hour. This would allow participants to attend sessions and still have time to eat or run errands. If participants are allowed to eat during sessions held in the conference room, the time of sessions could be expanded to 45 minutes or one hour. FTNHS could consider developing partnerships with local restaurants like the Dixie Grill or Hard Rock Cafe in order to accommodate lunch needs. A pilot program will determine what works best for visitors.

Sessions should be held twice a month.

Weekly sessions could be too cumbersome for visitors who want to attend each one. On the other hand, it might help attendance if visitors know that Thursday, for example, is "Ford's Theatre" day. If sessions are held once a month, the series might lose its continuity. Therefore, sessions should be held twice a month, and a pilot program will show what works for visitors.

The winter months would be the best time of year to run the series.

The winter months would be the best time to run the series, since this is the "slow" period for FTNHS in terms of visitation.

The series should include at least eight sessions.

The total length of the series will depend on how far apart individual sessions are held, but in order to develop a theme and a following of regular participants, the series should include at least eight sessions.

A pilot program will show what works best for visitors.

The first time that "Lunchtime with Lincoln" is implemented, it should be considered a pilot program -- a time to experiment with different presentation methods, session lengths, and other implementation strategies to determine what best fits the visitor needs. In order to gain valuable information from the pilot stage, it is important to implement evaluation strategies.

EVALUATION

FTNHS should evaluate the series in terms of the visitors' educational experiences and expansion of the local audience. **Written evaluations or short participant interviews** could be used to find out what visitors are learning, what sorts of presentations appeal to them, and if they are enjoying their experiences. If participants names and addresses are maintained, FTNHS could **send the participants post cards** six months or one year after their participation to find out if they have visited FTNHS since the series. If "Lunchtime with Lincoln" participants receive some sort of **special benefit when they visit FTNHS** (such as a discount at the bookstore) this could also be used to track their visitation. If participants are encouraged to **volunteer or join Friends of Ford's Theatre National Historic Site, Inc.**, this could also be used as a way to study their continued visitation and involvement with the site.

SECTION III
Research

In order to develop the "Lunchtime with Lincoln" program, a variety of research methods were used. These include interviews with museum professionals, interviews with potential audience members, research in developmental literature, and Internet inquiries. A listing and/or explanation of these research methods is presented in the following manner:

Bibliography
Appendix A: Analysis of Interviews with Potential Audience Members
Appendix B: Information on Internet inquiries

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Carr, David, "The Adult Learner in the Museum"
The author examines the needs of adult learners in museum settings. He discusses assumptions that adults bring to the museum setting, ways that museums present knowledge, and common pitfalls of museums in dealing with adult learners.

Newman and Newman, Development Through Life: A Psychosocial Approach, 6th Edition, Washington, DC, Brooks/Cole Publishing Company, 1995, p. 516-629.
This research addresses life changes, learning needs, and driving issues for adults aged 22-60, the age span at which the lunchtime learning series is targeted.

Rothberg, Debbie, Educator at the National Museum of Natural History, personal interview, November 2, 1995.
This interview examined ways in which the interviewee has conducted a lunchtime series at her site: coordinating lectures, attracting an audience, advertising the program.

Schell, Suzanne B., "On Interpretation and Historic Sites," in *Patterns in Practice: Selections from the Journal of Museum Education*, ed. Susan K. Nichols, p.27-34, Washington, DC: Museum Education Roundtable, 1992.
This article looks at the history, current status, value, and issues associated with using historic sites to interpret the past. The author stresses visitors' preconceived notions of the past, suggests using an interdisciplinary approach to interpretation, and asserts that research is key in establishing credibility.

APPENDIX A:

Analysis of Interviews
Ford's Theatre National Historic Site
Lunchtime Lecture Series

Interview Objectives

The objective of the interviews I conducted was to find out **if there is a potential audience for a lunchtime lecture series at Ford's Theatre National Historic Site (FTNHS)** [primary objective]. Through my questions I hoped to find out about the following sub-objectives:

1. Is lunchtime conducive for brief educational activities?
2. Are people aware of the existence/significance of FTNHS?
3. Are people interested in potential FTNHS lecture topics?

Rationale

Before FTNHS invests the time and effort of putting together a lunchtime lecture series, the site should first determine if there is a potential audience for the program. Potential audience members (employees of local businesses) were interviewed during their lunch breaks (the suggested time of the program) in order to help determine interest in the program.

Methods

Ten "person on the street" interviews were conducted within a three block area of FTNHS. Interviewees were asked if they worked near Metro Center. They were then told that the interviewer was a graduate student doing research on people who work near Metro Center. If the person agreed to be interviewed, they were asked a series of questions from a questionnaire. The interviews lasted approximately three minutes. (they were kept short in recognition of the fact that most interviewees had little time to spare during their lunch hours) The interviewer did not mention FTNHS until the end of the interview, in an attempt not to influence the interviewees responses. At the end of the interviews, interviewees were thanked and were told about the objectives of the interview.

Please see the attached blank interview questionnaire for more information.

Findings

First the three sub-objectives will be discussed, and then the primary objective will be discussed.

Is lunchtime conducive for brief educational activities?

While the majority of interviewees said that they take about one hour for lunch

everyday, the responses ranged from "one hour" to "no time at all." When asked what they do during their lunch times, almost all interviewees said that they use the time to run errands. Only a few indicated that they eat during their lunch time, but they may have thought that eating was implicit in their responses. Most interviewees seemed very busy, and in fact the interviewer had some difficulty stopping people on the street to agree to interviews – most people said that they were on their lunch hour, running errands, and in a rush. Once they agreed to a three minute interview, however, interviewees seemed willing to discuss the questions. Five out of ten respondents said they would be willing to take 15 minutes out of their lunch time to learn about these topics, and four said they might be willing to do so (there was only one "no" response to this question).

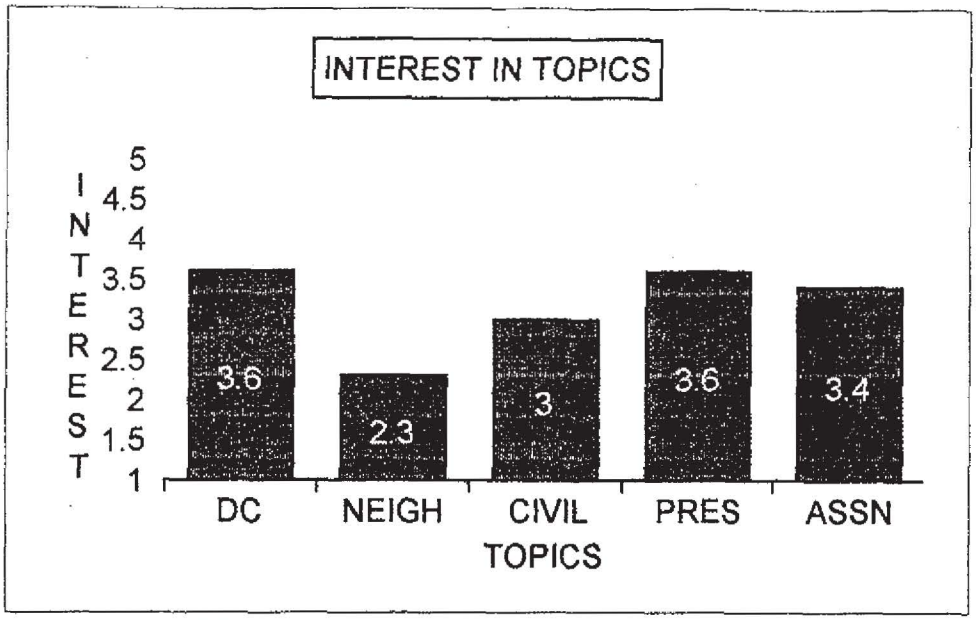
Lunch is a very busy time for local employees. Lunchtime educational programs would have to be brief, advertised well ahead of time (to allow people to adjust their errand-running schedules), and of interest to participants (enough interest for people to give what little time they have to the programs).

Are people aware of the existenCe/significance of FTNHS?
When asked about the history of the neighborhood, only 2 out of 10 respondents mentioned FTNHS. Half of the respondents (5) said that they knew nothing about the neighborhood's history. However, 8 out of 10 respondents (including 3 who said they knew nothing about neighborhood history) said that they had visited FTNHS. This may suggest: respondents do not connect FTNHS with local history, respondents did not learn about local history on their visits to the site.

Since the majority of respondents had visited FTNHS, they know that it exists. They may not be aware, however, of this site's value to the community. They may, in fact, not even see it as a community site, but perhaps as a "national" site. Or they may not have an interest in/attachment to the Metro Center neighborhood since they do not live in the area. Further interviewing would have to be done to determine people's perceptions of FTNHS.

Are people interested in potential FTNHS lecture topics?
People were asked to rate their interest in a number of topics on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 meaning "very interested" and 1 meaning "not interested. The first two topics deal with local history, and the last three topics deal with areas more directly addressed at FTNHS, with the last topic being the main focus of the site.

The average rating for each response is represented in the bar graph below:



DC= history of Washington, DC
NEIGH= history of this neighborhood (Metro Center)
CIVIL= the Civil War
PRES= the presidency of Abraham Lincoln
ASSASIN= the assassination of Abraham Lincoln
10 interviewees

The chart indicates that respondents were most interested in learning about the history of Washington, DC and the Lincoln presidency and were least interested in learning about the history of the Metro Center neighborhood. Lecture Series coordinators should consider focusing on the topics that are interesting to local employees. When rating their interest in the last three topics (the Civil War, the Presidency of Abraham Lincoln, the Assassination of Abraham Lincoln), most respondents tended to be uniformly interested or uniformly uninterested in these areas (one respondent said, "I'm not really a history buff"). See the appendix for more detailed record of responses.

Is there a potential audience for a lunchtime lecture series at Ford's Theatre National Historic Site?

The interviews, although limited in sample size, suggest that there is a potential audience for a lunchtime lecture series at FTNHS. In order for the series to attract an audience and maintain that audience's interest, the interviews suggest that the series would have to:

1. Be advertised well in advance, perhaps using a number of media (flyers, public service announcements, newspapers and other local periodicals). Such advertising should list dates for the entire series, allowing local employees to fit the lectures into their schedules.

2. Focus on Washington history and the Lincoln presidency. These topics were of

interest to those interviewed. Other topics should not be excluded, however, but rather could be "sprinkled in" among the topics that hold the most interest for the broadest spectrum of people. The sample size of this set of interviews is limited, so FTNHS may have to do some experimenting to find out which topics draw the most visitors.

3. Keep the lectures brief. While 15 minutes may be too short to address any topic in depth (or to attract a quality guest speaker), sessions that last much longer will probably not have an audience, since area employees seem to be extremely busy during their lunch breaks. Lectures probably should not last longer than 1/2 hour.

Interest in topics of potential lunchtime lecture series

topics

interviewees	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5
A	4	2	3	2	2
B	5	1	3	4	5
C	4	2	5	5	5
D	5	3	1	3	3
E	5	3	2	3	3
F	3	5	5	5	5
G	3	2	2	2	2
H	3	1	5	5	5
I	2	3	1	4	1
J	2	1	3	3	3
average rating:	3.6	2.3	3.0	3.6	3.4

LEGEND

T1 = History of DC
T2 = History of Metro Center Neighborhood
T3 = Civil War
T4 = Presidency of Abraham Lincoln
T5 = Assassination of Abraham Lincoln

Scale of 1 to 5
1=no interest in topic
5=high interest in topic

APPENDIX B
Information on Internet inquiries

I sent out an inquiry on Museum-L, a museum discussion list on the Internet with over 1,200 participants worldwide. Most participants are professionals at art museums, historic sites, nature centers, arts agencies, exhibit design or evaluation companies, or other related entities. I told the "list" that I was developing a lunchtime lecture series on a local historic site and needed information on how to run them successfully. Several people answered my inquiry, and I found out about lunchtime lecture series at the following institutions:

National Portrait Gallery
Lehigh County Historical Society
Chester County Historical Society
Kentucky Library and KY museum
National Museum of American History
Smithsonian Institution Center for Museum Studies
Cincinnati Museum of Natural History and Science

In most cases, respondents to the Museum-L inquiry merely stated that lunchtime programs have been held at these sites. Occasionally, I was able to get additional programmatic and implementation information on one of the sites. A copy of one of the responses to the inquiry is included with this appendix, in order to better illustrate the nature of the correspondence.

If Ford's Theatre National Historic Site needs further assistance or recommendations on implementing "Lunchtime with Lincoln," the site could approach any of these institutions.

Date: Mon, 23 Oct 1995 23:44:58 CDT
From: koomlsm@WKUVX1.WKU.EDU
To: laurenb@gwis2.circ.gwu.edu
Subject: RE: lunchtime learning...

Lauren Jill Brownstein <laurenb@gwis2.circ.gwu.edu> writes:
>
>1. How were the series with which you were involved advertised?

THese were advertised with flyers placed in university building, psa announcements on the local radio and tv and in the newspaper, and by word of mouth.

>2. Was training provided for the presenters (presentation skills...?)

Surely you jest??!! REally, we were given some advice like speak slowly and clearly, make your topic interesting...that sort of thing. But this was more a vehicle for grad students to have public speaking experience...something highly prized at WKU.

>3. Were participants invited to any follow up events, sicj as
> evening programs?

There were no follow-yp programs...these stand on their own.

>4. Were people who attended the programs museum members? If not,
> were they invited to join?

Museum membership information is at the front desk as you enter the buildng. It is not really mentioned during these events, though I am sure that the option is available for those who are interested. Visitors are always invited to join.

>
>Again, if you could find a few minutes to answer these questions it would
>really help me with my project. Thanks for your help!
>
>--Lauren Browstein
>laurenb@gwis2.circ.gwu.edu
>

Good luck, and if I can be of any other help, please let me know. This series continues each spring. >

Sharon Duane Koomler
Director of Education
Shaker Museum at South Union, KY
(502) 542-7734
e-mail koomlsm@wkuvx1.wku.edu

"The attainments of tomorrow are dependent on the efforts of today, and are related to them as the blossom is to the bud, and the fruit to the blossom."

Eldress Catherine Allen, Mt. Lebanon

Lincoln Lore:
Storytelling Program
Ford Theatre National Historic Site
Final Proposal

Submitted By:
Mia R. Llarena
Education 223
Dr. Joanne Hirsch
Museum Education Program
The George Washington University
December 12, 1995

Mia Rausa Llarena
2877 Audubon Terrace NW Washington, DC 20008 • 202/237-8019

December 10, 1995

Chris Jones
Site Manager
Ford's Theatre National Historic Site
517 10th Street
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Mr. Jones:

The following document is the final proposal for *Lincoln Lore:* Storytelling at Ford's Theatre National Historic Site (FTNHS). This proposal focuses on ways FTNHS can connect and build relationships with local family audiences. The findings and suggestion of this proposal comes from three months of research including interviews with target audience members, institutional studies and surveys of educational and developmental psychological research.

This proposal is presented in the following manner:

- Proposal Outline
- Proposal
- Appendices:
  - Bibliography
  - Interview Summary
  - Resource page
  - Site Status Quo Report

If there are any questions regarding this proposal, please contact me at 202/237-8019 or via e-mail at miaatgw@gwis2.circ.gwu.edu .

Thank you.
Sincerely,

Mia Llarena
M.A.T. Candidate
Museum Education Program
The George Washington University

Proposal Outline
Lincoln Lore:
Storytelling at
Ford's Theatre National Historic Site

Part One - Proposal:

I. Objectives
- A. Program Objectives
- B. Institutional Objectives

II. Rationale

III. Implementation
- A. Program Times
- B. Story Themes
- C. Staff and Training
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IV. Feasibility and Supporting Research
- A. Target Audience Rationale
- B. Program Interest and Demand
- C. Supporting Research

V. Pros and Cons
- A. Pros
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VI. Evaluation
- A. Program Evaluation
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Part Two- Sources and Research

I. Bibliography
- A. Periodicals and books cited

II. Appendices
- A. Storytelling programs, associations and training programs.
- B. Interview Summary
- C. Site Status Quo Report

Program: *Lincoln Lore:* Storytelling at Ford's Theatre National Historic Site (FTNHS).

Target Audience: Adult with children ages 12 and under. Metro District of Columbia Community.

Objectives:

Program Objectives:

- To tell and teach the life and times of Abraham Lincoln through the use of stories and object based learning.

Institutional Objectives:

- To widen the scope of interpretation.
- To broaden FTNHS' audience base.
- To provide alternative training opportunities and professional development for the site staff.
- To create options for current and future volunteers.
- To create viable programs for the planned FTNHS Learning Center.
- To further incorporate FTNHS into the life of the local community.
- To promote FTNHS as a "family-friendly" site.
- To foster an appreciation of museums as institutions of learning.

Rationale:

FTNHS expressed the desire to implement programs that would assist in their on-going effort for professional development, broadening of audience base, strengthening community relations and interpretational programming.

Implementation:

Program Times:

- Storytelling sessions will be conducted on weekend days and/or evenings, no more than twice a month during FTNHS' slow seasons and on special days.

Story Themes:

- Storytelling programs will be based on some aspect of the collection, special collections or monthly themes (such as African-American History Month).

Staff and Training:

• Storytelling sessions will be conducted by both staff and volunteers trained specifically in this form of interpretation.

• Training will be secured through local storytelling organizations (See Appendix B)

Publicity:

• Advertising could be secured through a number of local media resources including *The Washington Post* and *The Washington Time*, and *Washington City Paper*, radio and television Public Service Announcements (PSA), Neighborhood papers such as the *Northwest Current*, Church Bulletins, libraries, and local and storytelling program networks.

Program Structure:

• The program will be split into five parts:

Part One - Orientation

Families will be given information packet that contain an agenda, map of the site, a brief description of the site and it current services and events, and an evaluation form.

The program will be introduced by a member of the site staff. Rules of the site will be explained, along with the plan of the day and the people the audience will be encountering.

Part Two - Storytelling I

Stories of the first session will pertain to Lincoln and his life.

Part Three - Family Activity

Families will be allowed to explore the museum and do a story related activity which include:

- Drawing a scene from the story using certain objects.
- Pretending to be a character in the story and writing their own stories based on the materials presented by the storyteller and the collection.

At the end of the family activity time the group will come together again and (if they wish) share their creations.

Part Four- Storytelling II

The second session will tell the story of an "ordinary person" of Lincoln's time.

Part Five - Closing and Evaluation

A member of the site staff will formally close the storytelling session inform the audience of other current events future programs and invite the families to fill out the evaluation.

Feasibility and Supporting Research:

Target Audience Rationale:

• Census records indicate that families with children 12 and younger make up more than 50% of the DC household/family population. FTNHS currently offers no formal programs to meet the needs of this section of the population. (US Census 1994, Interview FTNHS Staff 1994)

Program Interest and Demand:

• Interviews and surveys conducted on Adult-Child and/or Family audiences in the surrounding community indicate a great interest and popularity of storytelling programs. Of those surveyed 70% have attended storytelling sessions in the past, with all participants responding favorably to the experience with 100% indicating their interest in attending future storytelling programs. (Llarena 1995)

Supporting Research :

• Educational and museum institutional research indicates storytelling programs are not only a popular form of family entertainment but also a viable educational tool. As family leisure time becomes more scarce, parents tend to seek out outside activities that are both entertaining and educational. (Llarena 1995, Hood 1993) Museums are popular destinations for family leisure activities not only for their educational value but also social properties. Studies show typical family activities in museums are primarily child directed. Parents pick the gallery/site, but children set the terms as to what they see in the museums. Children in turn must rely on their adult companions to explain and clarify what they are encountering (Dierking & Falk 1992) This interaction encourages learning by creating

an atmosphere that promotes high level thinking. Stewart Cohen (1989) observed in his research on learning in children's museums:

> *Museum settings that emphasize child-adult inquiries favor concrete over abstract learning, physical over verbal interactions, experimental over conceptual understanding and sensory over encounters.*

Storytelling is becoming a popular teaching method in formal educational settings. Research conducted on a fifth grade US History Class where storytelling was the primary form of teaching showed an improvement in students in school performance. Storytelling reaches across curriculum improving language art skills as well as fostering creativity in learners. (Brophy 1992, Genisio and Soundy 1994)

Museum storytelling brings together the best of both entities creating an activity that is both entertaining and educational. Margaret and Raymond DiBlasio in their article "Constructing a Cultural Context Through Museum Storytelling" reports that effective museum stories:

- Balances entertainment and factual soundness.
- Is compact.
- Is concrete, employing highly visual language,
- Is personally appealing.
- Dislodges stereotypes.
- Invites cross-cultural comparisons.

Evaluations from programs conducted at the National Museum of African Art in Washington, DC and the Adler Planetarium in Chicago, IL support the DiBlasios' research with one parent claiming in her evaluation of the Adler Program:

> *Thank you for this program. I never thought I would understand physics or science, but your program helped in making an otherwise overwhelming subject easy and less intimidating, especially in explaining the subject to my child. Also, by approaching this subject through this medium, I was able to answer the burning question, "what does this have to do with real life?!". Thank you again.*

Storytelling provides an effective way to reach and teach museum audiences.

Program Pros and Cons:

As with all perspective programs, *Lincoln Lore* presents a number of advantages and disadvantages.

Pros:

- The Storyteller Program adds another dimension to interpretation at FTNHS. The collection of the site, coupled with the Lincoln Legacy provides an unlimited amount of themes.

- The program can be run by not only the staff but also volunteers, providing more opportunities for the general public to get involved with the site.

- Expandable: Storytelling can be tailored to fit other programs such as school outreach, gallery talks, lantern tours, etc.

- Versatility: The program appeals to groups across racial, ethnic and socio-economic lines. (Hahn 1994, Llarena 1995)

Cons:

- Funding

  - Programs such as this will strain an already low budget. Outside funding will be required.
  - Initial expenditures include training, art supplies, contract storytellers, and copyright royalties.

- Staffing - The current staff of FTNHS is overwhelmed with daily duties. Questions to the amount of time the staff can invest in training and implementing the program is still under investigation.

- Space and Time : FTNHS is limited in terms of room and accessibility. Because the site doubles as a working theatre, schedules must be accommodated.

Program Evaluation:

Evaluations will be conducted per story session as well as on a seasonal basis. Evaluations will involve audience input as well as institutional reviews.

Session Evaluations:

- Session evaluations will include the following:
  - Audience surveys of experience

- Supervisory critiques on technique, story content, overall flow of session.

Overall Evaluation:

• Seasonal evaluations will look at the overall program performance including:
  - Overall audience reaction
  - Seasonal attendance
  - Reaction to story themes.
  - Evaluation of Objectives.

Conclusion:

Through the Storytelling program, FTNHS will be able to achieve their goals of audience outreach and improvement of interpretational programs. Research indicates that programs such as this are of great interest to the community at large. Moreover, storytelling provides great opportunities for professional development and volunteerism, elements that contribute to establishing FTNHS as an interested community institution as well as historic site.

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Theriault, Marie C. (1996). *ImaginAsia Statistical Report.*

Appendix A
Interview Findings

Objectives:

By the end of this inquiry, researchers will know:

- How families spend their leisure time inside and out side the home
- How much time families spend in museums.
- When they spend family time.
- What kind of activities families participate or would be interested in participating.
- Interest in storytelling programs.

1) When you have free time with your family AT HOME, how do you spend it?
Of those activities listed:

50 % or above:	**40% or above:**	**30% or above:**	**10% or above:**
Play	Music	Cooking	Movies
Reading	Talking	Crafts	Musical instruments
		Eating	Art
			Gardening
			Dancing
			Activities

2) How do you spend free time with your family OUTSIDE of the home?
Of those activities listed:

40% or above:	**30% or above:**	**20% or above:**	**10% or above:**
Movies	Eating	Camping	Amusement Parks
Playground	Bike Riding	Hiking	
Church	Shopping	Festivals	
Museums		Travel	
		Sports	
		Visiting Friends	

3) Family time is usually spent:

Weekend am	Weekend pm	Combo	Weekday am	Weekend pm	Combo	Weekend Combo + Weekend pm
10 %	10%	30%	0%	0%	0%	50%

4) When choosing family activities outside of the home, what is important in making the decision:? Of those answers listed:

Education	Cost	Location	Accessible	Entertai n-ing	Time of Activity	Age Appropriate	Social value
100%	100%	50%	70%	70%	70%	60%	20%

5) Do you prefer your family activities outside the home to be structured or unstructured? (For example, a guided tour of vs. a self-led tour).

Structured	Unstructured	Combination
0%	50%	50%

6) Would your family be interested in learning about the following? Of those answers listed:

Abraham Lincoln	Murder Mysteries	Civil War History	US History	DC Folklore	Slavery in America
60%	30%	70%	60%	90%	80%

7) Has you family ever attended a Storytelling session?

Yes	No
70%	30%

What do you remember?

"Enjoyed very much"

"Thought I could've done a better job"

8) If a Storytelling Program for families was offered to the public, would you consider attending?

100% Yes

9) How often is your family leisure time spent in museums?

Once every 2-3 months	**Once a month**	**More than once a month**	**Once every six months**	**Never**
40%	30%	10%	10&	10%

10) IF YOU GO TO MUSEUMS WITH FAMILY MORE THAN ONCE A YEAR.
What family museums activities do you or have you participated.

Hands 0n Activities
Tours
Discovery Theatre
Storytelling

11) IF YOU DO NOT GO TO MUSEUMS MORE THAN ONCE A YEAR.
Why not and name one activity a museum can do to gain your interest.

No response.

12) Have you heard and/or been to the Ford's Theatre National Historic Site? (The Theatre where President Lincoln was shot and died).

100% Yes

13) Where do you live?

DC		**Virginia**	**Maryland**
60%		10%	30%
	40% NW		
	20% NE		

Interview Summary

Interviewees: Adults with children 12 and under
Site: St. Aloysious Church Washington, DC
Date: November 12, 1995

Purpose:

The interviews and surveys were conducted for the purpose of finding out what families do in their leisure time and if storytelling would appeal to this audience.

Method:

Findings come as the result of interviews and surveys conducted with members of St. Alyosious Church in NW Washington, DC. All the subjects interviewed did so on a voluntary basis. St. Alyosious is a Catholic Church that attracts members from the DC, Northern Virginia and Southern Maryland area. The parish is diverse in terms of its racial, ethnic, socio-economic, and political make-up.

Findings:

When asked the criteria for choosing family activities, participants listed educational value and cost as the most important factors followed by level of entertainment, accessibility and amount of time the activity takes to complete. Interviews and surveys also show that the majority of family time is spent on the weekend days and weekend and weekday evenings. Favorite activities outside the home show a relatively high level of museum visitation, with half of the participants favoring unstructured museum activities while the other half preferring a combination of structured and unstructured museum activities. Of those surveyed, 70% have attended storytelling sessions while 100% expressed interest in attending future storytelling events. Of those subject pertaining to FTNHS, Abraham Lincoln, Civil War History, Slavery in America And DC Folktales proved to me he subject of interest. The study also showed that all have heard of and at one point in their lives visited FTNHS.

Discussion:

The information found by the interviews provide FTNHS with a framework by which they can set up not only storytelling but also other future family programs.

Appendix B
Local Resources

*Ann Sheldon
School of Library and Informational Science
Catholic University
Maret Hall
Washington, DC 20064
202/319-5058

*Jo Radner
Washington Storytellers Theatre
1202 S. Washington Street
Alexandra, VA
703/549-6657

Maria Salvador
Children's Resource Coordinator
DC Public Library
Martin Luther King Library
901 G Street
Washington, DC 20004
202/727-1248

American Folklife Center
Library of Congress
1st and Independence Ave
Washington, DC
202/797-6590

*Margaret Chatham
Coordinator
Voices in the Glenn
Glenn Echo Park Storytelling Program
703/698-5456

Julian Hirschberg
Children's Literature/Storytelling Coordinator
Takoma Park Library
101 Philadelphia Ave.
Takoma Park, MD 20912
301/270-1717

Folklore Society of Greater Washington
307 Broadleaf Dr.
Vienna,VA
703/281-2228

* Denotes Training Workshops are Available

Appendix C

STATUS QUO REPORT
AND
RECOMMENDATIONS:
FORD'S THEATRE
NATIONAL HISTORIC SIGHT

Submitted by:
Mia Rausa Llarena
Ford's Theatre Group
Museum Education Program
The George Washington University
September 26, 1995

Introduction

The following report is based on interviews and research pertaining to the Ford's Theatre National Historic Site (FTNHS) and its surrounding community. The purpose of this document is two fold:

- To examine past and present efforts in terms of audience outreach and programming.
- To recommend ways to expand the audience base.

Except when noted, information found in this document comes by way of interviews conducted with the staff of the FTNHS in September 1995 by me and my colleagues in The George Washington University Museum Education Program.

The report is presented in the following manner:

- Summary of Current Status
- Organizational Goals
- Analysis and Recommendations

If there are any questions or comments regarding any part of this document, please feel free to contact me at 202/237-8019 or through e-mail at miaatgw@gwis2.circ.gwu.edu.

Thank you

Sincerely,

Mia Llarena
M.A.T. Candidate
Museum Education Program
The George Washington University

Summary of Current State

Mission:

Ford's Theatre National Historic Site (FTNHS) officially operates under the mission of The National Park Service (NPS) Federal Organic Act of 1916 which states, " (Properties of the NPS) are to conserve the scenery and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such a manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations." In terms of the FTNHS, the Organic Act translates to telling the story of the Lincoln Assassination and the circumstances surrounding the event, along with the preservation of the site's collection.

Audience:

While no formal visitor study has been conducted at the FTNHS, staff " head counts " estimate visitation at 10,000 people per day. In 1994 approximately 1,290,000 patrons visited the FTNHS with this years number thus far exceeding last year by 11%. The FTNHS' client base consists of mainly school groups and tourists, the majority of who hails from outside the DC area.

Programming:

For the most part, programming revolves around the permanent collection which pertains to the events surrounding the Lincoln assassination. Interpretive programs consist of orientation/ gallery talks conducted by the Park Service personnel, many of whom hold degrees in History, Art History, and Anthropology. Gallery talks are independently researched and thus vary according to the Ranger's area of interest or expertise. Barring production rehearsals, gallery talks are usually held in the theatre house.

Efforts are made to accommodate audiences with special needs. American Sign Language tours are available with advance notice and guide rails were recently installed in the various stairwells. Because structural problems prohibit 100% wheelchair accessibility, park personnel take extra steps to assist wheel chair bound patrons as much as possible.

For foreign visitors, brochures are printed in 13 languages and at the present time, FTNHS has one staff member proficient in a French. Most international tour groups come with their own guide and are always welcome to conduct independent tours at the site.

Organizational Goals

Friends of Ford's Theatre:

1995 saw the formation of the Friends of Ford's Theatre, a non-profit organization dedicated to the overall improvement of the FTNHS. Once officially incorporated, the primary goal of the friends group will be program development and fund raising.

Audience:

The main goal of FTNHS is not to increase its audience in number but rather in scope. As stated previously, while the FTNHS receives a high volume of visits from persons outside of the DC area, visitation/ involvement of the local community is quite low. The staff of FTNHS strives to foster greater interaction between their organization and the people of DC, particularly that of their immediate community. Because they stand as the majority population in the DC, staff members cited the African-American community as their primary target audience.

Programming:

Outreach is the number one priority as far as programming. While attempts at outreach have been made in the past for the most part have been unsuccessful. For example, last April student from area DC schools were invited to a symposium for the 130th Anniversary of Lincoln's death. The students were pretty much uninterested in the subject matter and the staff deemed the project a "flop". Programs are already in place for African- American History month while plans are in the works to commemorate Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

For the disabled community, FTNHS hopes to develop a Braille tour along with an audio tour for the sight impaired while plans are in the works to create a photographic mock up of the areas not wheel chair accessible.

With the "Friends of.." group , FTNHS hopes to increase its volunteer base, develop a strong interpretive training program, create a period garden in the rear of Peterson House and establish a Lincoln/Douglas debate society. The latter would sponsor an annual student debate competition at the theatre.

Surrounding community:

FTNHS is literally and figuratively split between two very different communities. To the south of the theatre stands the ever thriving DC tourist industry. The site is easily accessible by both private (mainly car and tour buses) and public transportation (L2 bus line and the METRO Red Line) and is within walking distance of other tourist attractions such as the National Mall, the FBI Building, the National Portrait Gallery and the Museum of American Art. Many tourist oriented shops and restaurants, particularly the Hard Rock Café, are also close by. Aside from the tourist industry, the area south of the theatre contains many office buildings made up of mostly law firms, trade associations, and municipal and federal agencies.

At the north side of the site is the declining Metro Center business district. Many of the building surrounding the site are abandoned and/or boarded up. Most of the businesses are small, independently owned clothing boutiques, beauty shops, restaurants, tourist shops and street merchants. One of the areas biggest retailer, Woodward and Lothrop, is set to close within the next year, adding economic strain to an otherwise depressed area. Along with small businesses, Metro Center is home to a number of churches, community organizations such as the YWCA and the Asian Cultural Society, as well as a sizable homeless population.

The theatre's closest residential enclave is the Gallery Place-Chinatown neighborhood. While the area is known as Chinatown and in fact possesses a significant immigrant population (not necessarily Asian), the neighborhood is a primarily African-American community made up, for the most part of families consisting of traditional and single female headed households. The median age of the community is 33.5, with the majority of children falling between the 6-11 age range. 56.6% of those over the age of 25 hold high school degrees while 14.2% possess a BA or higher. While the population has held steady between 31-36,000 people , the US census predicts a 1.5% decline in population by 1998. Like its Metro Center neighbor, the Gallery Place-Chinatown area is also in a state of economic decline. Of the 34,000 plus residents, an estimated 29.7% of households are below the poverty level with unemployment running at almost 40%. (US Census)

Analysis and Recommendation

Analysis - Why Aren't They Visiting?:

Like a number of FTNHS' counterparts, much of the organization's problems stem from the general public's apathy toward cultural institutions. The popularity of television, movies and other more seemingly active" forms of entertainment remain the museum's number one competition. This problem is further exacerbated by lack of funding. Programs for outreach, exhibition upgrades and the like are almost never realized because the money is not available. Perhaps the institution's biggest obstacle in the image of museums themselves. Despite the variety of subject matter, museums are still regarded for the most part as elitist institutions that have no relevance to the public in general and minorities in particular.

To the general public the museum itself, in comparison to other institutions, appears to have little to offer. Unless one is a theatre patron or a Lincoln enthusiast, one could pretty much see the site in one visit. Again, lack of variety in programming is due mainly to funding problems and thus is virtually out of the hands of the site staff.

While FTNHS expresses a strong desire to connect with the local community, it seems very little has been done in terms of basic marketing. Assuming that the general population knows that the FTNHS is located in their neighborhood does not necessarily infer its awareness of the organization's significance or programs. Aside from the lack of marketing, the site must also deal with the area's social problems. As stated previously, census records show that 56.6% of those over the age of 25 are high school graduates with 14.5% with BA or higher, leaving 29.9% of the population with out high school degrees. This statistic, coupled with the shortcomings of the DC Public School system doesn't spell a very supportive system for the FTNHS educational goals. A many in the population are immigrants who may not necessarily know who Lincoln was. Finally, seeing that the bulk of the residents of the immediate community are low income, leisure time may not be as plentiful as of those in the upper echelons.

Recommendations:

Before the any new programs can be created, FTNHS should consider the following:

- Adopt a site mission statement stating specifically it purpose and goals.
- Conduct a Visitor Study .
- Institute Diversity Training Workshops for the FTNHS staff.

•Find alternatives for funding or possibly create a development department geared exclusively to finding funds for museum programs.
•Promote patron loyalty through the "Friends of..." group .

Other suggestions include

•Strengthen ties with community organizations- Outreach is much easier when one has help. The FTNHS should try to work with the local business community, civic groups and the like to promote the Metro Center as a whole.
•Strengthen ties with local schools by developing traveling exhibitions, internship programs, and volunteer programs with local schools.
•Widen the scope of outreach: limiting alternative programming to the African American Community only reinforces the already exclusionary image already portrayed by institutions such as FTNHS.

Suggested Audience Outreach:

Local demographics suggest the following as potential target audiences:

•School Groups
  Elementary through Adult Education
•Religious Groups
•Community Outreach/ Social Service organizations
  Family programs
  Adult literacy programs.
•Civic/Professional organizations
•Local Business community (especially lunch time crowd)

Out of those listed the most viable groups in terms of short-term programs and development are:

•School Groups/Community Outreach/Social Service - Can provide much needed curriculum support and/or serve as an extra-curricular activity
• Families - Promote museum visiting as a family activity.
•Civic Organizations-Fostering partnerships with the local community can only strengthen the organization through joint ventures.

Work Cited

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Recruitment and Training of Volunteers for Ford's Theatre National Historic Site



Programming Proposal
Museum Audiences
The George Washington University
EDUC 223
Abbi Wicklein-Bayne

OUTLINE OF PROGRAMMING PROPOSAL

RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF VOLUNTEERS FOR FORD'S THEATER NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

I. INTRODUCTION

Description of Project
Rationale
Objectives

II. IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECT AT FTNHS

Current Volunteer Program
Staff Responsibility for Program
Establishing Expectations and Needs of Volunteer Program

III. RECRUITING

Planned Recruitment Strategy
Potential Sources for Recruitment of Volunteers
Application and Interview

IV. TRAINING

Planning Training Sessions
Awareness of Volunteer Needs
Training Group Size and Timing
Content of Training Sessions
Retention of Volunteers

V. CONCLUSION

VI. APPENDIX

A. Storytelling Program Proposal Summary-as submitted by Mia LLarena's
B. Sample Volunteer Application
C. Sample Volunteer Training Schedule
D. Research Summaries
E. Interview Summaries and Interview Protocol
F. Bibliography

Recruitment and Training of Volunteers for Ford's Theatre National Historic Site

"Volunteer staff augments the paid staff in a majority of state and local history organizations, allowing these institutions to accomplish goals well beyond their means."
Laura Daly-The Valentine Museum, Richmond, Virginia.

INTRODUCTION

Description of Project:

Implementing a volunteer program at Ford's Theatre National Historic Site (FTNHS) would enable the site to engage in producing special programming that staffing and budget restrictions now limit. Specifically, this proposal will look at finding volunteers to staff a family storytelling program also being proposed for the site. Initially the program would be focused on setting up an organized and aggressive recruitment effort targeting potential audiences that may have special interest in becoming volunteers for family programming. Training of these volunteers for staffing specific programming is also very important for the programs to be successful. Effective training methods that are currently in practice similar sites in the area will be offered as examples for FTNHS.

Rationale:

FTNHS is an institution that can benefit from, and is in great need of, the services of volunteer staff. In order to create new programs FTNHS needs to find the staff to facilitate them. Volunteers are vital for this purpose, they are especially valuable at this site due to the shortage of staff and funds. Volunteers are currently used to assist Rangers in their daily duties in the museum. They are also able to create programs for the public using their own initiative and labor. Currently, there is no recruitment and formal training program at FTNHS. Creating such a program will enable FTNHS to expand programming to families, a currently under-served audience at the site. The proposed storytelling program (Appendix A) offers FTNHS a chance to reach this audience and bring them the message of Ford's Theater while going around the age-inappropriate story of the assassination of Lincoln. Different aspects of Lincoln's life, presidency and the time period can be brought alive for this new audience. This program can also offer young children and their families time to learn together and from

each other and from a knowledgeable facilitator. With proper training and support from the staff, volunteers will in turn support the staff members, enabling them to create programming that the site's limitations would otherwise prohibit.

Objectives:

Establishing a volunteer recruitment and training program at FTNHS will result in:

*FTNHS having the available people to plan and implement new programming

*FTNHS staff members being able to pursue programming ideas otherwise impossible

*FTNHS implementing the proposed program dealing with Storytelling for Families

*FTNHS being able to reach out to underserved audiences through special programming, especially families

*FTNHS furthering the educational mission of the site

*FTNHS utilizing the knowledge and creativity of the surrounding community

IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECT

Current Volunteer Program:

FTNHS currently has a successful but small volunteer program. At the present time the hours contributed by volunteers every week are equal to those of a full-time ranger. Volunteers relieve Rangers of some day-to-day duties to do special research and outreach. These volunteers are often self-motivated to prepare talks or programs for the museum's present audience on their own and then seek approval from the Coordinator of Volunteers. The program involves no formal training, people follow and observe Rangers until they feel comfortable performing the tasks on their own

Establishing Expectations and Needs of Volunteer Program:

Before recruiting begins it is necessary for the staff to clearly define what the volunteer's job. In this case, for programming involving storytelling and family programming, volunteers must be aware of the tasks involved. "You have to establish your needs. . . . what do you need, not what you wish for." (Andrea Lewis, Coordinator of Volunteers and Education, The Baltimore City Life Museums) Volunteers will be working with adults and children, in storytelling sessions and perhaps facilitating an arts and crafts period. They will have to be able to work with groups and to be comfortable speaking in front of others. It is also important for them to understand the time commitment involved including the training sessions.

Staff Responsibility for Program:

The recruitment of volunteers will take up the time of a staff member, presumably the coordinator of volunteers. However, the reward of having a viable volunteer staff with new blood and ideas will more than make up for the time spent. Another alternative commitment of staff time is the assignment of an experienced volunteers to become the volunteer coordinator or team leader. They would be closely supervised by the staff Coordinator of Volunteers and in

constant communication with the site staff. This person or persons, would be responsible for organizing the recruitment and training of new volunteers, including:

*locating volunteer sources
*maintain contacts with community resources and leaders
*interest the volunteer in FTNHS and communicate the mission
*place the volunteer in the appropriate situation with the correct staff supervisor(Soobitsky 6).

RECRUITING

According to Webster's dictionary to recruit means, "to raise or strengthen by enlisting personnel, to increase or maintain by supplying anew; replenish, to revive or restore." Setting up and implementing a recruitment program will be the first challenge for FTNHS to strengthen and revive an institution saddled with budget restraints and staff cuts. The recruitment method that will be the most successful for FTNHS due to location and the subject matter being interpreted would be a strategy used by many sites of comparable size and mission, Planned Recruitment (Soobitsky 6).

Planned Recruitment Strategy:

This plan needs to be supervised by a staff member, or a veteran volunteer with close staff supervision. This planned recruitment can take on many forms and can be very low-cost. Some methods that may be very valuable to Ford's and that work in other sites with similar needs and constraints are:

*making mention of volunteer opportunities at all off-site programs and in all mailings sent out (Frederick Douglass House)

*tapping into student's need to complete community service graduation requirement (Baltimore Children's Museum)

*placing brochures with information about volunteer opportunities in the exhibit space and advertise in a variety of newspapers to reach a diverse volunteer audience (FONZ)

*targeting specific groups whose interests match the theaters and general promotion through press releases and public service announcements with all inquiries directed to the volunteer coordinator (Valentine Museum, Richmond Virginia)

Potential Sources for Recruitment of Volunteers:

FTNHS may look to a number of sources for recruiting volunteers interested in family programming.

Civil War Reenactment Groups:

There are many reenactment groups that perform scenes of Civil Wars battle and civilian life,' members are familiar with the time period currently interpreted by FTNHS. These groups currently are very active at many National Parks such as Gettysburg and Harpers Ferry. They would also be available during the winter months, when reenactment events are at an ebb and family programming is most feasible at Ford's Theater.

Contact: Regiment leaders, Roundtable Organizations
Possible Target: 54th Infantry-African-American Reenactment Group

Social Studies teachers:

Teachers of related topics are a knowledgeable resource. FTNHS should explore rewarding teachers with continuing education credits.

Contact: Department Heads, County Resource Teachers, National Council of Social Studies Teachers, History Magnet Programs

Storytellers:

Members of this growing audience are already experts in the field that they would be facilitating for the public. They would also be a good source of instructors for the training sessions. There are storytelling organizations that can be explored.

Contacts: Maryland Storytellers Association, Washington Storytellers Association, Smithsonian Institution-Clare Cutly, Librarians

High School Students:

Students are an excellent, albeit somewhat captive source of volunteers. They can be trained to be facilitators or assist adults in running programs. United States history is taught in 9th grade and Advanced Placement is taught in 11th and 12th. These students especially may have had their interested piqued about the time period and subject interpreted by Ford's.

Contact: Student Service Alliance-both Maryland and D.C.

General Public:

This large and local audience may also be interested in becoming a volunteer if the opportunity is made known to them. There is a segment of the population that are considered "history buffs" who would be interested in bringing their knowledge to small children and their families.

Contact: Volunteer DC, Volunteer Maryland, Volunteers of America

Friends of Current Volunteers:

Word of mouth is a great recruiting technique. Present volunteers could be encouraged to tell friends, family and co-workers of their experience and the rewards of volunteering at FTNHS.

Contact: Volunteer Coordinator, Friends of Ford's Theatre

Application and Interview:

This follow up step to recruitment is one of the most crucial components of the volunteer program. If the volunteer has a good experience at this point it is more likely that his or her talents will be used effectively and that they will do a good job (Daly 2). It is during this process that the coordinator of volunteers must make sure the expectations of the volunteer, including those of the training requirements, are made perfectly clear. The application form(Appendix B), with references should be completed by each potential volunteer. From this information the coordinator can interview applicants, either on the phone or in person. The interview plays the greatest role in determining the compatibility of the site and the potential volunteer. After this process letters should be sent out informing compatible volunteers of the training schedule and any necessary orientation information. For incompatible volunteers a letter of regret should by sent with a list of other possible site that could benefit from their service included.

TRAINING

"Volunteer programs make a lot of sense. Through education and training, volunteers become model stewards in their own communities. (Meehan 3).

Planning Training Sessions:

Training should be planned early, leaving enough time to organize logistics, scheduling and staffing, and funding if any is needed. Instructors, willing to donate their time, can be found if there is enough time left for them to fit it in their schedules. People from storytelling associations would be prime candidates for this task. The Baltimore City Life Museums uses a Smithsonian Institution employee, who is active in the storytelling world, to train their volunteers. Librarians may be able to donate their time or attend as an out-reach program for the library. The National Zoo's "Storytime at the Zoo" program is facilitated by librarians from the Montgomery County, Maryland Library. Rangers, willing and able to train volunteers is the specifics of the site and interpretation techniques, should be informed well in advance for preparation and scheduling.

Awareness of Volunteer Needs:

Volunteer training is a crucial part of the volunteer program at any site. Volunteers must be given the background they need to perform their tasks appropriately, to know what is expected of them, to understand how to relate to the visiting public, and to be able to facilitate the family programs successfully. They will not be able to feel comfortable unless they are appropriately prepared. It is also necessary to keep in mind the personalities of the individuals coming to donate their time to the site. Different people are capable and can excel at different things. Perhaps some volunteers who come for this specific program can be tapped for other projects or needs of Ford's Theater.

Training Group Size and Timing:

Training group size should not exceed twenty to twenty-five whenever possible. This promotes camaraderie among the group and the available staff. It also will be better suited to FTNHS's limited space and available staff. Volunteer training programs at different sites last anywhere from thirty hours to one year. There are also programs where volunteers merely follow staff members until they are comfortable performing certain tasks. FTNHS does not have the resources to produce a lengthy training program: therefore they should consider a series of weekend training sessions such as the one for specific programs at the National Zoo.

Content of Training Sessions:

(See sample schedule of training sessions-Appendix C)
Training sessions would be begin with an orientation period conducted by the coordinator of volunteers. Basic information, in the form of an orientation folder which is used successfully at both the Valentine Museum and the Baltimore Children's Museum, can include staff lists, a calendar of events and continuing training sessions, bibliographies of readings, job descriptions etc.. The hourly requirement of volunteers for the storytelling program, 25 hours of training and at least two days a month for program preparation and implementation, should be made known at this point. Training would be a combination of sessions run by instructors on storytelling and complementary sessions run by FTNHS Rangers. It would also be possible to involve current students or graduates of the GWU Museum Education Program (MEP) in facilitating sessions on the benefits of object-based leaning and the inquiry method of teaching.

Learning to Facilitate Storytelling Programs:

* Sessions with the guest instructor
  The storytelling training sessions would involve learning from readings, instruction and actual experimentation with the volunteer group. Volunteers will practice conceiving, writing and presenting creative pieces dealing with Lincoln and his life.
* Sessions with MEP student or graduate
  Part of the information conveyed during these sessions should deal with the techniques and importance of object-based and inquiry, discovery learning.
* Sessions with FTNHS Rangers
  Sessions facilitated by the Ranger will deal with FTNHS itself, its mission, audience and what goes on in a regular day. It would be a Ranger's responsibility to inform volunteers about successful group management techniques used at FTNHS. Another part of the training would be a Ranger mentor program. This is especially effective with student volunteers, according to the Frederick Douglass House staff. Volunteers in training would be assigned to a Ranger, at times mutually convenient, in order to get a first hand look at the workings of Ford's Theater and how the Rangers use their storytelling techniques

APPLICABILITY OF PROGRAM TO FUTURE NEEDS OF FTNHS:

The information provided in the sessions run by Rangers and the MEP students could be used by volunteers in programs at FTNHS other than just storytelling. Future training, specific to new programs, would not necessarily require return volunteers to go through the Ranger led portion of the training. Volunteers would be well versed in the basic information and needs of the site. They would also have been exposed to many other aspects of FTNHS through the Ranger mentor program. This would enable them to help propose and implement new programming secure in their knowledge of their surroundings. New content training would be necessary for programming but his would be a minimal effort.

Retention of Volunteers:

How do you keep your volunteers? There must be a program in place that includes recognition, meaningful work and clear lines of communication. It is very important to include in training sessions information about scheduling, review and evaluation so volunteers are clear on what is expected of them. This helps eliminate much confusion that may arise in the future. Ford's Theater currently has a solid volunteer recognition program in place. They have a free theater tickets available, dinners, field trips, a VIP Banquet, and a recognition plaque in the lobby of the theater. This is a great program and one that should be kept in place and built on. One of the greatest problems in volunteer retention cited by professionals in the field is that very often there is not enough meaningful work for volunteers to do. If volunteers are bored and feel unneeded they will not come back. People are donating their free time when they could be doing a myriad of other things, it is necessary that they are challenged and that communication lines are kept open so any problems can be brought up and dealt with immediately.

Conclusion:

This proposal outlines a basic plan that can be followed by a site to begin building a volunteer corps. Although recruitment of volunteers for Storytelling for Families is the focus of this proposal, the approach outlined can be applied to recruitment of volunteers for any program. Eventually a bank of people with varied talents can be created for Ford's to draw on as needed. A volunteer program will enable Ford's to forge a greater bond with the DC community with a greater variety of interesting programs and by utilizing the talents of the citizens surrounding them.

Appendix

Appendix E

Interview Summaries

Recruitment and Training of Volunteers for Ford's Theater National Historic Site

Interview Objectives:

After conducting interviews with possible volunteer sources for family programming and sites with similar volunteer needs I will be able to better asses:

*the present state of FTNHS's volunteer program
*what FTNHS and similar sites need from their volunteer programs
*the state of family storytelling programs and the role of volunteers
*successful techniques for recruitment and training of volunteers at FTNHS
*sources for potential volunteers for family storytelling programs and the qualifications of each audience

Rationale:

By interviewing volunteer coordinators of sites with similar needs as FTNHS some conclusions can be made as to appropriate techniques for volunteer recruitment and training. It will also be possible by talking with members of organizations targeted as potential sources of volunteers for family storytelling program to determine the needs of these audiences, their interest in becoming a volunteer, with Ford's specifically in mind.

Methods:

It will be necessary to interview most of these informants by phone. There were two separate interview questionnaires, one for sites and one for potential volunteers. The questions were then compiled to determine successful methods of volunteer recruitment and training for FTNHS and potential sources of volunteers.

Findings:

Current Situation at FTNHS

Jeff Leary
Coordinator of Volunteers

Program:

The volunteer program has been in existence in present form for the past three years.
Jeff has been in charge for the past year and a-half and says he was "Lucky to inherent a successful program."
The program has become much more serious in the past three years as it has become more necessary due to the lack of staff. Last year there was over 2,000 hours given by volunteers to Ford's. This is equivalent to one full-time Ranger
There are 5 volunteers who consistently give 4 hours a day to the site
This frees up Rangers to due talk, research and outreach

Volunteers:

Volunteers are mostly found by word of mouth from current volunteers.
They also ask about the program when they have seen a tour or talk given by a volunteer and become interested in doing it themselves. There is very little recruiting done on the part of the staff.
Volunteers are normally self-starters who come up with ideas, research them and then are able to carry them through
The job can be boring for younger people, the volunteer corps is mostly older. Also, the volunteers are very well educated (two with Doctorates) and professional. They are willing to put in the time to make it exciting for themselves.

Training:

There is little formal training done for the volunteers.
The tasks done by the Ranger on the museum floor are pretty simple and the volunteer learns by watching. They are given some basic training for the interpretive talk but they learn mostly by listening to the Ranger and give their own talk when they feel comfortable. It is on the job training.

Storytelling programs:

Volunteers come up with these programs on their own, research them and present them to Leary for his approval. The main

requirement is that they be historically correct. They usually have something to do with Ford's or Calendar events- example"Dastardly Deeds" about assassinations of presidents, St. Patrick's Day talk on Irish American immigrants in American. Some dealing with first person costumed interpretation are currently in the works.

Retention of Volunteers:

They are very careful to appreciate volunteers "Treat them like gold."
In the last three years they have gone from only offering volunteers reduces theater tickets to offering dinners, feld trips (last one was a Ranger guided tour of Booth's escape route), VIP Banquets, plaques on display in museum etc.

Future of Program:

Leary would like to see a better recruitment program since a the present time there is none in existence. The present program could be expanded to an even greater level.

Interview Summaries

Types of Programs from Similar Sites:

The sites volunteer program ranged from well organized programs of 1000 participants (FONZ) to programs consisting of 40-50 occasional volunteers (BCLM). Most of the sites ranged from fifty to one-hundred participants who are all very valuable to the organization. From speaking to the sites it is evident that there is no set pattern for the duties of volunteers. Volunteers are responsible for almost every different job at the sites. This is especially true at smaller sites with staff shortages.

Recruitment:

Most sites rely on a mixture of planned and informal recruitment. Putting flyers in the museum space and advertising is a be draw (FONZ). Also, word of mouth from present volunteers was cited as successful by almost everyone interviewed. BCLM recruits actively only for special programs and also use a finder service such as Volunteer MD. The community service graduation requirement for DC and MD students was also praised for bringing young students into sites.

Training:

Training of volunteers takes place in many different forms. Some sites do not have any formal training sessions at all. Mentor programs aroused with staff members at Frederick Douglass Historic Site. The opposite of this is FONZ whose training commitment is a full year with weekend sessions for special programs. Training session are held seasonally and for special programming, each site has to decide what meets their objectives, timing and staff and budget requirements.

Storytelling Programs:

Storytelling is a programming tool used by many sites. Of the sties surveyed they have all worked with storytelling for families at some point. Most are currently involved in this this type of programming and feel it is very successful. It was found that storytelling for families was most successful of weekends with moderate success on weekdays in programs such as "Toddler Tuesdays," at the Baltimore Children's Museum. Storytelling is used in conjunction with special holidays an to further interpretation of the site.

Potential Volunteer Audiences:

Most audiences need some special incentive from the site to devote their leisure time. Teachers recommend continuing education credits be applied to time working as facilitator for storytelling programs. Also, the subject specific area interested groups who dealt specifically in these areas, such as American history and the Civil War. The way to get to audiences most effectively is through the leaders of their organizations. This would be a way to have the influence of supervisors to coerce members to volunteer. The issue of the seasonality of the site and the possibility of special programming did fit in nicely to many schedules of potential volunteers, especially the Reenactment groups. Volunteers would need information to be sent out as the most effective form of recruitment.

Recommendations by Sites for FTNHS:

Mentor programs, though only used in one of the sites, was highly praised. It was cited that the small size of the program was not necessarily a draw-back because it was important for every volunteer to have a job and not be bored (BCLM). It is necessary to make sure volunteers are aware and follow schedule in order to eliminate feelings of confusion. Volunteer appreciation needs to be an important part of every volunteers programs. Colleges and libraries are recommended as sources of volunteers used successfully (FONZ).

Sites Interviewed:

Ford's Theater National Historic Site
Frederick Douglass Historic House
Friends of the National Zoo
Baltimore Children's Museum
Baltimore City Life Museums

Interview Questions
Site With Volunteer Programs

1. How heavily do you rely on volunteers? How valuable are they to your organization?

2. How long have you had a volunteer program?

3. Where do you get your volunteers? How do you recruit people? Do you have requirements? What do they get out of it?

4. Do you have an indepth training program? What aspects do you think are vital for you volunteers?

5. What are some of the most successful components of your program? unsuccessful?

6. Do you ever do programs with storytelling for families? If so do your volunteers receive specific training?

7. Are you familiar with Ford's Theater National Historic Site-Do you have any recommendations for them in setting up a volunteer program or a storytelling program?

Interview Questions
Possible Volunteer Audience

As a representative of ---------- are your colleagues (as an organization) actively involved in community service?

Why or why not? (lack of time or opportunities)

Explain Ford's Theater Project

Are you familiar with Ford's Theater?

Would you, as a _____, be interested in becoming part of a volunteer corps that would be storytellers at Ford's for families for disadvantaged areas?

What are some topics that you would be interested in dealing with?

What recruiting methods would appeal to you and your colleague? Are there any professional organizations that Ford's should be aware of to recruit?

Appendix F

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Getting the Word Out

increasing visibility for
Ford's Theatre National Historic Site

NIKI SANDOVAL

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Audience Selection -- The News Media

Why is the news media important?

According to *Ford's Theatre* and *Friends of Ford's Theatre* staff, visitorship from the local Washington metropolitan area is lacking (see Appendix I.) There appears to be no pro-active effort to reach local visitors to inform them about permanent or temporary exhibitions, interpretive programs, or volunteer opportunities (see Appendix II.) The most effective and efficient way to reach potential, local Washington metropolitan area visitors is through the news media. By obtaining regular listings in local periodicals, along with public service announcements on local television and radio stations, it is possible to reach the target audience with a minimal effort and cost -- *Ford's Theatre* staff provides the information, the news media disseminates the message.

Proposed Programming

How do we reach and cultivate this key audience?

Create a successful program that serves visitor needs and is feasible for execution by Theatre staff. Due to limited resources -- both financial and human, this proposal will offer efficient and feasible media relations strategies and tactics. Reaching the news media is only the first step, purposeful cultivation and evaluation must also be implemented in order for the programming to succeed. Proposed activities could include the following:

Create a "story bank"

Keeping the *Ford's Theatre* and the *Friends of Ford's Theatre* in the news on a consistent basis is essential to the establishment of a visible public profile and donor base. An interesting, cost-effective way to accomplish this is to create an internal "story bank." The "story bank" is a listing of interesting story ideas that can be pitched to journalists when appropriate. The "story bank" is maintained on a database by staff and volunteers of *Ford's Theatre* and the *Friends of Ford's Theatre.* Informal brainstorming sessions can be conducted on a quarterly basis to keep the "story bank" fresh and lively. Some of the most interesting stories to read are those about people. For example, in attempting to recruit more foreign language speaking volunteers, a snappy profile and photograph of a current volunteer in a local, foreign language newspaper could increase awareness of the volunteer program among the target audience.

Proposed Programming *continued*

Have an "open house"
Invite local journalists to attend an "open house" at the *Ford's Theatre National Historic Site.* Allow them to follow a particularly animated interpreter or ranger giving a school tour. Give them a glimpse behind the scenes (see Appendix III.) A journalist participating in the open house may be inspired to compile a print or television story to run during Presidents' Day Weekend. The "open house" will also introduce journalists to staff who are an important source for story tips and expertise.

Invite local news media to special events and exhibitions
Give journalists a sneak preview of an exhibition prior to its opening and invite them to attend symposia and lectures on a regular basis. Positioning *Ford's Theatre* as a dynamic and evolving destination is essential to the launching of the *Friends of Ford's Theatre.*

Compile an annual print and electronic media report
In addition to being an evaluation of media coverage, these reports will also be essential in securing potential funders and retaining previous ones. Most funders like to know that their money is being put to good use and that people are benefitting. Nearly all funders like to be recognized publicly for their philanthropy. Laminate the print report's pages and display it for museum visitors. The media report testifies to Lincoln's influence and legend.

Potential for Success, Possible Constraints

The **potential for success** in reaching the news media and cultivating the relationship lies in the creativity and energy of *Ford's Theatre* and *Friends of Ford's Theatre* staff (see Appendix IV.) The staff has the advantage of wearing many hats and seeing a variety of operations. They are in a prime position to identify newsworthy stories. The staff and volunteers also appear to care about what they do and that passion will empower them for the successful story pitch (see Appendix V.)

Possible constraints include current demands on staff time and operating budgets. As day-to-day operations and site maintenance are priority challenges that require full attention and resources, media relations activities may be viewed as non-essential and can slip through the cracks. With money going to fund necessary maintenance, it is unlikely that funds would be allocated to pay for advertising space or media relations activities. However, with the *Friends of Ford's Theatre* beginning to raise funds, an investment in media relations activities could be made. This will be a tool for raising more funds.

Programming and the Audience

The activities mentioned above are proven media relations strategies. However, the formula for success is never the same for any museum or historic site. The creation of the beginnings of a "story bank" along with a media list of journalists who should receive news releases, calendar listings, invitations to events and story tips is a feasible first step in reaching and cultivating the news media.

Programming and the Staff

Staff training is an essential part of *Ford's Theatre* and the *Friends of Ford's Theatre* media relations program. The core staff, comprised of the site manager, park rangers, historian, and clerk will coordinate an initial, half-day workshop in media relations for non-profit organizations. The executive director of *Friends of Ford's Theatre* will also be invited to attend, along with any volunteers who work in media relations (see Appendix VI.)

Setting up the Workshop

1. **Decide upon specific objectives,** which could include:

   a. identifying strategies for reaching the news media
   b. indentifying ways to effectively and accurately convey *Ford's Theatre* and *Friends of Ford's Theatre* messages
   c. identifying media relations strategies for recruiting volunteers

2. **Select a topic for the workshop,** which could include:

   "Media Relations Support for Fundraising Activities"
   "Handling the Media During Crisis and Controversy"
   "Pitching Stories"
   "Image Building"
   "Reaching and Cultivating Diverse Audiences through the News Media."

3. **Invite three Washington area media relations professionals to volunteer to give one half-hour presentation in their area of specialization,** followed by a question and answer period focusing on specific questions about how the topic covered applies to *Ford's Theatre* and the *Friends of Ford's Theatre*.

4. **Devise a method for evaluating the success or shortcomings of the workshop.** Build an evaluation period into every workshop. This will measure if your objectives were met.

Programming and the Staff *continued*

Each presenter will give one half-hour presentation followed by a question and answer period. During the question and answer period, core staff will have the benefit of posing specific *Ford's Theatre* questions to trained professionals in the field of media relations. Following the guest speakers' presentations, the core staff will convene on their own to actively brainstorm and begin formulation of the "story bank."

During the final hour of the day, staff will evaluate the workshop and determine if the objectives were met. If the objectives were indeed met, the staff will set dates for three more seminars to occur quarterly and for two hours each. The site manager will select the invitees and suggest topics that are relevant to *Ford's Theatre* and the *Friends of Ford's Theatre*. Active brainstorming and adding to the "story bank" will be a part of each workshop.

Programming and Volunteers

Volunteer opportunities in media relations should be made known among those who wish to serve *Ford's Theatre* and *Friends of Ford's Theatre*. Media relations volunteers should be included in the quarterly media relations workshops. All of the activities proposed can be performed by consistent and dedicated volunteers.

Getting a Head Start

There are some activities that the *Ford's Theatre* and *Friends of Ford's Theatre* staff and volunteers can begin work on immediately.

Developing the "Story Bank"

1. **Begin a list of print stories and create photograph files to accompany the stories**. Suggested topics include:

   Hungry? Ford's Theatre Offers Slice of History for Lunch
   (profile of lunchtime programs)

   What People Want to Know -- The 10 Most Asked Questions in Washington
   (interpreters reveal the most asked questions)

   Every Picture Tells a Story -- and Lincoln's Speaks Volumes
   (profile of storytelling and interpretive programs)

   Ford's Theatre Invites You to Make History
   (charter membership invitation to the *Friends of Ford's Theatre)*

   Ford's Theatre Invites You to Make History
   (call for volunteers)

Developing the "Story Bank" *continued*

2. **Begin a list of electronic stories and assemble stock footage, or produce b-roll (background footage) to accompany stories.**

Developing a Media List

1. **Begin a list of contacts in the news media.** Start by listing any journalists or producers who have written or produced stories involving the *Ford's Theatre*. Be sure to include addresses, phone numbers, fax numbers and electronic mail addresses. Encourage staff and volunteers to routinely record all contacts with the news media -- this will develop your list. Invite these friends to any and all special public programs. Do not hesitate to call them to follow up on the written invitation. By keeping the personal contacts alive, you are increasing the comfort level -- making it more likely for them to call you when they want your help on a story. Remember not to hound them, however.

2. **Purchase Hudson's Washington Media Directory**. This is the most complete Washington area directory, featuring hundreds of news outlets and newsmakers.

3. **Purchase Bacon's Radio/TV, Newspaper and Magazine Directory**. This national directory that will be especially useful in beginning to increase visibility on a national scale -- which is necessary in establishing a foundation of visibility for the *Friends of Ford's Theatre*.

4. **Keep media list in an organized database that can be easily updated.** Newsmakers and the news change constantly. Keep your list current.

What is the Bottom Line?

The bottom line is visibility. Increased visibility in the Washington area (and nationally) will be instrumental in establishing a consistent donor base for the *Friends of Ford's Theatre*. No one is likely to want to be a member of a club they've never heard of or have never visited. By increasing awareness of *Ford's Theatre*, the site can begin to be positioned as a vital, interesting and relevant destination in the Washington metropolitan area. Media relations techniques provide useful and effective vehicles for disseminating messages on behalf of *Ford's Theatre* and *Friends of Ford's Theatre* -- assisting staff and volunteers in fulfilling their mission as set forth by the National Park Service's Organic Act and Vail Agenda (see appendix VII.)

Appendices

Appendix I

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

MARKETPLACE

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 1995

TRAVEL

Tourists Skip the Capital for Flashier Sites

By Jacqueline Simmons
Staff Reporter of The Wall Street Journal

Once a must-see for vacationing families, the nation's capital now finds tourists looking elsewhere.

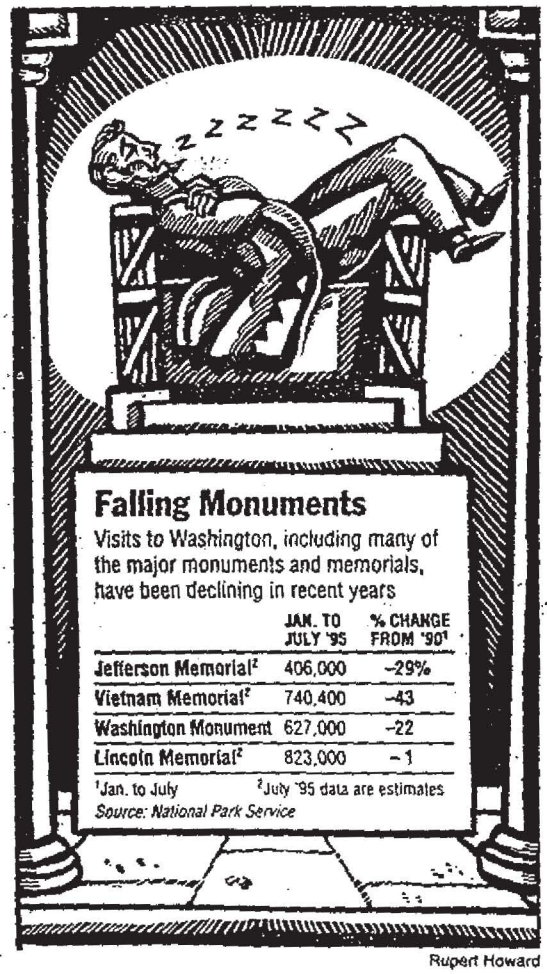
Tourism is booming nationwide, but visits to the Jefferson Memorial have fallen more than 40% in three years and are down at least 20% at the Vietnam Memorial this year. In fact, barring a sharp upturn this fall, Washington will suffer its second-worst year in tourism in a decade, second only to the Gulf War slump in 1991.

The good news for the tourists who do come to the capital: Hotels and restaurants have been cutting prices.

"We're living in the age of Disney and flashy theme parks, and Washington landmarks can't compete with that," says Joe Brancatelli, an editor of Travel Holiday magazine. According to the Travel Industry Association of America, just 7% of Americans said they wanted to see the capital this summer, compared with 89% who said they prefered to go to Florida, California or Hawaii.

Travel Holiday's Mr. Brancatelli says tourists are still drawn to historical attractions around the country, but "when people think of Washington nowadays, they're not thinking of history, they're thinking of crime, poverty and race."

Total crime in the city, having hit a high in 1993, dropped 7% last year, but the city's bad reputation continues to deter tourists—as does considerable cynicism around the country about the workings of the national government. "Washington has never been up there as a high priority for me," says Mitch von Gnechten, a 33-year-old Phoenix resident who has never traveled to the nation's capital. "I mean, look at what's coming out of there: If it's not crime and murder, it's corruption."



Falling Monuments

Visits to Washington, including many of the major monuments and memorials, have been declining in recent years

	JAN. TO JULY '95	% CHANGE FROM '90[1]
Jefferson Memorial[2]	406,000	–29%
Vietnam Memorial[2]	740,400	–43
Washington Monument	627,000	–22
Lincoln Memorial[2]	823,000	–1

[1]Jan. to July [2]July '95 data are estimates

Source: National Park Service

Rupert Howard

But it is the allure of other attractions that is keeping many student groups away, according to the Close Up Foundation, a leading organizer of high-school trips to Washington. Foundation officials say about 2,500 schools will take part in the company's program this year, its second-lowest total since 1985.

Another organizer of such trips, Federal City Tours, is expecting only 6,000 students this year—down from 10,000 five years ago. Pat Wolverton, owner of Federal City, says fewer of those students are part of a history or political-science class; instead, they are only going to Washington to perform in some event, like a national high-school debate or a spelling bee. "You hear about schools that used to go to Washington going to Disney World or Europe instead," she says. "I wasn't hearing that before."

Indeed, students at Bernardo Heights Middle School in San Diego won't be flying to Washington this school year with a history and English teacher, as was done in the past. But they will probably take a trip to Sea World and Disneyland, says assistant principal Elaine Johnson. And last year, one group of students went to Spain. Kristin Flaherty, a 13-year-old student at the school, offers a typical comment: "I'd rather go to Hawaii ... than stand in front of the Lincoln Memorial."

Veterans, once a staple of the capital's tourist industry, haven't been flocking to Washington either. The new Korean War Veterans Memorial, which opened this summer, drew disappointing crowds. And the 50th anniversary of V-J Day last month failed to bring about a military influx.

The tourists who do get to Washington this summer remark on how deserted the

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Tourists Skip the Capital, Set Out for Flashier Sites

Continued From Page B1

city seems. On a recent Saturday, A.J. Lundstrom emerges from his hotel lobby near Pennsylvania Avenue and sees hardly a soul. A 30-year-old artist from New York, Mr. Lundstrom is on his first trip to Washington and finds the dearth of tourists a major disappointment. "I guess I was expecting to see a bunch of flag-waving Americans," he says. "Geez, it's awfully quiet."

Some of the summer's inactivity can be attributed to an exodus of vacationing Washingtonians. But Louis Williams, who owns a tailor shop in the vicinity of the White House, is particularly struck by how few tourists he has observed in recent days. "Everything is off 100%," he says, shaking his head. "Things sure aren't like they used to be."

Those who depend on crowds of tourists are particularly downcast. Joel Ojelade, a cab driver in Washington for six years, says his business is increasingly coming from locals and foreigners. "I haven't seen too many domestic tourists lately," he sighs.

So far, the response from city officials has been low-key. Washington is planning a major expansion of its convention center, but that won't be completed until around the year 2000. "Of course, things change from one year to next," says Marie Tibor, spokeswoman for the city's Convention and Visitors Association, when asked about the tourism numbers.

But hotels and restaurants aren't passively awaiting the next cycle. Among those using price cuts to entice customers, even a four-star property like the Jefferson Hotel has been offering 40% markdowns.

"No question about it," says Randy Smith, of Smith Travel Research, a hotel-research company. "Washington has become one of the best bargains around."

Appendix II

VOLUNTEERS

Looking for volunteer opportunities? Following are groups in your area in need of volunteer help for a day or a week or on a regular basis. Nonprofit groups in need of volunteers should send notices to Volunteers, The Washington Post, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071.

Air and Space Museum

■ The National Air and Space Museum on the Mall seeks volunteers to work in its Educational Services Department, answering mail and inquiries from students and teachers. Volunteers work weekdays any time from 9 a.m. to 3:15 p.m., and schedules may be arranged to suit individual needs. Call Maretta Hemsley, 202-786-2102.

Other volunteers are needed to work at the museum's Tour and Reservations Office scheduling group visits on a computer. Training will be provided for volunteers without computer experience. Call Davidé Jackson, 202-357-1682.

Appendix III

Niki Sandoval
EDUC 223
Museum Experience at Ford's Theater

I. Physical Context/Accessibility
   a. Initial ambiance
      1. Neighborhood outside theater is dilapidated and disturbing.
      2. A theater lobby with volunteer situated in the ticket window is available to answer questions and hand out literature if approached. Volunteer was helpful and informative.
      3. No general text, recording or speech to orient visitor.

   b. What I would change
      1. I would create an orientation experience for the visitor. Not everyone is aware of Abraham Lincoln or the circumstances of his life and death. Visitors need a context for viewing historical objects.
      2. I would have an interpretor in the theater to answer visitor questions.
      3. I would have a map of Ford's Theater, Museum and the Petersen house in each of the three locations. Visitors do not necessarily make the connection between the three without an orientation map.

II. Affective Context/Accessibility
   a. Fulfillment of emotional and experiential needs
      1. The experience did not fulfill my emotional needs, but did fulfill my experiential needs. I enjoy going to places that I have studied or read about and seeing the theater and Lincoln's artifacts satisfied some of my curiosity about events of the past.
   b. Fulfillment of expectations, attitudes and values
      1. I expected a better orientation at the start of my experience.
      2. I was not aware of the variety of artifacts or the museum and was pleasantly surprised. I enjoyed seeing the contents of Lincoln's pockets.
      3. I was hoping for a more extensive historical context in the theater and museum.
   c. How I would enhance the personal context
      1. I would create an historical context at the beginning of the experience. Inform the visitor about what Washington was like at the time. What citizens attitudes were like. There must be existing documentation of peoples reactions to Lincoln's assassination. What did this event mean? What were the implications of this event on history?

      2. I would provide a book for people to write their thoughts on Lincoln. The thoughts could make a good book or exhibition.

III. Social Context/Accessibility

a. Learning and enjoyment with companions

1. The visitor experience is self-guided and conducive to group visits. Their are several objects that spark conversation. I saw many people speaking with their companions about topics covered in the museum.

b. How I would enhance the social context

1. The book for visitor thoughts would enable visitors to view the opinions of others not in their group.

IV. Cultural Context/Accessibility

a. Accessibility to my cultural background

1. I did not see any specific attempts to tell the stories of people from diverse ethnic backgrounds. Being of Native American, Mexican and Spanish ancestry, the only mention of my culture was in a panel that stated several Native delegations visited the Lincoln White House.

b. What I would do to improve cultural accessibility

1. I would tell the stories of people who lived in Lincoln's time. People of different ethnic backgrounds lived during his time, but you wouldn't know it from the exhibitions.
2. I would target the local community in promotions for the theater's programs and offerings. The Washington metro area is extremely diverse.
3. I would offer interpretive components in spoken Spanish and other languages largely represented in the Washington area.

V. Cognitive Context/Accessibility

a. Understandable concepts

1. The panels are written in a basic, understandable level (probably seventh grade) and are effective in conveying basic messages. More involved and complex issues are covered in the text as well. Text is multi-layered for various age levels.
2. The quantity of information is ample enough to satisfy and encourage further study, yet brief enough to be digestible.
3. Text offers interesting questions for further thought, but no specific sources of additional information.

b. What would I do to enhance intellectual accessibility

1. I would create a resource center on site for further exploration of topics surrounding Lincoln.
2. I would create a resource guide for national and local distribution.
3. I would have interpretors on site to answer questions and respond to visitors who wish to engage in conversation.

Overall Opinion .

My initial opinion is that Ford's theater, museum and the Peterson house are national treasures with a wealth of unrealized potential. I could see from one visit that the site is understaffed and that resources are at a minimum. The exhibitions are well executed and effective for a general audience but there are many stories to be told.

Only when those stories begin to be told will there be hope of attracting audiences that are more reflective of the local population. That is not to say that presentations need be ethnic-specific, but to say that there is a wealth of material that is of interest to a large population that is simply not being interpreted.

Appendix IV

Institutional Profile

Mission, Size, Scope

The mission of the Ford's Theatre National Historic Site is stated in the Organic Act of 1916 which established the National Park Service. Following is an excerpt from the Act (see Appendix I) which is particularly relevant to Ford's Theater:

> The service thus established shall promote and regulate the use of the Federal areas known as national parks, monuments, and reservations hereinafter specified, except such as are under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Army, as provided by law, by such means and measures as conform to **the fundamental purpose** of the said parks, monuments, and reservations, which purpose **is to conserve** the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein **and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.**

Ford's Theatre staff has also identified three secondary missions:

Interpret cultural history of Abraham Lincoln's era

Preserve history and material culture of Lincoln

Dispel myths regarding Lincoln

The Ford's Theatre is visited by more than one million people annually. The site consists of four buildings: Ford's Theatre and Museum, Peterson House, theater dressing rooms and Star Saloon. The site focuses on the moment when Lincoln was shot. The site is staffed by a site manager, historian, curator, clerk, seven rangers, seven maintenance workers, a volunteer corps and interns. The site holds more than 10,000 photographs and objects relating to Lincoln. Their acquisitions are limited to objects that relate to the assassination or his tenure as president. They do not have an acquisitions fund.

Current Programs

Permanent and Temporary Exhibitions

The museum features artifacts and memorabilia relating to Lincoln's death and presidency. Temporary exhibitions focus on special topics such as the contents of Lincoln's pockets when he died. Text is basic enough to be accessible to a range of ages and cultural backgrounds.

15-minute Interpretive Talks

These talks are given by volunteer interpreters or Rangers. Each interpreter selects a topic relating to the site, researches it, and develops a 15-minute talk. The variety of topics covered keeps the talks lively and interesting, a repeat visitor is not likely to hear the same talk twice.

Volunteer Interpretive Program

Volunteers research topics of interest and develop 15-minute talks. Volunteers are very committed and interested. It is a volunteer who began the Friends of Ford's Theater.

Theatrical Performances by *Ford's Theatre Society*

The Society offers regularly scheduled performances in the theater, which keeps the theater a living and vibrant place. However, their rehearsal schedule conflicts with public hours. There is no collaborative effort with the Ford's Theatre itself. The theater gets no revenue from these performances.

Friends of Ford's Theatre

Incorporated in January, 1995, the group is awaiting tax-exempt status confirmation. The group is developing a budget and will solicit gifts when it is officially recognized as a non-profit. It consists of a three-member, volunteer board. The Board would like to implement a long list of projects, with the aid of private funds, including an interpretive training program, physical improvements, period garden in rear of Peterson House as a solution to visitor traffic overflow, and Lincoln/Douglas debate society featuring an annual student debate program to take place at Ford's Theatre.

Immediate Community

More than 34 thousand people live in the neighborhood surrounding the Ford's Theatre. The majority of the population are African American, but there are Caucasian, Hispanic, and Asian residents as well. According to Ford's Theatre staff, the local population does not regularly visit Ford's Theater; their visitorship of more than 1 million people consists mainly of foreign and domestic tourists. However, those numbers can not be expected to remain consistent or increase, as tourism in Washington, D.C. has declined steadily over the past few years (See Appendix II.) The Ford's Theatre must increase support and visitation from the local population in order to establish a dependable and consistent support base.

Accessibility Requirements

The site, as a museum or place of public gathering, is required by the American Disabilities Act to have an accessible entrance, clear route and accessible bathrooms. They meet some of the requirements, not all. As an historic building, however, they are not required to conform to all requirements because changes could damage the structural and historic integrity of the building.

The staff appears to have done an excellent job of doing the best with what they have. The performances have audio description for non-sighted visitors, the plays and interpretive programs can be translated in American Sign Language for deaf visitors. For those areas that are not accessible, such as the Peterson House and the box where Lincoln was shot, the staff hopes to produce high quality photographs so that those who can not physically access these areas can at least appreciate them visually.

Audiences

Potential Audiences

Washington Metropolitan Area Residents
- **School Groups, Students**
- **Families**
- **Ethnic Groups**
- **Donors, Members**

Foreign and Domestic Tourists
- **School Groups, Students**
- **Families**
- **Ethnic Groups**
- **Donors, Members**

Underrepresented Audiences

Washington Metropolitan Area Residents
- **School Groups, Students**
- **Families**
- **Ethnic Groups**
- **Donors, Members**

The Ford's Theatre does not seem to be in need of visitors as it attracts more than one million people annually. However, according to the staff, the site is not serving its local public and the diverse audiences within that public. The Ford's Theatre is an important historic site and a treasure for all Americans, but the educational potential it holds is not currently being realized. This is due to a lack of financial and human resources that devoted to programming for a variety of audiences. Day to day maintenance and a seven day operation is challenging enough to require the staff's full attention.

Realistic Short-term Program Development and Implementation

Where Do We Start?

Ford's Theatre is blessed with a dedicated and creative staff (and volunteers.) Staff, along with the *Friends of Ford's Theatre*, have expressed the desire to embark on a long list of projects. All projects are in the interest of the Theatre's mission and some are necessary to the site's survival. The first step is to prioritize these projects. The second step is to identify project objectives and goals. The third is to identify resources and a timeline. The fourth step is develop methods for implementation and evaluation. The fifth is to implement the project. The final step is to evaluate the program to assess its success. It is important to know if a program is worth repeating.

Possible Activities to Address Needs of Ford's Theatre

- *Need to increase private funds and establish reliable donor base*

Ensure presence of the *Friends of Ford's Theatre* at every public and private program conducted on property. One way this can be accomplished is through *Friends'* volunteers distributing membership literature and greeting patrons and visitors at events. Membership program pitch should printed in every written program in the theater. Formal announcements of membership sign-ups and special events should be made over loud speaker during intermission of plays and programs.

- *Increase visitorship that reflects the local population*

Conduct public programs such as lectures, symposia, special exhibitions and films in honor of ethnic heritage months such as Asian-Pacific Heritage Month, African-American Heritage Month, Hispanic Heritage Month and Native American Heritage Month. Such activities can assist in targeting traditionally underrepresented groups. For example, it is briefly stated in the permanent installation that several Native American delegations visited the Lincoln White House. It is safe to assume that documentation exists about these visits. A modest, temporary or permanent installation about these visits and Lincoln's role in the history of Native peoples would interest a variety of publics, not only Native Americans.

Feature lunchtime films, lectures and discussions that target local neighboorhood employees. By getting local people involved in Ford's Theater, they can be cultivated to become supporters. By making the neighborhood feel like a part of the theater, neighbors can be stimulated to give their time, financial support and to spread the word to other Washington metropolitan area residents.

Have pre-theater events in Museum that introduce patrons to the *Friends of Ford's Theater*. The theater patrons are a logical audience to tap into for membership development, as they already visit and support theatrical events.

Appendix V

Ford's Theatre National Historic Site
Interview Research

Introduction

The core staff of the site, comprised of the site manager, historian, clerk and five rangers were asked the same series of questions, (see attached interview questionnaire). Although my selected audience is the news media, I decided that interviewing the staff would be more relevant to my proposal in that it would help me accomplish the following objectives:

to assess level of staff awareness of the news media as an audience,

identify potential stories for the "story bank,"

and assess staff interest in media relations activities.

The data obtained from my interview questions informed my development of the training component of my proposal. It is important to know your audience before developing programming for them!

Similarities

Most respondents agreed that the public is informed of *Ford's Theatre* programming in the following ways:

via the news media, through the National Park Service Public Affairs Office

the **National Park Service "Kiosk"** publication

brochures, guidebooks, history books and travel videos

contacting **special interest groups,** such as the Lincoln Group and Suratt Society

through contacts with **schools**

word of mouth

Similarities continued

Most respondents agreed that the following newsworthy events occurred within the past year, and that they received noteworthy media attention:

The Contents of Lincoln's Pockets exhibition

130th Anniversary Symposium

John Wilkes Booth exhumation hearings

Presidential Gala

C-Span's live school bus program

Most respondents agreed that the **1996 Symposium** would be a news worthy event next year.

Most respondents agreed that the news media is an audience of *Ford's Theatre*. Following is a sampling of some of the staff's reasons for believing that the news media is an important audience:

"The media is not a neutral group of organizations. They need to be courted in order to get them to cover your events."

"The media is a tool that we must work actively with in order to accomplish other site goals."

"The print media and television reach a wide audience."

"I would consider them a potential audience that should be tapped into."

Differences

A few respondents did not consider the news media to be an audience of *Ford's Theatre* for the following reasons:

"The media likes things that are new, interesting, and of general public interest – something we are not."

"Audience implies entertainment. At NPS we deal with history and interpretation."

Ford's Theatre National Historic Site
Interview Research

Conclusions

In conclusion, it is apparent that overall the staff of the *Ford's Theatre* National Historic Site have a high level of awareness of the news media as an important audience. The staff mostly agrees on what makes a newsworthy story. Most of the staff acknowledges that they have interacted with the news media in one way or another and a few have been interviewed in both print and electronic media. As the staff is aware of this important audience, identifying stories for the "story bank" should come relatively easily -- the staff already knows what makes a good story.

Most importantly, the staff realizes that the news media provide an important vehicle for disseminating the messages of the *Ford's Theatre* National Historic Site. One of the park rangers summed it up best:

"Only this week I received a phone call from a lady in Rhode Island after she viewed the A&E special about the Lincoln assassination. She said she was most pleased to see the sad events of April 14, 1865 being treated in a more accurate manner. No longer should history dismiss John Wilkes Booth as a madman. He was depicted as a political activist who fought for his cause, the Confederate States of America. Mr. Lincoln fought for his side -- the Union. **It is in this vein, along with the on-going scholarship that the media can help better inform the nation of its history, be it dark or glorious."**

Ford's Theatre National Historic Site
Interview Research

Audience – **The News Media**

Interviewees – ***Ford's Theatre* staff**

Objectives – **Assess level of staff awareness of the news media as an audience**
Identify potential stories for the "story bank"
Assess staff interest in media relations activities

Interview Questionnaire

1. What is your role on the *Ford's Theatre* or *Friends of Ford's Theatre* staff? Or are you a volunteer?

2. How does the word get out to the public about *Ford's Theatre* or *Friends of Ford's Theatre* programs?

3. Have you seen the *Ford's Theatre* or *Friends of Ford's Theatre* in the news within the past year?

4. In your opinion, were there any newsworthy happenings at the *Ford's Theatre* in the past year? Do you anticipate any newsworthy happenings at the *Ford's Theatre* in the coming year?

5. In your role, do you engage in any media relations activities?

6. Do you consider the news media to be an audience of the *Ford's Theatre* or *Friends of Ford's Theatre*? Why or why not?

Friends of Ford's Theater

Background information from Niki Sandoval's phone interview with Gary Crawford

I. Ford's Theater Mission Statement
   a. One of the first things the founders developed, six months in the making.
   b. Mission statement developed prior to legal incorporation in January 95.

II. Organizational Structure
   a. Three-member founding board consisting of former Ford's Theater volunteers and rangers.
   b. Friends of Ford's theater has a "corporate identity" office with a receptionist and phone. Gary Crawford checks in daily for messages, but works full time in the U.S. Tax Court. Efforts of the Board are non-salaried.
   c. No set budget. Awaiting tax-exempt status confirmation. Has funded office operations with sporadic financial gifts to Ford's Theater. Board is currently discussing budget scenarios and will solicit major gifts once a certified non-profit.

III. History
   a. National Park Service volunteers and rangers affiliated with Ford's Theater saw need for support base.
   b. Encouraged by site manager two years ago to initiate effort to create a "friends of" group comparable to Gettysburg or the Sandburg House.

IV. Vision for the Future
   a. Long list of projects to be completed. Plan private fundraising as a way to enable the undertaking of these projects.
      1. Interpretive training program.
      2. Theater improvements, alterations.
      3. Period garden in rear of Peterson House as a solution to visitor traffic overflow.
      4. Lincoln/Douglas debate society. Annual student debate program to take place at Ford's Theater.

Objectives for interview with Gary Crawford. Friends of Ford's Theater

1. Identify mission of FOFT
2. Identify organizational structure of FOFT
3. Identify vision and long term goals for FOFT

Questions for Friends of Ford's Theater

1. Do you have a mission statement?

2. Do you have a fact sheet on the organization or a brochure you hand potential supporters?

3. How many people on staff of FOFT? Are they paid?

4. Are your staff needs currently being met?

5. How did the FOFT come about?

6. What is your vision for the FOFT?

7. Do you view the FOFT as having a local or national focus?

8. Where would you like FOFT to be in 5 years? In 10 years?

9. How do you plan to achieve those goals?

References

Suggested Reading

"Creating Museum Experiences for Organized Groups," The Museum Experience, John Falk and Lynn D. Dierking.

Open Conversations, Strategies for Professional Development in Museums, Carolyn Blackmon, Teresa K LaMaster, Lisa C. Roberts, Beverly Serrell.

"Interview," A Practical Guide to Behavioral Research Tools and Techniques, R. and B. Sommer.

The Adult Learner in the Museum, David Carr

Museums in the Life of a City, Strategies for Community Partnerships, Portia Hamilton-Sperr, Project Director.

Appendix 5

EDUC 226 Internship and Seminar in Museum Education
Course Syllabus

Museum Education Program
The George Washington University

Carol B. Stapp
Spring 1996

EDUC 226
Course Outline
Internship and Seminar in Museum Education
Friday 9:00 am - 12 noon
(and other times as assigned)
GSEHD Building
B08/09

I. OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

A. Design and carry out self-directed learning for their own professional development.
B. Analyze and compare museums as institutions.
C. Discuss approaches to and methods of museum interpretation and compare with their own philosophy and practice.
D. Develop a fundable project.

II. REQUIREMENTS

A. Four days a week or their equivalent at the internship site.
B. Regular seminar attendance and participation--on and off campus.
C. Internship Papers, Weekly Logs, Museum Profile, Self-Directed Learning Project, Grant Proposal, Intern Exchange, Reflective Portfolio, Professional Portfolio.
D. Readings.

III. TEXTS (See General Texts and Readings)

IV. SYLLABUS (See Syllabus)

V. EVALUATION

A. Internship--45%
    1. Presence and participation--5%
    2. Assignments--20%
        a. Weekly Logs
        b. Museum Profile

c. Intern Exchange

3. Internship Performance--20%
    a. Consultation with site supervisor
    b. Mid-Term Progress Report
    c. Mid-Term Site Visit
    d. End-of-Semester Phone Call
    e. Final Letter of Evaluation

B. Seminar--45%
    1. Presence and participation--5%
    2. Assignments--35%
        a. Self-Directed Learning Project
        b. Grant Proposal
    3. Readings--5%

C. Reflective and Professional Portfolios--10%

Students must request prior approval from faculty for any modifications in fulfilling requirements (seminar attendance, punctuality of assignments, etc.) in order to ascertain acceptable modifications without incurring academic penalty. Flexibility will be exercised within the parameters of University standards, in accord with faculty discretion.

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Museum Education Program
The George Washington University

Carol B. Stapp
Spring1996

EDUC 226
Syllabus
Internship and Seminar in Museum Education
Friday 9:00 am - 12 noon
GSEHD Building B08/B09

Jan 19	9-10:30	Orientation I Internship Reportage
		DUE: Internship Papers
	10:30-Noon	Introduction to Grantsmanship
	1-4:00	Foundation Grants Workshop 1001 Connecticut Avenue, NW (entrance on K Street)
Jan 26	9-10:30	Orientation II
	10-11:00	Site Supervisors Meeting
	11-12:00	Brunch
	2:00-5:00	Review Panel and Grant Writing Nuts and Bolts
		DUE: Pre-Assignment and Readings
Feb 2	9:00-Noon	Museum Profile Exchange
		DUE: Museum Profile
	1:00-4:00	Preview / Reprise Internship Reportage

Date	Time	Federal Grants Workshop
TBA	TBA	Old Post Office 1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
		DUE: Readings
Feb 5 Mon to Feb 22 Thurs		Site Visits with Mid-Term Conferences and On-Campus Proposal Consultations
Feb 23	9:00-10:00 10:00-Noon	Internship Reportage Proposal Exchange
		DUE: Proposal First Draft
March 1	9-10:30	"New Visions" SPEAKER: Kim Igoe
	10:30-12:00	Theory to Practice
		DUE: Readings
March 8	9-10:30	"The Blurring of the Boundaries" SPEAKER: Elaine Heumann Gurian
	10:30-12:00	Theory to Practice
		DUE: Readings

March 15	9-12:00	Proposal Exchange
		DUE: Proposal Second Draft
		MUSEUM PRACTITIONER SEMINAR
	2-4:00	"In Search of Generalizability" SPEAKER: Beverly Serrell
		DUE: Readings
March 22	9-10:30	"Capacity Building" SPEAKER: Bonnie VanDorn
	10:30-12:00	Theory to Practice
		DUE: Readings
March 29		Proposal Roundtable
		DUE: Self-Directed Learning Project
April 5		Preview / Reprise Internship Reportage
		DUE: Proposal Final Draft
April 12		Exchange Self-Directed Learning Project Proposals
		DUE: Readings

April 19

Retrospective / Prospective I
- Reportage
  - Intern Exchange
  - Internship
- Theory to Practice

"Monday Morning Know-How"
DISCUSSANT: Marcella Brenner

DUE: Readings

April 22
Mon

DUE: Reflective Portfolios

April 24
Wed

DUE: Professional Portfolios

April 26

Retrospective / Prospective II
- Portfolios
  - Reflective
  - Professional
- Theory to Practice

"Leadership in the Field"
DISCUSSANTS: Judy Landau
Joanne Hirsch

DUE: Readings

Museum Education Program
George Washington University

Carol B. Stapp
Spring 1996

EDUC 226
Internship and Seminar in Museum Education
Friday 9:00am - 12 noon
(1:00 - 4:00pm on occasion)
READINGS

General Texts

Alexander, Edward P. *Museums in Motion: An Introduction to the History and Functions of Museums*. Nashville, TN: American Association for State and Local History, 1979.

Commission on Museums for a New Century. *Museums for a New Century*. Washington, DC: American Association of Museums, 1984.

Munley, Mary Ellen. *Catalysts for Change: The Kellogg Projects in Museum Education*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Office of Museum Programs, 1986. (*Gratis*.)

Museum Education Roundtable. *Patterns in Practice: Selections from the Journal of Museum Education*. Washington, DC: MER, 1992.

Reading Assignments

March 1 — American Association of Museums. *New Visions: Tools for Change in Museums* (Part 1). Washington, DC: American Association of Museums, 1995.

March 8 — Gurian, Elaine Heumann. "A Blurring of the Boundaries." *Curator* Vol. 38, No. 1 (March 1995) pp. 31-7.

_____. "A Safer Place." *Journal of Museum Education* Vol. 20, No. 3 (Fall 1995).

Museum Education Program
George Washington University

Carol B. Stapp
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March 15

Bitgood, Stephen. "Introduction and Issues in Summative Evaluation." *Visitor Behavior* Vol. X, No. 3 (Fall 1995) pp. 4-5.

Hayward, Jeff, and Ross Loomis. "Summary of 'Looking Back at Summative Evaluation.'" *Visitor Behavior* Vol. X, No. 3 (Fall 1995) p. 5.

Serrell, Beverly, "The 51% Solution Research Project: A Meta-Analysis of Visitor Time/Use in Museum Exhibitions." *Visitor Behavior* Vol. X, No. 3 (Fall 1995) pp. 5-9.

Shettel, Harris H. "Should the 51% Solution Have a 'Caution' Label?" *Visitor Behavior* Vol X, No. 3 (Fall 1995) pp. 10-11.

March 22

St. John, Mark. *Institutions of Informal Science Education: An Invisible Infrastructure* (The Executive Summary).

April 12

American Association of Museums. *Code of Ethics for Museums*. Washington, DC:AAM, 1991.

Harris, Neil. "A Historical Perspective on Museum Advocacy," *Museum News* 59, no. 3 (November/December 1980): 61 [61-62, 65-66, 69-70, 73-75, 77-78, 81-82, 85-86].

April 19

Coles, Robert. "The Art Museum and the Pressures of Society." In *On Understanding Art Museums*, ed. Sherman Lee, 195-203. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1975.

Graburn, Nelson. "The Museum and the Visitor Experience." In *The Visitor and the Museum*, ed. Linda Draper, 5-26. Berkeley, CA: Lowie Museum of Anthropology, 1977.

April 26

American Association of Museum Task Force on Museum Education. *Excellence and Equity*. Washington, DC:AAM, 1992.

Schroeder, Fred E.H. "Accountability: A Covenant with the People," *Midwest Museum Quarterly* 40, no. 3&4 (Summer/Fall 1980): pp. 3-11.

Museum Education Program
The George Washington University

Carol B. Stapp
Spring 1996

EDUC 226
INSTITUTION'S EXPECTATIONS OF THE INTERNSHIP

DUE: January 12, 1996

(A statement describing what the intern is expected to experience and accomplish during the internship, with the projected process of orientation to the institution, major activities and final or overall product.)

Upon completion of my internship at Ford's Theatre, I expect to enhance my understanding of the inner workings of the museum and the educational function of the museum. An orientation of FTNHS should include an in depth discussion of the projects I will work on and an extended tour of the museum and theatre. Also, I would like to receive any educational material that has been developed by the NPS, specifically at Ford's Theatre. Viewing the staff in their respective duties as tour guides, crowd controllers, and information sources would also be helpful as I realize the scope of Ford's Theatre educational mission. Finally, a clear understanding of Ford's Theatre's position within the National Park Service and the organization of the Park Service would be helpful as I realize the best way to implement the following projects.

As discussed with my site supervisor, I would like to accomplish the following tasks at FTNHS:

1. Lay the ground work for a youth interpretive program designed by Museum Education student, Liz Cook. The project will involve
- **Discussing the proposal with FTNHS staff and deciding how best to implement the project.**
- **Finding out the best method of working with D.C. schools (how one goes about contacting the school to establish a partnership).**
- **Working on developing a script for the project as rangers and or volunteers will engage in off site visits to local schools.**
- **Contacting the schools with the proposal and establishing a lead teacher.**
- **Training staff to implement the project for the following school year.**

2. Possibly implementing a trunk program with local schools.
- **Again this would involve contacting schools and obtaining the curriculum for D.C. schools.**

3. Researching how to build an effective board and volunteer core.
- **Work with the Friends of Ford's Theatre group.**

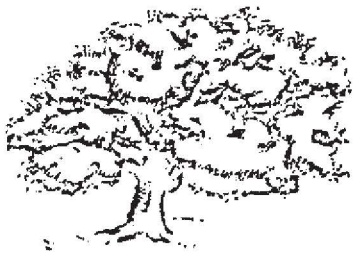
4. Developing an audience survey.

In order to best accomplish these projects I would like the opportunity to research school programs at nearby museums. I also ask to be included in all staff meetings and off site visits to other NPS sites or museums in order to develop contacts with educators at other nearby institutions. I look forward to my internship at Ford's Theatre.

Appendix 6

Memories Take Root

Memories Take Root: Planting Trees and Preserving the Memory of two Historic Figures at Bunker Hill Elementary


What is *Memories Take Root?*: A program for you, a fourth grade student, at Bunker Hill Elementary. On **Monday, April 22**, rangers from Ford's Theatre and the Frederick Douglass Home National Historic Sites will visit your school and discuss the National Park Service's role in protecting and preserving our nation's historic sites. On **Wednesday, April 24,** we will plant two historic trees at your school in honor of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass.

Why are we planting historic trees: By planting two historic trees we are preserving the memory of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass so that they may live on in all of us who see and enjoy the trees.

What are historic trees?: Seedlings from trees taken from Lincoln's birthplace in Kentucky and Douglass's home at Cedar Hill in Washington, D.C.

What types of trees are we planting?:
The Abraham Lincoln Overcup Oak and the Frederick Douglass White Oak.

Where are we planting the trees?: At the best elementary school around town -- Bunker Hill Elementary

Who will participate: All Bunker Hill Elementary fourth grade classes.

We look forward to meeting all of you!

Memories Take Root: Planting Trees and Preserving the Memory of two Historic Figures at Bunker Hill Elementary

Procedures for teachers for: Pre-Activity

Rationale for teachers: To provide students with a general introduction to the concepts related to the National Park Service (NPS) and to discover how the Ford's Theatre and the Frederick Douglass Home preserve the accomplishments of Lincoln and Douglass. Also, to prepare students for the pre-lesson by National Park Service Personnel.

Objectives: Upon completion of the pre-activity, students will be able to:

- Discover the NPS by creating a chart of "What they know about the NPS," "What they don't know," and "What they want to know."
- Define key words relevant to the understanding of the mission and goals of the NPS.

Rangers will be visiting on Monday, April 22: Inform students that park service personnel will be visiting their school on Monday for a special program. The rangers will discuss their role in protecting and preserving two National Historic Sites: Ford's Theatre and the Frederick Douglass Home NHS. Explain to the students that for the highlight of the program, they will be involved in planting two trees on their school site so that, they too, can play a part in preserving our nation's history (Hand out and discuss, *Memories Take Root: Planting Trees and Preserving the Memory of Two Historic Figures at Bunker Hill Elementary).*

Create Chart: On a chart make three columns with the first column labeled, "What the students know about the National Park Service", the second, "What they do not know," and the third, "What they want to know." Brainstorm with students on what they think the NPS is.

Distribute worksheet on NPS and the two sites:

Understanding the NPS: Hand out, *What is the National Park Service.* As a class, read the worksheet and discuss the "definitions of key words" at the second half of the page.

A Look at two National Historic Sites: the Ford's Theatre and the Frederick Douglass Home: As a class read about these two park sites.

Let's Look at the chart again: After you have discussed the worksheet and park sites, revisit the chart and discuss what the students have discovered. Probe the students and help them discover that the NPS does not only preserve and protect parks/forests but also historic buildings such as Ford's Theatre and the Frederick Douglass Home National Historic Sites.

Note: Also included are biographies of Lincoln and Douglass -- if you would like to distribute these to the class, please do. It will give them a better understanding of these two important historic figures.

A Look at two Historic Sites: Ford's Theatre and Frederick Douglass Home National Historic Sites

Ford's Theatre and the House Where Lincoln Died: The National Park Service preserves and protects Ford's Theatre. No other theatre in the country has the sad history that has made Ford's Theatre a national monument. When President Lincoln arrived to see the play "Our American Cousin" on the night of April 14, 1865, the audience cheered. The band played "Hail to the Chief," and President Lincoln stood at the front of his box to greet the people.

An hour and a half later, while the play was going on, John Wilkes Booth, a well-known actor, entered the presidential box and shot Abraham Lincoln through the back of his head. Booth then jumped from the box down to the stage. The spur of his boot got caught on a flag hanging from the box. He broke his ankle but still managed to escape. Lincoln was carried, unconscious, to the Petersen House across the street. He died there the next morning.

Ford's Theatre has been restored to look exactly as it did the night Lincoln was shot. In the basement, there is a museum where you can see the clothes the president was wearing, the pistol that Booth used, and the assassin's diary. The museum also has exhibits which describe Lincoln and his life.

Across the street from the theatre, the House Where Lincoln Died has also been restored. You can walk through the house into the bedroom in which Lincoln spent his last hours.

Frederick Douglass Home: The National Park Service protects and preserves Frederick Douglass's home so that it looks exactly as it did when Frederick Douglass lived there in the late 19th century.

Frederick Douglass was born a slave in 1817. When he was twenty-one years old, he escaped from a plantation in Baltimore and spent the rest of his life fighting to free all oppressed people. He was a writer, a speaker, and a presidential adviser (he advised President Lincoln many times) --certainly one of the great African American leaders of the 19th century.

Frederick Douglass lived at his home in Washington, from 1877 until he died in 1895. Pitts, his second wife, petitioned to turn the home into a national monument after Douglass's death. The house, called Cedar Hill, has been restored by the National Park Service to look as it did then. In the house you will see, books, paintings, and furniture that tell much about this self-educated man and his life.

You will better understand the thoughts and feelings of this great man after reading passages of Douglass's autobiography that is on display at the visitor center, near the house. His opinions on the struggle for freedom are still very meaningful today.
Please take your families to these sites to better learn about President Lincoln and Mr. Frederick Douglass.

The Life of Frederick Douglass

Frederick Douglass was born into slavery as Frederick Bailey in February 1818 on a Maryland estate owned by Aaron Anthony. He served the family in different capacities over the years: at age 13 he was sent to Baltimore to live with Lucretia Auld, Anthony's sister, and take care of her infant son. She taught Douglass how to read and write until her husband found out and forced her to discontinue the lessons. At that time it was illegal to give a slave an education.

Douglass continued studying on his own in secret, however, and soon developed proficiency in reading. A series of speeches about liberty and democracy, published in the Columbian Orator, inspired him to break away from his life as a slave. However, his dream of freedom would not be realized until later. After time spent in Baltimore, he was sent back to work the family plantations for several more years.

At age 18, Douglass again returned to the family's home in Baltimore and eventually escaped. He fled to New Bedford, MA, where he was taken in by the well-to-do black family of Nathan Johnson. Douglass was still in danger of being reclaimed by the Auld family, so he decided to change his name. He chose "Douglass" for one of the characters in Sir Walter Scotts "Lady of the Lake."

Douglass became active in the abolitionist movement, making speeches and fighting to end slavery. At this time he decided to publish his autobiography, the "Narrative Life of Frederick Douglass, and American Slave," with introductions by William Lloyd Garrison and Wendell Phillips. He took a risk by exposing his true identity; federal laws gave the Aulds the right to take him back as a slave.

Douglass traveled to England and lived there for a while. He continued his activity in the abolitionist movement, which was gaining popularity overseas. Back home, friends of his brought his freedom and he was able to return to the states. He became editor of the "North Star", the nation's first black newspaper, in Rochester, NY. After the Civil War, Douglass also served in public office and eventually bought a hone in Washington, D.C. He lived there from 1877 to 1895.

Pitts, his second wife, petitioned to turn the home into a national monument after Douglass's death in 1895. It has been preserved by the Frederick Douglass National Historic Site to look as it did in the late 19th century, and displays a desk that had been a gift from Harriet Beecher-Stowe as well as Douglas's private 2,000-book library. Also on the property is a one-room cabin where Douglass spent quiet time writing and reading. The Frederick Douglass Home National Historic Site preserves the memory of this great historic figure.

The Life of Abraham Lincoln

Abraham Lincoln was born on February 12, 1809, in a one-room log cabin near Hodgenville, Kentucky, where he spent the first seven years of his life. Occasionally, when his father thought he could be spared from chores on the family farm, Abraham was permitted to attend school. He would walk two miles to a school house, where he learned the basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic. School cost money and Abraham could rarely get away from his chores, but he kept learning by reading books on his own.

When he was seven years old, his family moved from Kentucky to another farm in Spencer County, Indiana. Here he went to school again, but only for a few weeks at a time. Tragedy struck the family when Abraham's mother died when he was just nine years old.

At the age of twenty-two Abraham moved to New Salem, Illinois. While he was living at New Salem he decided that he wanted to become a lawyer and despite having less than one year of school, he attained his goal. In 1837, Abraham moved from New Salem to Springfield to begin his law practice. While living in Springfield he met a young lady name Mary Todd. They fell in love and were married in 1842.

Mr. Lincoln was a lawyer and became very well known and popular. He had served in the state legislature and had been elected to Congress by 1846. He ran for the U.S. Senate against Stephen Douglas in 1858. Lincoln and Douglas campaigned by holding seven debates, or public arguments, throughout the state of Illinois. The two candidates spent much of their time debating. Abraham Lincoln felt strong that slavery was wrong and should not be allowed to spread. Mr. Lincoln lost the election but became famous as a result of the debates.

Since Lincoln became so popular, the Republicans decided to nominate him for President in 1860. He won the election and became our 16th president.

This was not a good time to be president because the Civil War was taking place. This war, fought between the northern states and the southern states, lasted four long years. During his presidency, Mr. Lincoln's greatest accomplishments were winning the war holding the country together and helping to end slavery.

Just a few days after the war ended, in 1865, Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln attended a play at Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C. As they were watching the play, John Wilkes Booth, a famous actor, shot the President in the back of the head. Mr. Lincoln was taken to a house across the street where he died early the next morning. Today Ford's Theatre maintains the theatre and the house where Lincoln died. The buildings are a memorial to this great historic figure.

WHAT IS THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE?

Congress established the National Park Service in 1916 to **preserve** and **protect** our nation's natural and historic resources:

What kinds of parks does the National Park Service operate?

1. Parks/Forests/Wildlife
example: Yellowstone National Park

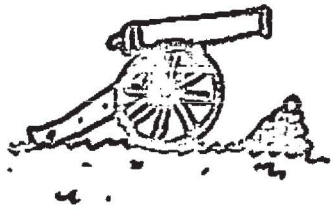
2. Monuments
example: the Washington Monument

3. **Historic sites**
example: Frederick Douglass Home and Ford's Theatre National Historic Sites

4. Reservations
example: the Casa Grande ruin in Arizona

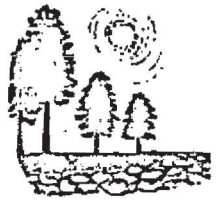
5. Military Parks:
example: Gettysburg battlefield

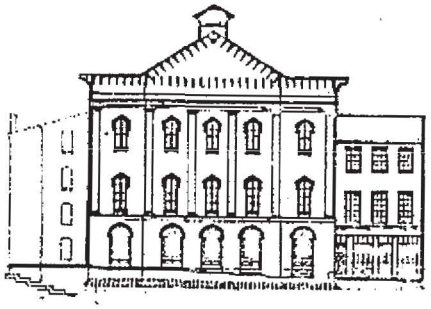
6. Memorials
example: the Lincoln Memorial











Why does the National Park Service Preserve and Protect?:

The National Park Service takes care of our nation's historic and natural resources for the benefit of present (that's you) and future generations (your kids).

Definitions of Key words:

Preserve - To protect from harm or damage; save.
Protect - To guard or defend against harm or danger; shield
Historic - Famous or important in connection with events in history.
Site - The space of ground a building rests upon.

Did you know?
There are over 360 National Park sites in America.
National Parks are exciting places to explore our country's great beauty and to learn about the rich lessons of our past.

Name_____

Directions: Read the back side of each picture and answer the following questions.

1. What type of structure is the National Park Service preserving in this picture?

Circle One

Building (House/Theatre)

Monument

Memorial

Battlefield

2. Who is the National Park Service remembering or honoring by preserving this site?

_____

3. Why do you suppose the National Park Service protects and preserves this site?

_____

_____

Appendix 7

Report on Ford's Theatre
Memories Take Root Program

Report on Ford's Theatre "Memories Take Root" Program
Submitted by Judith Landau
Museum Education Consultant
June 15, 1996

Objective: To assess and provide feedback to the Museum Education Program graduate intern, Wendy Sears, and Ranger Jeff Leary on the outreach program sponsored by Ford's Theatre National Historic Site in collaboration with Frederick Douglass National Historic Site.

I attended a meeting with the Project Director of Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration, Dr. Joanne Hirsch, Ms. Sears, and Ranger Leary in order to provide feedback on teaching techniques, learning objectives, and procedures employed in a program at Bunker Hill Elementary School in northeast Washington, DC. The program, held in Spring 1996 as an outreach effort to celebrate National Park Service Week, was designed to highlight the preservation and protection mission of the organization while involving fourth-graders in an active exploration of what an historic site can offer in terms of educational experiences.

The program included two visits to three fourth-grade classrooms. The first visit introduced children to the diverse functions of the NPS, including the educational mission and value of historic sites (see Appendix 6, **Memories Take Root**). A follow-up visit two days later included a collaboration with the Frederick Douglass National Historic Site. Actors portraying Lincoln and Douglass spoke to the children about education. In a ceremony attended by children, teachers, principal, rangers from the two sites, and the project director, seedlings from historic sites associated with each man were planted on the school grounds. Two of the three introductory sessions were videotaped and were the basis of discussion at the meeting.

The program seems to be founded on sound educational principles. I was particularly impressed with the decision to pair two NPS sites--FTNHS and Frederick Douglass NHS--in a worthy partnership that makes sense historically, strategically, and educationally. The in-class presentation was built upon research findings in the field of human development and educational psychology that enhance learning objectives. Good use was made of clearly stated objectives; an advance organizer to prepare students for the class and uncover what students already know about the topic; an active, participatory lesson design that used inquiry as a means of exploring old and new information. Intrinsically interesting objects were used as part of the experience.

I have several recommendations that essentially have to do with using the lesson in its current form, but refining the implementation process. The MEP intern and ranger facilitated the lessons with enthusiasm. Both had excellent rapport with the students and made good efforts to involve them actively in the lesson. Some aspects of the plan that could benefit from further discussion include the following:

> The development of clear educational objectives: Why are they important? How do you write them?
>
> The inquiry process--the nuts and bolts of using questions to foster critical thinking.

The focus on objects or object-based learning: How can objects become the focus and jumping-off point for learning through discovery? How can objects be used to facilitate connections to children's experiences and prior knowledge?

These elements of effective teaching are part of the toolbox of a successful teacher. They are skills that, once known, can be practiced, refined, and internalized by anyone committed to quality education.

The ranger's previous experience in front of a classroom of students was limited. As a result of the collaboration with the MEP intern throughout the development and implementation of this project, it appears that the ranger overcame his initial hesitancy about working face to face with children in this informal approach. He has emerged from this experience ready to be a pioneer in adapting inquiry and object-based learning techniques to the interpretive approaches currently emphasized by the NPS and FTNHS's effort to work with schools.

Appendix 8

Preparation for Visitor Study

Response from FTNHS Site Manager Suzanne Kelley to April 25, 1996 meeting

May 15, 1996

Dear Randi and Joanne,

The staff have come up with a few questions they would like to see on the survey in one form or another. They are:

Are visitors' enjoyment and/or appreciation of their visit to the site diminished by the number of other visitors?

Would they like to see more special exhibits, programs?

Do they consider Park Rangers to be subject matter experts?

Would their visit be enhanced if they could spend time with a Ranger one on one?

Did they visit the site as part of interest in the Civil War or Lincoln, or just because it's here?

Did they layout of the museum detract or enhance their understanding of the assassination story?

Looking forward to working with you and the class! Call me if you need any further information.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Kelley
Ford's Theatre NHS
(202) 426-6924

Planning Meeting for Conducting an Evaluation of Visitor's Experience at Ford's Theatre National Historic Site

Agenda prepared by Wendy Sears, GWU Museum Education Program Graduate Intern

Date: April 25, 1996

Participants: Randi Korn, Evaluator, Randi Korn and Associates, Inc.
Suzanne Kelley, Site Manager, FTNHS
Gary Crawford, President, Friends of Ford's Theatre, Inc.
Joanne Hirsch, Project Director, FTMC
Wendy Sears, Graduate Intern

Visitor Survey at Ford's Theatre National Historic Site

Rationale: Last fall, an institutional profile of FTNHS was conducted by MEP graduate students. The profile indicated that FTNHS's staff wanted to better serve their current audience as well as attract new audiences from the local community. In addition, in-depth interviews with staff revealed their desire to conduct a visitor survey and use the results of the survey to enhance programming at FTNHS.

Information the staff would like to know about their visitors:

* Audience needs and characteristics about their visitors
* Visitors' definition of an ideal museum experience
* What objects are most intriguing to visitors--information to be used in future trunk program

Target Audience:

* adult/child
* weekend visitors
* weekday visitors
* peak-season attending visitors
* off-season attending visitors

Overall Objectives of Project:

1. Conduct a visitor survey to establish a new understanding of how each group perceives the visitors' museum experience.

2. Synthesize findings from visitor and staff surveys of visitor experiences. (Information could be used to develop FTNHS mission statement)

Methods of Evaluation:

1. Entrance/Exit Interview
Interviews conducted with visitors upon entering and exiting the museum.

2. Object-based Interview
By using objects from the trunk or reproductions of the permanent collection, interviews can be conducted which will allow the visitor to answer questions based on objects associated with the Lincoln assassination. The survey would determine the effectiveness of more participatory learning in the museum and the power of object-based learning versus a straight lecture.

3. Tracking and Interviewing
Students track visitors for their entire visit. Track their movements in the museum, Theatre, and Petersen House and then conduct exit interviews.

Appendix 9

Audiodescription at Ford's Theatre

GRANT PROPOSAL -- FINAL AUDIODESCRIPTION AT FORD'S THEATRE

EDUC 226
WENDY SEARS
DUE: APRIL 5, 1996

April 5, 1996

Eugene B. Casey Foundation
800 South Frederick Avenue, Suite 100
Gaithersburg 20877-4102

Dear Ms. Casey,

Ford's Theatre National Historic Site (FTNHS), Washington's only historical museum dedicated to the collection, preservation, and interpretation of the life and death of President Lincoln, as well as the cultural history of Washington, D.C. during the late 19th century, invites your investment in a $15,000 special project to increase the sites' accessibility to blind and visually impaired visitors. Serving a national and international audience, FTNHS strives to be at the forefront of physical and programmatic access for people with disabilities.

We are encouraged that the Eugene B. Casey Foundation supports innovative projects that aid museums and other cultural institutions in their effort to provide meaningful and educational experiences to all visitors through increased access to their sites. The projects you have assisted in the past have helped a variety of persons with disabilities, particularly the blind, receive the full educational and cultural benefits of a museum environment. This strong commitment to unique projects is shared by our 11 professional staff members at FTNHS who strive to create a museum that is fully accessible to all of the one million people who visit per year.

The Problem: Inaccessibility to blind and visually impaired. According to the Health Interview Survey of the National Center of Health Statistics completed in 1990, there are an estimated 8 to 12 million people in the U.S. who are visually impaired; 381,000 are totally blind, and 9.7 million have functional limitations in seeing. Though reliable national figures for attendance of visually impaired visitors are not available, museums around the country have learned that the inaccessibility of their sites is a strong deterrent for these audiences.

FTNHS is composed of two historical structures: the 19th century restored theatre which includes the museum, and the Petersen house, located directly across the street from the theatre,

where President Lincoln died. In order to gain access to both buildings, visitors must cross a street with heavy traffic. Inadequate signage and directions, prevents safe access for blind or visually impaired visitors. In addition, the conservation and preservation practices at FTNHS require that objects are enclosed in glass cases with dim lighting, preventing visitors from touching or easily viewing the objects. For blind or visually impaired persons, without a sighted guide, this means that they are excluded, in many cases, from participation in the museum environment. Also, due to the limited staffing and heavy crowds, the rangers and volunteers at Ford's Theatre are unable to consistently provide blind visitors and persons with low vision the opportunity to receive a quality experience on demand.

The Solution: Audio descriptive Tour Tape and Touch Cart. *"Objects that cannot be touched, and even those that can be seen through touch, can come alive through words well chosen."* (from "A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words for Blind and Visually Impaired Person Too!", American Foundation for the Blind). Described as the "art of talking pictorially," audio description is the art of verbally describing visual information, enhancing the understanding and experiences of people, particularly those who are blind or have low vision (definition from the newly formed National Association on Audio description). Its use has been developed and expanded in various venues including: theatre, television, museums, and film, for the past twenty years.

An audio description tape would allow blind persons to enjoy the ambiance of a museum site, whose main objects are its ornately decorated buildings; objects that are not described with labels or alternate text. A tape that describes the theatre and historic Petersen house would not only provide blind and visually impaired visitors with a well oriented and safe guided tour through the visually rich and disjoined spaces, but also provide detailed directions to both sites, to the brochure material and to the touch cart. A touch cart containing objects such as Abraham's Lincoln's face and hands, a correspondence book of letters written in Braille, and a reproduction of

the gun that mortally wounded President Lincoln would be located in the museum. The cart would give the blind or visually impaired visitors, along with other patrons of the Theatre, an opportunity to better understand the events of the assassination and life of Abraham Lincoln through touch. An audio descriptive tour tape and touch cart would enhance the visually impaired visitors experience of the museum and eliminate the problem of inaccessibility.

Evaluation: Front end, Formative, Summative: Careful evaluation of the audio description tour tape and touch cart will occur before, during and after the completion of the project. Front end evaluation will consist of a two tiered method that has proven effective for institutions currently using audio description. Upon completion of the narrative, the staff of FTNHS will review the content to insure historical accuracy and to insure that the institution's educational goals are being met. A second review by a focus group composed of visually impaired and sighted individuals will allow future consumers to make suggestions on ways to improve the tape. Also, both groups will comment on the effectiveness of the objects displayed on the touch cart.

Formative evaluation will involve documentation by the staff of visually impaired visitors comments and suggestions for both the tape and touch cart in a log book. The staff will identify the number of people using the tape and any concerns or problems with the distribution and effectiveness of the tapes.

Summative evaluation will occur six months after the implementation of the project whereby the consultant will return to FTNHS to conduct a two-day evaluation. At this time the staffs' log entries with visitors comments from the face-to-face interviews and suggestion will be considered.

Credentials: FTNHS's staff is dedicated to providing visitors with a meaningful experience and has proven their desire to create an accessible environment. Upon request, tours are presented in American sign language for the hearing impaired population, structural changes are continually being made to provide better access to wheel chair users, and brochures are available in large print for the visually impaired and in 15 different languages to accommodate the diverse population of

visitors to the site. In addition, audio description is currently being used, through contractual arrangement, in the theatre for selected performances.

In order to fulfill the audio description project, FTNHS plans to collaborate with a consultant whose experiences include the recent design and implementation of an audio description tour of the U.S. Capitol. The consultant will assist the staff of FTNHS in realizing the goals of the tape as well as writing the script of the narrative, purchasing the equipment, and conducting formal evaluation.

Budget Request: $15,000. With the demonstrated concern that the Eugene B. Casey Foundation has shown in this area, I request a grant for $15,000. The funds will be used to purchase 10 cassette players, all of the costs associated with recording the tape including narration and duplication costs, consultant fees, and the touch cart with reproduced objects. In making this investment, the Trust will be supporting an innovative and effective project that will open the doors of the museum to the blind and visually impaired persons and enable them to become more fully integrated into the mainstream of cultural and social life.

Your support will make a critical difference to the lives of blind and visually impaired visitors who visit FTNHS from around the world, providing them with the full cultural and historical significance of this rich historical site. Please contact Ms. Wendy Sears of my staff at 202 426-6924 to answer questions or give additional information.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Kelly

See Attached Budget

SUMMARY OF BUDGET

Total this Grant **$15,000.00**	**Total** **$16,300**	**Total Requested** **15,000**	**Total Donated** **$1,200**
I.Personnel	**$7,700**	**$6,500**	**$1,200**
A. Salaries and Wages	$7,700	$6,500	$1,200
II.Non-Personnel			
A. Materials	$6,165.	$6,165.	-0-
B. Recording/editing	$2,000.	$2,000.	-0-
C. Duplication costs	$185.	$185.	-0-
D. Cassette Player Equipment	$150.	$150.	-0-
E. Telephone	$100.	-0-	$100.

Appendix 10

EDUC 227 Museum Evaluation
Course Syllabus

Museum Education Program
George Washington University

Carol B. Stapp
Summer 1996

EDUC 227 Museum Evaluation
COURSE OUTLINE

May 22 - June 19
Monday/Wednesday/Friday
9:30 am-12:00 pm GSEHD B09

I. OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

A. Discuss evaluation and research theory, practice, and findings in the museum field.

B. Demonstrate understanding of evaluation and research methods appropriate to the museum setting.

II. REQUIREMENTS

A. Regular class attendance and participation
B. Readings
C. Fieldwork Assignment* and Literature Review
D. Thought Paper
E. Project*

III. TEXTS (See Texts and Readings)

IV. SYLLABUS (See Syllabus)

IV. EVALUATION

A. Class attendance and participation	5%
B. Readings	10%
C. Fieldwork Assignment*	10%
D. Literature Review	10%
E. Thought Paper	25%
F. Project*	40%

* Randi Korn

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Museum Education Program
George Washington University

Carol B. Stapp
Summer 1996

EDUC 227 Museum Evaluation
SYLLABUS

May 22 Wed	Orientation Preview: Literature Review and Thought Paper Preview: Fieldwork Assignment* and Project* The Generics of Research and Evaluation I*
May 24 Fri	The Generics of Research and Evaluation II* Reprise: Literature Review and Fieldwork Assignment* Menu of Projects* Due: Readings
May 27 Mon	Holiday
May 29 Wed	Nuts and Bolts of Research and Evaluation I* Due: Fieldwork Assignment
May 31 Fri	Nuts and Bolts of Research and Evaluation II* Due: Readings
June 3 Mon	Literature Review Debriefing Due: Readings
June 5 Wed	Conferences*
June 7 Fri	TBA
June 10 Mon	Thought Paper Research
June 12 Wed	Thought Paper Presentations
June 14 Fri	Project Trouble-Shooting*
June 17 Mon	Project Research
June 19 Wed	Project Presentations*

Museum Education Program
George Washington University

Carol B. Stapp
Summer 1994

EDUC 227 Museum Evaluation

READINGS

May 12

Committee on Audience Research and Evaluation. "Professional Standards for the Practice of Visitor Research and Evaluation in Museum." *Museum News* Vol. 72, No. 5 (September/October 1993) 63.

May 17

Korn, Randi. "Introduction to Evaluation: Theory and Methodology" in *Museum Education History, Theory, and Practice*, ed. Nancy Berry and Susan Mayer (Reston, VA: National Art Education Association 1989) 219-238.

Loomis. "Understanding Museum Visitors: Evaluation and Management," *MVE*, 3-33.

Munley, Mary Ellen. *The Museum Evaluation Primer*. Frederick, MD: Mary Ellen Munley, 1982.

Patton, Michael Quinn. *Alternate Evaluation Research Paradigm*. North Dakota Study Group on Evaluation. Grand Forks, ND: University of North Dakota Press, 1975.

May 19

Korn, Randi. "The Living World Exhibition Halls at the St. Louis Zoo: A Summative Evaluation." Unpublished, 1993. Photocopied.

May 24

Class Readings:

Hayward, Jeff. "An Evaluator's Viewpoint." *ILVS Review* Vol. 2 No. 2 (1992) 287-292.

Hilke, D.D. "Quest for the Perfect Methodology: A Tragi-Comedy in Four Acts." *Proceedings of the International Conference on Visitor Evaluation* (Science Museum of London, 1993) 67-74.

Huck and Cormiers. "The Typical Format of a Journal Article," *Reading, Research and Statistics*.

Kamien, Janet. "An Exhibit Developer's Viewpoint." *ILVS Review* Vol. 2 No. 2 (1992) 293-298.

Parsons, Chris. "How Graduate Students Learn to Study Visitors: One Approach." *Visitor Studies: Theory, Research, and Practice*, Volume 5. (Jacksonville, AL: Visitor Studies Association, 1993) 275-79.

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Group Readings:

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Appendix 11

Understanding Ford's Theatre National Historic Site Visitors: Demographics, Behaviors, and Preferences

A Report of Research and Evaluation

Understanding Ford's Theatre National Historic Site Visitors: Demographics, Behaviors, and Preferences

A report of research and evaluation
submitted to Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration
August 1996

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Project Overview

Introduction

This report is part of the cooperative agreement among the Ford'sTheatre National Historic Site (FTNHS), The Friends of Ford's Theatre (Friends) and The George Washington University (GWU) Museum Education Program. A team of four GWU students enrolled in Education 227-Museum Evaluation worked with project director Joanne Hirsch, Ph.D., evaluator Randi Korn, and the staff at FTNHS and Friends to evaluate programming and interpretation at FTNHS. This report represents a summary of the evaluation project, including key findings and recommendations.

The Ford's Theatre Model Collaboration (FTMC)

In 1995 a model project was initiated among the Museum Education Program (MEP), the FTNHS, and Friends to "improve present and future visitor use and enjoyment" of Ford's Theatre. MEP faculty and students participating in the project developed an institutional profile and programming proposals, implemented proposals, and evaluated aspects of programming.

Goal

The goal of this evaluation project is to assist the staff at FTNHS in improving the visitor experience, particularly in areas of programming and interpretation.

As part of this model collaboration this evaluation project served several purposes. In addition to providing the staff at FTNHS with information about its visitors and their experiences, it gave them the chance to participate in the evaluation process. The staff participated in discussions about goals and objectives for the project. They also collected survey data from visitors and facilitated a hands-on experience for visitors.

Objectives

To determine:

- demographics of visitors to FTNHS
- what visitors did during their visit
- visitors' ratings of the different interpretation at the site
- comparison of visitors' reactions to the range of interpretive strategies
- visitors' interest in content areas and objects in the collection
- visitors' motivation and expectations about their visit.

Staff at FTNHS will be able to use this information generated from this evaluation to modify existing programs, develop new interpretation strategies, and apply visitor research methods to future evaluations.

For more information about FTNHS see Appendix A.

Executive Summary

This report presents findings from a visitor survey, observations, and open-ended interviews conducted at Ford's Theatre National Historic Site (FTNHS). The goals of this study were to determine:

- demographics of visitors to FTNHS
- what visitors did during their visit
- visitors' ratings of the different interpretations at the site
- comparison of visitors' reactions to the range of interpretive strategies
- visitors' interest in content areas and objects in the collection
- visitors' motivation and expectations about their visit.

The sample included 334 completed survey questionnaires, 23 group observations, and 11 interviews.

Demographics of Visitors

- The male:female ratio of visitors to FTNHS is nearly equal (47 percent and 53 percent, respectively).
- Among adult visitors, the mean age is 42.7 years. Almost two-thirds of visitors are 35-54 years of age (65 percent).
- Nearly two-thirds of visitors are college educated (64 percent) and almost one-quarter hold a graduate degree (23 percent).
- Nearly all visitors reside in the United States (98 percent). More than one-quarter reside in Ohio, California, and Virginia (26.2 percent). Only one visitor reported being from Washington DC.
- The overwhelming majority of visitors identified themselves as white (93%).

Visiting Behaviors

- Over half of the visitors to FTNHS come with a family group (52 percent). Most visitors visit with one or more companions (96 percent).
- Nearly an equal number of child visitors are 5 to 11 years of age and 12 to 17 years of age(45 and 48 percent, respectively).
- Nearly three-quarters of visitors are first-time visitors (72 percent). The vast majority of visitors indicated a desire to return (87 percent).
- Nearly all visitors visit the Theatre and the museum (89 percent and 82 percent respectively).
- Visitors are motivated to visit FTNHS for a variety of reasons, and they visit FTNHS as part of a broad range of activities.

Visitors' Experience

- Visitors expressed a preference for Lincoln's personal effects and John Wilkes Booth's gun.

- Most visitors' experiences at FTNHS are "informative," "exciting," "fascinating," and "valuable," although the ratings for "exciting" are not as high as they are for "informative."

- More than half of visitors rated the Ranger Talk very informative, as 57 percent scored it a 7 on the "uninformative (1) / "informative" (7) scale. Nearly as many visitors rated the Museum as very informative, as 55 percent scored it a 7 on the scale.

- Visiting the Theatre without hearing a Ranger's presentation was rated lowest by visitors. Nearly one-quarter (24 percent) of visitors scored it a 5 or lower on the "uninteresting" (1) / "fascinating" (7) scale.

- Visitors rated their overall experience at FTNHS somewhat lower than they did their experience with individual components.

- Visitors participating in the hands-on trunk engaged in a high degree of "active behaviors." These account for three-quarters of the behaviors observed. One-fifth of the observed behaviors involved role-playing.

- Visitors who were interviewed had overwhelmingly positive responses to the ranger presentations.

- When asked for suggestions to improve interpretation at FTNHS, visitors most often mentioned a desire for more interpretation by live people.

- Visitors expressed the most interest in the topics of the Lincoln assassination and the history of Ford's Theatre.

Program Description

FTNHS has approximately one million visitors each year. This large audience is generally composed of school and adult travel groups and families. During their visit, visitors can tour the museum and Petersen House, and visit the Theatre where they can hear a ranger's presentation. At least once an hour, a ranger presents a short overview of Lincoln's assassination and a history of the Theatre which usually lasts about fifteen minutes.

The Theatre is also open to visitors during the time between the ranger's presentations. At this time, visitors can view the Theatre and the Presidential Box where Lincoln was seated at the time of his assassination.

Visitors can also tour the museum located beneath the Theatre. The museum contains a permanent exhibit which focuses on both the assassination and the cultural history of the Civil War era. The exhibit contains objects connected to Lincoln's life and death, such as a life mask, clothing, and political ephemeral. John Wilkes Booth's journal, personal effects, and derringer are also on display. The exhibit is designed for large groups of people to tour at their own pace.

FTNHS staff and MEP students cooperated to implement a model hands-on trunk activity in which visitors interacted directly with reproductions of historical items, including Lincoln's clothing and his life mask. Replicas of newspapers, Civil War uniforms, women's clothing, photographs, and a derringer were also available for visitors to view, touch, and try on. Several rangers were present and engaged in conversations with visitors.

Literature Review

A variety of methods is used to understand what visitors do in museums and how they perceive their experience. Surveys are a common method of evaluation which provide a quick measure of visitor demographics and experiences for large sample sizes. Surveys conducted in 1990 at the Anniston Museum of Natural History by Stephen Bitgood and Sheila Bishop were used to measure visitors' overall attitude toward the museum. The evaluators used bi-polar adjectives with a 7-point scale and examined their results in comparison to gender, current visit, and repeat visitation. The FTNHS evaluation team used the model established by Bitgood and Bishop to design a survey instrument for FTNHS. The survey at FTNHS asked visitors to rate their experience with specific components and their overall experience at the site on a 7-point scale with bi-polar adjectives. Data analysis compared the visitor overall ratings with their ratings of the Ranger Talk and museum visit.

Observing and counting visitors in an exhibit can also inform evaluators about what visitors do at a site. Jeff Haywood discusses his method of observing visitors in his article titled "Counting Visitors Helps to Evaluate Exhibits." Using this method, evaluators gain a more accurate view of how an exhibit space is used. Although this does not reveal visitors' understanding of exhibit content, it can be a powerful tool for recording behaviors and demographics. Additionally, the evaluation team benefited from a study conducted by Randi Korn and Associates at the National Museum of Natural History in Washington, DC, which documents tracking and timing visitors in the exhibit "Spiders!" Observations conducted at FTNHS during the hands-on trunk activity documented visitors' interactions with rangers and reproduction artifacts, as well as visitors' interaction among themselves.

Face-to-face interviews allow evaluators to directly interact with visitors and gain holistic information about attitudes, experiences and expectations. As explained in a 1992 report, Barbara Birney conducted visitor interviews at the Denver Zoo to determine visitors' attitudes about graphic components. This study provides a model on which to base both questions and analysis for interviews conducted at FTNHS. The responses and criticism from visitors will give rangers information they can use in modifying and developing programs and presentations.

Methodology

Goals and objectives for the project were established through consultation with all partners in the FTMC and the evaluation team.

Three evaluation methods were used to collect various kinds of data in order to produce the most complete picture of visitors' experiences at FTNHS: standardized questionnaires, open-ended interviews, and observations. This triangulation of methods allowed the evaluation team to find correlation among different data types.

Standardized Questionnaire

Developing the Questionnaire. A standardized questionnaire was developed through consultation between the evaluation team and the staff at FTNHS. Final approval was granted after several drafts of the instrument. The objective of the survey was to determine demographics, visiting behaviors, and a measure of visitors' experiences with individual interpretive elements at FTNHS. A pre-test of twenty-two surveys was conducted after which minor changes were made to a few of the questions. The final questionnaire includes twenty-four questions on demographics, group composition, opinions and experiences (Appendix B1).

Data Collection. Data were collected on every day of the week, including weekends and days which the Theatre was closed, both planned and unplanned closings. Questionnaires were given to visitors by the evaluation team and the staff at FTNHS. Only adults over the age of eighteen were asked to complete a questionnaire. When selecting visitors to answer the surveys, data collectors used a systematic selection process known as probability sampling method. This ensured that each visitor had an equal chance of being approached. The surveys were self-administered and took visitors about three minutes to complete. A total of 334 surveys were collected by the evaluation team.

Data Analysis. Survey data were analyzed using Quattro Pro, a statistics program for personal computers. Percents and summary statistics, including the mean (average) and median (point at which half of the responses fall above and half fall below) were calculated for the rating scales. T-tests were employed to determine the difference between two mean scores. Only those that proved to be statistically significant are reported in the body of this report.

Observations

Data Collection. Two observation sessions were scheduled during the interactive trunk activity conducted at FTNHS. Observers unobtrusively recorded demographic information, and visitor behavior and interactions. Groups of visitors were chosen using probability sampling method in order to ensure that every visitor had an equal chance of being chosen for observation. Twenty-three observations were conducted over a two-day period (Appendix B2).

Data Analysis. Observation data were reviewed and similar responses were given category names and grouped together for analysis. Demographic data were also compiled and used to detect trends and significant relationships to specific behaviors (Appendix C).

Open-Ended Interviews

Open-ended questions were devised by the evaluation team and received final approval from FTNHS staff. The interviews were structured to give the evaluation team a chance to probe for visitors' experience at and opinions of FTNHS. Nine main questions with probing, follow-up questions were asked of visitors attending the Ranger Talks in the Theatre. These questions focused on visitors' opinions, expectations and suggestions (Appendix B3).

Eleven interviews were conducted over the course of two weeks. Visitors were interviewed after the ranger presentations in the Theatre on weekdays and weekends, in the morning and afternoon. While the interviews were primarily conducted with individual visitors, members of the interviewee's group often added comments during the interview (Appendix D).

Principal Findings

The findings are presented in an order determined by sample size with the survey findings first, trunk activity observation findings next, and interview findings last. Data from the observations and interviews can be found in Appendices C and D.

1. SURVEY

Demographics

Gender, Age, Education, Residence, Ethnicity

Ford's Theatre attracts nearly an equal number of men and women (47 percent and 53 percent respectively).

Table 1.
Gender of Respondents in Percent

Gender	%
male	47
female	53

The mean age of adult visitors is 42.7 years (median: 42). Table 2 shows that the majority of adult respondents are 35 - 54 years of age (65 percent), twenty percent are under 35 years of age and fifteen percent are 55 years of age and older.

Table 2.
Age of Respondents in Percent

Age in Years	%
under 35	20
35 - 54	65
55 +	15

Respondents indicated their highest level of education from a list of eight options. Table 3 shows that almost two-thirds of respondents are college educated (65 percent). Nearly one-quarter hold a graduate degree (23 percent).

Table 3.
Education of Respondents in Percent

Education	%
Grade school	< 1
Some high school	1
High school	10
Some college/Associate's	23
College graduate	27
Some graduate work	14
Graduate degree	23
Other	< 1

Table 4.
Country of Residence in Percent

	%
United States	98
Foreign	2

The majority of Ford's Theatre visitors reside in the United States (98 percent). This statistic may be inflated because completing the questionnaire is dependent on being able to read English. More people reside in Ohio and California than in any other states (10 percent and 10 percent, respectively). Virginians, at 6 percent, were also well represented. Only one respondent reported being from Washington, DC. See Table 5.

Table 5.
State of Residence
in Number of Respondents

State	N
Ohio	28
California	26
Virginia	16
New York	14
Florida	11
Pennsylvania	11
Texas	11
Wisconsin	10
Maryland	09
Michigan	08
Washington	08
Connecticut	07
Illinois	07
Minnesota	07
Kentucky	06
North Carolina	6
Oklahoma	06
Oregon	06

Table 5. (cont.)

Arizona	05
Missouri	05
Tennessee	05
Colorado	04
Indiana	04
New Jersey	04
Utah	04
Alabama	03
Georgia	03
Iowa	02
Kansas	02
Massachusetts	02
Mississippi	02
Nevada	02
New Mexico	02
South Dakota	02
Alaska	01
Arkansas	01
Idaho	01
Nebraska	01
New Hampshire	01
North Dakota	01
Montana	01
South Carolina	01
Vermont	01
Washington, DC	01

Table 6 shows that nearly all survey respondent are white (93 percent) and that minorities are poorly represented (7 percent).

Table 6.
Ethnicity in Percent

	%
White	93
Hispanic	03
American Indian	02
African American	01
Other	01
Asian	< 1

Percents add up to more than 100 due to rounding

Behaviors

Questions in this category focus on visitor group composition and size, visitation patterns, and visitor behavior.

Group Size and Composition

Table 7.
Group Size in Percent

Number of Visitors	%
Alone	04 percent
2	22 percent
3-4	42 percent
5-7	16 percent
8 +	17 percent

Most visitor groups consists of three to four visitors (42 percent), as shown in Table 7. Nearly all visitors come with one or more companions (96 percent); only 4 percent visit alone. More than half come with their family (52 percent), and 16 percent came with friends. A small percentage indicated that they were with a tour group (13 percent); the majority of tour groups represented were school groups (86 percent) (See Table 8).

Table 8.
Group Composition in Percent

Composition	%
With family	52
With spouse/partner	16
With friends	16
With friends and family	12
Alone	04

Children

Parents bring nearly an equal number of children who are 5-11 years of age and 12-17 years of age (45 percent and 48 percent, respectively). See Table 9.

Table 9.
Ages of Children in Percent

Age in Years	%
0 - 4	07 percent
5 - 11	45 percent
12 - 17	48 percent

Visitation

As shown in Table 10, almost three-quarters of Ford's Theatre visitors were visiting for their first time (72 percent). Nearly nine-tenths (87 percent) reported that they would like to return.

Table 10.
Frequency of Visits in Percent

Visits	%
First visit	72
Repeat visit	28

Table 11.
Visitors Indicating Desire to Return in Percent

Desire to Return	%
Yes	87
No	13

What Visitors Did at FTNHS

Visitors indicated how they spent their time at FTNHS. Table 12 lists all the options in descending order based on frequency of respondents' activity. As expected, most visitors toured the Theatre (89 percent) and visited the museum (82 percent). Fewer than one-third indicated that they had visited the Petersen house (28 percent), but a large number said that they planned a visit to the Petersen house (84 percent). Only 14 percent participated in the hands-on trunk activity.

Table 12.
What Visitors Did at Ford's Theatre National Historic Site
in Percent

Activities	%
Visited museum	82
Listened to Ranger Presentation in Theatre	54
Visited Theatre without Listening to Ranger Presentation	35
Visited Petersen House	28
Participated in Trunk Activity	14

Visitors' Self-Reported Preference for Museum Objects

From a list of twelve museum objects, visitors were asked to choose those that they liked best. Table 13 lists all the options in descending order based on what was chosen by the most respondents. Lincoln's clothing was chosen by more than one-quarter of respondents (26 percent), followed by Booth's derringer (18 percent). The "Measure of Lincoln" was also popular with 10 percent of the respondents choosing it. Surprisingly, the door was chosen relatively frequently at 8 percent. This may be explained by its relative large size and high visibility.

Table 13.
Visitors' Preference for Objects
in Percent

Museum Object	%
Lincoln's Clothing	26
Booth's Derringer	18
Measure of Lincoln	10
Door	08
Booth's Diary	07
Theatre Diagram	06
Booth's Boot	05
Trial Hoods	05
Flag	04
China	04
Playbills	02
Other	04

Visitors' Experience Ratings

Rating scales were used to measure visitors' experiences with the ranger talks, Theatre, museum, and their overall experience. These rating scales consist of seven semantic differentials that have opposite adjectives at either end, and respondents are asked to place a mark on the scale closest to the word that best reflects their experience (see Q 3 in Appendix B1). The word pairs are opposite-- negative judgments associated with one side and positive judgments with the other ("boring"/ "interesting" for example).

Visitors' experiences at Ford's Theatre were measured using nine 7-point semantic differentials as described above. Each aspect that was measured is presented in Table 14 in descending order, starting with the highest mean rating. Virtually no one (less than 1 percent) rated any aspect of his/her experience with FTNHS lower than a 3 on the 7-point scale differential.

Table 14.
Experience Rating Scales in Percent and Mean Ratings
On a scale from 1 to 7

Experience	1-2 %	3-4 %	5 %	6 %	7 %	Mean	Median	±
Ranger Talk Uninformative(1)/Informative(7)	<1	02	06	34	57	6.43	7	.860
Museum Uninformative(1)/Informative(7)	<1	06	11	28	55	6.31	7	.927
Trunk Worthless(1)/Valuable(7)	00	00	30	22	49	6.19	6	.877
Museum Confusing(1)/Clear(7)	<1	10	13	31	46	6.09	6	1.10
Overall Uninformative(1)/Informative(7)	<1	08	16	32	43	6.09	6	1.03
Trunk Boring(1)/Exciting(7)	00	08	22	23	46	6.06	6	1.01
Ranger Talk Boring(1)/Exciting(7)	00	11	23	32	34	5.89	6	1.04
Overall Boring(1)/Exciting(7)	<1	08	16	32	43	5.87	6	1.09
Theatre w/out Ranger Uninteresting(1)/Fascinating(7)	<1	15	29	24	31	5.65	6	1.23

T-Tests

Table 15 indicates a statistically significant difference between visitor ratings of their overall experience at FTNHS and their experience in the museum. Visitors rate the museum as more "informative" than their overall experience (t= -3.123; p=.001)

Table 15.
Mean Ratings of Informative/Uninformative Experience

Experience	Mean
Museum	6.31
Overall	6.09

t= -3.123; p=.001

A statistically significant difference was also found between the ratings for the Ranger Talk and the overall experience at FTNHS. Visitors rate the Ranger Talk as more "informative" than their overall experience (t=3.29; p=.001) (See Table 16).

Table 16.
Mean Ratings of Informative/Uninformative Experience

Experience	Mean
Ranger Talk	6.43
Overall	6.09

t=3.29; p=.001

2. HANDS-ON TRUNK ACTIVITY OBSERVATION

Demographics

Gender and Age

Twenty-three group observations were conducted over the course of two days, a Sunday and a Tuesday. A total of 74 people were observed in their interactions with the reproductions, the Rangers and each other. A little more than two-fifths (32) of the visitors observed were male while three-fifths (42) of the visitors were female. There were almost an equal number of adults (38) as children (36). (Appendix C)

Table 17.
Gender and Hands-on Trunk Activity Participants in Number of Participants

Gender	N
Male	32
Female	42

Table 18.
Age and Hands-on Trunk Activity Participants in Number of Participants

Age	N
Adult	38
Child	36

Group Composition

Nearly three-quarters (16) of the groups were multi-generational groups. The remaining were adults groups (4), individuals alone (2), and a teen group (1). A sign advertising the trunk program emphasized that it was designed for families, and indeed, families were the prevalent participants.

Table 19.
Group Composition
in Number of Participants

Group Composition	N
multi-generational	16
adult groups	04
individuals alone	02
teen groups	01

Behaviors

Time

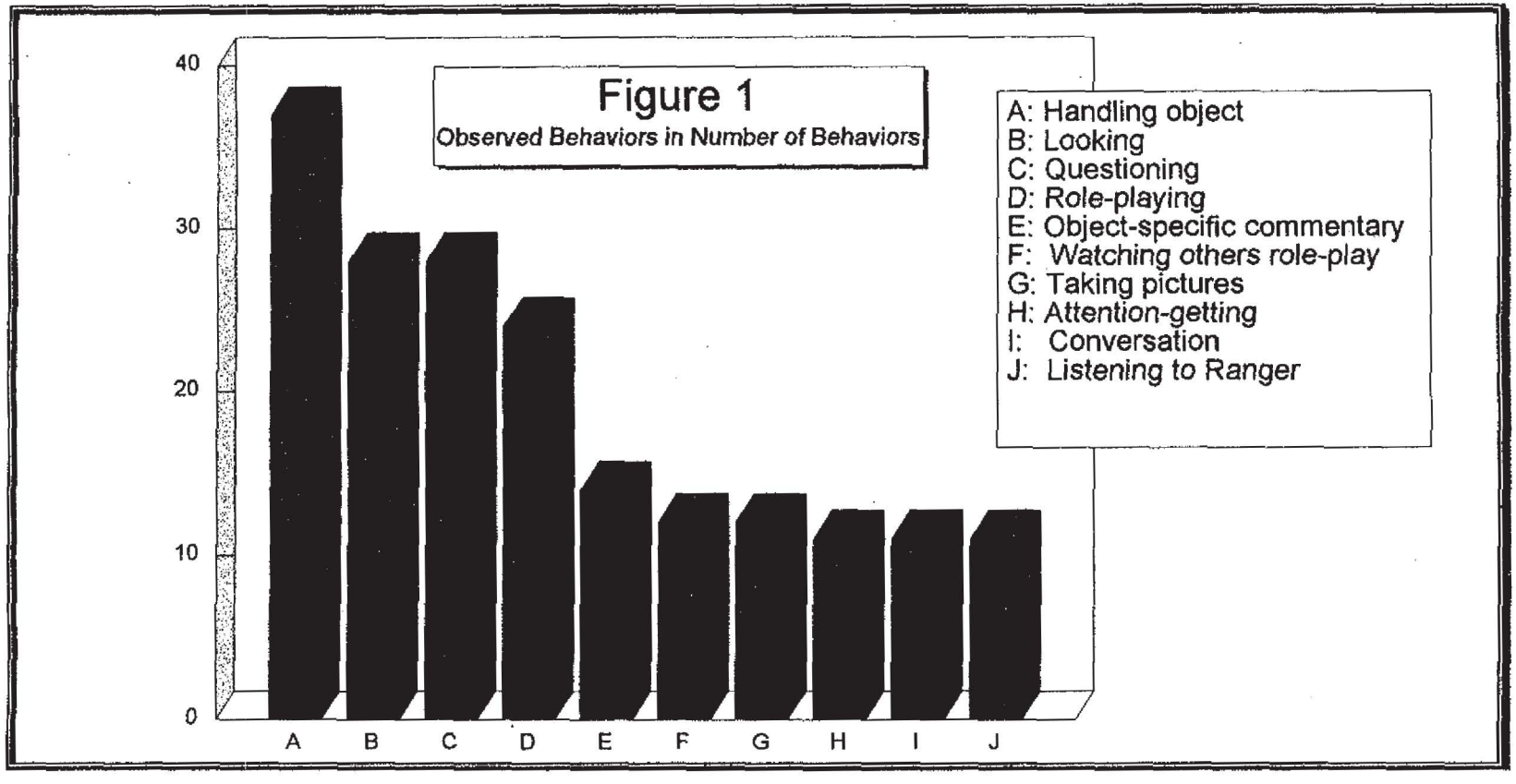
Observed groups spent a mean of 4.1 minutes participating in the hands-on trunk program. Just over one-half (12) of the groups observed participated in the trunk activity for more than 6 minutes. One group spent 11 minutes. Eleven groups spent between less than 1 minute and less than 4 minutes. Those groups that spent a long time with the activity (more than 4 minutes) were observed in conversations among members of the group and with the ranger. Many tried on the reproduction costumes and documented their experience with photographs.

Table 20.
Time Visitors Spent at the Hands-on Trunk Activity in Number of Groups

Time in Minutes	N of Groups
0-1	3
1-3	8
4-5	7
6+	5

Behaviors

Observed behaviors were analyzed and similar behaviors were grouped into 11 categories. Active behaviors (touching objects, asking questions, role playing, etc.) account for three-quarters of the behaviors observed. One fifth of the observed behaviors involved role-playing-- trying on a costume or interacting with an object as if it were the real thing (see Figure 1).


Figure 1
Observed Behaviors in Number of Behaviors
40
30
20
10
0
A
B
C
D
E
F
G
H
I
J
A: Handling object
B: Looking
C: Questioning
D: Role-playing
E: Object-specific commentary
F: Watching others role-play
G: Taking pictures
H: Attention-getting
I: Conversation
J: Listening to Ranger

Role Playing/ Trying on Period Costumes

Trying on period costumes was the most popular activity among visitors. They accounted for nearly one-fifth of the observed behaviors. Items most often chosen were the hoop and the reproductions of Lincoln's hat and coat. Children engaged in role-playing behaviors more than adults (29 and 12, respectively), and females more than males (25 and 16, respectively). Those trying on period costumes did more than just put on the clothes. They also made connections between the items and the past. One boy remarked after trying on Lincoln's coat, "Holy cow! He must have been cold that night." Another commented about Lincoln's size: "He must have been a tall man. Look at the size of that hat!"

Table 20.
Participation in Role-Playing Activities
in Number of Behaviors

Age	N
Children	29
Adult	12

Gender	N
Female	25
Male	16

Interaction with Ranger

The rangers' informal conversation during the hands-on activity engaged male and female visitors (6 and 8, respectively) and adult and child visitors (8 and 6 respectively) equally. However, adults asked the majority of questions as seen in Table 20. This shows that while adults and children were equally attracted to the ranger's informal conversation, only a small number of children were compelled to ask questions.

Table 21.
Age of Visitors Asking Questions
in Number of Questions

Age	N
Adult	25
Child	3

Questions

Questions were asked by many more adults than by children (25 and 3, respectively). Questions were asked by about as many males as females (15 male asked-questions, 13 female asked-questions). Almost one third of the questions were about the authenticity of the objects. Visitors wanted to know "Is this real?" "Is this the original hat?" or "Is this a reproduction?" One-fifth of the questions were about the size of Lincoln ("How tall was he?") and an equal number were general questions like "What do we have here?" Visitors also asked questions about the gun.

Table 23.
Visitor Questions in Number of Questions

Question Type	N
Reproduction	8
Size of Lincoln	7
What is this?	5
Gun	2
Other	8

Visitors' Observed Preference for Objects

Visitors' interacted with the reproduction of Lincoln's hat most frequently, followed by the life mask of Lincoln, the woman's costume, and the Civil War soldier's uniforms. The derringer, the hoop, and the reproduction of Lincoln's coat were also popular items with visitors. See Table 22.

Table 24.
Visitors' Observed Preference for Objects in Number of Behaviors

Objects	N
Lincoln's hat	22
Life mask of Lincoln	18
Woman's costume	15
Civil War uniforms	12
Gun	11
Hoop	10
Lincoln's coat	10
Lincoln's boots	05
Photos	04
Newspaper	03
Bust of Lincoln	03
Other	04

3. INTERVIEW

Eleven interviews were conducted over the course of two weeks. Visitors were interviewed after the ranger presentations in the Theatre on weekdays and weekends, in the morning and afternoon. While the interviews were primarily conducted with individual visitors, members of the interviewee's group often added comments during the interview. Interviewers recorded the ages and genders of all respondents, so the total number of interview respondents is greater than eleven. Finding are reported below.

Demographics

Table 25.
Age and Gender of Visitors Interviewed
in Number of Visitors

Age	M	F	Total
12-17	1	0	1
17-23	0	0	0
23-29	0	2	2
30-39	0	1	1
40-49	3	3	6
50-59	1	1	2
60-69	2	1	3
70+	0	2	2
Total	7	10	17

Visitor Responses

Response to Ranger Presentations

Visitors who were interviewed had overwhelmingly positive responses to the ranger presentations.

• Several groups of visitors said that the ranger presentation was the most memorable aspect of their visit to FTNHS.

• Visitors felt that the ranger presentations were informative and gave them the clearest picture of the story of the assassination. "The information was fascinating, just to get the chronological aspect of what went on each day...."

• Nearly all visitors commented that they enjoyed the ranger talks. One visitor noted that, when the ranger began to speak, "people were sitting on the edge of their seats." Another visitor noted that the ranger "did a good job of entertaining even those of us who aren't into history."

• A number of the interviewees applauded the professionalism of the rangers. Said one visitor, "He (the ranger) loves kids and history, and it shows."

• The only common complaint was that it was often difficult to hear the ranger speaking during the presentation.

Suggestions to Improve Interpretation

In suggestions to improve interpretation at Ford's Theatre, visitors most often mentioned interpretation by live people.

- Re-enactment of the assassination was suggested by several visitors.

- While many visitors mentioned video and audio interpretation, they expressed a preference for live interpretation. Visitors said that lasers or music might be distracting and videos were less than satisfactory. "I think it's more interesting when you have a live person telling about things that happened."

- Visitors felt that written interpretation in the Theatre, including placards and guides, would improve their experience.

- Visitors also mentioned more hands-on experiences and increased accessibility for people with disabilities as ways to improve the visitor experience at Ford's Theatre.

Topics of Interest

Visitors expressed the most interest in the topics of the Lincoln assassination and the history of Ford's Theatre.

- Visitors had many questions about the details of the assassination, specifically the various players in the story, including Booth, the co-conspirators, Lincoln, and the Ford Brothers.

- Visitors had an equal number of questions about the history of the Theatre itself, specifically its restoration and current use.

- Visitors expressed less interest in the life of Abraham Lincoln and the history of the Civil War.

Motivation to Visit

Visitors are motivated to visit Ford's Theatre for a variety of reasons. They view a visit to FTNHS as part of a broad range of activities.

- Many visitors said that an interest in history and President Lincoln influenced their decision to visit FTNHS.

- Other visitors said their decision to visit FTNHS was influenced by seeing it on a tourist map or by its proximity to the FBI Building.

- Visitors placed a visit to Ford's Theatre in the context of a visit to a variety of sites, including Washington, DC, monuments and museums, Civil War sites, Lincoln sites, and other NPS sites and museums outside of the Washington, DC, area.

Discussion

Impact of FTNHS Interpretation on Current Visitors

Data analysis shows that there is a discrepancy between observation and survey ratings of the hands-on trunk activity. Visitors were observed in active behaviors--handling objects, trying on period dress, asking questions--yet the ratings for this experience were lower than for the more passive activity level of the ranger's presentation and museum visit (Table 14). To some extent, this finding can be attributed to the exclusion of children in the survey sample. Would their survey responses modify results obtained from adults surveyed?

Anecdotal information, collected in the museum during the initial observations conducted by the evaluation team as a prerequisite to the design and testing of instruments, suggests a more passive visitor experience in the museum. (The exhibit provides few opportunities for a hands-on experience--the chance to measure oneself in relation to Lincoln's height.) However, the study did not systematically record observations of visitors, adults or children, in this setting. Do visitors' verbal behaviors (questions, conversations, and information sharing) parallel those documented during the hands-on trunk activity? Does the presence of the ranger/ expert change the nature of the experience in the museum for the visitor? The findings from this evaluation suggest further exploration and testing.

Overall ratings of FTNHS were not as high as ratings of individual components (Table 14). The quality of the visitors' experience is composed of many factors: among them, interpretive offerings, time of day, amenities, weather, attitude/mood, crowds, and prior knowledge of the subject. Many of these factors are beyond the control of FTNHS. However, the positive ratings of the interpretive elements of the museum experience that *are* controlled by the staff are well-received by the visiting public. During the course of the evaluation, FTNHS offered its visitors a range of experiences: a self-guided museum visit, formal presentations by the rangers in the Theatre, and a hands-on trunk activity facilitated by rangers. Findings from the survey, interviews, and observations of the visitors' experience consistently give FTNHS a strong positive rating. Eighty-seven percent of the visitors expressed a desired to return for another visit.

This study suggests that visitors' interaction with historic reproductions enriches the social interaction of a family outing and diversifies the museum visit by contributing an interactive component to the museum experience. Data obtained from the survey and observation can be used to guide FTNHS in choosing reproductions of objects for additional hands-on programs.

The Missing Audience

The site has learned much about the effect of its interpretive approaches on current visitors. The survey also confirmed staff's strong suspicion that the visitors to FTNHS did not include Washington, DC, residents. These findings can help strengthen a stated commitment to reach out to local residents and schools, as well as the national audience currently served by FTNHS. Not only did the survey document that few local residents visit FTNHS, it also found that 93 percent of the visitors reported that they are white and 64 percent are college graduates. More than one-fourth of the adults had visited FTNHS before. These findings raise some interesting questions with regard to outreach. Given the demographics provided by census data, demographics of local residents and school groups do not resemble the current FTNHS audience.

FTNHS's commitment to the local community may be demonstrated most effectively by taking into account the following factors: programming during off-season, narrowing outreach or on-site programs to specific school-aged children engaged in relevant curriculum, and incorporating selected hands-on trunk activities as a regular component of programming.

The foregoing discussion gives some insight into findings relating to interpretation at FTNHS. Recommendations for applying these findings follow. These recommendations are made with knowledge that, given the volume of visitors to FTNHS, the sample size was small and the sophistication of statistical analyses accordingly limited. The constraints on generalizability of the conclusions is lessened by the diversity of evaluative approaches employed: survey, observations, and in-depth interviews.

Recommendations

For Future Study

1. Conduct a survey, in-depth interviews, and/or focus groups with young visitors--individually, in family groups, or school groups--to document their assessment of their museum experiences.

2. Investigate the nature of visitors' experiences in the Theatre when there is no Ranger Talk and the possibility of providing visitors with an alternative experience when the Theatre is closed to the general public.

3. Evaluate the connections that visitors make across the interpretive experience, including the museum, the Ranger Talk, the Theatre, and Petersen House.

For Interpretation

1. Expand interpretation to allow for more hands-on experiences that encourage interaction among visitors, and between visitors and objects, and visitors and Rangers.

2. Use findings from studies concerning young visitors to develop interpretive strategies appropriate for this large audience group.

For Staff Training

1. Continue staff development in the area of evaluation to ensure that further studies can be carried out in the future.

2. Provide training to help staff strengthen current interpretation and test new interpretive strategies.

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Appendix A:
Ford's Theatre National Historic Site Information

Description
The site of Abraham Lincoln's assassination, Ford's Theatre is a National Historic Site. The site consists of Ford's Theatre, a museum and gift shop below the Theatre, the Star Saloon (Theatre box office) and Petersen House (the House Where Lincoln Died.)

Mission
Ford's Theatre is administered by the National Park Service, whose mission is outlined in the Organic Act of 1916:

> To conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wildlife therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.

This mission is expanded in the NPS' World Wide Web Homepage, under the heading "Interpretation and Education":

> The National Park Service will conduct interpretive programs in all parks to instill an understanding and appreciation of the value of parks and their resources; to develop public support for preserving park resources; to provide the information necessary to ensure the successful adaptation of visitors to park environments; and to encourage and facilitate appropriate, safe, minimum-impact use of park resources.

The mission of Ford's Theatre, as described by site staff, is to tell the story of Lincoln's Assassination and Lincoln's life and present the cultural history of the era.

Visitors
In 1995 there were 1.02 million visitors to FTNHS; at the peak of the spring season the site averages 10,000 visitors/day. Ford's staff have informally identified their current audience as mainly tourists and tour groups. Staff have also observed seasonal fluctuations in the age and nationality of the tour groups visiting Ford's Theatre.

Budget and Staff
Ford's Theatre has an annual operating budget of $533,000, of which $20,000 is budgeted for supplies and materials and $25,000 is budgeted for repairs. The majority of the budget goes towards the salaries of the 21 personnel who work on site. Of these 21, seven are NPS Rangers whose responsibilities include interpretation.

Accessibility
The staff at Ford's Theatre strives to make the site accessible to people with a variety of disabilities. Per the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1991, Ford's Theatre provides its visitors with physical disabilities with an accessible entrance, a clear route through the museum and Theatre floor, and accessible bathrooms . The box where Lincoln was shot is not accessible to individuals in wheelchairs. For those with hearing disabilities, one ranger on staff is able to provide tours in American Sign Language.

Appendix B:
Evaluation Instruments

1. Survey Questionnaire and Protocol
2. Observation Protocol
3. In-depth Interview Questions

#_____

Ford's Theatre Visitor Survey 1996

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.

1. Is this your first visit to Ford's Theatre National Historic Site?

☐No
☐Yes

2. Did you hear a Ranger's presentation in the theatre today?

☐No, go to question 4.
☐Yes **3. What did you think of the presentation?** Please indicate your opinion by circling one number on each scale.

Boring 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Exciting

Uninformative 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Informative

4. Did you visit the Theatre without hearing a Ranger's presentation?

☐No, go to question 6
☐Yes **5. What was your overall experience in the Theatre?** Please indicate your opinion by circling one number on the scale.

Uninteresting 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Fascinating

6. Did you visit the Petersen House/The House Where Lincoln Died across the street today?

☐No **7. Do you plan to do so today?** ☐No ☐Yes
☐Yes

8. Did you visit the museum on the lower level today?

☐No, go to question 11
☐Yes **9. What did you think of the museum?** Please indicate your opinion by circling one number on each scale.

Uninformative 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Informative

Confusing 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Clear

10. Below is a list of objects in the museum. Which did you like best? (Check up to three responses)

☐Booth's derringer	☐Booth's diary	☐Booth's boot
☐Door	☐Lincoln's clothing	☐Flag
☐White House china	☐Playbills	☐Trial Hoods
☐Measure of Lincoln	☐Theatre interior diagram	☐Other _____

11. Did you participate in a hands-on activity in the red room today?

☐No, go to question 13
☐Yes **12. What did you think of the experience?**

Boring 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Exciting

Worthless 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Valuable

OVER PLEASE

13. What was your overall experience at Ford's Theatre National Historic Site?
Please indicate your opinion by circling one number on each scale.

Uninformative 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Informative

Boring 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Exciting

14. Would you like to return to Ford's Theatre?

☐No
☐Yes

15. With whom did you come today?

☐I am alone
☐My family
☐My family and friends
☐My spouse/partner
☐My friends

16. Are you part of an organized group?

☐No, go to question 18
☐Yes **17. Please indicate which type:** ☐School ☐Adult

18. Including yourself, how many are in your group? _____

19. You are: ☐Male ☐Female

20. If you are here with children under the age of 18 years, please indicate their ages.

☐0-4 ☐5-11 ☐12-17

21. What is your age? _____

22. Please indicate the highest level of education you have completed:

☐Grade school
☐Some high school
☐High school
☐Some college/Associates degree
☐College graduate/Bachelor's degree
☐Some graduate work
☐Graduate degree
☐Other_____

23. Where is your permanent residence?

☐United States Which state? _____
☐Foreign Which country? _____

24. With which group do you identify? (U.S. residents only)

☐African American/Black
☐Asian/Pacific Islander
☐White
☐American Indian/Native American
☐Hispanic
☐Other (please describe) _____

ADMINISTERING A STANDARDIZED QUESTIONNAIRE: GUIDELINES

Here is a list of important points to follow when administering a standardized questionnaire.

1. Introduce yourself in a friendly manner. Briefly describe the project in a conversational, spontaneous style and indicate that you would like for the visitor to participate. Rather than asking a visitor to participate, make a statement such as "... and I would like for you to complete a questionnaire." More people will agree to participate if you do not give them the opportunity to say no. If some persuasion is necessary, depending on the situation, you can add: "It will take only X minutes of your time"; "all responses are anonymous"; "everyone's opinion is important"; and/or "we are interested in what all our visitors think." If your randomly chosen visitor does not speak English, but his/her companion does, ask him/her to act as translator.

2. Convene in a area that is as quiet and private as realistically possible. You want to avoid distractions and you want the visitor to feel comfortable. Since only one visitor to complete the questionnaire, it is a good idea to make suggestions on what "third parties" could do while their companion is busy. For example, suggest they visit the gift shop.

3. Know the questionnaire form. Understand the purpose, and be very familiar with each question. This will help you to answer any questions the visitor may have.

4. Create a pleasant, friendly rapport. Be positive, enthusiastic, and happy. Visitors will respond to you in the same way you present yourself to them.

5. Do not suggest answers to the respondent. If the respondent asks you a question, do not pressure him/her by giving your own ideas or reactions either verbally or by using gestures. Remain neutral at all times.

6. Save chatty conversation for afterwards. Often visitors will want to ask you about volunteering. Explain that you would gladly talk with them once the interview is over.

7. There may be several reasons why a respondent would leave a question blank. A respondent may have misunderstood the question; left a question till last, but then forgot about it; and may want to avoid the question for of fear of giving a wrong answer. If this is the case, reassure him/her that this is not a test of knowledge and that all their responses are important. Some reassuring responses are, "take a moment to think it through," or, "many of these questions are involved, so take your time."

8. Review the questionnaire before closing remarks. Before letting the respondent exit, check the questionnaire to be sure all applicable questions have been answered. The respondent should wait while you do this. When everything seems fine, thank the respondent for his/her time. We recommend providing a token of appreciation such as a postcard or another small gift.

Appendix B2 Observation Protocol

FTNHS Observation Sheet Date _____ Presenters _____ Observer _____

Time began _____ Time ended _____ Total time _____

Group Composition

Visitor Behavior and Visitor Talk

Visitors' Questions (gender/age)	Ranger's Answers

Appendix B3 In-Depth Interview Questions

1. Why did you come to Ford's Theatre today?

2. What did you expect to see or do during your visit to Ford's Theatre today? (Did you expect to see this?)

3. When you think about your visit today, what most sticks in your mind? (What new piece of information, what fascinating thing did you see?)

4. Did you see a presentations by one of the Rangers while you were here? Oh, good, talk about the ranger's presentation.

5. Did you talk to the Ranger, or ask him/her any questions after the presentation?

YES? Tell me about this?(Did the Ranger answer your questions, how could this have been improved?)

6. NO? The rangers here at Ford's Theatre are very knowledgeable. If the Ranger were standing here next to me, what would you want to ask him/her? (about Ford's Theater, about the site, Civil War, Lincoln)

7. What do you think would be interesting things to hear about in the Rangers' presentations?

8. Have you visited other museums or historic sites? How often have you visited them in the last year?

9. What have you seen at these places that you think might enhance the program here?

Appendix C:
Observation Data

ab= attention-getting behavior
cr= conversation response
do= documentation
ir= information response
lb= listening behavior
lo= looking at objects
or= observe role-playing
po= pick-up object
qp= questioning behavior
rp= role-playing
to= touching objects

f = female visitor
m = male visitor
numbers indicate visitor age

ab: "brooks bros?" f40
ab: "Look dad" as trying on hat m13
ab: "Look what I get to wear, this is fun, wow" f30
ab: "See the boots?" mteens
ab: "Take another picture" m8
ab: "There he is" pointing to bust of L m70
ab: calls "Dad" to look at newspaper on table f12
ab: points to L mask fteens
ab: "look at the little bow" on L hat m44
ab: "look how big his feet were" f40
ab: shows son boots f40

cr: has conversation with friends about gun mteens
cr: "Isn't that pretty?" f40
cr: "You'd never get it around me." f40
cr: discuss big l bust m10
cr: discuss big l bust m10c
cr: discuss corset with other f55
cr: discuss newspaper on table m30 f30
cr: discuss newspaper on wall m10
cr: discuss newspaper on wall m8
cr: laughs at suggestions to try on hoop skirt f35
cr: talk about L. bust with other f55

do: take picture f55
do: take picture of friend in woman's costume fteens
do: take picture of son in soldier's clothes f40
do: takes photo m30
do: takes photo of fs in hats m30
do: takes photo of girl with hoop m40
do: takes photo of girls trying on costume f50

do: takes photo of man in hat f30
do: takes photo of woman m35
do: takes picture of f in hoop m40
do: takes picture of family in front of L bust m40
do: Takes video of newspaper m40

ir: "Bet it weighs 11 tons." m9
ir: "He must have been a tall man. Look at the size of that hat" m30
ir: "Holy cow he must have been cold that night" with coat on fteens
ir: "It fits in the palm of my hand." m30
ir: "oh, it's larger" f40
ir: "Size 14 shoes" to onlooker f35
ir: "that looks really hot" pointing to Ranger costume m30
ir: "That's a big hat" m30
ir: "That's a curtain tieback" m40
ir: "That's a tie back for drapes" f40
ir: "These boots are reproductions" f30
ir: "They'd be hot back then" m13
ir: "This is what they put water in" m30
ir: answers Ranger's question about the mask (beard missing) f30

lb: listen to Ranger tell mask story m30 f12 f30
lb: listens to Ranger explain how to wear hoop f30 f6 f7 m4
lb: listens to Ranger m70
lb: listens to Ranger talk about coat
lb: listens to Ranger talk about hat fteens
lb: listens to Ranger talk about Lincoln m50
lb: listens to Ranger talk about mask f45
lb: listens to Ranger talk about mask fteens
lb: listens to Ranger talk about soldier's uniforms mteens
lb: listens to Ranger tell overcoat story m30
lb: listens to S explain about dressing f38

lo: examines canteen mteens
lo: examines photos mteens
lo: glances at soldier's uniforms f35
lo: glances at woman's clothes m60
lo: look at boots f55
lo: look at L table hands behind back f38
lo: look at L table hands behind back m38
lo: look at Lincoln coat with f45 fteens
lo: look at LIncoln coat with fteens f45
lo: looks at big L bust f30
lo: looks at coat m45
lo: looks at coat mteens

lo: looks at hat m30
lo: looks at L bust mteens
lo: looks at L table without touching f45
lo: looks at lincoln table without touching m50
lo: looks at newspaper on table m30
lo: looks at newspaper on wall f30 f12
lo: looks at photos fteens
lo: looks at photos m15
lo: looks at photos m60
lo: looks at plaster cast mteens
lo: looks at woman trying on hoop m50
lo: looks at woman's costume f30
lo: looks at women's clothing f38
lo: looks at women's costume m30
lo: looks over m40's shoulder at newspaper f35
lo: reads incription on gun m30

or: observes own girls with costume f50
or: observes own girls with costume m60
or: watch another girl dress up f50
or: watch another girl dress up fteens
or: watch another girl dress up m60
or: watch someone put on hoop m9
or: watch someone put on hoop f7
or: watch someone put on hoop m40
or: watch someone put on hoop f40
or: watches hoop demo f11
or: watches hoop demo f11
or: watches hoop demo fteens

po: picks up boot f12
po: picks up bugle f7
po: picks up civilian hat and puts on baby m30
po: picks up gun and examines it m60
po: picks up gun f40
po: picks up gun m13
po: picks up gun m30
po: picks up gun m30
po: picks up gun mteen
po: picks up gun, has it taken away by mom m10
po: picks up hand compares to own f35
po: picks up hat m13
po: picks up hat m60
po: picks up uniform m30

qb: "Are these all reproductions?" m50
qb: "How tall was he?" m44
qb: "How tall was Lincoln?" m35
qb: "I never thought he was such a big man?" f35
qb: "Is it real hands?" m40
qb: "Is that a reproduction of the gun?" f50
qb: "Is that what his wife would have worn?" m38
qb: "Is this a repro?" m30
qb: "Is this the original hat?" f30
qb: "Is this the real thing?" m44
qb: "Single shot?" m30
qb: "So this is...?" points to plaster cast f30
qb: "That's the type of gun?" f40
qb: "These aren't his though?" m38
qb: "This is a reproduction?" m35
qb: "Was there a beard there?" f30
qb: "were these made for the time period, were they made for now?" f30
qb: "What am I looking at here?" f35
qb: "what do you got here?" m44
qb: "What is this?" (lhands) fteens
qb: "What is this?" (lmask) fteens
qb: "What size are these?" f40
qb: "What size gloves?" m35
qb: "What would the hair be like back then?" to Suzanne w40
qb: "What's the size of the boots?" m40
qb: ask about underwear and drawers f55
qb: Ask to try on l coat m35
qb: asks about l mask m10

rp: helps boy try on hat m30
rp: m44 puts civilian hat on f40
rp: posed for photo in front of big L bust mteens
rp: pretends to fire gun mteen
rp: puts hat on boy m40
rp: puts hat on girl m35
rp: puts mask in front of face m13
rp: sit down and pose with hoop f55
rp: stands in front of big bust for photo with hoop f11
rp: tries on corset f30
rp: tries on corset fteens
rp: tries on hat mteens
rp: tries on hat f12
rp: tries on hat f30
rp: tries on hat f30
rp: tries on hat f5

rp: tries on hat fteens
rp: tries on hat mteens
rp: tries on hoop f11
rp: tries on hoop f7
rp: tries on hoop fteens
rp: tries on hoop, smiling f7
rp: tries on l hat m35
rp: tries on l hat m44
rp: tries on purse f30
rp: tries on uniform fteens
rp: tries on uniform m10
rp: tries on uniform m8
rp: try on coat mteens
rp: try on daycap fteens
rp: try on daycap fteens
rp: try on hat mteens
rp: try on hoop f55
rp: try on hoop fteens
rp: try on hoop fteens
rp: try on Lincoln hat and coat mteens
rp: try on purse fteens
rp: try on purse fteens
rp: try on soldier cap fteens
rp: try on soldier's uniform mteens
rp:tries on hoop embarrased fteens

to: handles tieback mteen
to: handles uniforms m60
to: measure hand against L. hand m40 f40
to: shake hoop fteens
to: squeezes nose on L mask m40
to: touch coat m40
to: touch boots f55
to: touch boots m40
to: touch cast m10
to: touch cast m40
to: touch corset f55
to: touch corset fteens
to: touch hat m10
to: touch hat m40
to: touch hats m8
to: touch l face f7
to: touch l face m9
to: touch uniform m10
to: touch water bottle m10

to: touches coat mteen
to: touches L hands m35
to: touches Lincoln hands m15
to: touches overcoat m30

Appendix D:
Interview Data

FTNHS
Interviews by Response

Code:
(Respondents in the actual interview are in bold, accompanying group members are in plain type)

INTV 1
1 M Age 50-59
(w/1 F age 50-59, 1 F age 12-17

INTV 2
1M Age 60-69
1 F Age 60-69
(Friday 6/21, pm, presented by Jim)

INTV 3
1 F age 30-39
1 F age 70+
(Friday 6/21, pm, presented by Karen)

INTV 4
1 F 23-29
1 F 23-29
(Wednesday 6/19, pm)

INTV 5
1 F Age 40-49
1 M Age 12-17
(Wednesday 6/19, pm)

INTV 6
1 M 40-49
1 M 40-49
(Saturday 6/22, am)

INTV 7
1 F 50-59
(w/ 1M 50-59, 2 M Ages 12-17)

INTV 8
1 M Age 60-69

INTV 9
1 F 70+

(w/ 1 F 20-39, 1 M 30-39, and several children)

INTV 10
1 F 40-49
(w/ 1 M Age 12-17)
(Monday 6/10, am)

INTV 11
1 M Age 40-49
1 F Age 40-49

Question 1: Why did you come to Ford's Theatre today?

1.1. Never been here before. History , like history, especially Lincoln, wanted to see this. Lived here years ago, never got to come to Ford's Theatre.
back now, from Oklahoma.

2.1. Like Presidents and presidential history. Been before, many years ago, overall been three times. Have visited Lincoln sites in Illinois and Kentucky.

3.1. Been before, and there was a long line at the FBI. Interested in history.

4.1. I've been here before, but she has not. She had heard about it.

5.1. Never seen it before, brought my son. We're here to see the FBI, on the map Ford's Theatre was just around the corner, so we said 'Let's go see it,' cause I've always been interested in Lincoln. Never seen it before, saw it on map, with FBI.

6.1. Saw it on map.

7.1. (It's) near FBI, mom wanted to come see it.

8.1. On a transit trip, stopped to get lunch and came across street.

9.1. She had been once and wanted to bring her grandsons back again.

10.1. We've had a debate, like history, wanted to see this. Had been in DC years ago and wanted to come, it takes a 1600 mile trip to do it.

11.1. First time, but it's a historic place.

Question 2: What did you expect to see or do during your visit to Ford's Theatre today? (Did you expect to see this)

1.2. expecting something larger
didn't expect box to be right on the stage, thought it was back and that Booth jumped farther, misconceptions even from watching documentaries on TV
didn't realize that we were going to get such a great informative lesson, "I wish all my history lessons were that interesting" Even (our daughter) can learn things

2.2. used to do speech
very impressed, very good
He (the ranger) loves kids and history, and it shows
Ranger should have been a history teacher

3.2. Theater, it was difficult to hear, drapes, paper flags on wall, how much is original

Hear the story, had read about the museum

4.2. Didn't expect there to be someone speaking about it, which is really good,
I thought you would just come in and take a look around
Expected to see the box, look around theatre in general

5.2. Knew that we would see the box Lincoln was assassinate in
Didn't realize the stuff downstairs, all the memorabilia was there, just go a quick glimpse,
knew that it was still a working theatre, didn't know what it would look like
or that we were going to this performance that told us the history, it was extremely
interesting, would have been nice if she had a microphone, not sure everybody could hear
real well.

6.2. Half of a museum on President Lincoln and half of
Just wanted to see it, first visit

7.2. see where Lincoln was shot
(Thanks have a good day)

8.2. see the theatre

9.2. The place where Lincoln was shot
she just came, didn't know what to expect

10.2. Expected something larger

11.2. Just to be here, American history is my hobby, didn't know what to expect,
didn't expect to have a speaker up there

***Question 3:* When you think about your visit today, what most sticks in your mind? (What new piece of information, what fascinating thing did you see?)**

1.3. How sad it is,
Wife-thought Lincoln was shot from the stage,
father had known that he was shot in the Box from history books,
wife knew about Booth jumping down and breaking his leg

2.3. We knew about Abraham Lincoln and knew what to expect,
also know about how many times Lincoln was buried
Nothing really stands out since we know a great deal
Didn't know about Rathbone being injured

3.3. The story, what happened, story of John Wilkes Booth, that he was a famous actor,
that there were guests in the box

4.3. It was a really good talk, enjoyable, very expressive.
Learned a lot, remembered the circumstances around it, things that I had forgotten about
It's so long since I'd been here before
Remembered basically what had happened, but forgotten all the little details about running across the street with the body

5.3. Its very historical it's a link to our past, political past, life of the President, I think its very important to keep these things alive and accessible to the people. The performance where she gave all the information was great
Main impression is that I've never actually seen the theater, I read a lot about Lincoln, the assassination plot, interesting to see the theatre, the box

6.3. Lincoln
it looks real plays are still going on
didn't know that it had been gutted and redone, walls look pretty good

6.3. Yes, know on vacation and have fun
not a lecture

8.3. The condition of the theatre is excellent

9.3. take me back in history to the time and be able to imagine what was going on at that time
that the crowd had been much larger

10.3. blank

11.3. That's a tough question to answer because I like his speech, it's his hobby, so he knew what the ranger talked about

Question 4: Did you see a presentation by one of the Rangers while you were here? Oh, good, talk about the ranger's presentation.

1.4. Really enjoyed it, thought it was great
not sure what she could have added, it was good
Everybody got quiet, people were sitting on the edge of their seats
had some trouble hearing

2.4. His love of the theatre was apparent
he knew a great deal, it was an excellent talk
today people want a job and want to do the minimum, but the ranger clearly loves his work, and does it to the best of his ability

3.4. Good, at the front door
Very good, like to see the rangers at work, animated and articulate

4.4. Did a great job , easy to follow along

5.4. Excellent, well-performed, information was fascinating, just to get the chronological aspect of what went on each day prior to his coming
interesting that to think that they didn't have much security back then, that it was common knowledge that he was coming to the theatre that night
Extremely well done, would have been better with a microphone

6.4. Liked the information it gave
Wished she'd have a microphone,
liked the presentation

7.4. good style
have fun, on vacation
entertaining
understood what very going on that night
better than museum, better picture of what was going on that museum numbered cases help understand order

8.4. no

9.4. blank

10.4. blank

11.4. Did a good job of entertaining even those of us who aren't really into history, women is not a big history fan, but enjoyed it
it was interesting

***Question 5:* Did you talk to the Ranger, *or* ask him/her any questions after the presentation? YES? Tell me about this? (Did the Ranger answer your questions, how could this have been improved?)**

1.5. blank

2.5. blank

3.5. blank

4.5. blank

5.5. Just some information about when the next tour was

6.5. blank

7.5. Yes, very approachable

8.5. no

9.5. no

10.5. blank

11.5. blank

Question 6: NO? The Rangers here at Ford's Theatre are very knowledgeable. If the Ranger were standing here next to me, what would you want to ask him/her? (about Ford's Theater, about the site, Civil War, Lincoln)

1.6. Surprised about the size of it, 1700 people could fit in
Didn't realize that Booth was so well known by the Ford's people
What was their reaction, how were they viewed afterwards, when all of the conspirators were gathered up in a witch-hunt type things,
What happened to the Ford Brothers afterwards

2.6. Can we still look at the box
The Ranger mentioned a town in Maryland, a battle, wanted to know which town/battle where 30,000 died in a half day of battle
they knew about Gettysburg, but didn't know about this

3.6. A- History of theatre before Lincoln, History of the theatre, what happened after
B- Large size, Physical changes, decor, how it was researched and preserved

4.6. Was he the first president assassinated
5.6. Are the chairs the box the original, actual ones?
What's original to the theatre, did they always use chairs like this?

6.6. Could we visit the booth?
I would ask about the wound, if it bled a lot, she said he slumped forward, did they pull him back, what they talked about at that moment in the booth, sort of the eyewitness accounts
The pillow, was soaked, did they dress the wound, did they just say "It is mortal" and let it drip?

7.6. no, nothing else

8.6. how the condition of the theater in comparison to Lincoln's time
what's been changed, how repaired

9.6. they done a good job, can't think of anything

10.6. blank

11.6. Why didn't Lincoln have guards, why wasn't the one there

Question 7: What do you think would be interesting things to hear about in the Rangers' presentations?

1.7. What happened to Booth and the co-conspirators, (supposed co-conspirators)Dr. Mudd
Not sure if that would detract from the emphasis, the importance of the horrible act.
What's going on in the theatre, show? That it's a working theatre

2.7. More about Lincoln, his ability to speak, give speeches, who he was
Felt that in general people know more about Lincoln than the Civil War
Booth, that he was well thought of, well known and that he made that comment during the Lincoln speech
Dr. Mudd
The whole, larger picture, liked that the ranger gave the whole picture

3.7. History of the theatre, the Civil War up to the assassination
Life of Lincoln
Why no microphone

4.7. He covered everything,
a little more of the history, like when the theatre was built, more about theatre

5.7. Male commented "I've read in books that one guard that was supposed to be watching" Where were the guards. Read that Guard Parker was out drinking.
That Lincoln was superstitious and that night he said "good-bye" to his body guard rather than "good night"

6.7. About other co-conspirators, the woman who was the operator of the boarding house, whether she was guilty or not, the controversy surrounding that, whether or not she was guilty
How did they rebuild theatre
News coverage about across the street, it said that the streets were crowded, did they print a paper immediately, and start running down the streets yelling about it, how long before the rest of the nation heard, I'm sure the presses were running immediately

7.7. more about what the time was like
crowded, smaller seats, big dresses, squished in, no air-conditioning

8.7. blank

9.7. no more other information

10.7. blank

11.7. History of Ford's Theatre

Question 8: Have you visited other museums or historic sites? How often have you visited them in the last year?

1.8 Capitol

2.8. Hodgeville Kentucky
Springfield, Lincoln's Grave , there's debris all around it, they moved his grave. New Salem, Vendalia, Illinois-- the Boyhood home

3.8. Houston Museum of Art, Planetarium, Kennedy Center, Memorials
Holocaust Memorial Museum, Capitol, Civil War, Jackson MS

4.8. museums in North Carolina

5.8. White House, All Smithsonian Museums, Archives, Art Museums/National Gallery, Monuments, Gettysburg, Appomatox, Holocaust Museum, Lots of things in New York City

6.8. Smithsonian, Mt. Vernon, National Cathedral

7.8. blank

8.8. no
9.8. White House, Williamsburg
Not really, canít get around as much, hope to in the future

10.8. blank

11.8. Yes, Gettysburg, Bull Run Battlefield

Question 9: What have you seen at these places that you think might enhance the program here?

1.9 Jazz it up with laser, or music would detract, but subtle music would be good
my daughter would like re-enactment, including breaking the leg

2.9. What we learned at these sites was information we had already read about in speeches and in books

Ranger talk is excellent, reminded hme of a good guide at the Korean Veterans Memorial, he knew a lot, made it very interesting
I like the details (the theatre sat 1700 people)
comparison of wars by comparing the Vietnam Veterans Memorial to battles in the Civil War

3.9. Memorable, night programs outside, like at Big Bend NP, programs outdoors in amphitheater
Play, re-enact, not just tell
Videos are horrible, so are written things, sometimes difficult

4.9. Re-enactments might be interesting, not sure how likely it would be every ten minutes
A lot of museums around have little placards explaining "This is where John Wilkes Booth..." might help

Very interesting, I'd forgotten, it's been a long time
came with parents, remember the theatre and a talk, although she doesn't remember details

5.9. Most of those were kind of different than Ford's Theatre
today's presentation was really excellent
I can't think of anything

We live in Baltimore, we've been to Ft. McHenry, actually I think this was better. There they employed lots of movies and videotapes and actually I think it's much more interesting when you have a live person telling you about things that happened, and the more you can have hands-on and see, even though you can't have people traipsing through the box where he was shot, if people could walk by and look in. It' more interesting to hear people that to watch a video screen.

6.9. Air and Space, liked Sky Lab/space station, and gift shop
Docents at Mt. Vernon, bus driver on the way to Mt. Vernon
Whatever way they convey the information, placards, guides that you can read It is good to get all the little give trivial background that you don't get out of a free guide

7.9. music, video downstairs
better signs for handicapped access
not accessible for little people/children

8.9. blank

9.9. no everyone here has done a really good job

10.9. blank

11.9. visit to Gettysburg, one Ranger enacted the whole battle, very animated
Would have loved to have seen people enacting parts while he talked, maybe on stage, in the boxes

Appendix 12

Object-based Learning Workshop

Object-Based Learning Workshop
Museum Education Program, GWU
July 24-25, 1996

Summary Statement

This two-day, two-part workshop was designed to serve as a model for the participants to consider when they are developing museum experiences for visitors. As such, it drew together information, attitudes and skills that inform object-based learning, in this instance, for an audience of adults. All of the elements used are based on sound educational principles and can be adjusted to serve audiences of various ages.

By dividing the workshop into two parts, an opportunity was provided for the introduction, repetition, and expansion of the basics of leaning from artifacts. The first day presented a particular approach: the systematic framework of description, analysis, and interpretation that creates a structure for the experience; and the inquiry method that challenges and encourages learning through discovery. This advance organizer was concluded with a model of such a lesson using an ordinary contemporary object (a Coca-Cola can). The audience actively participated in the lesson and then stepped outside of it to reflect upon and evaluate the experience.

On the second day of the workshop, after reviewing the key elements, the concept of object-based learning was expanding to include a space/place as an object. The skills needed for "reading" such an artifact were discussed and a short activity using the great hall of the National Building Museum was completed. A second activity was introduced in which participants, working in small groups, had the chance to brainstorm in a space of their choice in the museum and to develop some preliminary ideas for a lesson they could teach. The workshop concluded with a discussion and review of the two-day event and the completion of an evaluation form. Throughout, the workshop sought to embody the principles of education that are embraced when the visitor's experience is placed at the center of the event. It was designed to be participatory, informative, and well-structured and to serve as a model for those who will facilitate experiences for others.

Object-Based Learning Workshop
Museum Education Program, GWU

Presented by Judith Landau
July 24-25, 1996

"Learning is a journey, not a destination."

Brooks and Brooks
The Case for Constructivist Classrooms

"The only reason to study artifacts is to get at the people behind them."
Henry Glassie
Material Culture Studies in America

"Conversation marked by the free exchange of ideas is a mark of an inquiry-centered program. it is in preserving for ourselves and our students the 'right to be wrong' that we gain courage to try out new ideas, to explore more alternatives, to evaluate objectively our own work as well as that of others. Students have to learn to trust their ability to find and evaluate answers. To do that they have to feel safe in asking questions. They need time to think and an environment that encourages speculation."

Mary Budd Rowe
Questions, Questioning Techniques, and Effective Teaching

Goal Statement

Developing museum experiences that spring from the exploration of objects is at the heart of the museum educator's work. This workshop will focus on systematic processes that support object-based learning.

Objectives

As a result of this workshop, participants will be able to:

1. demonstrate an understanding of a particular form of object-based learning that combines the structured study of objects with the inquiry method;

2. identify the elements of a format for adult audience workshops.

Object-Based Learning Workshop
Museum Education Program, GWU
July 24-25, 1996

Agenda

July 24, 1:00-2:30 pm

I. Introduction to the workshop
   A. Greetings
   B. Advance Organizer

II. Object-based Learning One
   A. Discussion--models and methods
   B. Demonstration
   C. Conclusions

July 25, 1:00 - 4:00 pm

I. Object-based Learning Two
   A. Discussion--more models and methods
   B. Gallery Activity
   C. Conclusion

Object-Based Learning Workshop
Museum Education Program, GWU
National Building Museum-- July 25, 1996

Small Group Activity

You are developing this object-based museum experience for a small group (10-12) of adult visitors--your peers.

1. Select one member of the group to serve as a recorder/reporter. With your group, explore the building, inside and out if you wish, and select one or more areas of the building that intrigue you. **Stick to the building; do not use the exhibitions.**

2. Spend time "experiencing" or "reading" your selections; brainstorm any/all perceptual, descriptive, functional, and interpretive aspects.

3. From the ideas you brainstormed, identify a theme that will serve as the unifying element for the 30-minute experience you are designing.

4. What is your rationale for this theme?

5. Develop one or two objectives that you expect as outcomes for your audience as a result of this museum experience.