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Making power visible for museum educators : a theoretical framework for multicultural museum education

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Making power visible for Museum Educators:

A Theoretical Framework for

Multicultural Museum Education

By

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ABSTRACT

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Title   Making power visible for Museum Educators: A Theoretical

              Framework for Multicultural Museum Education

This theoretical essay provides museum education staff invested in opening museums to wider audiences with a theoretical model for how to effectively engage multicultural audiences. This study first provides a brief history of the American museum and museum education. It then situates museum education in a socio-political context, from which the theme of power and authority emerge as prominent barriers. This study then investigates the meaning of culture in the context of power and its relationship with learning, followed by a look at how ethnocentrism is addressed by multicultural education. Finally this essay hones in on key principles of culturally responsive teaching and arrives at a theoretical model, Multicultural Museum Education, which serves as a framework for museums, museum educators and researchers interested in providing meaningful experiences for wider audiences. The central guiding question of this study is *how can museum educators (and volunteers) effectively engage multicultural audiences, who may face language and socioeconomic barriers, with objects of art in museum galleries?*

For my husband who is my best friend and pillar of strength and

for learners with rich stories to tell that reside

outside the Master Narrative.

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PREFACE

"Art allows us to acknowledge how different we are…no human being on earth sees the world the same…(and) art is the one place where our differences are affirmed."

-Peter Sellars

During my childhood I endured a lot of change, which gave me little time to construct a holistic view of the world and a place for myself within it. Originally Pakistani, I was born in London and grew up as an expatriate in Saudi, Abu Dhabi and Dubai. My longing for home was perpetuated by my parents' and grandparents' sense of displacement caused by the 1948 partition of India and the 1971 Genocide in East Pakistan (what is Bangladesh today). I attended a British elementary school in Abu Dhabi, which I loved, a Lebanese middle School in Abu Dhabi, which was more like a prison, and a British high school in Dubai, which seemed to have forgotten that it was located in the Middle East. We had few museums and only a limited selection of community centers and libraries to choose from. The local shared culture comprised shiny new malls, glitzy movie theatres, a faraway old town, an ice rink, private beach clubs, the desert and highways. We lived a transient lifestyle reinforced by a lot of travelling to Pakistan and to different parts of the world, not to mention the constant coming and going of friends and family caused by job transfers.

My inheritance of loss became amplified on 9/11, which took place two weeks after I arrived at Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, Massachusetts. The culture shock, the heightened sense of displacement and cultural disconnect I encountered, drew me to the Department of International Relations and

eventually led me to study abroad in Cairo where I researched the role of media as a vehicle for representation. I found glimpses of myself in the writings of Edward Said, Franz Fanon and Alice Walker, in the architecture of Andalusia Spain and Fatimid Cairo, and in songs of love and loss by Mano Chao and Umm Kulthoum sung to me by my Coptic American-Egyptian friend whom I bunked class with to take Faluka rides on the Nile. But these were merely snapshots of myself with no thread to tie them altogether. I felt as if I inhabited someone else's world, forever in search of my own.

My first moment of complete self-recognition took place in the presence of a painting of Madonna and child at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The border of her robe was decorated with Arabic calligraphy that translated into, "There is no God but God and Prophet Muhammad is his Messenger." I had heard of churches being turned into mosques and vice versa, but I had never heard of an artist incorporating both Christian and Islamic iconography (think Samuel Huntington's Clash of Civilizations) at once. I had read philosophical works by Maimonides and Avicenna, but the thousand yearlong cross-cultural exchange between Venice, Damascus, Safavid Iran and Istanbul appeared to be much more prominent in a work of art. Reminding me of my own upbringing, the synthesis of these cultures, illustrated through decoration, the function of the object, the use of stylized text, and the use of materials such as gold leaf, glass, malachite and crimson, gave birth to a fluid identity that is simply complex and beautiful. Visiting this exhibition at the Met inspired me to reflect back on my childhood and piece together a more complete view of the world and my place within it

The exhibition reminded me of my childhood home, covered in the warm hues of Southern Spain: Burnt Sienna, Umber, Ochre, Burgundy, and dusty

greens. Bright red azaleas filled our garden and aromatic coral pink honeysuckle creepers climbed our terra-cotta pink walls. In the winter months, my mother would pick white flowers from her jasmine bush and put them into little bowls of water placed on my nightstand each evening. At sunset, especially during my grandmother's visits from Pakistan, the house sat in a fog of *boukhour* or *incense*. My mother would fill the mabkhara or traditional incense burner with burning coals and scented bricks that looked like elephant droppings. She carried the fumes throughout the house and waved them into my hair.

Just like the painting of Madonna and Child, I realized that each object I grew up with told a story of cultural identity and relations. Even today, my mother's Turkish carpets bring back memories of my brother and I getting drunk on apple tea in the carpet shops of the Grand Bazaar in Istanbul. Her tall ceramic oil lamps transport me back to the extremely dusty, dimly-lit and object-ridden palace in Bangalore that belonged to an alleged descendant of a Mughal family who made his living by dressing up like a *nawab* (turban and all) to sell antiques. The large terra-cotta tiles in our backyard remind me of red clay on the banks of the Indus or the Red Fort in the run-down Muslim quarters of Delhi. The tribal and silk rugs from Iran, Turkey and Pakistan, remind me of sitting atop mounds of carpets listening to my parents discuss dyes, knot counts, wool, warp and weft as they looked through piles of carpets at the local carpet shop.

As I got lost in the undulating folds of Madonna's robe below her right arm, I was reminded of a textile that had been passed down in my family. It suddenly occurred to me that the complex story of my identity had been sitting at the bottom of my mother's bedroom chest all this time. The tie-dyed black and red six foot-long wedding sari wrapped in incensed white muslin for protection

tells the stories of love and loss, more love and loss and loss and love again. All the women in our family received black and red tie dyed Kutchi *joras* (outfits) on their wedding day allowing us to trace the journey of our forefathers from Kutch to Bombay to Calcutta (for trade), to East Pakistan (due to 1948 partition of India and Pakistan), and to West Pakistan (driven by the 1971 Genocide of Bengalis by the government of West Pakistan) and on.

The textile is drenched in cultural, psychological and personal meaning. It is a reminder of our humble beginnings as Kutchi Hindus who converted to Islam sixteen generations ago. As I dressed in my very own Kutchi *jora* handed down to me by mother-in-law, I imagined that each red dot represented members of my family, scattered across the globe. The color red symbolized the fiery spirit of independent women like my mother and grandmothers, their love, strength to rebuild, cook and be joyful. Meanwhile, the black dye was our profound sense of loss and our sharp intuition.

The bond I formed with the Metropolitan Museum of Art and its collection that day was so profound that it shifted the course of my career away from Corporate Advertising to Art History to Museum Education. My dear friend Tara Lyons, Museum Educator and Program Head at the Buffalo Historical Society says it best, "In Greek "eum" means house and "muse" means to inspire, therefore a museum is a house of inspiration. If it doesn't do that, then what is it?" This is precisely what my experience with the Madonna and Child at the Met did for me. Five years later, I am now in my final semester of a Master of Science in Education at Bank Street College and I am on the Staff of the Education Department of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of this theoretical essay is to explore the shift in the skills necessary for museum educators to effectively engage multicultural audiences in art museums. This study will look to relevant literature in the field of pedagogy, museum education and multicultural education theory to construct a theoretical framework for multicultural museum education pedagogy and practice.

This study does not aim to generalize but hopes to produce transferable insights, that is, "in what ways understanding and knowledge can be applied in similar contexts and settings" (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012, p. 31) or referred to by Patton (1990) as "context-bound extrapolations…speculations on the likely applicability of findings to other situations under similar, but not identical, situations" (p. 489).

RATIONALE AND SIGNIFICANCE

The rationale for this study is three-fold. First, Museums can be sites for social justice by helping to close the cultural and psychological gap between immigrant adults and their children. Secondly, the rapidly shifting demographic of America also requires museums to address the challenge of becoming relevant for multicultural audiences for very practical reasons such as economics and survival. Third, engaging multicultural audiences in museum education is a timely and relevant topic for local museums in New York.

Museums can help New American adults culturally and psychologically catch up with their children:

Emira Habiby-Brown introduced herself to me as the founder of The Center of Integration and Advancement of New Americans (CIANA) in Queens; an organization that helps support newly-arrived immigrants in New York City. Emira felt that the objects in the galleries, when made accessible, could be a powerful cultural connection for New American audiences (especially adults) who are in the process of integrating into New York City. I agreed with her as the presence of the newly renovated Arts of the Islamic World galleries also made me feel empowered as an immigrant Pakistani Muslim and gave me a stronger sense of belonging to the City. Emira also pointed out that museums could help fill the gap between immigrant parents and their "Americanized" children,

> When New American families come to America, adult immigrants are left behind…New American children integrate by attending school while the adult remains isolated from American society due to language, legal, educational, and economic barriers. With no formal

> space to interact with other members of the community or society, the psychological, social, linguistic and cultural gap between parent and child expands over the years, resulting in long term negative consequences for their children." Emira asks, "Why should this gap exist at all and why isn't it addressed sooner rather than later? (Habiby-Brown, E., In-person interview, July 2012)

New York City is becoming increasingly multicultural:

After my initial conversation with Emira, I began researching the demographics of New York City to determine how important this topic might be for the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

New York City has always been multicultural. In 1776 Major Samuel described New York City as "a motley collection of all the nations under heaven" (as cited in Binder & Reimers 1996, p.31). The difference today, however, is that New York City is multi-racial with residents who are largely non-European and non-White. According to a government report titled New Immigrants to New York, "As of 2006, the city's foreign-born population was over three million, an all-time high. Immigrants constituted 37 percent of the population in 2006" (Salvo & Lobo, 2009). Today, New York City's population of 8 million comprises even more nations including, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Eritrea, Nepal, Ghana, China, India, Korea, Philippines, Pakistan, Italy, Ireland, Russia, Poland, Germany and Great Britain.

As foreign-born immigration rises, the native-born multi-racial or multicultural American pool in New York City will continue to increase, making the New York City population increasingly multicultural. The geographic distribution of New York city's multicultural communities is also shifting, according to Joseph Berger, a metropolitan reporter and education columnist for

The Times and author of a new book, "The World in a City: Traveling the Globe

Through the Neighborhoods of the New New York"

> Sixty percent of New York City residents are immigrants or children of immigrants… and neighborhoods are being remade as older immigrant groups, like the Irish and Italians, continue a decades-long immigration to the suburbs. Mr. Berger cited the Chinese and Koreans in Flushing, the Dominicans in Washington Heights and the West Bronx, the Guyanese in Richmond Hill, the Caribbeans in East Flatbush, the South Asians in Jackson Heights, the growing Chinese population in Bensonhurt and the polyglot mix of Arabs, Brazilians and Bangladeshis in Astoria. (as cited in Sewell 2007, New York Times)

Consequently, as New York City becomes increasingly diverse, local museums

are faced with the challenge of adapting themselves to the needs of multicultural

communities.

Engaging multicultural audiences in museum education is a timely and relevant topic for local museums:

There is a museum-wide trend in New York City museums towards

community-based programming, with a particular emphasis on effective

engagement with multicultural audiences. For example, the Museum of Modern

Art, Queens Museum, Tenement Museum, and the Rubin Museum, are all trying

different ways to engage multicultural audiences.[1]

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[1] Some specific examples include the Queens Museum, which has the New New Yorker program that offers cost-free courses in a variety of languages and emphasizes the arts, technology and English language acquisition. Subjects covered include painting, book making, crafts, photography, video editing, performance, graphic design, web design, and computer literacy. In addition, the Tenement Museum offers the Shared Journey program for English as Second Language learners. This program is a series of six workshops for Adult ESOL learners, which include a tour of a restored apartment in the tenement at 97 Orchard Street, and a discussion about the connections between immigrant experiences past and present. The Museum recently offered its venue for Citizenship Now!, a City University of New York program that provides free, high quality, and confidential immigration law services for individuals and families. The program offers one-on-one

The importance of making museums more accessible to non-traditional museum visitors (multi-racial audiences) is reinforced by a recent $244,430 grant awarded by the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) to a community-based organization in New York called Cool Culture, a nonprofit committed to closing the achievement gap for low income families by providing free access to museums. The Laboratory has created 10 partnerships between small to medium-sized museums and local preschools in Harlem and Chinatown. The press release states that

> The three-year laboratory will deepen museum professionals' knowledge of educational best practices at preschools, outreach strategies for low-income audiences, and how to align their museums' resources and programs with community needs — a critical step in museums' expansions and searches for new audiences. In years two and three, the project will bring speakers from across the country to engage a learning community of 40 museum professionals around these important topics. (Cool Culture 2011, Press release)

> Reinforcing the timeliness and relevance of developing skills to engage

multicultural audiences, the Director of Education at Cool Culture, Barbara Palley, recently mentioned the following to me,

> Increasing participants' cultural competencies is something we want to achieve… I'd love to pick your brain if you have ideas for activities that help educators become conscious of cultural competencies and their own strength and weaknesses/biases. (Palley, B. (2013, March 1). Email Interview.)

Increased accessibility for multicultural audiences is a priority for key influencers at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Met):

The diversity of the Met's collection spans the breadth of human experience, making it a treasure chest of personal connections for multicultural

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consultation sessions with attorneys and paralegals for immigrants in the process of becoming citizens. Services are available in Spanish, Mandarin and Cantonese.

audiences. That said the institution faces several challenges in making itself accessible to new audiences. For example, the results of an in-house evaluation of a pilot partnership between the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the International Rescue Committee, a resettling agency for newly arrived refugees in New York City, serve as a point of departure for this critical essay. The partnership, which took place in 2012 over a period of six months, revealed that refugee participants had an overwhelmingly positive response to the objects in the museum and particularly enjoyed hands-on experiences in the galleries. That said, the evaluation revealed that teaching pedagogy and practice emerged as major areas of growth, particularly for communities who were new to the museum and had high entry-barriers such as language and socioeconomics.

Moreover, in a recent TED talk, Tom Campbell, the President of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, talks about bringing down the barriers of the Museum and publicly acknowledges how intimidating the Metropolitan Museum can be for visitors. He says,

> The Great Hall at the Met is one of the great portals of the world, awe-inspiring, like a medieval cathedral. From there, you can walk in any direction to almost any culture. I frequently go out into the hall and the galleries and I watch our visitors coming in. Some of them are comfortable. They feel at home. They know what they're looking for. Others are very uneasy. It's an intimidating place. They feel that the institution is elitist. I'm working to try and break down that sense of that elitism. (Campbell, TED Talk 2012)

A leading member of the Education Department echoed this sentiment at a recent volunteer training for Community Programs, where she said,

> It is particularly important for Community Programs to make audiences (with barriers to entry) feel welcome, part of this place. They are individuals who come here, feeling initially that this is a place they don't belong to. We need to change their mindset… (Leading member of Met Education, Thesis Journal entry, Monday 24, October 2012)

At another training for volunteer educators (there are approximately 100 volunteers who lead gallery tours for school programs) in the School Programs division, the same member of the Education Department emphasized the importance of the role of the educator in making the Museum accessible to multicultural audiences, especially those who face language and socioeconomic barriers. She shared an example of a self-guided group tour of fifty students who were English Language Learners that she came across in the galleries. While a teacher of the group was doing a color-block exercise with his students in front of a Monet painting he told her half his students do not participate in class because of their feelings of inadequacy about their language skills. She noted that with the help of the teacher, the original work of art in the galleries, and the color block activity, the students responded with "enthusiasm and confidence that transcended language at the end of the session" (Leading member of Met Education, Thesis journal, Monday 24, October 2012).

As a result, this case study will explore what museum educators (including volunteers) should and should not do to help "change" the mindset of multicultural audiences in the museum, to make them feel that they belong.

DEFINING MULTICULTURALISM

The pressure on institutions and educators to attain the knowledge, attitudes and skills to work with learners from diverse groups, and to help learners from mainstream groups develop cross-cultural knowledge, values, and competencies, has never been so great (Banks, 2010). In order to do so however, it is imperative for museum educators to have a shared understanding of the terms "diversity" and "culture." Museum educator's understanding of audience identity typically inform museum programming and thereby shape attitudes and assumptions that can either isolate communities or bring them into the fold of society. Therefore, museum educators must first look closely at the *language* used to describe such audiences. It is important to ask whether the terms presently used to describe an increasingly dynamic public help fulfill the goal of bridging the cultural divide between mainstream White, male, privileged members of society and those who are not. What terminology can museum educators use that is all-inclusive without being monolithic?

Thus far, institutions, schools, governments, psychologists, museum practitioners and education theorists are labeling diverse audiences in several ways, which make the term 'multiculturalism' murky and confusing. Some of the names used to describe new audiences include pluralism, multicultural, diverse, ethnic and people of color. Moreover some use these terms interchangeably. For example, Schauber & Castania (2001) say, "Call it diversity, multiculturalism, or pluralism—this issue (is) brought to the forefront mainly by demographic changes…" (p.39).

However, each of these terms terms have different histories and meanings. For example, the term diversity began

> with reference to women and persons of color, underrepresented in the workplace, particularly in decision-making roles. It has since evolved to be more encompassing in its intent and application by referring to individuals' social identities including age, sexual orientation, physical disability, socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, workplace role/position, religious and spiritual orientation, and work/family concerns. (American Psychological Association 2002, p.10)

But museum education theorist and Professor Eilean Hooper Greenhill (2010) says to refer to something or someone as 'diverse' suggests there is a 'norm,' which is being diverged from. She says,

> Although I have used the expression myself (as cited by Hooper-Greenhill 1997), I am not happy about this aspect of it, although one alternative, 'cultural difference,' is also problematic. (p.288)

Alternatively, the term 'ethnicity' is typically used to refer to non-White individuals. However, it "does not have a[n]…agreed upon definition…[and can refer] to ethnicity as the acceptance group practices of one's culture of origin and a concomitant sense of belonging. Consistent with Brewer (1999); Sedikides and Brewer (2001); and Hornsey and Hogg (2000) individuals may have multiple ethnic identities that operate with different alliances at different times (American Psychological Association 2002, p.9). The term ethnicity or the commonly used phrase "ethnic minority" also assumes that the majority population of the United States, that is of European decent, does not have any ethnicity at all, a belief that is fundamentally incorrect.

Another commonly used term, "people of color," is defined as

> a term of solidarity referring to Blacks, Native Americans, Latinos, Asians, and Pacific Islanders. This term is preferred to other terms often heard such as MINORITY and NON-WHITE. While people of color are a minority in the United States, they are the vast majority—nine-tenths—of the world's population; White people are a distinct minority. Use of the

term 'minority,' therefore, obscures this global reality and, in effect, reinforces racist assumptions. To describe People of Color as 'non-White' is to use the White race as the standard against which all other races are described or as a referent in relation to whom all others are positioned. It is doubtful that White people would appreciate being called 'non-black' or men would like being called 'non- women'." (Steuert, Jenness, & Jones-Ruzzi, 1993, p. 73)

Yet, the term 'person of color' trivializes culture and excludes individuals who are White but from outside American mainstream culture. For example, some individuals from north Pakistan are White and blue-eyed and may still face language and socioeconomic barriers in American culture.

Amalia Mesa-Bains (1992) describes this moment in time as a "postcolonial, post-civil rights era." And goes on to say that

we are faced…not simply with issues of quantification, affirmative action, quotas, parity, access, and representation, but with the qualitative aspects of the diverse experiences of uniqueness, the polysemic voice that we speak of so often. (p.100)

 Acclaimed scholar, Professor Tariq Ramadan (2011) says that in order to address the diverse experiences of uniqueness or what he refers to as "super-diversity" of our times, we need to move beyond an ethno-focal understanding and to adopt a *multidimensional* approach" (p.7).

 One possible description of audiences who are from cultures within and outside of the dominant culture is *multicultural*, which is both a controversial and potentially useful term. According to Mesa-Bains (2010), people feel most comfortable with this term due to

its euphemistic nature. [But} she also highlights its limitations saying that it allows us to acknowledge our own ethnicity, but not the categorical differences in race, class, and gender that are below the surface and need to be addressed in order to deal in an appropriate and responsive way with the diversity we're talking about. (p.99)

This view of multiculturalism is particularly prevalent in places like Great Britain, where it is traditionally associated with an identity politics based on essentialism. Gunew (1997) says,

> Within critical theory it has often been an embarrassing term to invoke partly because it is seen as automatically aligned with and hopelessly co-opted by the state in its role of certain kinds of conscious nation-building. As a result, for example, it is consistently rejected by anti-racist groups in Great Britain (Hall, 1995). In the realm of theoretical debate it is often associated with an identity politics based on essentialism and claims for authenticity, which automatically reinstate a version of the sovereign subject and a concern with reified notions of origins. (para. 1)

However, in his forthcoming paper, *The Essentialist Critique of Multiculturalism: Theories, Policies,* Will Kymlicka says

> At the end of her book, Anne Phillips pleads for a new version of multiculturalism that puts agency at the centre of the project. I agree with this commitment to agency – as I noted earlier, autonomy is the foundational premise of my approach – but I would say that we need to put agency at the centre of any useful critique of multiculturalism.

Similarly, Mesa-Bains (2010) calls for *real* multiculturalism, which is characterized by a struggle for authority and power. Snjea Gunew (1997) describes this as a critical multiculturalism and explains,

> Multiculturalism deals with theories of difference but unlike post colonialism, which to a great extent is perceived to be defined by its specific historic legacies in a retroactive way, multiculturalism deals with the management (often compromised) of contemporary geo-political diversity in former imperial centres as well as their ex-colonies alike. It is also increasingly a global discourse since it takes into account the flow of migrants, refugees, diasporas and their relations with nation-states. The reason for continuing to focus on multiculturalism, particularly a critical multiculturalism, is precisely because it is so intimately bound up in many parts of the world with those practices and discourses which manage (often in the sense of police and control) 'diversity'. (para. 1)

> A guideline on multicultural training, research, practice, and

organizational change for psychologists issued by the American Psychological Association (APA) in 2002 proposes a broad, all-inclusive definition of

multiculturalism that is based on a definition of identity that is fundamentally

complex. This definition acknowledges that individuals may belong to several

identities at one time and that they may interact with one another in different

ways. The guideline states

> The terms multiculturalism and diversity have been used interchangeably
> to include aspects of identity stemming from gender, sexual orientation,
> disability, socioeconomic status, or age. Multiculturalism, in an absolute
> sense, recognizes the broad scope of dimensions of race, ethnicity,
> language, sexual orientation, gender, age, disability, class status,
> education, religious/spiritual orientation, ethnic/racial and personal
> identity, and psychologists are encouraged to be cognizant of issues
> related to all of these dimensions of culture. In addition, each cultural
> dimension has unique issues and concerns. (p.10)

As noted by the Guidelines for Psychotherapy with Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual

Clients (APA, 2000), each individual belongs to/identifies with a number of

identities and some of those identities interact with each other (APA 2002, p. 10).

Furthermore, critical multicultural theorist and educator, Sonia Nieto

(2004) describes multiculturalism, neither as a trend, nor as intended for a

particular audience or means of generating future capital, but as "a value, a

philosophy, and a way of looking at the world" (p.345). Nieto's definition

describes multiculturalism as a *point of view* rather than a group of people. Nieto

(2004) also highlights that differences in power and authority between dominant

and subordinate cultures is central to multiculturalism.

Therefore, the terms multicultural and multiculturalism will be used in

this study to refer to individuals or groups that include individuals who have

points of view from outside the dominant culture. The definitions of

multiculturalism provided by the American Psychological Association (2002) and

Sonia Nieto (2004) are simultaneously inclusive and make room for cultural

difference without being monolithic. As a result, the terms multicultural and

multiculturalism, used throughout this paper, have the following definition:

> Multiculturalism is a value, a philosophy, and a way of looking at the world. Multiculturalism is critical and therefore takes a historical and thus, post-colonial approach toward identity. It also recognizes a broad scope of dimensions of race, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation, gender, age, disability, class status, education, religious/spiritual orientation, ethnic/racial and personal identity, and psychologists are encouraged to be cognizant of issues related to all of these dimensions of culture. In addition, each cultural dimension has unique issues and concerns. Lastly, each individual belongs to/identifies with a number of identities and some of those identities interact with each other. (Nieto (2004) & APA (2002))

RESEARCHER ASSUMPTIONS & BIAS

Upon entering the study, I carry three assumptions about museum educators and volunteers at museums. First, multicultural audiences can have 'educative' experiences in museums. Second, there is general level of ignorance about individuals from other cultures amongst volunteers and museum educators. Third, education staff and volunteers seem to be ill-equipped with the knowledge, teaching skills, and awareness to engage audiences who are culturally "different" or unfamiliar with museums, especially audiences with language and socioeconomic barriers to entry.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Museums can be magical places. They collect and display objects that span the breadth of human experience; they provide us with the space to reflect on our identities and give us visual clues and information that help us understand the world we live in. Museums offer us a new experience each time, and when positive, they can awaken our senses, move us, heighten our awareness, hone our expertise, allow us to have moments of self-recognition and make new connections.

<div align="right">-- Sehr Karim-Jaffer, Thesis Journal, 2013</div>

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines a museum as a "building in which objects of historical, scientific, artistic, or cultural interest are stored and exhibited." Therefore a museum does two things, it "stores," which means to save or put away, and it "exhibits," which means to present or to display, which can be defined as to offer, to gift, to share, and to show. Thus, in order to create a museum experience, a museum's collection must be shared, received, accepted, and seen by a visitor from the outside. It is in this space between giving and receiving, that the visitor has an experience. The American Association of Museums, a group of leaders and professionals in the field, place particular importance on education in museums. Their report, Excellence and Equity: Education and the Public Dimension of Museums (American Association of Museums 1992) states

> The community of museums in the United States shares the responsibility
> with other educational institutions to enrich learning opportunities for all
> Individuals and to nurture an enlightened, humane citizenry that
> appreciates the value of knowing about its past, is resourcefully and

sensitively engaged in the present, and is determined to shape a future in which many experiences and many points of view are given voice. (p.25)

It is possible however, for visitors to have both good and bad experiences. Referred to as "educative" not "mis-educative," John Dewey (1938) defines a true educational experience as follows:

> The belief that all genuine education comes from experience does not mean that all experiences are genuinely or equally educative. Experience and education cannot be directly equated with each other. For some experiences are mis-educative. Any experience is mis-educative that has the effect of arresting or distorting the growth of further experience. An experience may be such as to engender callousness; it may produce lack of sensitivity and of responsiveness…a given experience may increase a person's automatic skill in a particular direction and yet tend to land him in a groove or rut…An experience may be immediately enjoyable and yet promote the formation of a slack and careless attitude… Each experience may be lively, vivid, and "interesting," and yet their disconnectedness may artificially generate dispersive, disintegrated, centrifugal habits. The consequence of formation of such habits is in ability to control future experiences. They are then taken, either by way of enjoyment or of discontent and revolt, just as they come. (p. 13-14)

In other words, a truly educative experience must be sensitive, responsive, and encourage learners to make connections, ultimately inspiring them to go on learning. According to George E. Hein (2004) Dewey describes such experiences as "hands-on," and "minds-on," and experiences that are "enjoyable and "organized to be educative" (p. 2).

Hein puts an emphasis on understanding audience experiences and the meaning they make of these experiences. He says,

> In order for visitors to grow and learn from their museum experiences, we need to understand these experiences sufficiently so that we can shape them. We need to understand what meaning visitors make of their museum experiences. How, exactly, do their ordinary responses to visits, as well as the occasional, powerful, epiphanies affect our visitors? How can the educative value of experience be enhanced? (p. 3)

This question is particularly relevant for museums today when museum-going audiences are shrinking and the demographic of the United States is

becoming increasingly diverse. Museum data shows that today's typical museum-going audience is a Non-Hispanic White American, wealthy, and highly educated (AAM 2010, p. 15). For example, American museum audiences today are predominantly of European decent, with only 9 percent representing non-European ethnicities (American Association of Museums 2010, p.5). However, the data also shows that non-White American audiences have been diminishing over the years. Moreover, the demographic of the United States is rapidly shifting with White Americans projected to become the new minority in the next few decades, thus increasing the pressure on museums to not only maintain the 9 percent non-White American visitor base but to also increase it (AAM, 2010, p. 5).

American museums are showing their support for new audiences with the creation of multicultural audience development departments. They are waiving fees for new visitors, creating community partnerships that are structured around repeat visits, and increasing museum-wide events that celebrate cultural festivals such as Fiesta and Eid. But are these new audiences having what Dewey refers to as "educative experiences"? A recent American Association of Museum's report titled, *Demographic Transformation and the Future of Museums* (2010) says they are not and attributes the drop in non-White Americans attendance to a number of reasons. Survey responses of non-White museum visitors were as follows: They found that "Historically-grounded cultural barriers to participation…make museums feel intimidating and exclusionary to many people" (p.13). Non-White visitors felt a lack in "specialized knowledge and a cultivated aesthetic taste ("cultural capital") to understand and appreciate what are perceived by many as elite art forms, especially in art museums" (p.13).

This audience had "no strong tradition of museum-going habits whether these were fostered in childhood or other family experience and tradition" (p.13). Non-White audiences also reported experiencing "subtle forms of exclusion" (p. 14). Lastly, these audiences also experienced barriers due to structural factors "such as where people live, museum locations, transportation options and financial barriers to entry—which often correlate to race and ethnicity" (p. 13). Claudine K. Brown (1992) attributes these responses to the way in which museums view non-White audiences and says,

> The issue that affects our inability to maintain "ethnic" audiences once we have gotten them through our doors involves our very limited way of viewing these groups. Our seduction of and newfound love for a new ethnic group each season gives rise to what one of my colleagues calls the flavor-of-the-month syndrome. This syndrome suggests that there are easy ways of programming for these groups because their issues are simplistic. Often our scope of our programming involves booking a dance company, doing hands-on ethnic crafts workshops, having a great ethnic icon speak, and arranging for bilingual interpreters. While I don't seek to diminish these programs, I do fault the programmers for frequently failing to represent more than one point of view, for dealing with the issues of these cultures in isolation and not as they affect others, and for being reluctant to listen to youthful and radical voices. (p.145)

Sandra Martell (2007) identifies the role of museum educators as critical to museums adapting themselves to an increasingly multicultural audience. In her study titled Informal (and Unpaid) Educators; How Museum Volunteer Educators Teach and Learn, Sandra Martell (2007) points out that museum volunteers in America are typically women who are White, with a high socio-economic status. Martell (2007) calls for museums to encourage volunteer museum staff to learn more about cultural groups visiting museums in order to implement programming that is governed by a deep understanding about audiences' cultural and/or economic background.

Based on the current data and trends among volunteer staff, the field of museum education continues to evolve in the context of a predominantly homogenous community of educators and audience members. Therefore, museums need to ask themselves what the typical experience for multicultural audiences who are not White, privileged and/or highly educated looks like today in American museums. In her essay The Real Multiculturalism: A Struggle for Authority and Power, Amalia Mesa-Bains (1992) argues that Museum staffs are clouded by confusion and disorder over the arts and cultures of people of color. She emphasizes the issue of power inequality that underlies how museums approach the arts and cultures of people of color, and says, "We are talking primarily about issues of race. To some degree, race is also a euphemism of the colonial age, one that was designed to divide resources from linguistic groups. Nonetheless, we deal with these notions of race…" (p.102). John Falk however, argues their race/ethnicity, is both primary and secondary. He says,

> We all know men and women whose race/ethnicity is a constant reality and issue in their lives—a part of their daily identity. But we also know others of the same race/ethnicity for whom this identity is of secondary importance at best; it is considered a happenstance of birth, no more. (Falk 2009, p.74)

Falk finds that a person's race, gender, age, ethnicity or education is rarely the reason that individuals opt not to visit a museum. Instead it is more about museums making individuals feel like the museum does not meet their needs, which speaks to Mesa-Bains point about how museum staff are clouded by confusion and disorder over the arts and cultures of people of color. Falk says that museums need to understand the individual needs of their communities, not by their overarching race and ethnicities i.e. the African American problem, but

rather as individuals with different needs, and without ignoring their race and ethnicity entirely.

In order to move towards a future "in which many experiences and many points of view are given a voice" and to ensure truly "educative experiences" for new audiences from a variety of cultural backgrounds and ethnicities that are neither White nor European, museum education departments need to ensure that their museums' educators are creating safe, relevant, and inclusive spaces that make audiences feel empowered, give them a sense of belonging, and leave them with a strong desire to return. Appropriate multicultural museum education can help museum educators and volunteer educators, particularly those from the dominant culture, adapt themselves to the needs of new audiences and ensure they are here to stay.

According to Dodd (1994), a change in how museums meet the needs of a new community goes hand in hand with a "shift in the skills used and roles played by museum education staff" (p.131). This study aims to determine the shift in skills required for museum educators to ensure museums can also be "magical places" for audiences who are from cultures outside of the dominant culture. This study will aim to define culture in the context of learning, develop a framework for multicultural museum education and describe the shift in skills necessary to become culturally responsive museum educator. The central guiding question of this study is *how can museum educators (and volunteers) effectively engage multicultural audiences, who may face language and socioeconomic barriers, with objects of art in museum galleries?* Other sub-questions addressed in this study include: *What do museums need to consider when bringing non-White multicultural adult audiences with socioeconomic- and language barriers into the*

museum space? What challenges do educators face in engaging with non-traditional museum adult visitors with language and socio-economic barriers to entry? What specific learning theories and teaching strategies must museum educators be aware of to effectively engage adult non-White multicultural audiences with socioeconomic and language barriers to entry? What skills do museum educators need in order to meet the needs of non-traditional, non-White, multicultural audiences who are new to museums? How do museum educators learn to become culturally responsive educators?

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Diagram: A 'Mis-educative' Experience for Multicultural Audiences
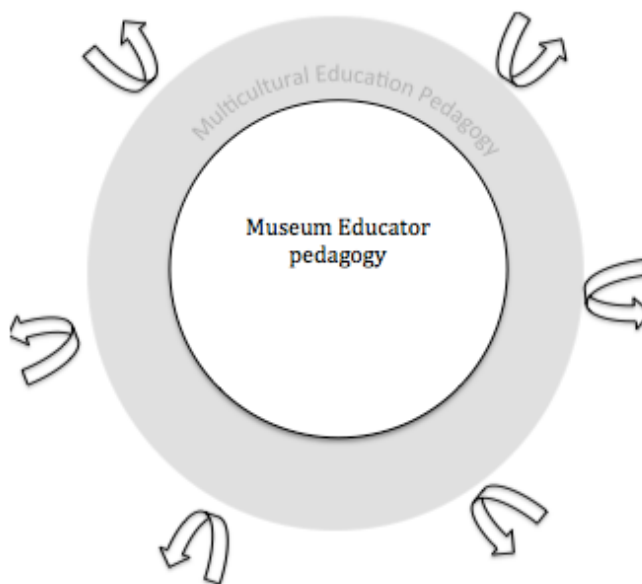
This theoretical essay takes a contextual approach and is divided into three main sections. Section 1 presents the pedagogical approach of the museum educator, represented by the inner circle in the diagram above. The section begins by looking at the founding ideals of the American museum followed by an exploration of the history of museum education to identify the overarching dimensions and specific learning theories and strategies of museum education practiced today. This section ends with a brief overview of the history of museum education in the context of multiculturalism.

Section 2 focuses on the invisible realm of multicultural education and theory represented by the grey ring in the model above which represents the gap between multicultural visitor experience and current skills and practices employed by museum educators. The grey ring can also be thought of as a glass barrier around museum education pedagogy that is invisible to museum

educators and therefore prevents multicultural visitors (arrows bouncing off the model) from entering into an educative experience. This section serves to make the invisible field of multicultural education visible for museum educators by exploring the definition of culture, followed by a deep dive into multicultural education theory, and lastly an exploration into culturally responsive teaching practices and training strategies.

Section 3 compares principles of museum education practice today with principles of multicultural education to determine the pedagogical gap between a museum educator and a multicultural educator. This gap will account for why educators are able to facilitate connections for some museum visitors (typically White and privileged) but not others (audiences commonly referred to as people of color or ethnic with language and socioeconomic boundaries to entry). The differences between the two educational approaches will serve to describe a new paradigm called multicultural museum education in which the realm of museum education pedagogy expands to include the skills, strategies and learning theories of multicultural education.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL ESSAY

SECTION 1: MUSEUM EDUCATION TODAY

I. A Brief History of Museum Education Practice

Museum education: A space for education or a space for collecting?

American museums have grappled with *how* to engage, give access to and welcome the American public since the eighteenth century. Hooper-Greenhill (1991) says that the primary mission for the American museum was understood to be "the advanced school of self-instruction," a place for teachers to seek assistance (as cited in Hein 1998, p. 5). However, by the 1920s, such ideas came under attack, and curators were less interested in the public use of museums and more interested in accumulating collections. The perpetual identity shift of the American museum, between a space for *education* and a space for *collecting,* is mirrored in the wavering importance placed on museum education over the last century. This oscillation has also impacted *who* engages with museum visitors, beginning with paid interpreters with degrees in Art History at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston in the late nineteenth century and gradually shifting toward docents or volunteers. Moreover, the ongoing debate between *collecting* and *education* has led to the emergence of an academic discipline referred to as "museum studies" or "museum education," and draws on child development, human development, psychology, and pedagogy to study, evaluate and determine the most effective pedagogical approaches and teaching strategies for engaging different museum audiences. This section will review the history of museum education in order to provide a general framework for museum education practice today.

What is Museum Education practice and theory today?

Since its inception, the American museum has been debating how much *information* to impart to its visitors versus how much *interpretation* to allow. This debate emerged in the nineteenth century, when art history was formalized as an academic discipline and when wealthy American industrialists' collections of original European works of art made their way into the museum collections and changed the identity of the American museum from the "crown of the educational system" to a "temple of exquisitely beautiful originals" (Kai-Kee 2011, p.20).

This shift in identity manifested in two competing missions, to *educate in art history* or to offer visitors an *aesthetic* experience. Arthur Schopenhauer (1969) described an aesthetic experience as follows:

> We no longer consider the where, the when, the why and the whither in things, but simply and solely the *what* …We lose ourselves entirely in this object…we forget our individuality, our will, and continue to exist as pure subject, as pure mirror of the object…the entire consciousness is filled and occupied by a single image of perception. (p. 178-179)

The secretary of the MFA, Benjamin Ives Gilman (1904), said, "Art is an end, education a means to an end" (p.93). Gilman described the docent's job as *companionship* not guidance with an emphasis on mutual interest, sensitivity to the audience and its needs, while staying in the background. A year after the MFA, the Metropolitan Museum also hired their own paid "museum instructors." According to Kai-Kee (2011), the initial museum instructors were expected to play the role of a host, to exercise delicacy, and to not give too much information about the object of art. Gilman (1904) argued that in order to understand art, the viewer required no art history at all and understanding came

through the individual artist. He quoted a Rembrandt scholar Carl Neuman who said,

> How often is one asked—'what art history is recommended in order to awaken an understanding of art?' But one answer can be given. 'No art history at all. The way to art lies through the individual artist.'" (p.64-65)

The pathway to an aesthetic experience was through formalism, concerning one's self only with line, shape, and color, with the overarching belief that "observers should focus almost exclusively on the objects themselves" (Kai-Kee 2011, p.24). According to the 1918 "Educational Credo" of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the mission of museum education shifted from imparting art history "to translat[ing] the message of the artist into terms intelligible to the visitor."[2]

Nearly fifty years later, Katherine B. Neilson, the acting director of education at the Museum of Art at the Rhode Island School of Design was also telling her education interns to distill their art history knowledge down for the purposes of accessibility. For example, Neilson (1949) says she told her interns

> "to swallow nine-tenths of their scholarly information and reorganize the remaining one tenth to fit the comprehension of the sixth grade—or (which is often a tougher assignment) of the ladies of the local Mother's Club or Women's Auxiliary." (p.188)

As the emphasis on art historic information phased out of museum education theory, museum educators began to debate about the authority of the museum educator, ranging from the educator being in absolute control and talking *at* the audience (didactic), to giving the audience member absolute freedom to roam through the galleries, select the objects and lead discussions.

The 1920s and '30s were marked by progressive ideas in adult education influenced by the pre-eminent education philosopher John Dewey, the leader of

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[2] Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art 13, no.9, (Sept.1918)

the progressive education movement in America. Dewey is best known for his manifesto on education titled, *Education as Experience,* in which he formulates a theory of experience. Dewey makes a case for a new educational system that is neither authoritarian (traditional) nor completely progressive. Instead, he calls educators to employ methods that are not static and rely on experience, experiment, purposeful learning, and freedom. Dewey argues that students build their fact-based comprehension through meta-cognition, building on prior experiences, and that it is the responsibility of the educator to provide learners with *educative experiences.*

In 1926, Educator Eduard C. Lindeman drew on Dewey's ideas to develop a new publication titled, *The Meaning of Adult Education,* in 1926 that emphasized cooperative, non-authoritarian and informal learning for adults (Kai-Kee 2011, p. 26). Grace Fisher Ramsey (1938) describes seeing a move away from the visitor as passive listener to the visitor as active participant.

During this time, Thomas Munro, an art educator at The Philadelphia Museum of Art did away with the "old way," which consisted of a quick general tour of the whole building, "in which a docile class was rapidly paraded through a tiring and bewildering series of galleries," supplemented with the informational lecture "replete with names and dates, with abstract principles and dogmatic evaluations." Instead he advocated "active doing," such as making notes or drawing (As cited in Kai-Kee, p28).

Munro was also very much influenced by John Dewey's progressive "hands-on" and "experiential" educational philosophies. Similarly, the Toledo Museum of Art experimented with active participation, being flexibile and allowing students to choose paintings. In the following decades, there was an

emphasis on games, treasure hunts, and discussion with lecturing kept to a minimum (Kai-Kee 2011, p.28).

As a result, by the 1940s and '50s, school group tours that consisted of slide shows in auditoriums followed by gallery tours gave way to informal and discovery-based teaching. Condit (1955) says Metropolitan staff lecturers called on the Socratic Method, a favorite technique, to lead children "to figure out their own answers by looking and reasoning…and [which provided them] freedom to question or comment at all times" (p.16). Theodore Low (1948) argued that participation based on equality was at the heart of museum education. He said,

> The student-teacher relationship must be kept to a minimum, with emphasis placed on the relationship of equals helping each other to find new ways of looking at old things and new ways of approaching new things." (p. 200)

This trend continued through the 1960s and 70s through activities in the galleries including dance, performance, photography, and discussion and an emphasis on art making in the studio.

During the 1980s greater emphasis was placed on inquiry-based teaching and questioning strategies. According to Kai-Kee (2011), Museum educators determined that the ideal museum educator was one who was a good listener, empathetic, enthusiastic, and flexible, perceptive about art, articulate, creative in communication, skillful in research and knowledgeable about art. Effective museum educators also called for object-based learning that took place in a safe and trusting environment, considered the learner's abilities, was active, and "encouraged divergent outcomes but also distinguished opinions from fact, and taught looking skills" (p. 41).

During the 1990s and 2000s, as post-modern Western artists shifted their focus away from the artist and toward materials; artistic processes, space, life, climate and audience and the importance of the "reader," "viewer" or "visitor" was elevated to the primary meaning maker of text, image, and object. Lois Silverman (1995), professor and director of the Center on History Making in America at Indiana University describes this time period as "a paradigm shift to a broad academic and political perspective referred to in various circles as post-modernism, constructivism, contemporary literary theory, or—perhaps most colloquially—*meaning making*" (p.161). Thus, in the 1990s and 2000s the museum experience was defined through the context brought by the museum visitor.

This shift was governed by an emphasis on constructivism, a learning theory that is a combination of Swiss psychologist, John Piaget's development theories, and Russian psychologist and philosopher, Lev Vygotsky's Social Development Theory. The basic premise of constructivism is that learners do not absorb knowledge but construct it for themselves. Learners make meaning for themselves and they build knowledge based on prior experiences. Such experiences provide learners with schemas or mental models of the world that they continually build on.

Constructivism is central to museum education theory today and is used by several key internationally renowned museum theorists and practitioners including Eilean Hooper-Greenhill, George Hein, and Elliot Kai-Kee. In the context of a museum setting, constructivism occurs through the interaction between the observer and the object and is facilitated by the museum educator whose job it is to "stimulate curiosity and imagination, provoke thought, and connect the viewers' prior experience with the objects" (Kai-Kee 2011, p.46). The

museum transforms from a place where knowledge is transmitted to a place where it is produced. The interpretative process is handed over to the visitors so they can discover works of art for themselves and ultimately construct their own meanings.

The debate about how much *information* to impart to visitors versus how much *interpretation* to allow was reignited in the 1990s when Philip Yenawine developed a pedagogical approach for looking at objects of art called, Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS). VTS was developed to help classroom teachers introduce their students to works of art and to help people learn observational skills that would empower them for their next encounter with a work of art. In order to facilitate such experiences museum educators had to become facilitators, skilled in listening, supporting, prodding, and negotiating, or as Yenawine puts it, "I become a facilitator. I don't tell. I ask" (Rice and Yenawine 2002, p.291). VTS called on the inquiry-method, or more specifically, open-ended questions, to get viewers to look at works of art and to actively think and learn through participation.

The role of information in museum tours and talks ranges from VTS, which omits any peripheral information about the artist's life, how the object was made, and symbolism, to what Rika Burnham calls VTS-plus, "layering" or "folding-information" that combines the viewer's initial observations with carefully selected information that serves to reinforce the viewer's observation. The latter approach is supported by the findings of a focus group of visitor attitudes and expectations sponsored by the Getty Center for Education in the Arts and the J. Paul Getty Museum that found that gaining new information about a work of art made viewers feel more connected to it (Walsh 1991, p.21).

Key thinkers in the field including Eilean Hooper-Greenhill and Cheryl Meszaros also emphasize the importance of "peripheral" information for meaning making, and call for engaging museum audiences in the process of shared meaning making. Hooper Greenhill argues that individual interpretations are not isolated but the products of individuals and communities, ultimately "personal interpretations are forged through social and cultural frameworks" (Hooper-Greenhill 2000, p.119); and Meszaros argues that even though we all make meaning through our individual interactions with the world, "we do not do this in isolation from received ideas and language" (Meszaros 2007, p.18). Therefore, museum learning is a two-way process that requires the visitors to share their observations and ideas while also receiving new information about the work of art. Education Specialist at the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles, Kai-Kee, ultimately calls for museum educators to "develop pedagogy that genuinely respects everyone's voices: the visitors', her own, curators' and art historians', and the voices of tradition" (Kai-Kee 2011, p.48).

According to the latest general museum theory and practice, the overarching dimensions of museum education pedagogy for a visitor are: learning theory, educator's role, environment, context and educator learner relationship (authority). The practices and strategies related to each dimension determine whether an audience member is able to connect with the object of art and have an educative experience. The diagram below suggests one way of depicting the general practice of museum education pedagogy in the field today.

The diagram above illustrates and 'educative' museum experience. The porosity of the boundary (black dotted line) of the 'educative' experience depends on the application of the five dimensions of a museum education experience. First, the role of the museum educator is to practice non-authoritarian pedagogy that allows for a two-way relationship between educator and visitor, and gives the audience the opportunity to independently connect with the works of art. The museum educator also applies constructivist *and* experiential *learning theories*, and makes room for the *context* of the visitor to enter the experience. The dotted line in the diagram above also demarcates a space, suggesting that the visitor's ultimate experience is the responsibility of the educator whose skills are to: give autonomy, be a good listener, be empathetic, be enthusiastic, be supportive, have high expectations, be able to negotiate, be flexible, and be perceptive about art. In order to create an experience with porous boundaries, the educator must also be articulate, creative in communication, skillful in research, knowledgeable about art, versed in object-based teaching, considerate of learner's abilities, and a facilitator of connections or experiences that build on the visitor's prior experience. Lastly the educator is able to create a safe and trusting *environment* for his or her audience. These dimensions are entered in the table below, which

will provide a framework for the multicultural museum education paradigm developed at the end of this study.

Dimensions	Museum Theory and Practice Today
Learning Theory	**A Cognitive, Psychological Frame of Reference:** John Dewey's educative experience and Piaget's & Vygotsky's constructivism: flexible methods, experiment, purposeful learning, and freedom, active doing (drawing), active participation (choose paintings), consider individual learner abilities and style. Learners do not absorb knowledge but construct it for themselves. i.e. looking and reasoning to discover out answers independently through VTS and inquiry
Educator-learner relationships	**Two-way:** The visitor participates in meaning-making
Role of educator	**Facilitator not Missionary:** Interpretation over information and participation is based on equality through a visitor-centered, non-authoritarian approach. Gives autonomy to audience to create a shared experience, emphasizes cooperative learning, and acknowledges prior experience.
Environment	**Creates a Safe and Trusting Environment**
Culture	**Values Culture:** Considers culture of average museum-visitor, and socio-political context (contemporary culture), culture of experts. Respects everyone's voice, visitors' voices, his or her own voice, curators' voices, art historians' voices, and the voice of tradition.

While current museum education theory and practice may fit the description of a dream educator in a school or a museum, data shows that multicultural audiences still do not feel welcome or safe in American museums.

Museum Education Theory and Practice
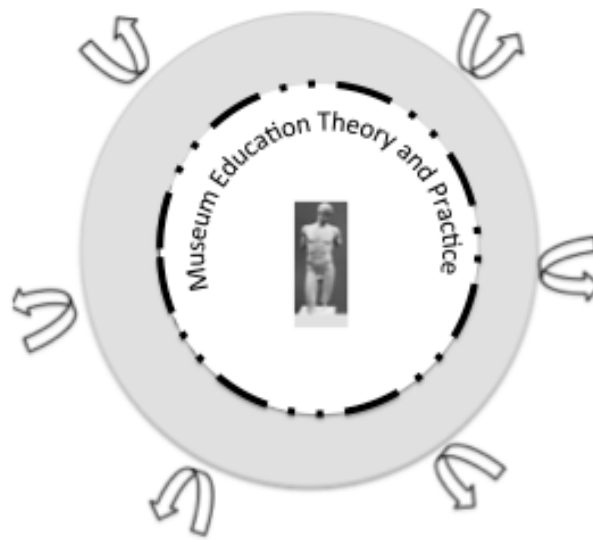
There is a second barrier that multicultural audiences need to get through in order to enter an 'educative' experience. Therefore, the gap (represented by the grey ring in the diagram above) between museum practice and audience experience demands a closer look at the history of museum education in the context of multiculturalism, to gain insight into this problem.

II. American Museums and Multicultural Audiences

American museums have been preoccupied with making themselves accessible to wider, more diverse audiences for decades. Hein (1998) highlights the inextricable link between socio-political culture and museums. He argues "socio-political forces have…brought interpretation to the foreground in museums" (p.9). For example, the inspiration for both the architecture and content of the early American museum, the "Greek temple or Renaissance palace" is attributed to the European museums that were created to house confiscated objects from fallen monarchs and nobility (Dana, as cited in Anderson 2004, p.17). The first European museums were created to demonstrate the wealth and power of their governments. The museums housed imperial conquests, displayed exotic material and treasures brought back from colonial centers, and awed the privileged few who had the fortune to view the splendor of the nation's wealth (Hein 1998, p.3).

American museums had a slightly different purpose than European museums. The latter began as private collections that were eventually seized or handed over to the state for the benefit of the public (think French Revolution), whereas, the American museum was founded on an ideological principle of philanthropy and "concern for the betterment of humankind" (Hein, 2000, p. 6).

The intent of the American museum was the transformation of society as whole and

> Like libraries, parks, and schools, the (American) museum was, in theory, open and accessible to everyone, and promoted itself as an ideal space in which people of all classes might peacefully mingle...(and) by simply being exposed to fine art, viewers and by extension society as a whole—would be transformed for the better. (Rhor 2003, p.23)

However, in reality, the experience of visiting the American art museum, was reserved for the privilege few who lived in close proximity to distantly set museums and who could afford to comply with the museums' restrictive dress codes, pay the prohibitively high admission fees, and had enough leisure time to visit during the limited hours of operation. Rhor (2003) says that

> The attitudes of many cultural leaders, moreover, were often rooted in fanciful, abstract notions about the public, as well as in strict conceptions of fine art that bestowed highest ranking upon the classical world and European civilization, thereby excluding the art and craft of non-Western societies. (p.23)

Therefore, while the European museums served to display the power and wealth of their governments, American museums showed the wealth and power of individual members of American society, a society accessible only to the privileged few. The exclusionary practices or elitism of some of the first American museums coupled with their predominantly European collections served to promote dominant values of Western supremacy, wealth and power inequality. Such imperial values of American museums continue to be reflected in the *international* collections of imperial nations in Europe and North America today that cannot be found in most other countries. For example, "Chinese museums do not have Occidental departments to match their Oriental counterparts in England or United States" (Hein 1998, p.4).

Still Hein (1998) warns that it is impossible to hold museums of 1850 or 1900 to today's standards of democracy. He argues that the American museum is inextricably linked to its socio-politics. He says,

> The United States is considered a democracy, even though its original formulation disqualified more than 50 per cent of its residents, and it took two constitutional amendments, the most recent ratified within living memory, to give the vote to African-Americans and women. As Oroscz

(1990) suggests, in the United States at least, museums have always been "direct products of the American democratic culture and enveloped in synchronization with the evolution of the general cultural climate… the great majority had serious and egalitarian aspirations. (p 3)

This is evident in the American art museum's shift away from the aesthetic ideal toward cultural context and contemporary concerns during World War II when "every work…[was beginning to be seen] as a social document" (Kai-Kee 2011, p. 32). A time of great anxiety, the war inspired western society to reflect on the nature and direction of human civilization, "including many discussions of the patriotic obligation of museums to make clear the values on which Western civilization is based" (*ibid,* p. 32).

This debate manifested in a change in the context in which the object of art was to be viewed. For example, Francis Henry Taylor, director of the Metropolitan "criticized the narrowness of scholars in archaeology and art history who did not recognize that they were part of what he termed the broader disciplines of humanities" (Taylor 1945, p. 26, 30, 44).

American activism in the 1960s and '70s also inspired a boom in museum visitorship from 200 million in 1960, to 300 million in 1965 and 700 million in 1970, a dramatic increase in new museums all over the country. This growth was followed by the creation of a "Credo for Museum Education" at a 1972 Museum Educator Conference in Cleveland, Ohio, that called for museums to serve "the broadest portion of society within its capabilities" (Association of Art Museum Directors 1972, p. 13).

Museum Educator as Facilitator or missionary?

As new audiences began to enter the museum space, museums began to customize their programs to meet the needs of new communities. For example, one program at the Whitney Museum of American Arts offered advanced study in studio art or art history to Puerto Rican teenagers (Kai-kee, p.36). An article in the *New York* magazine said the program

> saved the lives of talented ghetto youngsters, many of whom, considered hopelessly delinquent by their public schools, have been given the possibility of becoming constructive artists and channeling their energies into creative rather than destructive, antisocial forms of expression. (As cited in Kai-kee, p. 36)

However, such programs are few and far between and this program no longer exists. It also remains unclear whether the Whitney actually "saved the lives" of these teenagers.

Kai-Kee (2011) says that the "real issue for museum educators was the need to address the gap between the culture of experts and the culture of the average museum visitor" (p.45). For example, in the community-based program, titled Old Master: New Apprentices, which took place at the Metropolitan and catered to under-privileged teenagers and had the students observe, sketch and engage in group discussion, the Metropolitan Museum instructors found that they were able to address this gap by having a flexible personal approach to the course. This led the educators to give the students the freedom to wander through the collection and pick works of art they connected with. The museum educators found giving the participants freedom of choice and movement to be empowering (Kai-Kee 2011). The educators reported that

"By choosing their soul mates through history the kids also strengthened their own identities as artists": identifying with great artists of the past also gave "to many students the security of belonging to a tradition." [3]

This visitor-centered approach became the center of museum education philosophy in the 1990s and 2000s. It marked a shift in the field of museum education from the point-of-view of the cultural value system of the art world to the cultural value system of the visitor. In her article *The Art Idea in the Museum Setting,* Rice (1991) states

> Museum visitors have traditionally been regarded as needing to learn the cultural value system of the art world, and not the other way around…thus one might say that within this context the role of the art educators was that of a missionary: passing on the culture of the dominant group to those natives supposedly devoid of real culture of their own. Many museum educators have become increasingly uncomfortable with playing this role exclusively. In recent years they have made great strides in learning more about their visitors, and this newfound knowledge…has resulted in a new attitude of respect for interest in the perspectives of art-world outsiders. (p.134-35)

As the field of museum education begins to adapt itself to a multicultural audience (defined as diverse audience, with multiple points of views, interests, experiences, races, ethnicities, genders and abilities), the issue of power becomes central to museum pedagogy. According to Rice, to shift from a missionary role (someone who is all-knowing, a guide towards the single and correct path) to the role of facilitator (someone comfortable saying "I do not know," who sees every visitor as different and as a source of new information), requires the educator to relinquish power, become comfortable with being vulnerable and having a positive attitude toward and respect for those new to the museum and world of art.

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[3] Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art 27, no. 4 (Dec. 1968): 230-36

Rice highlights that the perceptions of museum visitors, the role of the museum educator, and assumptions about culture are at the very heart of museum education. In order to be better equipped for a multicultural world, museum educators must ask if they see themselves as the arbiters of knowledge or facilitators of shared experiences. How well equipped are museum educators today to engage with audiences as facilitators rather than as missionaries? What do educators need to know about culture in order to be better equipped to work with audiences from different cultures? Lastly *who* are museum educators? This question is addressed in the next section on volunteers who are a large majority of museum educators today in America. Therefore the shared culture and history of volunteer educators in American museums must be considered when developing a framework for effective multicultural museum education.

Volunteers

Upon becoming the temporary director of the Museum of Fine Arts (MFA) in Boston in 1906, Coolidge appointed the first 'docents.' The docents would give visitors in the galleries information about any or all of the collection. The first paid docents at the MFA were a former university lecturer in art history and an assistant in the Egyptian Department. In addition, two professors of the English Department at MIT acted as volunteer docents on Saturday and Sunday afternoons (Kai-kee 2011, p.20).

In the 1940s and '50s however, museum education departments were forced to rely on unpaid volunteers to reach wider audiences creating an additional layer of pressure on museum education departments to deliver both a high *quantity* of visitors in addition to offering *quality* experiences. One volunteer

organization in Kansas, Arts and Interests Committee of the Kansas City Junior

League, prescribed their most ideal volunteer as follows,

> She is a married woman, thirty to forty-five years old, with one or two children in school, and a husband in an executive position. She has attended exhibitions quite regularly for several years and has for some time brought her children to your classes and special events. She has some years of college education but is not always a graduate. She seldom has formal training related to her volunteer job but may have developed useful skills in other activities. She works well with her hands, likes people (especially children), and is at ease and talks easily with them. Most important—she has curiosity, imagination, and enthusiasm, and she believes in the importance of your organization to the community. (Flint, 1959, p.104)

The increasing reliance on volunteers however, was not without some

resistance. Kai-Kee (2011) reports, "In a 1953 issue of the *Circular on Museum*

Education dedicated to "Volunteer and Part-Time Workers," only three of the

thirteen education departments contributing opinions advocated using

volunteers to instruct students. Most museums were fixedly against the

practice." Theodore Low of the Walters Gallery argued that using volunteers

would lower standards, as teaching in the museum required an understanding of

the historical background of objects. He said,

> to use volunteers would inevitably result in a lowering of standards…Also, we hold strongly the belief that teaching the youngest child requires as much knowledge and experience as teaching adults. Few museums would be willing to let volunteers take classes of adults through the galleries. We can see no reason why the child should not likewise receive the best that we can offer. (Low 1953, p.6)

Nevertheless, qualified or not, volunteers helped museums keep up with the

sheer number of visitors they had. For example, in 1955, the Museum of Fine Art

in Houston said that their docents led more than 16,500 visitors. Additionally,

volunteers at Akron Art Institute reached forty-six thousand visitors, making it

possible to handle "thousands of children otherwise beyond (the museum's)

powers" (Kai-Kee, p. 30). Furthermore, by 1963, of 222 respondents to a survey by the American Association of Museums, 131 reported using volunteers as tour guides and 92 reported using them to give gallery talks (As cited in Kai-Kee 2011, p. 30).

According to Kai-Kee (2011), as a result museums today are confronted with a new challenge, namely volunteer resistance. Recent studies show that newer visitor-centered, inquiry-based approaches to gallery teaching have posed a challenge to volunteers who

> were accustomed to traditional notions of education and had experienced prior museum education regimes, under which they had been instructed to transmit to the public the authoritative wisdom of curators. They had indeed often volunteered precisely in order to gain privileged access to the curators' expert knowledge; becoming, at least to some degree, experts themselves had been their main motivation in working as docents in the first place. Furthermore, museum educators themselves were not unanimous in endorsing the reforms and improvements necessary in gallery education, and many longtime docents were tossed back and forth by changing docent coordinators with different ideas. (Kai-Kee 2011, p.47)

More specifically, the challenge confronting museum educators is in helping predominantly White, privileged volunteers adapt themselves to the needs of increasingly culturally diverse audiences. In her study titled Informal (and Unpaid) Educators; How Museum Volunteer Educators Teach and Learn, Sandra Martell points out that museum volunteers in America are typically women who are White, with a high socio-economic status. In her study, which focuses on museums in Milwaukee, she calls on museums to encourage volunteer museum staff to learn more about cultural groups visiting Milwaukee's museums. Martell (2007) says that programming for diverse audiences should be governed by a deep understanding about audiences' cultural and/or economic backgrounds. As audiences become increasingly

diverse, Martell (2007) calls for volunteers to place greater emphasis on the sociocultural context of learning and "how behavior and talk is "jointly negotiated, appropriated, and deployed"(Rowe, 2002, p.22) as well as on the contextual factor of culture, a recently added factor to the Contextual Model of Learning (Falk & Dierking, 2006)" (p. 152).

Based on the current data and trends amongst volunteer staff, the field of museum education continues to evolve in the context of a predominantly homogenous community of educators and audience members. Therefore, museums need to ask themselves what the typical experience for multicultural audiences who are not White, and/or privileged and/or highly-educated looks like today in American museums. What assumptions do current museum educators and volunteers have about their audiences? What are some areas for growth for volunteers and educators working with diverse audiences?

Defining multicultural audiences

Falk gives the example of a case study from the early 1990s at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (VMFA). The museum wanted to become more inclusive of the African American community of Richmond, a community that had been seriously underserved up to this point. Falk said that the museum needed to realize that the African American community was not monolithic and had to understand that "one size does not fit all" (Falk 2009, p. 210). The museum discovered through the help of an African American woman with strong marketing experience and new audience development tactics, that there were instead different groups within the African American community.

The museum identified one group as African Americans who really enjoyed art. This group was not married to any one genre or collection at the museum. The museum found that in order for this group to visit more frequently, they did not require the reinstallation of the African art collection "but a change in the attitudes of the institutions towards Black visitors, starting with the guards and other service personnel, but including the creation of special events and other promotions that made them feel welcome" (p. 208). The second group was African Americans who deeply identified with African culture and who were interested in the reinstallation of the VMFA's African collection, with some possessing expertise that surpassed the museum's curators. The third group was African American parents who never thought of the Museum as a place that would fulfill their specific leisure needs, to which the museum responded by creating brochures with photographs of African American parents doing things with their children in the galleries. The museum also supported a school-based program on African music featuring a world famous African musician who taught drumming and dance to their children, with a live performance held at the museum (Falk, 2009). Falk argues that it is ultimately the responsibility of the museum to present itself as a place where the diverse needs of its individual audiences can be met.

Today "more and more museums articulate their public relationship in terms of belonging, and seek to learn with and from the communities they serve" (Styles 2002, p. 12). Therefore museum educators are confronted with several complex and sticky questions. How do museum educators go about understanding their diverse audiences without being entirely defined by their race and ethnicity? What cultural understandings, awareness's and pedagogical

skills do museum educators need in order to meet the needs, and thus engage, multicultural audiences who are new to museums? What are the gaps between museum pedagogy and multicultural museum pedagogy? How much do the goals of museum educators overlap with the goals of multicultural education? How do educators values, positions of privilege, race, or in other words, power and attitude, affect how they engage non-White audiences?

This section shows that the American museum has been unable to break free from the shackles of elitism from the nineteenth century. The disconnect between museum practice and multicultural audience experience is attributed to the limited multicultural programming, volunteer resistance to new approaches, lack of cultural understanding, inability to define multicultural audiences, and the predominantly White and privileged demographic of museum visitors, museum educators, and volunteers.

In order to address these gaps in museum education, the next section of this literature review will explore culture, multiculturalism, and relevant theories within the discipline of multicultural education and culturally responsive pedagogy. These findings will provide building blocks that will be used to develop a model for multicultural museum education, a lens through which current museum education pedagogy will be viewed.

SECTION 2: MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION THEORY

I. What is Culture?

Joni Boyd Acuff (2011) argues museum educators cannot extricate themselves from their personal cultural or racial experiences and identities. She says that the sooner we become aware of our personal cultural identities, aware of the assumptions we make, and our varying emotional ties to other cultural groups, the more effective we will be as educators. In order to do this however, museum educators must develop a shared understanding of culture and its impact on learning.

Professor of Language, Literacy & Culture at the University of Massachusetts, Sonia Nieto (2009) says, "Culture is more than artifacts, rituals, and traditions. In fact, it is becoming increasingly indisputable that culture and cultural differences, including language, play a discernible although complicated role in learning" (p.48). Nieto (2009) also points out that culture is complex and can be problematic because it can mean several different things to different people in different contexts. For example, Nieto (2009) says

> Culture is sometimes used as if it pertained only to those with formal education and privileged social status, implying activities such as attending the opera once a month. In the present day (however), it generally is acknowledged that culture is not just what an elite group of people may do in their spare time but there are still various and conflicting ideas of what it actually means in everyday life" (p.47).

Nieto (2009) says that among Whites in the United States, culture is thought to be something held by those who are different to them and "it is not unusual to hear people, especially those of European background, lament that they do not "have" culture in the same way that African Americans, Asian

Americans, Native Americans, or other groups visibly different from the

dominant group 'have' it" (p. 47). Culture is also used interchangeably with

ethnicity, as something that it is fixed, static, and is simply passed down

"constant and eternal from one generation to the next" (p.47). And at other times,

culture is synonymous with the traditions celebrated in a family, reduced to the

food, dances, and holidays of a culture, also referred to as "visible culture" by

Erickson (2010) who points out that the distinction between "visible and invisible

culture has also been called *explicit/implicit* or *overt/covert* (Hall, 1959, 1976;

Philips, 1983). Erickson (2010) says,

> In multicultural education and in discussions of cultural diversity more generally, the focus has been on visible, explicit aspects of culture, such as language, dress, food habits, religion, and aesthetic conventions. While important, these visible aspects of culture, which are taught deliberately and learned (at least to some extent) consciously, are only the tip of the iceberg of culture. Implicit and invisible aspects of culture are also important. (as cited in Banks 2010, p.38)

This definition of culture is illustrated through The Iceberg Concept of

Culture (shown on the following page) that was developed to show that nine-

tenths of culture is invisible and below the surface.

Like an iceberg,
nine-tenths of culture is below the surface.

Surface Culture
Most easily seen
Emotional level - low

Food, dress,
music, visual arts,
drama, crafts,
dance, literature,
languagae, celebrations, games

Shallow Culture
Unspoken Rules
Emotional level - high

courtesy, contextual conversational patterns, concept of time,
personal space, rules of conduct, facial expressions,
nonverbal communication, body language, touching,
eye contact, patterns of handling emotions,
notions of modesty, concept of beauty, courtship practices,
relationships to animals, notions of leadership, tempo of work,
concepts of food, ideals of child rearing, theory of disease,
social interaction rate, nature of friendships, tone of voice,
attitudes toward elders, concept of cleanliness, notions of adolescence,
patterns of group decision-making, definition of insanity,
preferences for competition or cooperation,
tolerance of physical pain, concept of "self",
concept of past and future, definition of obscenity,
attitudes toward dependents,
problem solving roles in relation to age, sex, class, occupation,
kinship, and ...

Deep Culture
Unconscious Rules
Emotional level - intense

reference - Indiana Department of Education - Language Minority and Migrant Program - www.doe.state.in.us/lmmp

The Iceberg Concept of Culture differentiates between three kinds of culture: Surface, Shallow, and Deep Culture. Surface culture consists of tangible or folk culture that comes in the form of food, dress, music, visual arts, language, celebration, and dance. Shallow Culture is less visible, and has more emotional value for groups, comprising things like courtesy, conversational patterns, concept of time, personal space, facial expressions, body language, touching, eye contact, notions of modesty, concept of beauty, ideals of child rearing, nature of friendship, tone of voice, attitudes towards elders, group versus individual behavior. In contrast, deep culture is implicit; it is the least visible form of culture and is deeply emotional. Deep culture is made up of the unconscious rules of culture, its core values and beliefs. This level of culture can be thought of in the context of a group rather than of an individual, for example, preferences for competition or cooperation, concept of "self," concept of past and future,

attitudes toward dependents, class, socio-economic status, occupation, and kinship.

Nieto (2009) says that culture is less often defined as deep culture namely "values one holds dear, or the way one looks and interacts with the world" (p.47). Nieto's definition of culture refers to invisible or implicit aspects of culture, which she describes as inherently complex, intricate and contextual, shaped by *what* its contents are, *how* it is created and transformed, and *who* is responsible for creating and changing it. Nieto (2009) defines culture as:

> The ever-changing values, traditions, social and political relationships, and worldview created, shared, and transformed by a group of people bound together by a combination of factors that can include a common history, geographic location, language, social class, and religion…As is clear from this definition, culture is complex and intricate; it includes content or product (the *what* of culture), process (*how* it is created and transformed), and the agents of culture (*who* is responsible for creating and changing it). Culture cannot be reduced to holidays, foods, or dances, although these are, of course, elements of culture. This definition also makes it clear that everyone has a culture because all people participate in the world through social and political relationships informed by history as well as by race, ethnicity, language, social class, gender, sexual orientation, and other circumstances related to identity and experience. (p.48)

Nieto (2009) emphasizes that cultures are hybrids, mixtures of different cultures, multifaceted and embedded in context. When it comes to culture and learning, Nieto believes, we need to understand that "cultures are not static relics, stagnant behaviors, or sterile values." Instead we should embrace a description of "culture as a *verb* rather than a *noun*…(for it is) dynamic, active, changing, always on the move" (p. 49).

Understanding culture in the context of learning

Nieto (2009) argues that there are two issues that are central to understanding culture in the context of learning. First it must be approached unsentimentally and not as a yearning for a past that never existed (think of the way the West yearned for the exotic orient), or an "idealized, sanitized version of what exists in reality." This is described as "unadulterated, essentialized "culture on a pedestal" that bears little resemblance to the messy and contradictory culture of real life" (p. 48). Thus, an esssentialized and oversimplified approach toward culture shuts out real culture and can be described as romantic, exotic, idealized, and distant and shuts out real culture.

For example, Nieto (2009) shares that some argue that poetry cannot be considered Puerto Rican unless it is written in Spanish; however, there are hundreds of thousands of Puerto Ricans who identify as Puerto Rican but who do not speak Spanish due to the historical context in which they live. Similarly, an African American teenager with a perfect SAT score might be described as smart for an African American. Such interpretations help keep a dominant worldview, in which Puerto Rican poetry must be written in Spanish and African Americans are not smart, to remain intact. Dr Derald Wing Sue, Professor of Psychology and Education in the Department of Counseling and Clinical Psychology at Teachers College and the School of Social Work at Columbia University calls such situations, "microaggressions," about which he states the following in a 2010 article in Psychology Today titled, *Microaggressions in Every Day Life: Is Subtle bias harmful?*:

> In our 8-year research at Teachers College, Columbia University, we have found that these racial microaggressions may on the surface, appear like a compliment or seem quite innocent and harmless, but nevertheless, they

contain what we call demeaning meta-communications or hidden messages. (p.1)

Dr Wing Sue describes three different types of micraggressions:

• Microassaults: Conscious and intentional discriminatory actions: using racial epithets, displaying White supremacist symbols – swastikas, or preventing one's son or daughter from dating outside of their race.

• Microinsults: Verbal, nonverbal, and environmental communications that subtly convey rudeness and insensitivity that demean a person's racial heritage or <u>identity</u>. An example is an employee who asks a co-worker of color how he/she got his/her job, implying he/she may have landed it through an affirmative action or quota system.

• Microinvalidations: Communications that subtly exclude, negate or nullify the thoughts, feelings or experiential reality of a person of color. For instance, White people often ask Latinos where they were born, conveying the message that they are perpetual foreigners in their own land. (p.1)

Dr. Sue suggests that of the three forms of microaggressions, microinsults and microinvalidations can be more harmful because they are invisible, which he says "puts people of color in a psychological bind: While people of color may feel insulted, they are often uncertain why, and perpetrators are unaware that anything has happened and are not aware they have been offensive." As a result, people of color are caught in a Catch-22. If they question the perpetrator, he or she is likely to deny the offense and might label the victim as being paranoid or oversensitive. Alternatively, if the victim lets the microaggression slide, this can take a huge emotional toll on the psyche of the victim : "In other words, they are damned if they do and damned if they don't" (p.1).

Vanessa Andreotti (2011) acknowledges that although ethnocentric practice is not exclusive to Western Enlightenment humanism, when it is

inflicted by those who are in the position of power and by those who have the power to define and control the production of meaning, control the establishment of laws and institutions, and the global and local distribution of wealth and labor, then it falls into a different category than other ethnocentrisms. According to Andreotti (2011), this form of ethnocentrism has a higher capacity for harm or what she calls epistemic dominance, epistemic violence and "epistemicide." And in this case, those who hold power in society and have wider access are much less vulnerable to this form of violence than those who do not. In other words, ethnocentrism practiced by White males is much more harmful than ethnocentrism practiced by Black males in American society because White males hold much more power by virtue of race and the influence they have had and continue to have in society.

This highlights the issue of power when thinking about culture, which Nieto (2009) identifies as the second issue that is central to understanding culture in the context of learning. Nieto (2009) says culture is not divorced from history, society, politics, and economics, and the issue of power is at its center. Nieto (2009) argues that the way in which culture is viewed is shaped by a group's level of participation in a culture of power. The more a group sees their own culture as something they do not experience *as a culture* but as something that "just is," the more disproportionate the group's participation is in the culture of power. Nieto (2009) says, "Cultures do not exist in a vacuum, but rather are situated in particular historical, social, political, and economic conditions, and therefore they are influenced by issues of power" (p.49). Nieto says, the claim of Whites is a case in point. They

"frequently do not experience their culture *as a culture* because as the officially sanctioned and high-status culture, it "just is." Therefore, when Whites say they do not "have" a culture, they in effect relegate culture to not more than quaint customs or colorful traditions. This stance is disingenuous at best because it fails to observe that Whites as a group participate disproportionately in a *culture of power* (Delpit, 1988) simply based on their race, although access to this power is not available to those who are not White (nor, it should be stressed, is it shared equally among Whites). (p.49)

In order to understand culture in the context of learning, educators need to recognize that there is a dominant culture in America or what is described as a Master Narrative. In a PBS interview with Bill Moyers in 1990, Toni Morrison defines the Master Narrative as "…White male life. The master narrative is whatever ideological script is being imposed by the people in authority on everybody else. The master fiction. History. It has a certain point of view."[4]

African American art educator and professor Joni Boyd Acuff highlights the consequences of these colonial-age tools on her personal learning. Acuff (2012) describes feeling isolated and uncomfortable when learning about the History of Art Education and says

Learning about the History of Art Education was always uncomfortable. It wasn't that I believed the information was invaluable or irrelevant, but as a Black woman, I simply felt alone, isolated, and outside of the conversation. As I sat listening about the Massachusetts Drawing Act and the prominence of men and petitioners that made a difference, I know none of those men looked like me. I know African Americans existed when the Act was enacted; I wanted at least an acknowledgement of my presence in the world. This Act did not affect Black people's experiences in public schools because schools were segregated. So what were the historical art education experiences of people of color? (p. 7)

Acuff's experience can be compared to the following analogy provided by Toni Morrison (1990), who says "When these little girls see that the most prized gift that they can get for Christmas time is this little white doll, that's the master

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[4] On Love and Writing." Interview by Bill Moyers. *A Writers Work with Toni Morrison*. PBS. 1990. Television.

narrative speaking. "This is beautiful, this is lovely, and you're not it."…And for her, there is no way back into the community and in society…" Moreover, Doctor Wing Sue's research also indicates several harmful consequences of racial microaggressions that are a product of the Master Narrative. He says,

> Although they may appear like insignificant slights, or banal and trivial in <u>nature</u>, studies reveal that racial microaggressions have powerful detrimental consequences to people of color. They have been found to: (a) assail the mental health of recipients, (b) create a hostile and invalidating work or campus climate, (c) perpetuate stereotype threat, (d) create physical health problems, (e) saturate the broader society with cues that signal devaluation of social group identities, (f) lower work <u>productivity</u> and problem solving abilities, and (g) be partially responsible for creating inequities in <u>education</u>, employment and health care. (p.3)

In her complex yet deeply insightful book Actionable Postcolonial Theory in Education, educational practitioner and theorist, Vanessa Andreotti provides a powerful metaphor with which she shows how power and culture are inextricably linked and articulates four possible negative outcomes.

Andreotti (2011) invites readers to construct the metaphor with her and instructs the reader to "First, imagine a field of ripe corn cobs; take out the corn cobs' husks and display the corn cobs in front of you" (p. 4-7). She then asks the readers to compare the image of the corncobs they've imagined with the photograph on the following page.

Andreotti (2011) asks her readers to consider the yellow corncob as a Cartesian subject, one who projects his local worldview as dominant and global, and ignores the local roots of the presuppositions and foundations of his world view (referred to as epistemology) and the choices made to be dominant and global (referred to as ontological choices). The yellow corncob practices ethnocentrism because it sees its own color as the correct color of corncobs and projects its yellowness on to all other corncobs. According to Andreotti (2011), the implications of ethnocentrism wielded by those in a position of power, or what she describes as the "ambivalent relationship" between the yellow corncob and the multicolored varieties of corncobs, are as follows:

First the yellow corncobs may have the tendency to see other varieties as deficient or lacking, also known as deficit theorization of difference, which creates the desire to help multicolored corncobs to turn yellow. This is called paternalism, where the educator sees herself as superior, all knowing, as parent, savior or missionary and the multicolored corncobs lack of yellowness is perceived as the "White man's burden."[5]

Alternatively, the yellow corncob denies the cultural difference (color-blindness) of the multicolored corncob completely and sees the color of multicolored cobs as superficial, drawing on the argument that "we are all the same under the kernel skin." This causes the yellow corncobs to forget *their culture* and project their essence, desires, and aspirations as universal to all corncobs. Perhaps the multicolored corncobs begin to internalize the projections of the yellow corncobs. They begin to see themselves through the eyes of yellow corncobs and aspire to become more yellow and begin to form a self-image that is lacking and deficient or what Andreotti refers to as internalized oppression.

Lastly, some multicolored corncobs may resist yellow ethnocentric global hegemony and categorizations by reaffirming their "color" in what Andreotti calls reversed-ethnocentric ways. This comes in the form of speaking back to power using the language and tools of the dominant variety, but remaining trapped in the logic of the yellow corncob. Andreotti warns that this strategy is often successful in providing a critique of dominance; it generally fails to enable the emergence of alternative to ethnocentrism and hegemony.[6]

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[5] Kipling, Rudyard. 1899. *The White Man's Burden*. Published simultaneously in *The Times*, London, and *McClure's Magazine* (U.S.) 12 February 1899

[6] Hooks, Bell. *Talking Back: Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black*. Boston, MA: South End, 1989. Print.

This leaves museums with the challenge of coming up with teaching

training strategies that address ethnocentrism, hegemony and epistemic violence.

But how can this be done without offending educators from the dominant

culture, who might get angry or give up? The need to address this problem has

never been more critical. Mesa-Bains (1992) describes new American

communities as

> a kind of postcolonial diaspora. Much of art history and our ideas about
> art, the museum, and collecting have come out of the colonial ages. We are
> now dealing with the generations descending from these colonial
> experiences and occupations, but they have come home to the colonies. In
> the case of indigenous Mesoamerican, these communities represent an
> experience of internal colonization. You are now meeting their
> grandchildren, dealing with those of us and our children who come from
> that experience of the postcolonial age. (p. 99)

According to Acuff, the solution is to dismantle the Master Narrative "in

order to accommodate multiple entry points into the History of Art Education

that ultimately serve to acknowledge the presence of different cultures in the

world" (p.7). Mesa-Bains (1992) says, "Our institutions are ensconced in concepts

of history based…in a colonial age. Anthropology, psychology, and archaeology

originated in those times…Such colonial-age tools have set the stage for the

historical understanding with which the paradigms of art history have been

placed" (p. 101). In educational terms this approach to dismantling the Master

Narrative is called multicultural education theory. Banks (2010) describes the

Master Narrative in educational terms as a "Eurocentric, male-dominant

curriculum" (p. 65) that provides the underlying framework of many Western

institutions, academic disciplines, and even the discipline of art history.

II. Addressing ethnocentrism through Multicultural art education

According to Banks (2010) multicultural education was a product of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s. The movement, led by African Americans and eventually other ethnic groups pushed for curricula reform to reflect the histories, cultures, and perspectives of African Americans and other ethnic groups. Ethnic groups also pushed for schools to hire more Black and Brown teachers and administrators to offer role models for their children. Schools initially responded by focusing on ethnic holidays and celebrations and courses that focused on one ethnic group, referred to by Grant and Sleeter (2010) as "single-group studies." However, over the decades, schools and policy-makers approached multicultural education in a variety of ways. Stuhr (1994) points out

> Not all versions and understandings of multiculturalism challenge the dominant power and knowledge structures that tend to create sociocultural inequities. In fact many multicultural programs act to reproduce the political, economic, and social conditions that are currently practiced. (p. 171)

Since the 1960s, educators have defined and approached multiculturalism in a variety of ways. Grant & Sleeter identified five prevalent approaches to multicultural education: teaching the exceptional and culturally different approach, human relations approach, single group studies approach, and multicultural education approach. Patricia L. Stuhr (1994) interprets these approaches through the lens of multicultural art education and finds the following.

According to Stuhr (1994) successful multicultural art educators: foster a sense of unity; develop students self-esteem and confidence; present perspectives historically negated in the mainstream curriculum; provide an equitable

distribution of power between educator and student; reduce discrimination and prejudice; model equity and pluralism; provide diverse points of view; highlight multiple perspectives; take on perspectives other than the teachers own; explore similarities and differences and emphasize differences within a culture; reflect the demographic of the community in the content, state, nation and world; acknowledge different personal and cultural learning styles; are constructivist; apply cooperative learning; provide social and cultural context; encourage students to construct curriculum, explore diverse artists, involve community members, discuss feelings and attitudes and challenge mainstream points of view; provide curricula in a state of flux; include cooperative planning amongst teachers; and lastly, are willing to negotiate and adjust viewpoints for both students and teachers.

Conversely, Stuhr (1994) says limited approaches to multicultural art education include: a sequential approach to teaching art, limited context created for non-mainstream art, a search for universal qualities, overlooking differences, surface level multiculturalism (emphasis on folk culture and not deep culture), and no investigation into power negotiations and relationships.

Of the five approaches analyzed by Grant & Sleeter, Stuhr (1994) highlights two approaches to multicultural education with no limitations. These are Multicultural Education and Education that is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist. The former is characterized by an equitable distribution of power, a reduction in discrimination and prejudice, social justice opportunities, an institution that models equity and pluralism, diverse faculty, diverse viewpoints and multiple outlooks. This approach asks teachers to take on perspectives different to their own, make comparisons of similarities and

differences within a culture, develop curricula reflecting demographics of the community (state, nation and world), incorporate and build on personal and cultural learning styles, encourage cooperative learning, and to be non-sexist.

The multicultural and social reconstructionist approach emphasizes social justice and looks at art as it is experienced in life and as part of social and cultural context. This approach seeks assistance from community members, discusses feelings and attitudes and challenges existing views and preconceptions, requires students to negotiate and adjust their viewpoints, has a curriculum that is always in a state of flux, and relies on cooperative planning amongst teachers.

While both of these approaches are effective, this study will focus on multicultural education theory. The preeminent multicultural education theorist, James Banks (2010) defines multicultural education as

> An idea, an educational reform movement, and a process whose goal is to change the structure of educational reform movement, and a process whose major goal is to change the structure of educational institutions so that male and female students, exceptional students, and students who are members of diverse racial, ethnic, language, and cultural groups will have an equal chance to achieve academically in school. (p.3)

Banks (2010) says that educators immediately dismiss multiculturalism because they think it refers primarily to race and do not see it as relevant to the content they are teaching. However, Banks (2010) defines multicultural education as a

> A philosophical position and movement that assumes that the gender, ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity of a pluralistic society should be reflected in all of the institutionalized structures of educational institutions, including the staff, the norms and values, the curriculum, and the student body. (p.447)

The premise of Bank's multicultural education theory is that all individuals, no matter what their race, gender, ability, or economic status, have equal

opportunity to learn. Secondly, multicultural education recognizes that some individuals have a better chance to learn in environments that have a particular structure than other groups with particular cultures. Bank's multicultural education model has five dimensions. These dimensions include (1) content integration, (2) the knowledge construction process, (3) prejudice reduction, (4) an equity pedagogy, and (5) an empowering school culture and social structure. Each dimension is defined and illustrated next (Banks 2010, p.20).

Content Integration

This dimension focuses on the specific ethnic and cultural content incorporated by teachers in their curriculums. Banks says that integrating culturally specific content into the curriculum is important; however, it is not sufficient to make a curriculum truly multicultural and this is only one dimension. Moreover, Banks (2010) says "The infusion of ethnic and cultural content into the subject area should be logical, not contrived" (p.20).

Knowledge construction

This is where educators help students understand that "implicit cultural assumptions, frames of reference, perspectives, and biases within a discipline influence the ways in which knowledge is constructed within it "(as cited in Banks 2010, p.20) This dimension calls on students to look at "counterarguments" or counter examples. It calls on students to look at the topic, subject or object from more than one point of view. For example, when "studying the westward movement, the teacher can ask the students these questions: Whose point of view or perspective does this concept reflect, that of the

European Americans or the Lakota Sioux?" (Banks, p.21). This is what helps students become critical thinkers (as cited in Tucker 1998).

Prejudice Reduction

Banks (1998) says, "Notice that by the time we get to equity pedagogy and prejudice reduction, all teachers can be involved. Because all teachers—whether you teach math or physics or social studies—should work to reduce prejudice in the classroom" (as cited in Tucker 1998). The idea is to help learners who have many negative attitudes toward and misconceptions about different racial and ethnic groups develop positive attitudes toward different racial, ethnic, and cultural groups. And these are the "lessons and activities teachers used to help students develop positive attitudes toward different racial, ethnic, and cultural groups" (Banks 2010, p21).

An Empowering School Culture and Social Structure

This dimension looks beyond the classroom to the **overall culture** of the institution to see how to make it more equitable. Banks (1998) says, "For example, grouping and labeling practices, disproportionality in achievement, who participates in sports, in the interaction of the school staff. Now what does the school staff look like racially? We can talk about equity all we want to, but we must ask, who are the teachers? Who are the leaders? Are they diverse/ In other words, we have to walk the talk" (as cited in Tucker 1998). This principle calls for "institutions norms, social structures, cause-belief statements, values, and goals must be transformed and reconstructed" (Banks 2010, p.23).

Equity pedagogy

This fifth dimension calls on teachers to increase their repertoire of pedagogy to enable students from diverse races, ethnicities, cultures and genders to learn. Banks (1998) explains, "I'm not really talking about learning styles. I'm talking about teachers modifying their teaching styles so that they use a wide range of strategies and teaching techniques such as cooperative groups, simulations, role-playing, and discovery. In the end, this will help many White children, too, since they often do not learn from a highly individualistic, competitive teaching strategy either" (as cited in Tucker 1998), Banks warns that it is important that teachers respond to the individual learning styles of their students and do not pigeon-hole their students. He says,

> "And that's the danger…if teachers read that research indicates that cooperative learning can enhance the achievement of Mexican American students, that there are Mexican American students who learn perhaps better from a different strategy. But what we're suggesting is that cooperative learning will enhance the achievement of a wide range of students from a wide range of groups. So that we increase our repertoire of pedagogy, we will reach more and more students from all groups." (As cited in Tucker 1998)

Therefore, multicultural education offers a productive definition for educators to work with. First it is inclusive of White audiences and provides a common space for cultural disconnects between different cultures to be addressed. Second, this definition of multicultural education is particularly productive because it acknowledges the inequality and culture that Erickson (2010) says "is all around us, some of it visible and some of it transparent, much of it so familiar to us that we take it for granted" (as cited in Banks 2010, p.35). Other benefits of multicultural education include helping learners from diverse groups mediate between their home and community cultures and the

mainstream culture (Banks 2010, p.8). This is particularly important as the world becomes increasingly global; learners need "knowledge, attitudes and skills to function successfully in each cultured setting, across other microcultures in society, within national macroculture, and within the world community" (as cited in Banks 2010, p.8). The table below provides an overview of Banks model for Multicultural Education that will be contribute to the model of multicultural museum education at the end of this chapter.

Banks (2010) model for Multicultural Education	
Content Integration	Integrate culturally specific content in a logical (not contrived) way
Knowledge Construction	Present counterarguments, incorporate more than one point of view to understand implicit cultural assumptions, frames of reference, perspectives, and biases within a discipline
Prejudice Reduction	Help students develop positive attitudes towards different races and ethnicities
An Empowering School and Social Structure	Look at the overall culture of the institution, its norms, social structures, values must be transformed and reconstructed
Equity Pedagogy	Recognize and adapt to cultural learning styles i.e. cooperative groups, simulations, role-playing, discovery

But how do educators integrate specific content in a logical and not contrived way? What skills do educators need to understand implicit cultural assumptions, frames of reference, perspectives and biases within a discipline? How should educators address the subject of different races and ethnicities? And how do educators recognize cultural learning styles? What should multicultural

pedagogy and training look like? What language, awareness and skills do educators need to develop in order to be able to teach multicultural curriculums? The following section focuses specifically on the role of the educator and the skills he or she needs in order to practice equity pedagogy or culturally responsive teaching.

III. Culturally Responsive Teaching

Sonia Nieto (2010) is one of the leading theorists and practitioners of culturally responsive teaching (CRT). According to Gay (2003), CRT emerged in the 1990s in response to the frustration of teachers of color concerning the education of African American and Latino/a students, amongst others. This critical pedagogy calls on teachers to look at both their instructional methods and the histories and experiences of their students, which may be different from their own. As such, Sonia Nieto looks at the sociocultural and sociopolitical context of learning instead of employing a purely psychological frame of reference that monitors individual growth and development. Nieto outlines five principles of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) which are expanded on below: *learning is actively constructed, learning emerges from and builds on experience, learning is influenced by cultural differences; learning is influenced by the context in which it occurs; and learning is socially mediated and develops within a culture and community.*

Learning is Actively Constructed (Learning theory but learner attitude) (Educator attitude)

Nieto (2010) highlights the importance of Piaget's constructivism, which sees the learner as an active, not passive participant in learning. Learning happens through mutual discovery, and not through what Friere refers to as "banking education," where the learner is an empty vessel waiting to be filled with knowledge (Nieto 2010, p.35). Still, Nieto (2010) says teachers tend to transmit information rather than help their students construct it.

She attributes this to "*distrust* (which has found to be)…especially apparent in low-income schools with students from diverse cultural and

linguistic backgrounds" (p.36). Distrustful teachers perceive the students as not

having the appropriate experiences or the innate abilities to engage in

constructivist learning. However, all learners are capable of generating powerful

ideas; the question for the teacher is "not, Is it possible to educate all children?

But rather, Do we want to do it badly enough?" (p.37).

Learning Emerges from and Builds on Experience (educator's culture and identity)

Nieto (2010) says, "This characteristic of learning is based on the idea that

it is an innately human endeavor accessible to all people. Hence, it begins with

the assumption that everyone has important experiences, attitudes, and

behaviors that they bring to the process of education" (p. 38). However, for those

learners who are assumed to have not had the "necessary" experiences, teachers

may not call on their previous experiences, believing that they do not have any to

offer. According to Delpit (1988) this is particularly true for those who have been

raised within "the culture of power" or who have not explicitly learned the rules

of the game for academic success (Nieto, 2010, p. 38). Nieto (2010) points to

Bourdieu (1985)'s notion of *cultural capital,* which is

> "Evident through such intangibles as values, tastes, and behaviors and through cultural identities such as language, dialect, and ethnicity. Some manifestations of cultural capital have more social worth, although not necessarily more intrinsic worth, than others. If this is true, then youngsters from culturally subordinated communities are *a priori* placed at a disadvantage relative to their peers from the cultural mainstream. Understanding this reality means that the issue of power relations is a fundamental, largely unspoken, aspect of learning." (p.38)

Nieto (2010) argues that educators need to focus on what experiences their

students *do have* rather than "lament what they do *not have*" (p. 38). This relates to

teachers' attitudes about their students, their ability to recognize that their

students *do* have experiences that can help them learn, that their students'

knowledge and experience (such as language, dialect) are valid, and that they

believe their students *want* to learn. Nieto (2010) says, "It is clear, then that

teachers' thinking about the identities, previous knowledge, and experiences of

their students relates very directly to the kinds of practices and climate they

create for learning" (p.39). Therefore, Nieto (2010) says that for those teachers

who invalidate their students' experiences, such as speaking a second language

from a developing country or a visit to his or her family in Haiti rather than a ski

trip to Europe (deemed culturally enriching), it is an issue of cultural capital

rather than of the student's ability to learn (p. 39).

Learning is influenced by Cultural Differences (group culture context)

Nieto (2010) makes the argument that it is not just "individual

differences" that affect learning but also learners' cultural identities. This is

probably the most challenging of the five principles as teachers may not want to

place their students in specific cultural categories also referred to by Nieto (2010)

as "static thinking" (p.41). However, Nieto (2010) advises teachers to think of

difference as something positive and not negative. Nieto (2010) states,

> "Given the stated ideals of equality and fair play in our society, it is
> assumed that ethnic, racial, cultural, and other differences should play no
> part in our understanding or treatment of people. ..(but) refusal to
> acknowledge culture may lead to obscuring real differences in cultural
> values that may influence learning. Minds do not function in purely
> theoretical spheres; on the contrary, they work in contexts that are
> characterized by individual, cultural, economic, social, and political
> realities. If teachers and schools want to help all students learn, they need
> to be aware of what all these realities are and of how they may influence
> learning." (p.41)

Nieto (2010) advises teachers to take a more psychological approach

rather than looking toward single-study or monolithic reports on the cultural

values and behaviors of a particular cultural group. She draws on the examples

of two distinct value systems, individualistic and interdependent. She says,

> "Cultures that tend to stress interdependence usually emphasize such values as family responsibility, respect for elders, and cherishing of the extended family. Children's learning often takes place simply by being around adult family and community members who are carrying out essential tasks…. (Whereas) families and cultures in favor of independence often value individualization, separation, and self-creation, and consequently they tend to instruct through verbal teaching." (p.41)

Nieto (2010) highlights that Howard Gardner's theory of multiple

intelligences is similar to culturally responsive theory in the way that it also

considers "how children are socialized into their particular families and cultural

groups" (p. 42).

Learning is Influenced by the Context in Which it Occurs (context and environment)

Nieto (2010) argues "Learning cannot be separated from the context in

which it takes place because minds do not exist in a vacuum, somehow

disconnected from and above the messiness of everyday life" (p. 42). While

Piagetian developmental theory has guided teachers' approaches to learning,

these theories do not take into consideration *context*. Piagetian theory is

"criticized as falling within a mechanistic world view that is oblivious to

questions of power relations" (Nieto 2010, p.42). For example, Jerome Bruner

(1996) states that Piaget's theories "left very little room for the enabling role of

culture in mental development" (as cited in Nieto 2010, p.42).

Joe Kinchloe and Shirley Steinberg (1993) say that "meaning-making

frameworks" of children who are not from White, mainstream backgrounds are

often dismissed and thought to be developmentally inappropriate

Because developmentalism fails to ground itself within a critical understanding of power relationships of dominant and subordinate cultures, it has often privileged White middle-class notions of meaning and success." (as cited in Nieto 2010, p.43)

Nieto (2010) emphasizes the importance of teachers creating an environment that is accepting, caring, supportive, and respectful of student identities so as to avoid "psychic alienation that makes them vulnerable to devaluation" (p.44). In other words, it is imperative for teachers to allow students to bring their identities into the learning space, to validate these identities through acknowledgement, high expectations, and care and support.

Learning is Socially Mediated and Develops Within a Culture and Community (relationship between educator and learner)

This fifth principle focuses on the theory of psychologist Lev Vygotsky (1978) who believed that cognition was a sociocultural process rooted in social interaction. Nieto (2010) says, "Cognition described as social and cultural implies agency on the part of the learner; no longer is the learner simply acted *upon*, but she *acts*, *responds*, and *creates* through the very act of learning" (p.45). Jerome Bruner (1996) states, "Culture, then, though itself man-made, both forms and makes possible the workings of a distinctly human mind. On this view, learning and thinking are always situated in a cultural setting and always dependent upon the utilization of cultural resources" (as cited in Nieto 2010, p.45). Nieto (2010) says

This was precisely the point made by Paulo Freire (1970a) when he described literacy education for adults not as the teaching of mechanistic techniques for deciphering language, but as *cultural action for freedom*, because through literacy adults could learn to read both "the word and the world" and therefore become actors in the world. Learning implies both *action* and *interaction* because it develops within the social and cultural conditions of society, which themselves are created by human beings." (p.46)
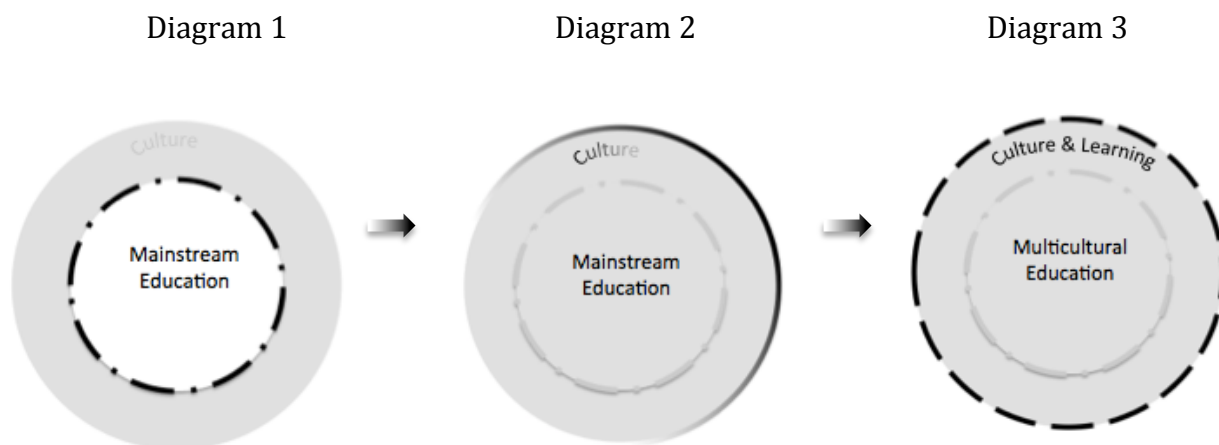
Nieto (2010) highlights the relevance of Vygotsky's (1978) zone of

proximal-development, or ZPD, which he describes as

> "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers." (as cited in Nieto 2010)

ZPD places the responsibility for the learner's success on the institution,

the teacher's actions, and the opportunity for social interaction; and emphasizes

the role of teacher as sociocultural mediator. Nieto (2010) states,

> According to Jim Cummins's (1996) theories concerning the negotiation of identity and the significant role this process plays, the ZPD should be understood beyond purely cognitive parameters and expanded into the realm of affective development and power relationships; otherwise, it can become another empty technique. (p.47)

Cummins argues "Teacher-student collaboration in the construction of

knowledge will operate effectively only in contexts where students' identities are

being affirmed" (p.47). Nieto (2010) reinforces this when she says central to

whether and how learning is taking place, is the nature of the relationship

between student and teacher.

Diagram 1   Diagram 2   Diagram 3

Culture

Mainstream
Education

Culture

Mainstream
Education

Culture & Learning

Multicultural
Education

Nieto (2010) says learning principles for multicultural education call on educators to first become aware of culture (Diagram 1 shows that culture is invisible in mainstream education). Upon recognizing culture (cultural barrier to learning becomes visible in Diagram 2), understanding it, and realizing that learning is embedded in culture (white circle in Diagram turns grey in Diagram 2), educators should implement pedagogy shaped by culture and learning in order to make education accessible to all (represented by dotted black ring in Diagram 3). The next section specifically focuses on the role of the educator and on how teachers can *become* multicultural educators.

IV. **Becoming a Multicultural Educator**

Gay (2003) describes culturally responsive teaching (CRT) as critical consciousness, which she says should be a major component of teacher education (p.181). According to Gay (2003) "teachers knowing who they are as people, understanding the contexts in which they teach, and questioning their knowledge and assumptions are as important as the mastery of techniques for instructional effectiveness" (p. 181). Gay (2003) says the need for critical consciousness is based on the premises that "multicultural education and educational equity and excellence are deeply interconnected," "teacher accountability involves being more self-conscious, critical, and analytical of one's own teaching beliefs and behaviors…" and "teachers need to develop deeper knowledge and consciousness about what is to be taught, how and to whom…" (p.181).

However, there are several obstacles to adopting CRT: teachers do not know what constitutes self-reflection, or how to do it; they do not see teaching as a contextualized process; they divert or diffuse attention away from topics related to race; and use silence to avoid analyzing their thoughts, beliefs, biases, and behaviors about racial and cultural diversity in education. Teachers also "seem mystified about how to acquire knowledge to overcome their ignorance," putting the instructor in the position to carry the conversation; they question the validity for the need for culturally responsive teaching; and they practice benevolent liberalism to conceal their

guilt over past acts of oppression, injustice, and marginalization (Gay 2003, p.184).

Teachers may commit to promoting educational equity but as conversations about cultural and racial diversity move from general awareness to specific teaching approaches they say things like, "Yes, but students of color have to live and work in the U.S., so they need to learn to be American like everybody else," and "If I teach them according to their cultural styles, won't the White kids be discriminated against, and won't I be lowering my educational standards?" (Gay 2003, p. 184). As with awareness,

> …many prospective teachers assume that feeling guilty about racism is sufficient to make them worthy promoters of equality and social justice in their classroom instruction. They do not examine the causes, motivations, depths, and manifestations of their guilt, least of all how to move beyond it, and to ensure that the guilt-provoking actions are not perpetuated in the future." (Gay 2003, p.184)

Some teachers are convinced that race and racism are no longer issues in U.S. society and schools, and some go as far to say that the Western canon *should* be taught, since they believe it to be the *truth*. Gay (2003) describes these kinds of teachers as incredibly naïve and and says they are completely unaware of the academic racism and cultural hegemony embedded in such beliefs. She claims such teachers are in total denial of their socio-political existence, and thus evoke notions of color-blindness and universality (p. 184).

To counteract such notions and misconceptions, Gay (2003) says that it is critical for teachers to reflect on the sources of their standards of universality (Master Narrative). They need to explore what these ideas mean when they are put into practice in the classroom. Educators also need to understand how color-blindness conflicts with educational values such as maximizing human potential

and using students' prior knowledge in teaching new information and skills

(Gay 2003, p. 184).

Nieto's (2010) principles and the obstacles cited by Gay (2003) confront the field of education with several questions. How can educators learn to be *trustful* of their students' prior experiences? How do they learn to *accept* their students' cultures that are different to their own? How do they *transform* themselves into sociocultural mediators and allow their students' identities to enter into the classroom? How do educators learn to accept and acknowledge meaning-making frameworks that are outside the mainstream or dominant culture? How does an educator break free from the shackles of the dominant culture and become a multicultural person?

Gay (2003) says,

Our experiences in teaching multicultural education to predominantly European American female preservice teachers have taught us that it is not enough to have courageous conversations about racism and social injustices, to appreciate cultural differences, and accept the need to be reflective in their personal beliefs and professional practices. They need to practice actually engaging in cultural critical consciousness and personal reflection. This practice should involve concrete situations, guided assistance, and specific contexts and catalysts. Real life experiences make the learning activities more genuine and authentic, and lessen the likelihood that students will escape the intellectual, emotional, psychological, moral, and pedagogical challenges inherent in reflection and critical consciousness. (p. 186)

Gay (2003) says teachers should develop position statements on multicultural education; examine power of language to perpetuate racism, role-play and simulation, adopting different ethnic perspectives on multicultural education issues and cooperative learning. She also suggests two training techniques. The first is to build meta-awareness and to routinely stop and debrief on a process that has just taken place by naming the types of communication used and the

different points of view. The second technique entails having "discussions about the core values of mainstream U.S. society and different ethnic groups…to help preservice teachers understand that what they may consider 'just the way things are' or 'the right way to behave' are, in fact, culturally determined standards of behavior and that students from different cultural, ethnic and social backgrounds may ascribe to very different ones" (Gay 2003, p. 186).

Gay (2003) believes that reflection is a critical step toward becoming a culturally responsive teacher. Educational psychologist, Jerome Bruner (1986) says "Much of the process of education consists of being able to distance oneself in some way from what one knows by being able to reflect on one's own knowledge" (p.129). Danielewicz (2001) explains the value of reflection:

> Reflexivity is an act of self-conscious consideration that can lead people to a deepened understanding of themselves and others, not in the abstract, but in relation to specific social environments… [and] foster a more profound awareness…of how social contexts influence who people are and how they behave….It involves a person's active analysis of past situations, events, and products, with the inherent goals of critique and revision for the explicit purpose of achieving an understanding that can lead to change in thought or behavior. (as cited in Gay 2003, p. 182)

In order to become truly multicultural, educators also need to become aware of their political locations. Bruner (1986) argues that everyone has a "perspective in which things are viewed and a stance toward what we view" (p.121). In her essay *Notes Toward a Politics of Location,* Adrienne Rich (2001) contemplates her stance in the world, which at one time she believed was the very center of the universe. She says, "It is that question of feeling at the center that gnaws at me now. At the center of what?" (p.64). She writes,

> It was in the writings but also the actions and speeches and sermons of Black United States citizens that I began to experience the meaning of my Whiteness as a point of location for which I needed to take responsibility. It was when I was reading poems by contemporary Cuban women that I

began to experience the meaning of North America as a location that had also shaped my ways of seeing and my ideas of who and what was important, a location for which I was also responsible. (p. 71)

Rich (2001) argues that the United States was stuck for forty years in a deep

freeze of history, trapped in a frozen discourse that allowed

…no differences among places, times, cultures, conditions, movements. Words that should possess a depth and breadth of allusions—words like socialism, communism, democracy, collectivism—are stripped of their historical roots, the many faces of the struggles for social justice and independence reduced to an ambition to dominate the world. (p.72)

Rich (2001) explains being caught in the deep freeze of Western feminist thought

prevented her from learning about so many chapters of women's history outside

the Western framework of feminism. She gives examples of womens' movements

in South Africa. She also cites an example from Lebanon and said she was

amazed to learn that a major strand in the conflicts of the past decade in Lebanon

…has been political organizing by women of women, across class and tribal and religious lines, women working and teaching together within refugee camps and armed communities, and of the violent undermining of their efforts through the civil war and the Israeli invasion…(p. 79)

Through reflection on her politics of location, Rich (2001) makes a case for

breaking out of a climate of either/or, waking up to the differences in the world,

and becoming aware of one's own position in it, "to stop looking without seeing,

hearing without listening" (p. 75). Nieto (2010) echoes Rich and says,

"I have argued elsewhere (Nieto 1996) that to become a multicultural teacher, one needs to become a multicultural person first...Even if their curriculum is outwardly multicultural, if teachers do not demonstrate through their actions and behaviors that they truly value diversity, students can often tell. Becoming a multicultural person implies as we have seen previously, that teachers need to learn more about their students and about the world in general. This means stepping out of our own world and learning to understand some of the experiences, values, and realities of others. It is sometimes an exhilarating experience, but it also can be uncomfortable and challenging because it decenters our world,

forcing us to focus on the lives and priorities of others who are different from us. It also helps us to empathize with others who we ordinarily might not have included within our circle of humanity." (p.178)
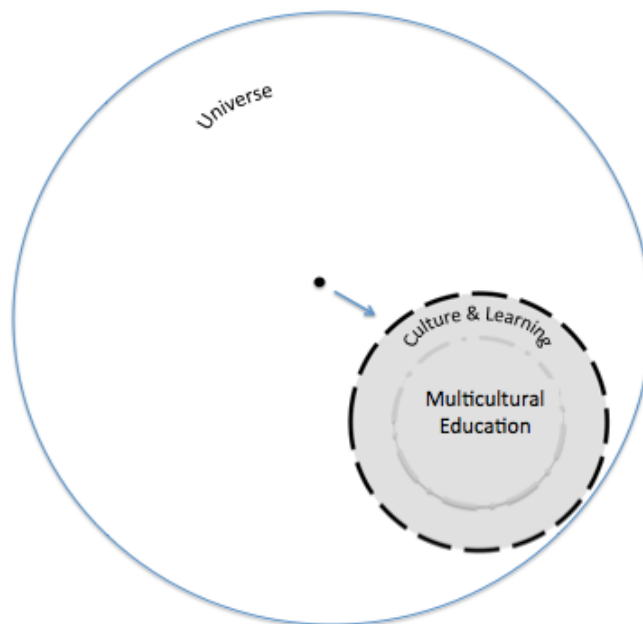
The diagram above shows the circle of humanity as the universe, and shows that in order for true multicultural education to take place, the educator's worldview must be decentered. The diagram above shows that in order to complete the task of becoming a multicultural educator, the educator must become aware of her position or power in the universe and decenter herself to make room for other points of view that are not necessarily visible in the dominant culture. The next and final section of this literature view compares the role of the museum educator with the role of the multicultural educator to arrive at a paradigm of multicultural museum education.

V. Arriving at a Framework for Multicultural Museum Education

According to the American Association of Museums Report (2010) *Demographic Transformations,* multicultural audiences describe their museum experiences as intimidating and exclusionary. They feel lacking in "specialized knowledge and a cultivated aesthetic taste ('cultural capital') to understand and appreciate what are perceived by many as elite art forms, especially in art museums." They also report experiencing "subtle forms of exclusion" (p. 14). These responses call on museums to answer the following question: *How can museum educators (and volunteers) effectively engage multicultural audiences, who may face language and socioeconomic barriers, with objects of art in museum galleries?*

Limitations

Upon reviewing the five dimensions of current museum education theory and practice through the lens of multicultural education theory, several limitations come to light (Refer to Appendix A). First, a cognitive, psychological frame of reference does not guarantee that museum educators perceive all students as having the appropriate experiences or innate abilities to engage in learning (Nieto 2010). For example, one volunteer educator, who gives tours for a community program at a New York- based museum, said the following after her first encounter with a group of multicultural visitors who were immigrants: "These people are not so sophisticated to be able to do an object based lesson" (Anonymous source).

Second, a two-way museum educator-learner relationship that allows for visitors to participate in meaning making does not prevent educators from invalidating learners' identities. Educators can allow learners to participate in discussions while also overlooking cultural differences and having a monolithic or surface-level view of culture.

Third, participation based on equality is not the same as participation based on equity. The former gives autonomy to audiences to create a shared experience, emphasizes cooperative learning, and acknowledges prior experience; whereas, the latter gives agency to learners by affirming their identities, thereby allowing them to participate in learning (especially for those who come from a culture that has faced cultural discontinuity[7]). In other words, museum education aims to appear fair, whereas multicultural education aims to empower.

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[7] Christina Igoa describes cultural discontinuity in her book *The Inner World of Immigrant Child* (1995): "Yet cultural discontinutiy has been evident in many of our schools (Trueba, 1993) and dates back to the beginning of U.S. colonization; the first attempt at cultural change was in 1830. For example, at that time the Native Americans were removed from the southeastern part of the United States and placed in Indian Territory. The children of these Native Americans were taken from their families and tribes and placed in non-reservation boarding schools (Spring, 1994). Only after the Native American cultures were systematically destroyed has there been a realization that the opportunity to learn what they had to teach was also lost. Now, students study their values and ways of life. From a distance we study their lifestyles, create teepees and headdresses, and talk about Native Americans in our classrooms. We also learn about about African Americans, Puerto Ricans, Mexican Americans, Central Americans, and Asian Americans who have been forcibly subjected to cultural discontinutiy. It if is possible to learn from past mistakes, perahps we can begin with the immigrant children to "heal our society and to develop in all children "peace, harmony, respect for cultural differences and cooperation towards common goals" (Trueba, 1993, p. 140). This can be done through the influence of teachers (p.137). I believe our task is profound, but we teachers can contribute to a more peaceful America, beginning in our classrooms in our own small way. What children learn in one year can carry them through a lifetime–every year is important in the lives of children. There are many ways we can foster their cultural continuity; one way I like to do it is by the report format, which, when finished can look like a book that tells their story."

A fourth limitation of museum education in the context of multicultural audiences is that the museum educator may view "everyone's voice" and a "safe environment" within the framework of dominant culture-making, thereby silencing and perpetuating multicultural audiences' sense of exclusion in museums. Nieto (2010) says that by dismissing meaning-making frameworks outside of the Master Narrative, educators can cause psychic alienation for their audiences.

Lastly, a museum educator who is unaware of his or her culture or what Bruner (1996) refers to as "stance," and is therefore unable to decenter his or her position in the world to make room for other perspectives, is unable to give agency to multicultural audiences, regardless of whatever pedagogical skills he or she may have. Giving agency to multicultural audiences learners affirms identities, and therefore gives them access to learning.

Diagram: An 'Educative Experience' for Multicultural Audiences
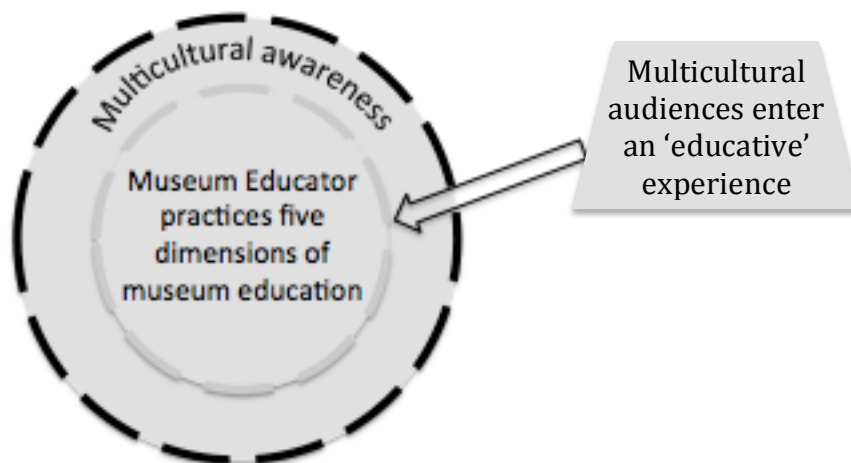
The aforementioned limitations of current museum education practice illustrate that the gap between multicultural audiences, and what Dewey refers to as an "educative" experience, is a gap between the *worldview* of the museum educator

and the *culture* of the multicultural audience (illustrated above as the ring between the grey and black dotted line). In contrast to current museum education practice, which is audience-centered, multicultural museum education must be *educator-centered* first. In order for multicultural audiences to have access (arrow represents multicultural audience entering experience) to quality--or what Dewey calls "educative"--experiences in the galleries of an art museum, museum educators need to develop *multicultural awareness* (the grey area in the diagram above). The essential components of multicultural awareness are to *understand that culture is not static, realize culture and language are intertwined, recognize deep culture, make power visible to become critically conscious, and practice equity pedagogy.* These components are expanded upon below:

Understand that culture is not static

In order to move towards a future "in which many experiences and many points of view are given a voice" and to ensure truly "educative experiences" for new audiences from a variety of cultural backgrounds, museum educators must view culture as fluid not static. Museum educators should be reminded of Nieto's definition of culture,

> The ever-changing values, traditions, social and political relationships, and worldview created, shared, and transformed by a group of people bound together by a combination of factors that can include a common history, geographic location, language, social class, and religion…As is clear from this definition, culture is complex and intricate; it includes content or product (the *what* of culture), process (*how* it is created and transformed), and the agents of culture (*who* is responsible for creating and changing it). Culture cannot be reduced to holidays, foods, or dances, although these are, of course, elements of culture. This definition also makes it clear that everyone has a culture because all people participate in the world through social and political relationships informed by history as well as by race, ethnicity, language, social class, gender, sexual

orientation, and other circumstances related to identity and experience. (p.48)

Realize culture and language are intertwined

Museum educators also must understand that culture is deeply intertwined with language. As Bruner (1986) states,

> Language not only transmits, it creates or constitutes knowledge or "reality." Part of the reality is the stance that the language implies toward knowledge and reflection, and the generalized set of stances one negotiates creates in a time a sense of one's self…. The language of education is the language of culture creating not of knowledge consuming or knowledge acquisition alone.

Recognize deep culture

Instead of employing a single-study, monolithic approach to culture, a multicultural educator tries to look at deep culture, which tends to be more value-based and psychological.

Make power visible to become critically conscious

Moreover, the educator has a critical understanding of power relationships of dominant and subordinate cultures and acknowledges the presence of a Master Narrative. The multicultural educator also has a critical consciousness by becoming *aware* of his or her own culture and stance or position in the universe, and reflects this in his or her use of language.

Practice equity pedagogy

Lastly, multicultural museum educators are committed to equity pedagogy and to creating a safe environment for learners, by paying heed to

both micro and macro structures of power that underlie the process of meaning-making, the cultural history of learners, and the socio-political context of the museum.

Conclusion

In contrast to current museum education practice that has a purely cognitive and psychological frame of reference, multicultural education has a socio-political point of departure and therefore calls for a shift in skills for museum educators. Museum educators who are multiculturally aware should be able to integrate culturally specific content into tours in a logical and uncontrived way. They present counterarguments, and incorporate more than one point of view to understand implicit cultural assumptions, frames of references, perspectives, and biases when looking at objects of art. Multicultural museum educators also consider the overall culture of the museum, its norms and social structures, and must be able to transform and reconstruct its values and culture in order to create a culturally responsive and safe environment for visitors. Lastly, multicultural museum educators implement equity pedagogy (anti-ethnocentric, anti-bias, anti-racist, not committing microaggressions) by becoming aware of their position in the universe, and willing to make room for other perspectives (in language, dialect, cultural connections, and prior experiences). Multicultural museum educators are able to recognize and adapt to cultural learning styles that are more group oriented i.e. cooperative groups, incorporating simulations, role-play and discovery (Banks 2010).

By investing in multicultural museum educators, museums make it possible for all audiences to enter into an 'educative' experience with an object of

art in the galleries of a museum. Museum educators who show resistance to developing multicultural awareness should remember that

> …invisibility is a dangerous and painful condition…When those who have power to name and to socially construct reality choose not to see you or hear you, whether you are dark-skinned, old, disabled, female, or speak with a different accent or dialect than theirs, when someone with the authority of a teacher, say, describes the world and you are not in it, there is a moment of psychic disequilibrium, as if you looked into a mirror and saw nothing. (Rich 1984, p. 199)

Appendix A

Dimensions	Museum Theory and Practice Today	Limitations
Learning Theory	**A Cognitive, Psychological Frame of Reference:** John Dewey's educative experience and Piaget's & Vygotsky's constructivism (Hein 1998) (Kai-Kee 2011).	**Distrust:** Educator perceives students as not having the appropriate experiences or the innate ability to engage in constructivist learning (Nieto 2010).
Educator-learner relationships	**Two-way:** The visitor participates in meaning-making (Kai-Kee 2011).	**Educator inspires meaningless connections for learners:** Educators have a monolithic or surface-level (folk culture) view of culture (Erickson 2010).
Authority	**Equality:** Interpretation over information. Participation is based on equality through a visitor-centered, non-authoritarian approach. Gives autonomy to audience to create a shared experience, emphasizes cooperative learning, and acknowledges prior experience (Kai-Kee 2011).	**Equity:** Educator does not affirm identities of learners: Educator does not fill power gap for learners with cultures that have faced cultural discontinuity (Nieto 2010) (Igoa 1995).
Environment	**Creates a Safe and Trusting Environment**	**Educator causes psychic alienation by dismissing meaning-making frameworks outside the Master Narrative:** Educators are not knowledgeable about culture; do not have a critical understanding of power relationships of dominant and subordinate cultures, and respects "everyone's voices "within the framework of dominant culture (Nieto 2010) (Banks 2010).
Culture	**Values Culture:** considers culture of average museum-visitor, and socio-political context (contemporary culture), culture of experts. Respects everyone voices, visitors' voice, his or her own, curators', art historians, and voice of tradition (Hein 1998) (Kai-Kee 2011).	

Appendix B

Dimensions	A Multicultural Museum Educator…
Learning Theory	**…applies both a cognitive, psychological and sociocultural and sociopolitical frame of reference for learning:** Educator understands that culture and learning and inextricably linked and therefore emphasize sociocultural and sociopolitical context of learning. Shared understanding of culture and its impact on culture; everyone has multiple cultures; culture is a verb and constantly evolving; culture is both invisible and visible; an individual may have several cultures all at once. Acknowledge and build on different personal and cultural learning styles (Nieto 2010) (Banks 2010).
	…applies constructivism and experiential learning based on unequivocal trust in all: Believe that everyone brings valid experiences to the table no matter what their culture. Become more accepting of cultures outside the mainstream, recognize difference amongst cultures, challenge dominant power and knowledge structures, and dismantle the Master Narrative (Nieto 2010).
Authority	**Equity (to be fair is to be unequal:** Recognize that some individuals are from a culture of power (White, privilege) whereas others are from cultures that are outside mainstream culture and require validation and affirmation to feel part of the conversation. Educator skills: Two-way, acknowledges different levels of power, cooperative, equitable distribution of power (Educators must be unequal to be fair), reduce discrimination and prejudice, model equity and pluralism (Banks 2010).
Environment	**…creates a safe and trusting environment based on the specific needs, cultures, and identities of his or her audience and ultimately affirms learners identities**

Appendix B continued…

Dimensions	A Multicultural Museum Educator…
Role of educator	**...is critically conscious, a facilitator, reflective and aware of his or her own culture and positionality (power):** foster sense of unity, develop students self-esteem and confidence, present perspectives historically negated in the mainstream, provide diverse points of view, highlight multiple perspectives, take on perspectives other than own, explore similarities and differences within a culture, reflect demographic of learners community in content, discuss feelings and attitudes and challenge mainstream points of view, provide curriculum's in a state of flux, include cooperative planning amongst teachers, negotiate and adjust viewpoints for both students and teachers (Nieto 2010) (Gay 2003) (Banks 2010).
Environment	**…creates a safe and trusting environment based on the specific needs, cultures, and identities of his or her audience and ultimately affirms learners identities**
Culture	**...Educator must have an understanding of culture that takes into account surface and deep culture, and the many different ways in which culture is defined:** Provide social and cultural context, involve community members, differentiate between surface, shallow and deep culture. Culture is complex. Culture as a verb. Culture as it exists in reality. Culture is part of history, society, politics and economics and issue of power is at its center. Recognize a Master Narrative (that there is a dominant culture in America- White Male Life) (Nieto 2010) (Toni Morrison 1990) (Acuff 2012).

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