**Museums, Discourse, and Visitors: The Case of
London's Tate Modern**

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the conceptualization of the visitor within the discursive construction of the contemporary public art museum. It takes the rhetorical formulation of the interaction between the theorized visitor figure and the discursively rendered museum to constitute the 'visit'. This work argues that the position of the visitor within museum discourse has radically shifted in the past generation; the primary claim being that the visit is reconceived as a personally customizable experience less oriented toward the transfer of information from the curator (regarded as expert and educator) to the visitor figure (regarded as ignorant pupil), and more oriented toward meeting the particular needs and preferences of the visitor. This conception currently appears in museum discourse and in the minds of influential actors who shape this discourse. To analyze this claim, this thesis draws on the institutionalization of the visit via a case study of the Tate Modern museum, which provides the primary empirical evidence demonstrating the above claim. The resulting study relates the questions, structure, and findings of a systematic investigation into the historical, social, and museological conditions necessary to an institutionally manifested personalized, visitor-centered visit. The conceptual development of the visitor figure is traced through implicit accounts of the visit within academic studies of the museum, institutional records, marketing reports, advertisements, and the public discourse convened around Tate Modern's opening thematic displays that served as an extension of Tate's marketing and audience development programs. This visitor figure is now coextensive with and conditioned by a neoliberal participatory agenda that trades on the notion of personal agency and enlightened cultural consumption, which is, in turn, undergirded and conditioned by the intertwined forces of consumerism, marketing, and branding.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter One: Introduction

Creating Your Own Collection

In September of 2005 Tate Britain launched a marketing campaign that invited visitors to 'Create your own Collection'.[1] This campaign presented the results of a competition in which participants figuratively assembled their own 'collection' of up to six works of art in Tate's permanent collection and on display in Tate Britain.[2] The chosen 'collections' were published in leaflets for other visitors to use and consider while visiting the museum. At the competition's conclusion the campaign had generated twenty new ways of seeing and navigating the items. According to Tate's own estimates, increases in visitors' numbers directly resulted from the campaign, with a twenty-two percent increase in the first month, and a fifty percent increase within six months (Tate, 2008). These visitor-devised selections promoted by the museum in outdoor posters, including the 'I'm Hungover', and the 'I've Just Split Up' compilations, adopted works in the permanent collection to explore, elaborate, or illustrate a psychic state or corporeal experience of the visitor now standing in as curator of its own visit.

The campaign came to this author's attention, because, more than being a commercial success it gestured toward a categorically different way to experience the museum than the conventional tracking of an art historical narrative developed by the curator. This campaign, essentially an innovative marketing ploy, indicates the institutional development of a visitor-centered experience that represents a rethinking of a visit to an art museum, and by extension, the roles the curator and visitor can play in defining and shaping this experience. Tate Britain's campaign brings to light a particular configuration of the visit, institutionally generated by Tate's marketing department and produced through an essentially creative act of textual and dialogic

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[1] Descriptions of two collections: the 'I'm Hungover' collection, and the 'I've Just Split Up' collection are included in the first appendix along with copies of slides 1-3 and 14-18 of 18, of a 2008 PowerPoint presentation made to the Marketing Society that relates the plans, intentions, and results of this campaign.

[2] Visitors were invited to create a list of their favored artworks drawn from the permanent collection, a list that constituted the visitor's own 'collection' arranged according to preferences, situations, or feelings. The list constituted a guide; the permanent collection was *not* rehung in accordance.

engagement. [3] This type of visit publicly and explicitly underwrites the visitor's capacity and

(presumed) desire to consciously shape an interaction with art with limited curatorial intervention.

What the term 'visit' means in this context is the rhetorical formulation of the visitor's

timed experience in the physical space of the museum (as opposed to its virtual spaces) and its

possibilities, particularly as bracketed by the polar conceptualizations of the visitor as either a

passive receptacle to the curator's knowledge or an active, engaged participant in making

meaning of the art object within the museum or gallery. The shape of what is termed a

'traditional' or 'conventional' visit here has been described by a key researcher within academic

museum studies, Eilean Hooper Greenhill (2000), as that experience in which the visitor figure

acts as an ignorant pupil attending the museum with the intention of having its gaze tutored as the

expert knowledge of the curator is transferred.[4] Alternatively, the visit which will be examined in

the below is configured within the texts of professionalized museum marketing practice as an

affectively engaged activity in which various aspects of the interaction between visitor and the

museum are customizable, responsive to the visitor's personality, and yield meaning that is

relevant to the individual visitor.

The 'Create your own Collection' visit is exemplary of the latter, in that it is customized

by the visitor who chooses the thematic configuration of the experience from among the choices

extended. These choices (bracketing aside the inherent limitations such as the specific artworks

made available for this exercise) are invented not by curators, but by visitors. This visit implicitly

acknowledges the visitor's choices as valid, as choices that might be brought into play by a major

museum of Modern and Contemporary art well able to draw upon its own curatorial resources to

shape its exhibitions. (Indeed, as will be discussed in subsequent chapters, many visitors come to

the museum expecting it will employ its curators' scholarly expertise to create exhibitions that in

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[3] This marketing stratagem also shifted visitors' perception of Tate Britain, and thus mediated visitors' relations to the museum. The campaign mitigated the image of Tate Britain as the stodgy, conservative cousin to Tate Modern, a younger, edgier member of the Tate family known upon its opening for its innovative, thematic displays.

[4] This model of the relation between the visitor and the curator is described by Eilean Hooper-Greenhill (2000) in *Museums and the Interpretation of Visual Culture*, as being aligned with a 'modernist' museum that privileges this kind of transmission approach to pedagogy. For Hooper-Greenhill this modernist museum emerged during the 19th century, and is now being slowly displaced by a post-museum that privileges a constructivist approach which regards learning as a mutual exchange.

scope and art historical knowledge exceed the capacities of non-professionals to devise.) The visit outlined in this Tate campaign is remarkable in its advocacy and promotion of the visitor's personality and feelings.

The, 'I've Just Split Up', collection for example, drew together pictorially poignant works evocative of loss and regret in a compilation intended to mirror a visitor's personal experience. Through the campaign other visitors examined and considered these representations of personal experience. Here, visitors' experiences and feelings are employed to shape exhibition conceits, offering an alternative to being led to a set of meanings by the curator.

It will be shown that this personalized visit is crucial to understanding recent and ongoing changes to the museum and to the roles of curator and visitor. In the complex web of interaction between institution and visitor the relation is now importantly mediated by marketing departments. This visit is shaped by a marketing campaign inviting visitors to enter the museum via discursively personalized avenues, expecting experiences correlated to their own thoughts and feelings.[5] Specialist curatorial knowledge and pedagogical authority were momentarily set aside in favor of inexpert visitors' choices.

Visitors responded enthusiastically to this (albeit momentary) overturning of the expected, paradigmatic curator-visitor relation. However, this campaign also frustrated many visitors who regard the museum as a primarily pedagogical institution, an Enlightenment institution of scholarly learning and instruction obligated to shape visitors' engagement with historical objects.[6] This visit's displacement of curatorial command over selected objects and the shape of the experiential narrative (and therefore the resonances of meaning that flow from this

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[5] This is not the only way this is accomplished. Marketing departments also work through the museum gift shops, giving visitors the opportunity to make purchases that memorialize and extend the visit.

[6] Donald Preziosi, in 'Brain of the Earth's Body' (2004), writes that although the museum's 'full potential and indispensability came to be realized only over time and through use and experimentation,' it was during the 19th century that the museum's philosophical orientation, 'achieved its more or less constant articulation from which it has not substantially deviated down to the present day.' This orientation made the museum a pedagogical institution, 'organized to make it unmistakably clear to the general public, but especially to the young, that one can gain knowledge from observing all the arts and sciences arranged together in their properly articulated relationships (Enlightenment commensurability)' (p. 75). Elsewhere in this essay he explains this notion of commensurability founded in the Enlightenment and expressed in and through institutions such as hospitals, schools, and museums, as, 'the rendering of all facets of social life and "nature" visible, legible, rationally ordered, charted, staged, and above all, intertranslatable' (p. 73).

visit) might simply represent the expansion of an awareness of the uses of social marketing that incorporates visitors' choices in promotional efforts. However an examination of the language used to describe how the Tate's marketers came to this unique campaign indicates that there are deeper implications to this visit.

Tate's slide presentation, 'A New Frame on Art' made for the Marketing Society Awards for Excellence in 2008 reads: 'By understanding the relationship between art and the public, we were able to update and refresh Tate Britain. We achieved this by focusing on how art makes people feel. As a result, everyone became free to enjoy Tate Britain on their own terms, depending on their mood' (Tate, 2008, slide 18). Certain phrases and terms are key references to broad museological alterations, rather than only institutionally discrete changes: 'the relationship between art and the public', 'how art makes people feel', 'free to enjoy', 'on their own terms', 'depending on mood'.

The first phrase indicates an awareness of its participation in a multifaceted, dialogic interaction between visitors, art objects, and art institutions, with Tate playing a role as an institution through which people engage with aesthetic objects. Though the terms 'art' and 'public' are not defined, the phrase, 'relationship between art and the public', indicates that the museum sees itself as promoting a relationship larger than the relation Tate Britain has with its visitors. More, this relation precedes the establishment of Tate and influences the ways in which Tate Britain is publicly perceived as much as Tate Britain influences how the British public might perceive art. Slide number three of this presentation reads:

> Launched in 1897, Tate Britain displays the largest collection of British art in the world; from 1500 to the present day. That is both a good and a bad thing. Good because it's drenched in history, has enviable kudos and is seen as being the 'best of classic British art'. Bad because many people have an inbuilt perception about what it represents. Many see the gallery as traditional, part of the establishment, stuffy and old school. Others see it as worthy, educational and dull (Tate, 2008).

Concern with public perception is key in this passage that expresses the intention to 'update' and 'refresh' itself. This is an acknowledgment that Tate Britain exists within a relation to the visitor that while temporally mediated by art objects, visual cues, fictions, is importantly mediated by visitor perceptions of objects, cues, and narratives. More, it is an acknowledgement that Tate must

maintain or re-establish its pertinence to the relation between art and the public. One of the signs

of current change in this relation is the growing significance of visitors' feelings.[7]

      To say that it is recognized that art 'makes people feel', rather than think, or learn is to

put the experience of the museum on affective footing. It is no surprise we then encounter the

term 'enjoy' in this text, which takes the affective one step further, to acknowledging the draw of

pleasure. These stakes are further raised by introducing the caveat that this enjoyment is to be

taken on 'their own terms', that is absent of direct institutional shaping or direction, which may

mean educational or curatorial intervention. To accept the visitor's enjoyment on its own terms

rhetorically subjugates curatorial intention and expertise to the visitor, or puts it aside. 'On their

own terms' means to forestall preemptive judgment or conditioning of the visitor's pleasure by

anyone other than the visitor. Within this marketised discourse, pleasure supersedes scholarly

intervention, or pedagogic intention, and is left to be contingent on the visitor's mood, which

from the perspective of the museum curator, is protean and unknown. The question this

explanation of the campaign raises is to what extent a discourse of marketized fulfillment imprints

itself on the museum and is accurately descriptive of the museum's priorities and focus with

regards to visitors.

      Lastly, 'A New Frame on Art' declares, 'Marketing's objective was to change the

perception of the gallery and its permanent collection, while increasing visitor figures and

frequency' (Tate, 2008, slide 2). Here the text states that the marketing department takes a hand

(it is not yet clear whether this responsibility is shared or not) in changing the views of the

museum-going public. These are essentially the responsibilities of public relations departments: to

alter public perception and shape the narrative around the event/organization/person to the benefit

of that entity.

      The installation of marketing departments and staff in museums is a relatively new

phenomenon.[8] This development can only come to be in a particular set of economic and financial

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[7] Slide twelve does evidence the importance of the affective in shaping the conception the speaker has of art. It reads: 'we understood that emotion is the key behind all art. And this is what people relate to (consciously or sub-consciously). Emotions are universal and never change. Therefore all art is contemporary'.

circumstances in which visitor numbers and the frequency of their visits is taken to be a)

important, and b) manipulable. In the below it will be shown that in previous decades there was

no such emphasis in Tate on audience expansion and retention. It is the conviction of this author

that this concern with figures and repeat attendance occurs simultaneously with a shift in the role

of the curator, an orientation of marketing towards the feelings of visitors, and the permeability of

the institution's authoritative demeanor because of deeper changes in the museum field.

An Emergent Phenomenon

The foregoing section's brief analysis of the rhetorical signs made by Tate with regards to

its 'Create your own Collection' campaign begins to point out certain museological issues. This

research thesis will relate the author's systematic investigation of these issues in order to answer

the question: 'How has this kind of visit come about?'. Another way of posing the question is to

ask what historical, social, and museological conditions are necessary, and in what ways do they

influence each other in order to generate this visit. These questions form the core of this research

project's examinations.

It seems important to answer these questions now. This visitor-centered visit seemed, in

an initial encounter, to more than simply signify recent developments in the museum world; it

appears to epitomize a trend. Indeed, the research findings conveyed in the following chapters

indicate this visit is not epiphenomenal, not an anomalous campaign. Rather there is a growing

tendency for exhibition programs in museums and art institutions large and small to either

explicitly or implicitly solicit visitors' participation, to treat visitors as collaborators with the

museum and sometimes even producers of the content displayed.

The more traditional visit model in which curators take the lead role in educating visitors,

is still a museum stalwart. However, as subsequent chapters will demonstrate, whether through

technological expansion of the means of interface with display objects, or via innovative

exhibition design expanding the range of sensorial engagement, or through programs intentionally

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[8] Fiona McLean (1997) has it that museums began to create stand-alone marketing departments in the 1980s.

fashioned to make the visitor a collaborator, museums are increasingly centered on the visitor and

are linking the visit, as an experiential endeavor, to individual agency, and thus are rhetorically

fashioning a visit that provides visitors with a space for self-expression or self-exploration.

To answer these questions, it is crucial to ascertain whether coexisting phenomena are

occurring together by coincidence, or are correlated and brought into being by identifiable

mechanisms. The significant phenomena are: a) a challenge to or displacement of professional,

curatorial authority by a newly invigorated visitor authority; b) an institutional and professional

emphasis on interpretation of the art object in the museum or gallery context by the visitor; c) the

rising prominence of marketing departments in configuring the expectations of the visit and

public perception of a museum; d) the undertaking of comprehensive study of the feelings and

psychic responses of visitors, and the incorporation of the same in exhibition planning, and; e) an

expansion of the terms describing a 'legitimate' visit beyond the scope of learning, that is

attending to and grasping information given by the curator .

Reasoning out an historical account of the generation of this visit is a considerable task in

light of the burgeoning nature of this visit. The forms that this visitor-centered visit is now taking,

its refractions and limitations, its promises and falsities, have not yet settled quiescently into a

historical record. This visit is still very much unfolding. It is key to develop a principled research

scheme through which this emergent property can be properly assessed and understood. Both the

research strategy of this thesis and the mix of evidence it relies on are by necessity innovative,

precisely because there is no pre-existing, disciplinary template for this type of organized study of

the visit.[9]

The literature that pertains to visiting museums of art consists of two distinct but equally

important canons: one pertaining to professional curatorial practice generated by those who work

in or with museums, and academic analyses and critiques that generally are gathered under the

heading of 'museum studies'. There is a rich and layered record of the intertwined scholarship

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[9] The lessons gleaned from the intuitive and trial-and-error assemblage of the evidence are methodological. In the course of conducting this research it became apparent that the way to assemble a convincing argument explaining the development of an emergent situation is to determine its historical antecedents and research how these antecedents relate with each other to create the conditions that give rise to the phenomenon.

produced from both canons that examines the institutional behavior of art museums, how the

psychic makeup of visitors affects their behavior in the museum, and how the interplay of the

museum and visitor affects other dynamics that circulate outside the museum, such as

socialization of the individual, the formation of community identification, encounters between

members of different social classes, and ideological functions of the nation-state.[10] There are

prominent museum studies scholars (to be discussed below) who focus on certain aspects of the

museum visit, such as the visitor's experience. However, to prioritize examining changes to the

visitor figure is a unique perspective. This analysis of a visit, while drawing on this work in the

related disciplines of museology, visitor studies, and sociology, examines an emergent practice

that sits in the interstices between these disciplines.

     The key academic discipline informing this study is museology. Knowledge of the

museum visit is constituted in the language of museology, that is, the study of the museum, its

forms, origins, organizing philosophies, professional practices, and the roles museums play in

society. Museology figures prominently in the analysis contained herein, because the visit is

constituted in the discourse of museums. The ways museums behave informs this discourse of

museums. There is a reciprocal dynamic of museums being informed in their professional

practices by the knowledge gathered from academic investigations, by theorists and researchers,

and other key actors. However, the visit in most museum-based research is tangential and implied,

rather than examined in the explicit and focused manner it is here. Therefore the following

analysis consists of bringing to the surface types of visit and aspects of the visit that are inferred

from accounts of the museum, studies of visitors, and theories of society. The visit needs first to

made legible for it to be examined.

     This thesis uses these data to move beyond the study of institutional histories and

practices, and locate the historical antecedents of particular shifts in governmental cultural policy,

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[10] A survey of the doctoral theses (UK) and dissertations (US) recently published reveal that most of the studies
conducted with reference to the visit have to do with examining other issues by way of the visit, such as the conduct of
visitors while making a visit, or questioning the putative elitism of museums by examining the effects of school visits
on children. See *Far Away is Close at Hand* (2005), by Areti Galani, and *Museum Visiting and Social Inclusion* (2009)
by Anna Lucy Woodham.

the economic and social forces that influence museum that condition and generate a visitor-

centered visit as a creature of discourse. The aim of this thesis is to show the discursive evolution

and elaboration of a personalized visit, to demonstrate its temporal development through an

institution and its institutional expression in exhibitions, internal structures, departments, and

museum communications.[11]

Surveying the Discourse

Surveying the relevant literature makes it clear that analysis of this visit should not

depend on observing what visitors actually *do*, or on the accounts given by visitors of their

experiences. Sharon Macdonald's *Behind the Scenes at the Science Museum* (2002), is a key text,

showing that the figure of the visitor appears in museological scholarship in distinct respects,

respects suited to different ways of approaching this study. Macdonald demonstrates that museum

exhibitions are primarily determined by museum professionals, who while concerned with and

informed by what visitors think, do not have direct, unmediated access to visitors' thoughts.

Rather, museum officers (in a range of professional duties, including, but not limited to:

exhibition design, marketing, development, education, visitor services) rely on a discursively

modeled visitor in addition to information gleaned from actual visitors.[12] Macdonald makes it

evident that a visitor exists as a discursive object in the literature on museums is as much a part of

the calculations of curators as what actual visitors do or say about their visits.

In essence, exhibitions are shaped by curators' perceptions of an idealized visitor framed

by discursively derived expectations. This is to say there is a visitor produced by the conversation

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[11] The range of proprietary materials the author was allowed to examine was severely limited after 2012: only one additional report, concerned with online visitors was thereafter made available to the author, who already possessed a document on in-person visitors. Inexplicably, Tate drew back from its earlier policy of allowing researchers access to this work. Despite this limitation, the author found that a wealth of data is contained in these two reports produced by the firm Morris, Hargreaves, and McIntyre, and not within the public domain. However, the limited focus of the primary source materials corresponds appropriately with the particular claims made by this thesis, which draws heavily on marketing data to demonstrate how marketing practice inflects the rhetorical formulation of the visitor figure.

[12] This is not to suggest that 'actual' visitors simply present themselves to researchers to be understood on their own terms. Actual visitors are also conditioned and shaped by the methodologies and technologies used to draw evidence from their experiences and organize the evidence, whether these methodologies are observation, survey of visitor experiences, or critical analysis of their accounts, such as those in visitor books. Also Macdonald points out that the power relations among curators was complicated by questions of status and privilege, and these questions had an effect on the knowledge produced.

among museum professionals distinct from visitors accounted for by visitor books, or face-to-face

interactions, or visitors observed at a distance. This constructed visitor is fed back into another

conversation curators convene as they devise exhibitions. Thus, *Behind the Scenes* shows that the

visitor, in addition to being a corporeal, active figure entering the museum and engaging with

objects, is also a discursive figure produced and developed within a curatorial grammar.

Alongside Macdonald, Donald Preziosi demonstrates that knowledge to be gleaned from a

discursive character would be more relevant than other data to questions posed by this study.

Donald Preziosi is a key museum scholar who relies on discourse analysis. In his essay,

'Art History and Museology' (2006), he begins by reimagining the museum object as constituted

through two primary discourses: art history and museology. To explain how it is that a visitor may

come to a museum and treat an art object as if it possesses agency, is able to communicate with

the viewer, and has revelations to disclose, he relates this agency to the intellectual provenance of

the museum art object. He argues that the act of imaginative projection is justified by both

disciplines that co-create the museum object as a stand-in for the modern subject (aesthetic

philosophy, social history, connoisseurship also make up part of the object's formation, though

they play smaller roles). To completely explain the development of a museum experience in

which human subjects gaze at art objects as though at versions of themselves, Preziosi reads his

visitor as a production of a multi-discursive, historical process stemming from the museum's

Enlightenment origins, the social and cultural transitions from pre-modern to modern societies,

and formalized, critical discussion of the art object.

Preziosi essentially traces and establishes the ideological pedigree of his research objects.

His analysis rests on critically evaluating an object of study by examining its component

philosophical components and the configuration of these parts as developed by a discursive

matrix. He analyses the museum object and the visitor *through* the discourses that shape them, by

finding in these objects, traces of discursive effects.

Furthermore, both Macdonald and Preziosi presuppose an historical aspect to their objects

of study. In each of their texts, the model of the visitor unearthed from either an art historical,

museological, or curatorial discourse derives its particular features from the socio-historical

distinctions that condition the respective discourses. Macdonald's 'virtual consumers', did not

exist in the same way in the curatorial discourse fifty years prior, when choice was not built into

an exhibition in tandem with the idea of developing active rather than passive visitors.[13] Preziosi's

visitor as modern subject can only discover a unified sense of self in the museum in the context of

a modernity that has created technological apparatuses, such as the modern museum and the art

object perceived as a subject, to facilitate this act of self-constitution.

Their research in museums indicates that historicizations of the visitor in the discourse

underpin and are related with particular types of visit. In other words, distinct historicizations of

the visitor inform distinct notions of the visit implicitly held by key researchers. This realization

underpins the decision to approach this study by examining the visit as a discursive object. Still,

there are other approaches used by prominent researchers in the field of museum studies that are

potentially useful to studying the visit by extracting evidence from the museum context, and these

are: direct observation, participant observation, and survey methods. The rationale for utilizing

them or leaving them aside has to do with their suitability to the questions being posed.

Research Strategies

A trio of researchers of symbolic interactionism at King's College in London, Dirk vom

Lehn, Christian Heath, and Jon Hindmarsh (2001) use direct observation of the visitor to

investigate the use of visitors' perceptual faculties during the museum experience. The questions

vom Lehn, Heath, and Hindmarsh pose attempt to discover what perceptual tools the visitor

engages during the visit, and how the individual visitor interacts with other visitors and with

objects in her surroundings in order to assemble meaning. Vom Lehn et al. have direct access to

evidence through video observation of the visitor in the museum. This method of observation

allows him to note the physical gestures and bodily signs found to be indicative of learning

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[13] In chapter six of *Behind the Scenes of the Science Museum* (pp. 157-192), Macdonald details the process by which
visitors are 'configured' by curators and exhibition designers as consumers who not only favor choice, but are seen as
more engaged when actively making choices.

processes. Interpreting these gestures and coding them into a lexicon of symbolic meaning correlated to movement, vom Lehn et al. build up an account of a kind of semiotics of corporeal gesture. The precision yielded by close observation is appropriate to his research questions, because gestures and bodily orientation, the physical behavior of the visitor is central to their analysis.

A second method often employed by museum researchers is participant observation, where the researcher is a visible and active member of the social sphere being examined. Sharon Macdonald's (2002) ethnographic study of the Science Museum in Kensington, is exemplary of this method. Through participant observation Macdonald lays bare the structures that shape a major museum exhibition, the implicit rules by way of which knowledge is constructed, and the ways in which the museum operates politically and socially in the creation of the scholarship that undergirds the exhibition.[14] Posing the question of how knowledge is formed for an exhibition at the intersection of social groups and professional agendas, Macdonald actively participates in the arenas in which her evidence is collaboratively formed and manifested. Here, the ability of the researcher to be present, to directly observe meetings and discussions, and actively respond to changing circumstances rather than being locked into a camera's perspective, was suited to Macdonald's research objectives.

Alternatively, French social scientists Pierre Bourdieu and Alain Darbel gathered evidence for their study of visiting patterns of Europeans related in *The Love of Art* (1990 [1966]) by using surveys. Though this work is at this point quite dated, it is foundational to the now widespread understanding of the roles institutions play in presenting, reproducing and validating particular aesthetics associated with the middle classes and naturalizing these aesthetics so that they seem inherent to individuals, rather than the result of socialization. Their study questioned respondents on their visiting habits, correlating this evidence with class indicators, such as education and income levels. The questions to which Bourdieu sought answers primarily concern

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[14] Macdonald uses an ethnographic investigation of the development of a permanent exhibition display on food, begun in 1988, at the Science Museum to reveal the complex negotiations around the construction of professional knowledge.

why members of the working class tended to stay away from museums, and, conversely, why

profiles of visitors in 1960s France tended to be mostly middle class. These questions

underpinned Bourdieu's sociological concerns, which were with the unequal distribution of

economic assets and the cultural expression of that possession or lack. His research model

essentially sought evidence of the class identity of visitors. His survey method was appropriate

assuming that the evidence of socio-economic status is accurately represented by the information

respondents reported. Survey data of the kind he relied on also allowed Bourdieu and Darbel to

examine large, aggregate patterns of behavior that were then correlated to discrete groups

identified by education and income levels.

Donald Preziosi, an analyst of discourses, on the other hand operates at a third remove

from the evidence. His questions concern how art history, art objects, and a modern visitor

interact in the museum space. His methods aim to assess how the discourses of the museum and

art history interrelate and create a subjectivizing experience for the visitor. For evidence, Preziosi

utilizes accounts given by other researchers about the museum or the art object to formulate his

critique. The key aspect of this meta-discursive approach, is the idea that the discussion that

occurs among the scholars of relevant discourses, museology and art history, shapes those

discourses, which in turn shapes the museum's practices. His data consists of what other

researchers in museology, art history, philosophy and history, assert, argue, and critique, the sum

total of which (along with the discursively formulated art object) produces what he calls a

museography. His methods are suitable for his research aims, which are to re-theorize the

museum space as a post-Enlightenment technological tool that modernizes the visitor.

However, Preziosi's research approach neglects to gather evidence of how the heavily

theorized museum he constructs operates as a financial, commercial, professional entity that

offers experiences for sale to paying visitors. A former Director of the Education Department at

the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York, Georgia Krantz, finds fault with his methods

in that Preziosi ignores that 'museums are businesses, and need to get visitors in the doors' (G.

Krantz, personal communication, July 23, 2014). While Preziosi offers a sophisticated view of the

museum as a museographical stage for the ritual acceptance of an Enlightenment inheritance and the enaction of modern subjectivity, there is a countervailing lack of institutional analysis at the level of professional practice, as pertains to the business of museums and the pressures they respond to as they seek to stay viable. As will be demonstrated in the following chapters, museums have recently become *more* business oriented as marketing strategies have proved salutary against the pressures, particularly in the UK, of reduced funding, increased expectations of value for dollar, and heightened competition among museums and other leisure sights. Institutional economics are a key source of data explaining recent changes to how museums are funded, making them more self sufficient, and more reliant on strategic marketing, but this discourse is largely elided in Preziosi's research. Preziosi neglects to investigate how museums work out their complex and at times contradictory mandates, so to speak, 'on the museum floor'. While theorists writing in the fields of museology and visitor studies tend to ignore the practical exigencies and restrictions of institutional practice, by the same token museum professionals at times ignore theoretical formulations of pertinent issues. Museums are the proving grounds for shifts in organizing ideas and theoretical stances that circulate more generally, and drawing conclusions about the existence of a visitor-centered visit requires analysis of its institutionalization. The optimal research methodology for study of the visit utilizes both approaches.

Organizing the Inquiry

The above considerations led to the conclusion that the visit of which the 'Create your own Collection' campaign is an indexical sign, is essentially a creature of discourse and must be examined as a discursive formation that produces a concept of the visit in distinctly historicized ways. The origins of a conceptualized, heavily marketized, visitor-oriented visit is not to be found *only* in visitor behavior, but more usefully appears in the accounts given by key actors who shape this discourse. Rather than observing visitors, or creating ethnographic accounts of the visit, or surveying visitors about their experiences, an analysis of the discourse of the museum visit was

found to be the most warranted. To borrow a phrase from Preziosi, the core concern here is not in

what visitors do, but in what 'what visitors do' does (Preziosi, 2004, p. 73).[15]

Here some clarification is in order. The term, 'discourse' is central to understanding what

constitutes empirical evidence in this thesis, but several valences of meaning have attached

themselves to the term over time. In this work, the term is understood as bracketed by the

disciplines of post-colonial studies and cultural studies and is defined as the sum total of

practices, the disciplinary and populist communication that describe and conceptually generate

the visit and also distribute the conceptions. The term has become embedded in museum studies

through key researchers Hooper-Greenhill (1992, 2000) and Tony Bennett (1995) who reference

the work of French historian Michel Foucault, particularly with regards to his conception of an

'archaeology of knowledge' (Foucault 1972 [1969]). However, as pointed out by Jansen (2008)

and Sawyer (2002), the term 'discourse' has different meanings ascribed to it by the academic

disciplines of socio-linguistics, anthropology, feminist theory, psychology, and post-colonial

theory.[16] In Sawyer's view, at the early stages in Foucault's thinking, a discourse consists of

statements and amalgamations of statements (or speech acts) that describe a verbal performance

in functional terms (Sawyer, 2002, p. 440). [17] This thesis utilizes a more developed notion of

discourse that pertains to the generation of knowledge.

The key concept deepening Foucault's initial notion of discourse has to do with, as Stuart

Hall (1977) states, the generation of understandings which particular statements draw on:

'Discourse is about the production of knowledge through language. . . . Discourse, Foucault

argues, constructs the topic' (Hall, 1977, p. 44). This notion, that the crucial feature of a

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[15] Unlike Preziosi, the chief concern here is not with the interrelation of distinct discourses, but rather with the features of the preferred form of the visit for key decision makers, and the aspects of this visit that make it categorically different from other types of visits that are found in the professional literature of museum workers, and the analysis of academic researchers.

[16] Jensen (2008) points out that the term has several different meanings depending on the context in which it is employed. Sawyer is interested in demonstrating the term does not even originate with Foucault, and has been misread by a great many scholars who mistakenly attribute a cultural studies understanding of discourse to Foucault.

[17] Sawyer (2002) has it that Foucault was himself unclear when he initially used it as a constitutive piece of his 'archaeology of knowledge'. Foucault first used the term to elucidate three main concepts that would form his archaeology: discursive formations, positivity, and archive. This archaeology of knowledge was intended to be an alternative way of understanding historical transformations to that of 'the history of ideas' (p. 437).

discourse, which sets it apart from dialogue or mere articulation, is that knowledge is socially

produced. This idea has become embedded in museum studies.

The discourse of the museum initiates, grows, and refines the idea of a visit and thus

generates it as a conceptualized object.[18] The dissemination of understandings of the visit is part

of the process of production. Hook (2001), reading Foucault, explains that a discursive formation

describes a 'discrete realm of discursive practices', or 'a conceptual terrain in which knowledge is

formed and produced' (Hook, p. 522). For example, the space for producing the idea of a museum

space consists of the corporeal space of the museum and the abstract spaces of disciplinary

dialogue that takes place under the auspices of art criticism, art history, philosophy, and

museology. Conceptual territories overlap the physical territories and both define the parameters

of practice and language that make the concept of the visit come about.

The term, 'discursive formation', also gleaned from Foucault's lexicon, introduces the

question of what can constitute evidence in the discourse and where that evidence is located. The

concept of a discursive formation orients the ensuing analysis of the visit towards evidence

obtained not only from academic disciplines, and institutions and institutional practices, but also

populist communication that appears in newspapers, magazines, and on television. As Mitchell

Hobbs (2008) states:

> When a discourse—which in a sense helps to both characterise and classify particular
> epistemes—is manifested and found in a number of areas, such as language, institutions,
> and practices, than [sic] that discourse is said by Foucault (1972[1969]) to be evident of a
> 'discursive formation'. It is the study of these discursive formations—as identified in
> historical records, statements, and other empirical sources—which gives Foucault's
> 'archaeology' the ability to reflect on the actions and the practices of historic actors, as
> well as the meanings such actors ascribe to their undertakings during particular historic
> periods. (pp. 7-8).

This study reflects on the actions of key participants in the discourse of museums by examining

historical records, reports of commissioned studies, accounts of discussions among professionals,

journalistic reviews, advertisements, and the testimony of key leaders. Evidence is also found in

academic studies, and public accounts such as blogs, list serve stories, forums, web pages, or

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[18] Discourse may also generate a conceptual object such as a 'goal' in the discourse of football, or a 'wicket' in the discourse of cricket. It is preferred to refer to the visit as a discursive object rather than a topic, because the term 'topic' seems to emphasise discussion and de-emphasise its constructed nature.

advertisements. Together these bodies of evidence indicate a discursive formation that may be

reconstituted by gathering the information about it dispersed through disciplines and institutions

and practices. The analogy of an archaeological examination is apt insofar as this study excavates

artifacts that indicate the growth and development of a conceptualized complex.

Bringing to the surface subcutaneous correlations among phenomena related to the visit,

and creating a coherent account of the causes of their correlation is largely the analytical task of

this thesis. The major investigative and analytical work consists in making these causes legible,

and furthermore, examining how this visit is shaped by these discourses, and how it is instantiated

in a museum. This study requires an institutional vantage point from which to observe this

instantiation, to explain how a discursive visit is operationalized.

The place to most clearly observe an institutionalizing of this visit is a museum. Ideas

regarding the proper roles of museums and visitors and the appropriate conditions for a visit are

dispersed across a range of texts and materials generated by and around museums. Among the

many things that museums are, they are sites of professional, reflexive practice, and while the

visit needs to be apprehended as a conceptual object, this object is subject to revision and

recalibration as new evidence appears and is assimilated by discursive participants. The museum

space is given to robust theorizing but also to bodily intersection where visitors, staff, and objects

work out their relations to each other. As will be demonstrated in the subsequent chapters, these

interactions feed into the developing understanding of the visitor in the fields of museum studies

and museum practice.

A world-leading museum, for the purposes of this study, most effectively provides an

institutional test bed by which to demonstrate a conceptual evolution of the visit and the visitor

figure, because an industry front runner is emulated by other institutions desiring similar success

and status. For this reason and others related below, the Tate Modern museum was selected as the

case study. Indeed, the campaign that incited this examination of the visit originated in a museum

within the Tate family.

Analysis of the selected museum is complicated by the questions of choosing appropriate vantage points from which to explore the evidence that makes the visit observable: differing administrative jurisdictions such as, education, exhibition, public programs, marketing; and differing professional responsibilities including, curatorial, conservators, marketing, visitor services. More broadly, relevant evidence is both intrinsic and extrinsic to Tate Modern. Proprietary commissioned reports, institutional records, and accounts given by key personnel are drawn from inside the institution. Governmental policy directives, critical appraisal from public news outlets, and advertisements produced in collaboration with commercial partners issue from outside the museum. To develop a holistic account of the visit it was necessary to extract information from all these sources. Through investigating the museum from these distinct vantage points, it comes to light that the visit now being progressively idealized and utilized rests on the conception of an activist figure able to configure the meaning of the museum experience for itself. This notion of the visit is now being formed in the consciousness of key players in the museum discourse.[19]

This research thesis details the findings of analysis done on two distinct but intertwined tracks: it examines evidence extracted from key actors in the discourse that demonstrate the existence of a visitor-centered visit, and it investigates how this context has been conditioned by changes in cultural policy linked with political regimes, the economics of the culture industries, and social dynamics with regard to consumption, consumerism, and the shrinking of a civic sphere hospitable to non-commercial action.[20] The second track as much as the first could find itself lost in ardent theorization. What grounds both lines of inquiry is their attachment to a real world case study.

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[19] See *The Tate Gallery: A Brief History and Guide* (1951), by Sir John Rothenstein and Mary Chamot, and *Tate Modern: The Handbook* (2000). Tate Modern opens in 2000. Before that date, the UK did not have a major public museum of modern art.

[20] This thesis is a text produced under the auspices of an academic program in the field of cultural studies, and is conditioned by the field's understanding of what constitutes useful, empirical evidence. Sawyer (2002) gives a concise explanation of the significance of documents produced by a discourse and why they need to be contextualized. He finds this definition of a discourse in Graeme Turner's book *British Cultural Studies: An Introduction* (1996): 'socially produced groups of ideas or ways of thinking that can be tracked in individual texts or groups of texts, but that also demand to be located within wider historical and social structures or relations' (as cited in Sawyer, 2002, p. 442).

The Case Study

In order to examine a visitor-centered visit in terms of its historical precedents and

development, its conceptual assemblage through too its practical installment in a museum, this

thesis takes the form of a case study of a major international museum: Tate Modern. At the point

at which this research project began, Tate Modern had a few years before come to prominence as

the most visited museum of modern and contemporary art in the world, with five million visitors

in its opening year.[21] That situation has since changed. However, the suitability of the museum

consists in more than its visitor numbers. Tate Modern is an appropriate choice for this

examination for several reasons.

Tate is a major institutional actor with an expansive presence in the UK and in the world.

In addition to Tate Britain and Tate Modern, which are located in London, there are also Tate

Liverpool, which opened in May 1988, and Tate St. Ives, which opened in June 1993.[22] Tate

Modern achieved a nationwide reputation by being the first national collection of modern art in

the UK to open its doors to the public. It has developed an international reputation because of its

innovative, thematic opening displays, and because of its status, Tate plays a major role in the

museum world in shaping current notions of professional museum and curatorial practice.

Tate's director, Nicholas Serota, is considered a key figure in the field of museums,

primarily for his vision of the visit featuring limited curatorial intervention.[23] He is a prominent

voice articulating a museological position that privileges the visitor over the curator as primary

interpreter of the artwork. His book *Experience or Interpretation* (1996) argues that the museum

of the future should be organized according to this approach which makes the curator less

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[21] See 'The Political Impact' by Chris Smith (2005) in *Tate Modern: The First Five Years*. However, since that time Tate has been surpassed by other museums. The most attended museum in the world is now the Louvre, according to TEA/AECOM. See: http://www.aecom.com/What+We+Do/Economics/Theme+Index+Report. Accessed on May 2, 2014.

[22] Tate Modern opens in 2000. Tate Britain, through still the site of the original Tate Gallery (Millbank, London), also comes into being the same year and its name is changed. Simultaneously, in 2000 'Tate' is inaugurated as the term used to refer to the entire enterprise including the Tate galleries at St. Ives and Liverpool. Tate Modern is really a new institution that is developed as new brand daughter of Tate, a child that is contemporary, innovative, and fresh, diversifying the Tate brand in the way that its visitors are also diversified.

[23] Before being hired to direct Tate, Serota was the director of the Whitechapel gallery from 1976 to 1988. He has led Tate since 1988.

traditionally custodial and more a facilitator of critical dialogues. This book has become an important component of professional curatorial and museological debates.

Third, Tate Modern's establishment confirmed emerging curatorial trends that had begun with the Tate Gallery at Millbank. Tate Gallery in creating Tate Modern, essentially differentiates and rebrands itself as a museum of modern art. This moment of institutional rebranding is a useful turning point that brings to the forefront underlying mechanisms that have spurred this change. While Tate Britain had maintained curatorial practices grounded in strongly classified national institutions, modernist artwork conditioned by an international market has provoked a break with these practices. Modernism and contemporary art both emphasize stylistic development in the work of art, and often invites the visitor to be active and playful in engaging with it. A visitor implicitly construed as active and playful can be observed in the display arrangements in Tate Modern. Tate's very public marketing schemes provide evidence of the promotion of a new museum of contemporary art exciting the expectations of visitors, and Tate using this excitement to create a brand presence in the market for pleasurable visitor experiences. This museum is useful in providing confirming information that marketing, curatorial decisions and interpretation as modes of visitor engagement are intertwined and mutually enabling forces that condition the museum visit.

Fourth, Tate possesses a well-documented history contained in its records. Once the Tate Gallery became a stand-alone museum in 1955, it was instituted as a registered charity, and as such, legally bound to document its activities, acquisitions, administrative and policy changes, and to make these documents publicly available. The museum's administrative and infrastructural development can be traced and analyzed via these documents. These records provide evidence for a changing museological orientation and allows for correlation of this change with administrative and financial changes that occur in Tate. These records demonstrate that Tate Modern is birthed as what may be termed an 'interpretive' museum, that is, generated by a burgeoning professional perspective on the necessity of the visitor's active interpretive involvement to the securing of an audience for contemporary art, and the maintenance of Tate's status.

Tate Modern also provides evidence of a shift from one leading museological orientation to another, and demonstrates that a contest is taking place between them.[24] With its opening in 2000, Tate Modern's thematic style of display caused a great surge of popular response then and for years afterwards. This museum was then at the centre of contentions concerning the 'proper' roles and responsibilities of a museum, with which are correlated certain curatorial practices, visitor expectations, and exhibition designs. This conflict played out in public documents making the distinction between an older, traditional museology and one less focused on the curator becomes legible in these critical responses. Tate Modern's opening brings underlying assumptions about the museum to the surface and these assumptions become the key exegetical elements to analyze in order to perceive the contours of the applicable museology.

Sixth, Tate Modern allows for an in-depth investigation of the effect of marketing and populist branding on the visit. Tate is acknowledged to be a world leader in this respect.[25] Tate uses a comprehensive program of marketing for its audience development program, and employs branding in almost all its audience communications: websites, signage, logos, and advertisements. The increasing marketization of museums is one of the developments in museums that occur with the spread of the visitor-centered visit. The quality of documentary materials provided by Tate in the form of reports of marketing studies and collaborative advertisements allow for analysis of this aspect of the visit. This documentary evidence in particular reveals the museum's changing primary perception of visitors, from that of ignorant pupils to consumers in possession of a range of perceptual abilities and behavioral affects that may be exploited.

Finally, Tate Modern is an appropriate choice, because in this museum the comingling of a new museology, consumerism, a new urgency to market museums and visitors, innovative display methods, and a reflexive, institutional self-awareness are made manifest. Not only do these phenomena appear together in Tate Modern, but also the evidence suggests that they are mutually enabling. The museum creates a synergistic effect through their combination, and

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[24] The term museology will be rigorously discussed in the below. For now suffice it to say that it refers to a fundamental philosophical orientation of the museums that organizes the institution and gives it a particular focus.

[25] Phillips and O'Reilly (2007) call Tate a brand leader in the field of museum marketing. Tate's use of branding is discussed in detail in chapter five, 'Branding, Advertisements, and Partnerships'.

provides documentary evidence of the processes and results. Thematic displays offer the visitor

choice, which in turn excites her capacity to control the visit, to choose her own experience. In

turn, visitors see themselves as self-actualizing agents, which dovetails with and is encouraged by

consumerist expectations. In turn, a visitor is further conceived as a consumer by being

categorized by marketing surveys according to the type of desire the consumer evidences.

Innovative displays are fashioned to draw more visitors who are ready and willing to employ their

interpretive faculties. Key actors in the visit discourse mobilize this perception of the visitor to

discuss changes to the museum and its core responsibilities. This twenty-first century museum has

been generated by this confluence of historically incised, cultural, museological, and professional

developments, so it is poised as an important institution to reveal the forces that make it so.

This study mainly examines only one museum. The close relation of theory to evidence is

made possible by deep, thorough, and detailed analysis through which elements of its conceptual,

administrative, intellectual, and commercial development are traced. For the level of detailed

analysis this thesis calls for, the case study has to be limited to one museum.[26] This is not to say

that a broader approach would be entirely impracticable. Other researchers have created

perceptive accounts while looking at a selection of institutions. However, the balance of this

thesis is weighted more towards analysis of detailed evidence. Were this personalized visit

already well established in the literature, then pointing out an inconsistency in its defined

properties, or a limitation in its institutional expression might be better facilitated by a wider

ranging survey. However, the research conveyed here has expressly been undertaken to

demonstrate its existence in the minds of actors in the discourse, and identify the historical, social,

and institutional conditions that brought it about.

This thesis being mainly limited to one institution does not mean that the conclusions

reached cannot be generalized. Rather, this study's rootedness in museum discourse gives the

conclusions reached here wider applicability. Tate Modern does not exist in a vacuum; its policies

and procedures exist in a shared museum discourse. More, this research details how a museum

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[26] Other museums are very briefly discussed, in particular to illustrate widespread practices evident in the field.

operationalizes the visit in real world circumstances. This balance of discursive and institutional

evidence, under analysis, draws out deductions that indicate trends in the field of museums.

The focus here is on a museum of modern and contemporary art. An art museum was

chosen for this study primarily because this author has a long standing experience with and

fondness for art museums. A deep familiarity with the museum has helped to shape this study and

assisted in determining the focus, an appropriate case study, and useful evidentiary sources.[27] Art

museums do provide an advantage in examining a turn towards a more individuated visit because

they privilege an examination of pleasure. As has been shown in the above discussion of the

'Create your own Collection' campaign, the art museum has lately become increasingly inventive

in its methods of drawing the visitor into engagement with objects. This inventiveness gives the

visitor incentive to attend and to participate, and this inventiveness is related with a professional

and scholarly deliberation of the visitor's pleasure. The visitor's pleasure is deeply inspected in

relation to a visitor-focused visit. The following will show that the pleasure of the visitor has

become an analytically valuable indexical sign of how the visit has changed.[28] If museums

persisted in being as unwelcoming to the working classes as Bourdieu has concluded, then the

success of contemporary galleries and museums is difficult to adequately explain (even with the

collapse of high culture divisions).[29] If the museum visit were simply a disciplinary workshop,

then we are hard pressed to explain the current offerings by museum that include Djs, late night

parties, games, and public spectacles. This examination will properly assess the significance of

visitors' pleasure in terms of conceptualizations of the visitor and the museum as an institution of

public service.

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[27] This author would not have been able to mount as effective an ekphrasis of the visit to, for example, natural history museums, because the basic knowledge of expectations of visitors, the historical development of museums of natural history, and the discourse produced around and by the natural sciences would have been lacking.

[28] This is not to suggest that other types of museum, such as those of science or history are necessarily less professionally oriented towards a consideration of the visitor's pleasure. Rather this author is convinced that the playfulness that often appears in contemporary art makes art museums well suited for this examination.

[29] In *The Love of Art* (1991[1966]), Bourdieu and Alain Darbel conclude that the typical European art museum's aesthetics naturalize a set of inherited privileges, including the sort of education that produces an appreciation for art. They argue that art museums actively symbolically constitute and maintain a division of classes by displaying only those aesthetics allied with the disposition of the dominant class, and here, they describe a symbolic violence enacted upon those who enter the museum and are made to feel inferior, overwhelmed, and out of place. Those who lack the proper disposition select not to attend the museum, imagining the museum is not meant for them.

Research Design

This study answers the question whether or not the art museum visit has lately been increasingly conceived as more visitor centered than the visit traditionally associated with the museum, and how this conception has come about. This study also seeks to demonstrate what exactly is meant by the statement, 'the visit is becoming more visitor-centered and less focused on the curator's relay of expert knowledge'. This study of the changing nature of the art museum visit is undergirded by a conviction that social changes occur with changes in museology. Though it is not clear that there is a causative relation operating in either direction, from the social world to the museum or the reverse, this thesis will show that they are mutually enabling dynamics and both operating together, generating changes in the nature of the imagined visit. Underlying changes are *expressed* in what is being termed a personalized visit. There is an ongoing transformation of the museum of the twenty-first century and examining this visit is one lens through which the ramifications and consequences of this transformation may be viewed. In this regard, this examination is a work of cultural and historical analysis.

To be clear, this thesis is formulated to deeply examine a specific phenomenon that is being manifested in the discourse of the museum in particular areas of professional practice, especially marketing. This research focuses on bringing the personalized visit to light through detailed analysis of these aspects of the case study museum, Tate Modern. At the same time there are other areas of practice, such as exhibition programming, or conservation, that demonstrate that the museum consists of competing agendas. While the thesis attempts to show that this visitor-orientated visit is becoming more clearly expressed in Tate, it is crucial to acknowledge that this visit is *not* the only type of visit, or even the dominant type of visit evidenced in Tate's galleries, exhibitions, and materials. Rather, the visitor-centered visit is shown to be an emerging theorization of visitors' experiences.

The necessary research scheme both considers evidence of a discursive nature and evidence of the institutional and professional application of conceptually derived or linked strategies. In the course of addressing the main questions this research scheme draws on evidence

to demonstrate links between academic and independent research discourse and professional practice. In this aim the thesis develops two propositions linked to the central questions: a) A leading museum of modern and contemporary art has reconceived the visitor to be an autonomous, meaning-making agent fundamentally understood as a bundle of potentially marketized desires; b) this conception of the visitor constitutes a profound change and can be traced to a new museology becoming dominant in the field. The following chapters will demonstrate these propositions by way of examining the case study. Developments in the (original) Tate Gallery are shown to devolve from two main socio-cultural shifts. They are: a) a fundamental late twentieth-century shift in the philosophical orientation of museums brought about my pressures intrinsic to the museum field; and b) the further elaboration of the visitor as a self-directed monad empowered by the consumerist act of purchase within a leisure industry conditioned by late-capitalist market economies and a shift in governmental cultural policy. This thesis finds that these two main dynamics working together are the crucial forces that have generated a newly imagined visitor figure and visit.

It should be acknowledged that the term 'new museology' has fallen out of favor since its frequent reference in the 1980s and 1990s debates around the primary functions and responsibilities of museums as the position of the visitor in professional and academic studies began to prove problematic to researchers. It is nevertheless used here to describe an historic shift, that while occurring decades in the past, has caused reverberations in the museum field that are still being parsed and debated. The term is also useful in distinguishing the visitor-centered visit from a visit associated with an older museology where the visitor was posited as inferior to the curator, a subject to be educated. The personalized visit, as is an educative, curator-centered visit, is produced by a museology distinct from other museologies that have historically shaped the collections, exhibitionary methodology, managerial organization, and practices of museums.

This study focuses on particular aspects of the case study museum. Its concentrates on marketing efforts and strategies, mostly leaving to one side education, public programming, and exhibition programming, because the evidence shows that the primary means of audience

development and visitor engagement is carried out through marketing. The main bodies of

evidence, marketing reports, advertisements, the opening thematic displays are all gleaned from

the arenas of professional practice linked with Tate communicating with existing visitors and

potential visitors via the avenues of promotion and brand building.

     Documents that account for conceptions of the visitor and the visit are the prime

evidentiary sources. How the particular documents were selected, how categorized, and the

techniques used to interpret them may be useful to the reader.

Evidentiary Sources

     The evidence collected to address the central questions of this thesis is documentary

material. There are five different categories, however the documents may also be broken down in

other useful ways. One strand emanates from within the museum, the other from external

agencies. These documents also comprise two different temporal strands, according to when they

are produced: one class of documents was issued prior to the birth of Tate Modern, and the other

after the museum opens to the public. The utilizing of both strands is key to avoiding analytical

myopia. By examining evidence across a span of time and from varying perspectives this study

provides a sense of the scope of change to the visitor figure and the visit, and allows the reader to

follow the trace of the developments left by pertinent documents.

     The first category of documentary evidence is a set of publically available institutional

records/administrative reports issued by the museum before Tate Modern officially comes into

existence, the Tate Reports. The selected span of the reports analyzed dates from the first report

issued in 1954 through the report issued in 2002, which immediately followed Tate Modern's

opening. The Tate Reports, are first issued yearly, and later bi-yearly, and detail major financial

and administrative changes that take place in the Tate Gallery to generate what is being termed an

'interpretive' museum. This interpretive museum constitutes a key part of the overall argument,

based on the claim that a particular kind of museum develops alongside the visitor-centered visit.

This interpretive museum, is in brief, a type of museum, that in regards to its museological

orientation, administrative structure and policies, and curatorial strategies, places the visitor in the

centre of the museum's focus and provides experiences that attempt to utilize the visitor's

interpretive faculties to make the visitor actively engaged in the determination of meaning.

The second category consists of marketing survey reports. This group of documents

includes two reports, *Tate Through Visitors' Eyes: An Anatomy of a Visit* (2004), and *Tate*

Online: Analysis of the Findings from an Online Survey (2011), both produced by Morris,

Hargreaves, McIntyre, a firm retained by Tate to carry out a several studies in the areas of visitor

needs, and perceptions of the Tate family of museums. These two reports clearly and in a detailed

manner set out the ways that marketers, allied with the museum in the aim of increasing visitor

numbers, imaginatively construct the visit and the visitor. These reports disclose how Morris,

Hargreaves and McIntyre envision the varieties of visitors to Tate, both in terms of embodied

visits, and by way of visits carried out in the virtual, electronic domain. They also convey

professional assessments of the museum, in terms of what visitors are perceived as needing and

desiring. These sources of evidence reveal how the visit is implicitly being rethought in the minds

of marketers, a set of key actors shaping the museum discourse. These reports are proprietary

information and not publicly available, and were (thankfully) provided to this author by staff

members of Tate.

A third category of documents anticipates the arrival of Tate Modern. These documents

are Iwona Blazwick's and Frances Morris' co-written essay published in *Tate Modern, the*

Handbook (2000) Blazwick and Morris, then the leading curators of Tate Modern, in consultation

with Nicholas Serota, the director of Tate in its entirety, designed the opening displays of the

museum and produced this essay that relate their thoughts on the displays and the imagined visitor

figure they expected to attend. [30] This essay gives a clear account of the changing types of visit

and new kinds of visitors these key actors anticipated appearing in Tate Modern. It also reveals

their concern with the influence of the museum as a potential purveyor of master narratives that

they thought represented a moribund approach to relaying the history of the modernist tradition.

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[30] Since then, Blazwick has gone on to become director of the Whitechapel Gallery, and Morris is now head of
Collections (International art) at Tate Modern.

The fourth category of documentary evidence utilized is advertisements. The selected advertisements were published on the back pages of issues of *Tate Etc.* magazine between 2006 and 2009, a time period spanning a partnership agreement between Tate and UBS. This material was selected by reviewing all the issues of *Tate Etc.* magazine and the magazines associated with Tate since the museum's opening, including those that preceded *Tate Etc.* These advertisements were chosen to demonstrate the ways in which a particular version of the museum visit is both shaped and conditioned by commercial interests and financial obligations, not only by museological and curatorial concerns. These documents are essentially a co-production, demonstrating the close relation between Tate and UBS, and indicating how the visit is being reconceived within a commercial agenda that brands interactions with corporate entities and commodifies visitors' experiences. The images contained in these advertisements present an idealized version of the visit and visitors, which is also a hybrid of conflated concerns including mutual profiting from a relation between an cultural giant and a financial powerhouse, and the desire to render public wealth as private goods. This visit conceptualized in a visual format is shown to be the nexus of a variety of layered, symbolic expectations that must be sifted through the use of particular methods of visual decoding.

The final category of documents is recently produced. This group consists of selected art criticism articles written in response to the opening displays of Tate Modern and the subsequent rehang that took place in 2006. This collection of documents was gathered through research of published articles containing keywords related to Tate Modern's opening. These reviews were selected because they represent the way the visit is imagined in the minds of public critics who are also important actors in shaping museum discourse.[31] These documents are key in demonstrating the implicit assumptions made about visitors and the nature of the visit based on the style of display. More, this category of evidence also reveal the projections that are made onto the visitor-centered visit, taken to be a harbinger of social change.

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[31] These sources were mostly newspapers published in the UK. The attempt was made to offer a fair sampling across the range of UK papers with a diversity of class and socio-economic associations. A few sources of art criticism published outside of Britain that are longer, sustained arguments are included, again to provide an accurate picture of the span of responses.

In addition to these documents, various other materials are examined to support or expand the analysis of related materials. Additionally, some secondary criticism is drawn on at various points in order to support or expand the analysis of the primary evidence. This section has discussed the ways in which the selected documents are appropriate sources of evidence for satisfying the questions posed. How they are analyzed follows.

Analytical Methods

The primary analytical tools used in this study are textual analysis and close, critical reading. As stated above, this thesis critically assesses manifestations of the discourse, which is a kind of discourse analysis that should not be confused with the methodology associated with linguistics.[32] Here the method of close reading alters significantly in the case of the Tate Reports, which require a slightly different frame for relaying the conclusions. Also, analysis of the advertisements, which are less textual and more visual, requires certain visual decoding tools.

The first group of documents, the Tate Reports, details the year-by-year functions of the Tate Gallery. These reports give accounts of the exhibitions, acquisitions, current trustees, the staff and administration, the state of finance, restoration projects, and the gallery building(s). These documents are read for indications of the presence of a particular museology and the transition from one to another. The exegetical armature for analysis of these reports is a time line that illustrates for the reader the ways in which a particular orientation to the visitor is manifested institutionally. This time line is importantly supported by a discussion of the political and economic context, in order for all the major forces behind the development of Tate into an interpretive museum are made manifest.

The advertisements constitute a different form of 'text' in comparison to the other bodies of evidence. These are analyzed in two very different regards. They are regarded as presenting an idealized visit with characters in the place of the putative visitor, and images are the key

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[32] This is not to be confused with discourse analysis, which is used by linguistics, social science, and cognitive psychology disciplines and involves a particular, formalized method of reading, interpreting, and breaking down language.

component. So, the images are read both as narrative devices that convey expectations around the visit, and they are read as a collection of signs that refer to ideas and characters that exist in current culture. They are broken down formally, in terms of their compositional arrangement, use of colors and tone. They are broken down into their component visual narratives, and read specifically to disclose the implicit types of visit and visitor they suggest. More, the images are analyzed as representative of a relatively new type of partnership between museums and businesses: collaborative branding that is intended to be a synergistic rendering of an idealized client.

Order of the Argument

The order of the chapters follows the order of analysis. The following overview will act as a chart, guiding the reader through the balance of the thesis.

The second chapter, 'The Changing Nature of the Visit' (pp. 40-86), explores the complex history of research on the visit, how several academic disciplines inform this history by posing their own particular questions and methods of examination. Through an overview of the literature, encompassing academic museum studies and professional practice investigations of the visitor's relation to the museum, the reader will come to see the central issue of museum and visitor studies that had generated much of the relevant scholarly and professional study. The central issue is how to change the middle-class makeup of the museum, to bring it into alignment with the Enlightenment ideals of universal education. A new museology registers a break with traditional ways of regarding the museum and visitor in addressing this dilemma. The ramifications of a 'turn to meaning' and its relation to the new museology are discussed. To place the visitor-centered visit in appropriate historical position, a critique of several prominent scholars' models of the visit follows. Out of these critiques is developed a rudimentary continuum of the professional and academic conceptions of the visitor. A personalized, visitor-centered visit is shown to appear in the work of recent scholarship, and shown to be institutionally imagined and performed in the case study museum.

The third chapter, 'An Interpretive Museum' (pp. 89-115) demonstrates the institutional developments that occur in the Tate organization before Tate Modern comes into being as an interpretive museum. It is argued that that this development of Tate Modern occurs as successive museologies shape and condition the original Tate Gallery. This argument is conducted by analysis of the Tate Reports, highlighting significant moments of transition between museologies. It is shown through the use of a chronology that a series of progressive changes in museum infrastructure and administration correlate to these shifts between museologies. The historical context is discussed with reference to changes in the profession expressed through national and international organizations that lead the museum field. This discussion includes the political framework set up by a conservative government that revised cultural policy to remake systems of governance and management for museums, essentially making Tate a corporate institution within an enterprise culture. The notion of 'public service' is shown to be a linchpin conceit with regard to a shift in policy under a New Labor administration concerned with expanding participation along the valences of class and race. The changing ideas of what constitutes public service serve as indexical signs to changes in the way the visit is imagined.

Chapter four, 'Marketized Visitors' (pp. 116-153) presents detailed examinations of two key internally commissioned reports, *Tate Through Visitor's Eyes* (2004), and *Tate Online: Analysis of the Findings from an Online Survey* (2011). Both survey reports present evidence that Tate has come to regard its visitors through the lens of marketized, consumerist logic. The visitor is modeled as autonomous agents with particular needs, learning styles, and ways of seeing the museum, all of which are broken down into correlating market segments that ostensibly allow the visitor's engagement with the museum to be manipulated. The nature of engagement and what the term implies in the field of museum practice is discussed. The notion of a virtual visitor gives rise to the idea of using the museum as an archive. The pliability of the museum with regard to visitor needs generates a discussion of ways the consumerist visitor is also imagined to be a producer of museum content and a collaborator through crowdsourced and co-curation schemes. The complex nature of consumption and the particular ways it is conditioned in a museum context is

considered, as is the role that marketing plays in mediating the shifting and intertwined roles of

the visitor who acts as consumer, shareholder, producer and collaborator with the museum at

various times. The discussion concludes with an examination of the benefits and disadvantages of

marketing logics shaping the visitor's conceptualization.

The fifth chapter, 'Branding, Advertisements and Partnerships' (pp. 154-183),

investigates the uses of branding in audience development and in conditioning the imagined

relation of the visitor figure to the museum. The application generally of brands in the

commercial and museum worlds is discussed along with the advantages of corporate partnerships.

It is argued that brands attempt to form a personalized connection with the consumer, and that

Tate has used this tool effectively to hold in abeyance several competing claims to present itself

to visitors as an institution that can meet their varied desires. It is also argued that a narrative of

an idealized visit produced in the form of an advertizing campaign collaboratively made between

Tate and the UBS corporation further markets the museum to a middle-class consumer base. The

images depicted in the advertisements are complex, layered series of signs that attempt to effect

the transmutation of public patrimony into private goods, thus making the visit an experience of

private consumption.

Chapter six, 'Tate Modern Displays' (pp. 184-217), returns to the early moments of Tate

Modern's opening to analyze the critical response to the displays. The public accounts reveal how

the display arrangements are linked to particular deeply held notions of what rightly constitutes a

museum and brings to the surface the conflict between opposing museologies. The critiques put

forward in this public debate are shown to correlate with the lead curator's testimony of their

intentions to construct a set of displays that would contrast with the traditional, progressive,

chronological displays associated with a connoisseurial program. The curators' vision of the

visitor as a flâneur is also shown to be implicit in the displays that were constructed to allow for

pleasure and excitement. The argument is made that a personalized, visitor-centered visit is

imagined to be more than it is by its association with a dream of democratic parity among visitors

and between visitors and curators. The visit envisioned by proponents of the opening displays is

also shown to be generated by the marketing of Tate as more than a museum, but also a harbinger of social change.

The final chapter, the 'Conclusion' (pp. 218-229), rehearses the arguments put forward and articulates the findings of the thesis, discussing the relation of the personalized visit to the marketing program of Tate, and the benefits and limitations. It examines the ramifications for the field of a visitor and visit that are an amalgam of the conceptualizations encountered through the evidence. This chapter also relates the limitations of this study, and makes suggestions for further exploration of the questions it raises.

All Change

This examination of the visit has come out of a protracted process of wrestling with questions about the visit, a difficult process given the range and extent of pertinent literature. The main reason for the investment of the labor required is the intense, personal identification this author has with the museum. It has been a place of revelation. For some the contemporary art museum is an exciting, promising harbinger for a uniquely twenty-first century cultural meeting place. For others, it portends the loss of a well-loved institution swallowed up in a sea of spectacle with the glint of a camera's flash now and then piercing the crowded rooms. The museum is said to no longer teach its visitors. Instead it entertains them with tawdry distractions. For the author, the first experience with a museum was as a child, and there is an urge to return to the wonder of that moment of initial discovery. As J.D. Salinger (1951) writes in, *The Catcher in the Rye,* in the voice of Holden Caulfield, explaining how the museum can be when consigned to memory and revisited:

> The best thing, though, in that museum, was that everything always stayed right where it was. Nobody'd move. You could go there a hundred thousand times, and that Eskimo would still be just finished catching those two fish, the birds would still be on their way south … Nobody'd be different. The only thing that would be different would be *you* [emphasis in original] (Salinger, 1951, pp. 157-58).

That is no longer the picture of the museum—at least not the contemporary and modern art museum. It was understood partway through making this study that it would not provide a way

back to that golden experience. Rather, this study has to establish a new kind of relation to the

museum that is experiencing troublesome change. This thesis examines the visit in order to

properly understand these recent changes, so that as Holden Caulfield suggests, we do not remain

static, but develop, so that each time we return to the museum we are different as well.

Chapter Two: The Changing Nature of the Visit

Introduction: Museum Literature and the Enlightenment

      The literature on the topic of visiting the museum is extensive, and dispersed across a

range of academic and professional disciplines. This literature does not issue exclusively from

museum scholars and researchers, but also from critics, historians, and social theorists, as well as

museum professionals, curators, conservators, designers, evaluators, development and education

staff.[33] Information on the museum visit also derives from professional institutions affiliated with

or comprised of museums. Among these are organizations that disseminate information with

regards to appropriate techniques and procedures, create ethics codes, host conferences, produce

journals, and form committees to assist municipalities in establishing and managing collections.[34]

Another vital source is museum studies programs that train, advise, and provide qualifications for

museum workers and professionals.[35] Still another source for the literature is museum journals

and publishing houses and their imprints.[36]

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[33] Hilde Hein (2000) discusses the growth of this group of trained insiders with specialized knowledge and technical abilities who institute regularized procedures and certification for museums (pp. 40-41).

[34] The International Council of Museums is the largest organization with the most influence on museums worldwide and is affiliated with UNESCO. ICOM was created in 1946 by and for museum professionals, has 32,000 members and museum professionals, and has committees representing 136 countries. Its Code of Ethics has created the most recognized, standardized framework of policies with regards to collections held in public trust (http://icom.museum/the-organisation/). In the UK the Museums Association is also the oldest such organization in the world, created in 1889. It has 6000 individual members and 600 institutional members (http://www.museumsassociation.org/about). Also in the UK, the Association of Independent Museums (AIM) exists for museums not funded directly by the state (http://www.aim-museums.co.uk/#). The MLA, the Museums, Libraries, and Archives Council accomplished some of the same tasks as the above organizations, existing from 1931 until 2012, when its responsibilities were folded into the Arts Council England and National Archives. In the US the largest museum association is the American Alliance of Museums, begun as the American Association of Museums in 1906. It has 18,000 individual members and 3000 institutional members (http://aam-us.org/home). The Smithsonian Institution, itself a source of museum-related epistemology, with an emphasis on bodies based in the US, offers a comprehensive overview of resources and archives and training as well (http://research.si.edu/). The largest commercial consultancy on the globe is Lord Cultural Resources founded by Gail and Barry Lord in Toronto, Canada 1981. The firm advises and manages museums and organizations viewed as cultural resources, and have completed projects in at least 50 countries (http://www.lord.ca/Pages/Lord_AboutUs_Profile.php). Accessed November 24, 2014.

[35] The largest program in the UK and the first of its kind is the Museum Studies program at The University of Leicester, which houses the Research Centre for Museums and Galleries. It is also the site where the journal *Museum and Society*, begun in 2003, is published. There are other programs listed on the Smithsonian website (see above footnote). In the US and Canada there are conflicting accounts of the number of academic training programs that exist. The Smithsonian lists almost 130 programs on its Center for Education and Museum Studies website. There is also the Association of Academic Museums and Galleries, which seeks to proliferate professional standards for museums and galleries affiliated with colleges and universities (http://www.aamg-us.org/about-us/). Accessed September 24, 2014.

[36] Titles pertaining to the museum are published under the headings of Museum Studies, Museology, Heritage, or Visitor Studies. The major presses for books and studies produced under these rubrics are Routledge, The University of Leicester Press, Athlone Press, Wiley Blackwell, and Alta Mira Press. Major journals are *Museum and Society*,

The literature draws on all these academic, professional, organizational, pedagogic and media sources to explain changes to the visit *implicitly*, by examining and describing changes to the visitor and the museum. It does so through analysis of the content of museum collections, exhibitions, and institution architecture (given the focus of this thesis, particularly, art museums); the relations between institutions and government; the growth and development among a cadre of museum curators of a discourse of professional responsibility; and a concurrent evolution of a philosophical orientation towards these responsibilities. Scholars and researchers also historicize and frame changes in terms of institutions' relation to shifting contexts altered by new modes of sociality, and broad cultural and economic shifts. There are also academics and professionals writing within the young discipline of visitor studies who *explicitly* examine the forces that condition changes to the visit. [37]

These investigations have produced a welter of information, diffused across several disciplines. Before explaining how this study of the museum visit relates to the available data, what the predominating views of the visit are, and how those views have been shaped by historical movements and particularly influential scholars, it serves to consider what information is relevant to this topic. This chapter will delineate the range of scholarly and professional literature within museum studies that is most relevant to the current, dominant, formulations of the museum visit. It will mark out the visit from the inundation of information that pertains more generally to the museum, which has been in more or less constant production since the founding of the public museum, but in the last twenty years, flourished with the explosive, worldwide

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Museums Journal, the *Journal of Conservation and Museum Studies*, and the *Journal of Museum Management and Curatorship*. For an aggregate list see the Smithsonian, though its inventory leaves out some important journals, it is a useful place to begin (http://museumstudies.si.edu/Header3.html).

[37] The recognition of study of the visitor as its own academic discipline is quite recent. Sharon McDonald in her essay 'Accessing Audiences: Visiting Visitor Books' (2005) says that 'over the past twenty years [is] the period in which "museum visitor studies" can be said to have become consolidated as a specific field of study' (p. 120). The main professional organization that anchors the discipline, and generates research and dialogue through conferences and the journal *Visitor Studies: Theory, Research, and Practice* (published bi-annually) is The Visitor Studies Association (VSA) founded in the US in 1990. They say they are 'a membership organization dedicated to understanding and enhancing learning experiences in informal settings through research, evaluation, and dialogue'. Their explicit goal is education: 'We offer an array of services designed to foster evidence-based practice, including an annual conference, professional development workshops, and the peer-reviewed journal *Visitor Studies*. Through these and other activities, we help researchers, practitioners, policy-makers, organizational leaders, and funders advance the field of informal learning' (http://www.visitorstudies.org/). Accessed November 19, 2014.

growth of new museums.[38] This chapter will demonstrate that the relevant literature does explain

changes to the museum and the visitor in terms of the visit becoming oriented towards the visitor

figure and shaped to meet this figure's needs. This important induction has not been widely

acknowledged in the field.

The areas that generate the knowledge contained in the museum studies canon are most

relevant to the museum visit: museology, psychology, sociology, market research, art history, and

anthropology. Each discipline contributes to our understanding of the visit by way of examining

the museum or the visitor. The museum visit finds itself at the interstices of several disciplines,

because it is comprised of the interaction between the visitor and the museum, and its study seeks

to understand the nature of this interaction. The visit is, perforce, an interdisciplinary subject. It

therefore requires examination through cross-disciplinary perspectives and sources. As stated in

the above introductory chapter, the particular scholarly discipline that brings together concerns

shaping the discourse of museums is museum studies.

Museum studies is the key disciplinary window through which to examine the reshaping

of the visit. Not all topics generated by the discipline are germane to this examination of the visit;

the following overview of the literature separates out the most relevant studies. However, the

literature *generally* lacks a comprehensively diagnostic view of the visit, and thus it fails to fully

account for the underlying causes of the current visit departing significantly from long held values

and expectations of the visit that relate to the public museum's founding ethos. This is the case

though the visit's departure from these values is methodically analyzed and frequently lamented.

Jean Baudrillard (1982) describes an entertainment bacchanal as the iconic museum experience in

'The Beaubourg Effect: Implosion and Deterrence', marking the museum as a site of ravenous,

indiscriminate cultural consumption. Other critiques of the post-Enlightenment museum are made

by Frederic Jameson in *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (1991), and in

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[38] This situation is rightly termed a 'museum boom'. The evidence collected shows that the numbers are staggering. Roberto Cecchi (2014) relates that the Fondazione di Venezia's study of the growth and expansion of international museums reveals that 652 new museums were build in the seventeen years that span 1995 and 2012. The majority of these by far were constructed in the United States (139), and the greater number of these were art museums. Even more startling is the fact that this boom occurred while the world underwent the worst recession of the past 80 years (Guerzoni, 2014).

The Cultural Turn: Selected Writings on the Postmodern (1998). Jameson views the museum as a realm that has been colonized by the global spread of capital that turns art objects into commodities. Rosalind Krauss (1990) in, 'The Cultural Logic of the Late Capitalist Museum', summarizes the argument that museums are now abandoning their roles as guardians of a public trust and couple their corporate interests with the delivery of art 'products' to a desiring consumer. She observes, 'The notion of the museum as a guardian of the public patrimony has given way to the notion of a museum as a corporate entity with a highly marketable inventory and the desire for growth' (p. 3).

In making its attempts to account for change to institutional and visitor behavior, the literature does not fully acknowledge that the central mission the public museum was charged with at its inception is its *sine qua non*, and departures from this mission threaten its identity and its seeming purpose. This purpose derives from the institution being formed in the European Enlightenment that held out the promise of universal education.

For its visitors, researchers, and patrons, seeming departures of the public museum from its core duty to educate the public threaten the belief and hope that the museum is a stable linchpin in a generous, collectively organized, civic endeavor through which we become connected to others and through which we come to deeper knowledge of ourselves. It is an article of faith that the museum will perform these collectively and individually salutary functions. Economic, psychic, and public health benefits associated with museum attendance reinforce the museum's identity as an institution that is important to and supportive of our individual and collective well-being.[39] Institutional behaviors that appear to threaten a departure from the core mission, threaten the museum's perceived purpose and identity.

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[39] The notion that museum activity is beneficial to individuals and communities issues not only from the museum and its researchers, but also from the disciplines of economics, medicine, and cultural studies. A study undertaken in Norway shows that participatory cultural activities such as museum visiting increase health (particularly in men) by lowering the risk for anxiety and depression, (Cuypers, Krokstad, Holmen, Knudtsen, Bygren, & Holmen 2011). Jan Packer found that museums can provide a restorative environment in which visitors can recover from the demands and pressures of their lives (Packer, 2008). In a commissioned study, an economist from the London School of Economics purported to quantify the value of visiting museums for the public, finding that the value is higher than playing a sport and worth more than £3000 per annum (Fujiwara, 2013). Chaterjee and Noble (2013) examined the effects of patients handling museum objects while in hospitals and care homes, and found significant improvement in what they terms 'positive emotion', wellbeing, and happiness. They also noted advancement in patients' perceptions of their own health.

These perceived threats have been acknowledged and examined in the literature, and the ways that museums have morphed in the past two generations to lose, or seemingly tenuously grasp this purpose have been inspected from a range of perspectives.

Hilde Hein (2000) provides an important overview in discussing the philosophical changes the museum has undergone, connecting them to outwardly manifested institutional developments in *The Museum in Transition*. Kenneth Hudson (1977) surveys the International Council of Museums' attempts to formulate official definitions of the museum, thus demonstrating how the museum's core values have been in flux, in *Museums for the 1980s: A Survey of World Trends*. A discrete area of the literature details and explains changes to the museum in terms of the onset of a critical shift in philosophical outlook known as the new museology. The book that definitively declares its arrival is *The New Museology* (1989), a series of essays edited by Peter Vergo. Max Ross describes this movement and its resulting orientation as featuring a new institutional reflexivity, increased accessibility to those who are not in the ruling class, more acceptance of popular culture, lessened exclusivity, and a more 'democratic climate' (2004, pp. 84-85). Deirdre Stam (1993) critiques this movement, pointing to an institution so completely reconfigured in the imaginations of those who desire the adoption of this museology, that it becomes almost anything. She writes, 'New Museologists offer less tangible metaphors to suggest purpose: the museum can be a forum, or a dialogue between curators and the public, or even "a public access system" where visitors assemble their own experience' (Stam, p. 273).

Still, this acknowledgement and subsequent examination does not allay the anxiety produced and manifested on the part of museum professionals, scholars, and other significant actors who frame the discourse of the visit. The museum studies literature manifests trepidation of the public museum either fulfilling its role or failing to do so. Its researchers and writers express dismay about the museum changing in such a way as to be topically fashionable, and

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Simon Tait (2008) puts forward the argument, gaining in popularity, that museums can bring about urban renewal by generating new business investment in areas previously blighted by crime and neglect.

simultaneously fear that the institution will remain frozen in time, unresponsive to changing

contexts. The key reason for this inconsolable anxiety is the museum's founding in the

Enlightenment project.

At the core of the discipline of museum studies is a persistent question concerning how

the European public museum birthed in an Enlightenment ideal of universal education has

become comprised of a visitor population that does *not* reflect the greater society.[40] It has been

and continues to be the case that the majority of visitors to the museum are middle class. Recent

analysis has been made of the Taking Part survey, the most comprehensive survey of participation

in arts, culture, leisure, and sporting activities carried out in England, from data collected from

2005 to 2006 (Bunting, Chan, Goldthorpe, Keaney & Oskala, 2008). The report generated

indicates that the higher the education and social status level, the more likely one is to attend

events pertaining to art. Those who are poor and working class still tend to avoid museums.

Recent statistics provided by Longborough University Research School of Informatics also bear

this out. According to their data, while working class and lowest subsistence groups make up

twenty-eight percent of the general population, they only make up eleven percent of museum

visitors. However, while middle class and upper middle class groups only make up twenty-four

percent of the population, they represent forty-two percent of museum visitors (Greenwood &

Maynard, 2006, p. 9).

The crucial question is, if museums really are intended for everyone, why then are they

not more representative of the entire population?

Museum studies is fundamentally concerned with this dilemma of the museum's

Enlightenment origins consistently being at odds with its visitor profiles, and this concern

conditions the discursive, conceptualized public art museum visit. An overriding fear of the loss

of an institution (that risks losing its identity) is sublimated into questions of the museum's

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[40] The literature referenced in this chapter mostly pertains to the European public museum, but occasional reference is
made to North American institutions that are influential in the culture of museums around the world.

responsibilities and the modes of address by which they should be met. A particular historical

trajectory has caused us to arrive at this point.

The Private and the Public

The precursors of the European public art museum were private, exclusive collections

that did not seek to educate the whole public.[41] The genealogically related Cabinet of Curiosities,

or *Kunstkammer* and *Wunderkammer*, that came into being during the Renaissance were intended

to be pleasurable explorations of the world collected in a chamber (or, in some cases, vast

storehouses, gardens, or pavilions) for the owner and his or her guests (Hooper-Greenhill, 1992,

pp. 79-80; Newhouse, 1998, pp. 14-16; Taylor, 1999, pp.1-3).[42]

In becoming a public enterprise the museum took on a reflexively definitive

responsibility to hold in collective trust objects intended for public exploration and use, under the

rubric of a state concerned with edifying its citizens and shaping their behavior.[43] In other words,

the museum takes on a responsibility by which it is defined, and over time begins to define itself

through its dutiful performance. The public museum comes into being in an historical moment

when the state is taking control of the social order, and it is constituted very much as a sign of that

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[41] For more thorough examinations of the transition to the public museum, see Jeffrey Abt (2006). Tony Bennett (1995) is very concerned with the continuation of particular concepts that underlay the organization of the Kunstkammer (pp. 40-42). The most thorough and important studies regarding the Renaissance origins of the museum have been made by Paula Findlen in 'The Museum: Its Classical Etymology and Renaissance Genealogy' (1989); and Possessing Nature: Museums, Collecting, and Scientific Culture in Early Modern Italy (1994).

[42] Actually, the cabinets performed several functions, which are not worth taking the time to outline here. Hooper-Greenhill (1992) analyses these collections in depth and clarifies the distinctions between them, in chapters four and five, 'The Irrational Cabinet', and 'The "Cabinet of the World"'.

[43] There is an influential strand of the literature that deals with the questions of how and it what ways the museum became involved in social reform movements that (in England) were a combined aspects of visual education, Christian moral interpretation, and the establishment of a national artistic tradition. Brandon Taylor (1999) analyzes these issues, particularly in his chapter 'Instructing the Whole Nation' (pp. 67-99). Tony Bennett (1995) also is concerned with the ' emerging role of museums in the formation of a bourgeois public sphere' (p. 25). He concludes that the museum is a machine for 'producing "progressive subjects", or put another way, 'induct the visitor into an improving relationship to the self' (p. 47). At the root is a fundamental move by the state to take responsibility for the social order. This action produces modern institutions, according to Zygmunt Bauman. Bauman (1992) explains the transition from pre-modern to modern societies arguing that this move is essentially the acceptance and taking on of responsibilities by the state, a useful and telling parallel to the above argument that the Enlightenment museum is at its core constructed around responsibility for and to its publics. George Hein (1998) reiterates this point (p. 3).

order.[44] More, with reference to royal collections in general and the exemplary Louvre museum in

particular, as these collections become available for public use, their availability comes to be seen

as a national inheritance and the appropriate management of museums comes to be seen as a

metric of good governance (McClellan, 2003). Museums become intricately intertwined with a

public appreciation of the character and value of the state and the public's identification with the

abstracted idea of a 'nation'.

        The crucial shift is from the private to the public: the public museum brings common

judgment and private experience together (Latitudes, 2013). It moves matters that once had been

private concerns into the public sphere where these concerns become subject to scholarship,

questioning, and debate. The museum becomes a civic institution that helps to define the civic

sphere as that which sits between the private home and the public workspace. It occupies this

third space, and is to some degree constitutive of it: the space of civil society where private

experience meets common judgment. Thus the public museum as a sign of the social order, of

national inheritance, of civic engagement, and of public education, with its establishment takes on

a series of interrelated responsibilities. 'With the creation of the public museum', as Victoria

Newhouse phrases it: 'Duty began to outweigh delight' (Newhouse, 1998, p. 9).[45]

        In taking up its duties, the museum takes up the role of educator, a role which mutually

reinforces and is reinforced by the authority exercised by the museum in attending to the public's

education. The twinned endowments of responsibility and authority condition the institution, its

cadre of professional workers and its patrons and visitors, to recognize the obligations it is

charged to fulfill, as coextensive with and definitive of the institution itself (despite the

complexity of the confluence of agendas in the museum's origins and its development).[46] Bound

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[44] The Secretary of the Smithsonian in 1895, George Brown Goode (1895) in his guidebook on the managing of
museums, *The Principles of Museum Administration*, wrote, 'The degree of civilization to which any nation, city or
province has attained is best shown by the character of its public museums' (p. 73).
[45] The discipline of cultural studies that generates this examination of the visit is well poised to analyze this topic.
Louise Purbrick (1996) says that the discipline of cultural studies is concerned with 'the analysis of institutions which
lie somewhere between official policy and popular pleasure' (p. 70).
[46] Even in the museum's Renaissance origins there were profound discrepancies, and inherent contradictions: for
example, the first private collection spaces were intended to create an insular sphere of scholarly study within the home,
philosophically structured to bring the outside world in. At the same time, this space acted as a sign indicating social
status and an area for social interchange. Paula Findlen (1989) explores these contradictions. More, Eilean Hooper-

up with this notion of duty are constelled notions of national identity, the public, and

institutional authority. Indeed, much of the literature generated within museum studies attempts to

parse the extent to which the museum mediates and conditions the identities of its visitors, shapes

a notion of 'the public', and how it wields its authority and to what purposes, particularly with

regards to its audiences.

The museum that provides the material and discursive space for carrying out of the

contemporary visit has been conditioned by values of universal education, and public

accessibility. However, the enshrining of these values in the idea of a public museum, or rather

the foregrounding of public education as the key goal of the public museum is also an historical

development. This type of institutional agenda has been termed the 'modern museum project'

(Starn, 2005).[47]

While the seeds for this development lay in the museum's Enlightenment birth, in the

earlier part of the twentieth century a philosophical orientation towards the chief work of the

museum is described by David Murray, a Scottish archaeologist, as dedicated to 'scientific

description, classification, and explanation' (Starn, 2005, p. 72). This moment, also described as

the 'Golden Age' of the public museum, preceding World War I, also preceded the modern

museum project. In this era, the museum's core concerns were centralization, specialization, and

classification of its collection(s) (Starn, 2005, p. 79). In essence, the museum was conceived

around and ultimately defined by its collection, and the care of this collection, its proper

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Greenhill, in her historical examination of the museum *Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge* (1992) takes an almost opposite view. She writes, 'There is no essential museum. No "direct ancestors", or "fundamental role" can be identified. Identities, targets, functions, and subject positions are variable and discontinuous. Not only is there no essential identity for museums, but such identities as *are* constituted are subject to constant change as the play of dominations shifts and new relations of advantage and disadvantage emerge' [emphasis in the text] (p. 191).

[47] Ralph Starn discusses how this project is distinct from an older scientistic museum project that sought through careful study and rigorous application of classifying schemes to make the world comprehensible. This project does devolve from the Enlightenment mission. It is quite similar to what Eilean Hooper Greenhill (2000) calls the Modernist Museum, which she describes as one that educates much of society by producing an 'encyclopaedic world view' through the collection and classification of artefacts and specimens. It also creates harmoniously unified visual narratives that do not admit the voices of visitors' (p. 151). Though this definition seems easily and immediately applicable to natural history museums, it is also accurately describes the synoptic display of a certain story of modern art's development given in the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the famous mind map depicting a panoply of schools and movements making an inexorable progression towards abstraction.

preservation, and the appropriate allocation of objects in recognized taxonomies of scholarly

discourse were its chief aims.[48] The collection was the museum's reason to be.

Alma Wittlin, an Austrian émigré and one of the most influential museum historians and

researchers on museum-based communication and education of the twentieth century, similarly

periodises the museums development, describing three distinct spans. Focusing her survey on

museums in Europe and America, Wittlin asserts that a period of specialization before the First

World War was followed by an inter-war period with an emphasis on public education (Wittlin,

1970, p. 121-145).[49] Then, according to Wittlin, post-1945, there is a span of 'search and conflict,

of gestation, achievement and deadlock' (p. 163).

The struggle Wittlin describes is between competing visions or philosophical perspectives

of what constitutes a proper museum, based on notions of what a museum is supposed to

primarily *do*. In the post-war era, museums in the UK, Europe, and in the US have consolidated

this shift from a concentration on collections to a concentration on public service through

education (Weil, 1999).[50] One of the clearest markers of this shift is the American Association of

Museums in 1976 bestowing a governance role to a group of educators who threatened to secede

from the organization in 1973. By 1984, the AAM had published a report, *Museums for a New

Century*, that unequivocally declared education to be the primary purpose of the museum.

Similarly, the membership of ICOM adopted a resolution at its ninth general Conference in 1971,

a resolution that rejected the emphasis of museums on collections and the care of objects and

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[48] It is common knowledge now within the field that the term 'curator' issues from the Latin, *curare*, 'to care for', as in to care for the objects of the collection.

[49] Wittlin also describes this period as another museum boom, with an estimated number of museums at 114 in 1917, increasing to 738 in 1934 (1970, p. 145).

[50] Both George Hein (1998) and Hooper-Greenhill (1991) assert that museums were embedded in and carrying out this educational role in the nineteenth century. Though they assert that the museum had this role much earlier than Wittlin, Ralph Starn (2005) and Stephen Weil (1999) claim, Hein and Hooper-Greenhill also cite the same organization, the (then) American Association of Museums, and their 1968 *Belmont Report*, and the threat made in 1973 by a group of museum educators to secede from the AAM, as evidence of the museum's education role being ratified professionally in the twentieth century. This series of events is the evidence most often cited to demonstrate that museums do make a clear shift in the post-war era.

urged the adoption of educational roles that specifically addressed the needs of the particular

communities in which museums were located (Weil, 1999).[51]

This focus on education signifies that museums have become public service institutions

that seek to 'contribute positively to the quality of individual human lives and to enhance the

well-being of human communities' (Weil, 1999, p. 231). However, the following analysis will

show that we are at the threshold of still another era, essentially now in a moment of transition,

and in this burgeoning millennial era, museums are shifting again. Now the new museology is

being conditioned by a late-stage capitalist positing of the autonomous, consumerist individual as

the primary model of the visitor, a figure idealized as a bundle of conscious, self-aware needs,

that meets its needs in collaboration with the museum.

It is important to periodise the museum in its relation to prevailing museologies so as to

provide an historical spine to which we may attach the convoluted and complex developments

that describe the visit's history. These developments do *not* simply track as a movement from the

private experience of the *Wunderkammer* to the public experience of national heritage or

education, from private pleasure to public performance, with a return now to (more) privatized

pleasures, though this trajectory does crudely describe the historical arc of the visit in museum

discourse. However, it is through the development of movements, such as the new museology,

which have fundamentally altered the relationship between the museum and the visitor, that deep,

underlying institutional changes are generated in the museum and expressed in the ways objects

are exhibited, didactic materials are composed, and connections are made with the visitor.

It is not the case that the museum's Enlightenment origin has always produced a concern

with its duty towards the visitor in the way it does now. Rather, movements both within and

without the museum have generated a reorganization of priorities that have at times previous, lay

dormant and unfulfilled. As stated by sociologists investigating the changes in public-service

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[51] In Britain, the expression of this change in professional perspective was not so sharply made. Rather, the change towards a more education focused, service-oriented outlook in museums was a more gradual process brought on by the concerns for primary school teaching, and is associated with the generation of research on museums' educational potential by public service bodies, such as the British Association, the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust, and the HMI Museum Committee. A thorough account of this process is given by Eilean Hooper-Greenhill (1991), and a briefer account by George Hein (1998).

organizations: 'institutional change may frequently represent, "a response to shifts in ideology,

professional standards, and cultural norms of the field or section in which an organization is

situated"' (as cited in Weil, 1999, p. 233). The changes to the museum are traceable to precisely

those shifts in ideology, professional standards, and cultural behaviors that are brought into being

by the movements to be discussed.

In this moment of transition, values of widespread education are still at the forefront of

the stated missions of many art museums and these values are intertwined with ideas by which the

museum formulates its relevance to a greater section of the population. Policies of social

inclusion, or the involvement of museums in urban renewal and programs specifically targeting

underserved populations are not easily separable from these values, even though strategies

employed to increase inclusion, such as visitor involvement in creating museum content, do not

necessarily consist of the traditional educational goals of inculcating knowledge and skills. It

remains a question how much contemporary strategies for reformulating the museum's mission,

such as those convened under the heading of 'engagement' can sufficiently fulfill the duties of

mass education while also allowing the museum to be perceived, in light of spectacular

exhibitions, or commercial additions, as an entertainment venue. A related question is for whom

will the museum's dutiful fulfillment be considered sufficient?

A detailed examination of the discursive visit promises to place these complex issues in

comprehensible alignment. This examination could have been attempted before, but to this

writer's knowledge has not. A discussion of why this is, and the potential benefits to using the

discursive visit as an organizing heuristic for examining the historical development of the

museum and the visitor, will briefly map out the intersection of the development of the museum

studies discipline and the origins of the discipline of visitor studies.

In the Museum's Shadow

A critical survey of the literature, summarized below, demonstrates that the visit has been

overlooked in ways because it occupies an interstitial space between the epistemological

fountainhead of the museum and the figure (slightly less generative of scholarship) of the

museum visitor. The public museum has precipitated deep, systematic investigation of several

aspects of museums and their histories: cultural histories of the museum and its genealogies, the

changing status of the museum object, the politics of museum culture, the shifting course of the

museum experience, and power relations, particularly those that exist between and among

institutions, the government and citizenry (Starn, 2005). As the public museum is constituted, it

quickly becomes the focus of study with regards to the relations of the Enlightenment to the

institutions to which it gave rise, and the relations of these institutions to each other, to governing

organizations, to reformers, patrons, curators, and of course to visitors.

This is to also say that the literature has a critical deficit in overlooking the visit. The

following will show that there are more or less systematic accounts of how relatively new

phenomena such as alterations to public funding, the onset of policies of inclusion, innovative

curatorial design, and an institutional embrace of for-profit business strategies affect museums

and (to a slightly lesser extent) visitors. However, other more recent phenomena such as: the visit

as representative of lifestyle choices, crowdsourcing, co-curation, which all describe new

institutional ways of interacting with visitors, lack this treatment.[52] A systematic account of the

changing nature of the interaction between visitor and museum in discourse would provide a more

holistic picture of the development of the public museum, enabling a grasp of these novel

phenomena, concepts, and policies that now permeate the museum field. These phenomena spring

from or simultaneously coexist in other industry discourses, and the fact that they do indicate that

the museum is being conditioned by contemporary dynamics that lay outside traditional research

concerns.

The museum has become more permeable than it was a generation ago. It is infused by

social practices and topical interests aligned with popular culture. The converse is also true. The

museum as the preeminent institutional example for a consciously and rigorously enacted

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[52] The meanings of these terms and their significance are discussed towards the end of this chapter, and in greater detail in chapter four, 'Marketized Visitors'.

collecting practices has diffused itself into the culture, in such a way that the idea of 'curating'

now is synonymous with the discriminatory and enlightened arrangement of consumables such as

food, wine, and personal items, whatever might constitute objects worthy of collection. It has

been noted that the collection might now metaphorically stand in for a mode of knowledge, even

where this knowledge is idiosyncratic and particularistic (Stewart, 1992, p. 161).[53] This

interpenetration of the practices of popular culture and the procedures of the museum has to do

with the onset of a twenty-first-century information-centric culture that is over-saturated with

news, advice, and intelligence. The technological tools that generate and are generated by this

culture, the internet, electronic media platforms, and digital data storage make the production and

distribution of more information readily available to more people than has occurred in previous

history. This amplified interchange between the museum and mainstream culture also inflects the

visit. A deep analysis of the embodied and imagined encounter between museum and visitor,

conditioned by shifting cultural and socio-economic contexts, would yield useful knowledge to

explain these visit-based phenomena.

However, key actors in the discourse do not agree on a systematic account for how the

visit is an index of these developments. The literature does not yet demonstrate how the

discursive visit anticipates, generates, or expresses new ways of conducting a visit that are now

appearing in the museum. Nor, to this author's knowledge, has there been a published account of

how it has been historically conditioned by perceptions of it held by its principal researchers, or

crucially, how the current visit has outstripped many of these perceptions.

There is a general lack of full appreciation for how the aggregate history of scholarship

on the museum has had the cumulative effect of shoring up arguments for the continuation of the

'modern museum' project, and the counterarguments of opposed groups that regard such a project

as moribund, and has calcified these oppositions. While there is a great deal of discussion

regarding what museums should be doing, and a great deal of study regarding how museums

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[53] Susan Stewart is interested in the philosophical permutations of desire as it is played out on objects in a marketplace setting. She focuses on the souvenir and the collection as, as she says, 'devices for the objectification of desire' (p. xii). Her project seems to be concern the fictions and psychic processes that underlay both making an object a souvenir and making a collection.

might achieve these goals, there is little explanation of what is happening in the way the visit is

hypothesized, in light of the modern museum project being thrown into question in the last

generation. The tendency has been to analyze why a particular course should be followed, rather

than analyzing how that course might look from a unique vantage. Now that this project's footing

is less sure, a comprehensive account of how the visit is institutionally conceived in the

reconfigured professional, experiential, and cultural circumstances that describe the current state

of museum visiting would be useful.

To be clear, researchers have made attempts to look at the visit from the perspective of

the visitor. In some rare instances, the visit is used as an occasion for examining the collaborative

conduct and interaction between visitors and between visitors and museum objects, in essence to

uncover the mechanisms for meaning-making in situ.[54] Still more rare in the literature are

ethnographies.[55] In these, visitors' experiences are utilized to provide illustrative images and

confirmatory evidence to develop or extend the comprehension of a transaction with sociological

or museological import. In this instance, a narrative or descriptive account shines light on the

analysis, but these studies are rarely undertaken within museum studies which is generally more

concerned with issues of power relations, the ontology of museums, and pedagogical concerns.

The subcutaneous presumption of the majority of scholarship within the museum studies canon

has been that the visit understood as an experiential phenomenon is rightly treated by the museum

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[54] There is a trio of researchers (mentioned in the above) largely responsible for research in this area: J. Hindmarsh, C. Heath, and D. vom Lehn (vom Lehn et al., 2001; Hindmarsh & Heath, 2003; Heath & vom Lehn, 2004). They are concerned with symbolic interactionism and interpersonal communication within the museum setting.

[55] The tool of ethnography is typically employed in anthropology and sociology. It entails viewing a particular situation or process through the eyes of a participant, allowing the very subjective details of interaction to shape the account. This is an ethnography of museums, not to be confused with museum ethnography, the latter which is the branch of museology concerned with the collection and display of the culture of indigenous peoples. The best examples of ethnographies of the museum is Sharon Macdonald's (1996) ethnography much discussed in the introductory chapter above, and is a unique type of ethnography and a glaring exception to the above claim of the tendency of museum studies. Anat Hecht's doctoral thesis *Past, Place & People: An Ethnography of Museum Consumption* (2004) is another rare example. Hecht uses detailed, analytical descriptions of the practice of museum consumption, from the viewpoints of consumers, to study the consequences of museum visiting with regards to intentions and expectations. George Hein (1998) also discusses some studies using ethnographic methods. There is a journal published in the UK by the Museum Ethnographers Group: the Journal of Museum Ethnography (http://www.museumethnographersgroup.org.uk/en/journal-of-museum-ethnography.html). Accessed January 10, 2015.

professional as an account by which an exhibition or aspects of the museum's physical state may be evaluated.[56]

The visitor also looms over the visit. Visitor studies, a newly inaugurated discipline, was initiated with a focus on determining investigative methodologies by which to improve the evaluation and design of museum exhibitions. There are three main forms its studies take: examinations of demographics (essentially who comes to the museum and who stays away); behavioral studies and knowledge-gain studies that presume a behaviorist, stimulus-response interaction between the exhibition and the visitor, and seeks to control the visitor's learning; and visitor-focused studies that investigate *how* visitors perceive exhibitions by comprehending their motivations, interests, and past experience (McManus, 1996, pp. 2-4).

At its core, the visitor studies discipline posits the visitor as an individualized learning subject with a set of learning needs conditioned by socio-economic circumstances and personal history. The discipline has been generated by a widespread professional recognition of the failure of traditional research methods to prove the learning outcomes of visitors in ways that were measureable and verifiable. This failure meant that previous to development of other evaluative tools, exhibitions could only be mounted with quite limited surety as to the results. The recognition of this failure meant also recognizing the limits of longstanding evaluative methodologies, and determining to devise more apposite tools.

As more sophisticated methods and strategies were developed, it became clear that it was crucial to ascertain the learning capabilities and tendencies particular to individual visitors, in addition to how visitors generally learn in the museum environment.[57] This focus on the visitor's capacities is one to which the discipline has largely adhered. The discipline examines the vagaries of context, individual history, and institutional structures in ascertaining how aspects of all these conditioning dynamics might shape visitors' responses to the museum environment.

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[56] Hooper-Greenhill (2006) argues that more studies aiming towards deep understanding rather than improvement of professional practice are not undertaken because such studies are time-consuming, expensive, are difficult to generalize, and do not directly inform museum practice (p. 374). However, there are proprietary studies carried out by commissioned consulting firms examining in very detailed fashion the visitor and the specific behavior that allows them to be segmented into types. This research will be discussed in depth in chapter four, 'Marketized Visitors'.

[57] Data gleaned from individual visitors is usually aggregated into groups or types in order to be most usable.

Visitor studies has generated a profound appreciation of *difference* among visitors, and thus revised a fundamental notion of universality that lay at the foundation of the museum's educational mission. At the level of pedagogy, visitor studies has helped to reshape the notion of mass education, by questioning and then rejecting the notion of a universal *approach* to learning in the museum setting. As this discipline has helped to fundamentally fracture the concept of universality in museum education, it has also helped to usher in an era of evaluation of the visitor by means of visitor-specific traits and viewpoints, and in so doing has laid the groundwork for the personalization of the visit.

Still, visitor studies is primarily a discipline comprised of museum professionals who generally prioritize the evaluation of museum policies and resources, behaviors and philosophies to construct a more effective visit (in terms of information conveyance). The visit as an area of inquiry functions within visitor studies much as it does in museum studies, as outlined above: as a metric by which to evaluate an exhibition, event, or physical aspects of the museum structure, or more abstractly, the curatorial strategies and didactic methods that shape museum displays.

However, through examining the discursive, historicized visit, it becomes clear that a personalization of the visit parallels developments in the disciplines of both museum studies and visitor studies with regards to how the visitor is perceived. The perceptions include seeing the visitor as a participant to be engaged, a consumer to be entertained, or a student to be educated. Rather than each of these categories of visitor type forming a generalized research strategy, these perceptions have now become part of a menu of options for comprehending visitor behavior.

Differences among visitors, rather than differences among curators or exhibition designers, or, to an extent, collections, have become the more crucial aspects of the visit constructed by museum professionals.

In the 'turn to meaning' discussed below, the museum field begins to recognize the necessity for a specification of tools and strategies that hinges on the variation among visitors, in research approaches and in constructing effective exhibits. This turn expresses a crisis in the

thinking about the visitor among researchers and museum professionals; it anticipates and mirrors

the establishing of the visitor studies discipline and the arrival of a new museology.

The Birth of Visitor-derived Meaning

There is a significant pre-history to the study of the visitor within the museum space,

(which pertains to the professionalisation of the fields of visitor studies and to the establishment

of a cadre of museum workers) for the purposes of this analysis, the most important junction

points occur in the 1980s and 1990s. Up to this point in the UK and the US, what visitors did

while in the museum was markedly less important to museum workers and to outside researchers

than issues concerning the collections museums maintained. Only a modicum of studies were

carried out concerning the behavior of visitors in museums. Theses studies examined topics such

as the role of museums in cultural life, how visitors used museums, or the use school children

made of their visit.[58] They also did not address visitors directly, but surreptitiously observed them,

based on the key assumptions that visitor behavior accurately indicates the efficacy of displays,

and what behavior indicates is more trustworthy than what visitors report on surveys (Loomis,

1987; Hooper-Greenhill, 2006; Hein, 1998). What underlay this method of information extraction

was an educational model then used to design materials intended for programmed use (Hooper-

Greenhill, 2006; Miles, Alt, Gosling, Lewis & Tout, 1988).

This model, shaped by an American school of behaviorist psychology, has been termed a

'transmission' model of communication. It presumes a unidirectional flow of information from

the communicator/teacher (in this case the exhibition designer or curator) to the receiver/learner

(in this case the visitor), who is expected to grasp and absorb the message (Hooper-Greenhill,

2000; Miles & Tout, 1994). According to this communication model, the visitor is ignorant while

the curator possesses expert knowledge, and the key purpose of the visit is the conveyance of that

information. At the time this model held sway it was assumed that if displays were appropriately

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[58] Margaret Lindauer (2005) also points out that in the early part of the century the AAM contracted Edwards Stevens Robinson to carry out research on 'museum fatigue' which he observed in visitors who had to stoop over to read labels. Robinson sought to reduce this fatigue in order to enhance the museum's efficacy in fulfilling its educational role (pp. 138-39).

designed, messages would be communicated effectively, and thus most early studies of visitors

sought to discover merely whether the visitor understood the message. The visitor's

comprehension was taken to be a metric of the effectiveness of exhibitions or displays. The

museum's frankly teleological agenda took little stock of differences among visitors.

In the US, this teleological agenda was generated in part by the notion of accountability

and the desire to measure educational 'outputs' for those who funded museums and exhibitions.

Managers of funding organizations sought to use these measures to spur museums to interrogate

themselves in terms of their efficiency and efficacy because so called third-sector institutions that

are not founded on the profit motive tend to be viewed as inefficient and ineffective compared

with for-profit businesses.[59]

In the UK, museums were being influenced by the pervasive installation of what is called

a 'new public management' program, a transformation of administrative and organizational

conception that effectively dismantled the public-private divide (Power, 1997). The NPM

implemented a regulatory mindset that increasingly relied on 'value for money auditing'

procedures. In a similar fashion to the change also occurring in the US, the NPM ideal sought to

'replace the presumed inefficiency of hierarchical bureaucracy with the presumed efficiency of

markets' to attempt to make the state more entrepreneurial (Power, 1997, p. 43).[60]

A 'turn to understanding', or a 'turn to meaning' began to upend this pedagogical

approach and research methodology. This change was precipitated by several overlapping

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[59] Stephen Weil (1999) argues that American museums have been pushed towards being evaluated on the basis of their achievements and performance. This push is based on the sense in managers of governmental agencies and third-sector organizations that not-for-profits lack, 'the common reality checks of a competitive marketplace as well as the operational discipline required to demonstrate consistent profitability' and thus do not apply their resources with the same efficacy and efficiency as for-profit businesses do (p. 239). Weil further claims that this movement has been spurred by the development of a 'social enterprise' model of third-sector organizations by J. Gregory Dees of the Harvard Business School, and the adoption of outcome-based evaluations by a large charity-funding institution that subjected its grantees to these evaluative criteria. However, according to Lindauer (2005), American museums may have helped to put themselves in this position by lobbying to be recognized by the federal government as educational institutions in order to gain grant money (p. 141).

[60] Michael Power's *The Audit Society* (1997), is the most comprehensive account of the causes, effects, and significance of the onset of what he calls an 'audit culture' in Britain in the later part of the century. Powers argues there is a complex series of developments that give rise to a New Public Management program in organizational governance. Among the reasons for its genesis was the call for fiscal restraint in the face of unsustainable public expenditure, a spreading ideological devotion to neoliberal ideas of smaller government, and the success of political demands for improved accountability in public services. These reasons, in addition to 'populist appeals to notions of empowerment and service quality' comprise the notion of value for money (pp. 42-44).

developments. One, researchers began to admit that given the tools at their disposal they could not

accurately predict or control what the visitor learned, nor even very effectively measure what the

visitor retained (Miles & Tout, 1991). This admission led to the realization that visitors 'were not

always as inclined to strive toward the attainment of educational goals as evaluators might have

wished, so the concept of "goal-free" evaluation emerged' (Hooper-Greenhill, 2006, p. 367).

Two, a significant schism developed among two prominent views concerned with epistemology

and philosophical definitions of science, and a series of public debates played out between them.

A debate took place between George Hein, who held the anti-realist position that knowledge is

constructed by the learner and therefore is relative rather than absolute, and bound up with his

values, and Roger Miles who held that knowledge is external to the individual and value-free

(Hein, 1997; Bitgood, 1997; Lindauer, 2005). The Hein-Miles debate brought to the surface the

views of epistemology that underlay methodologies used to carry out evaluation work being done

on visitors.

The debates represented both a methodological dispute and a deeper disagreement over

how the visitor should be perceived, and it helped to generate an interest in and pursuit of

constructivist learning theory.[61] This theory held that learners are active meaning makers and in

order for learning to be maximized, the learner's interpretive strategies and philosophies must be

grasped by both the person seeking to inform the learner and the researcher interested in

understanding the learning process.[62]

Visitor Studies in the 90s (1993), a collection of essays written by museum researchers,

was a crucial disquisition of the methods and underlying methodologies that were being contested

at this time, and it forged new conceptions of the visitor and suggested new avenues of research.

For example, Heiner Treinen makes the point that much of visitor experience in museums is

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[61] Constructivism covers a broad territory of related ideas that appear in epistemological theory, learning theory, and pedagogy. One the earliest researchers to put forward an argument for a constructivist approach to learning is Lev Vygotsky (1978). For an overview of learning theory see Susan E. Cooperstein and Elizabeth Kocevar-Weidinger (2004).

[62] Another way that this debate is described is as an opposition between positivist and interpretivist research theories. As Lindauer (2005) writes, positivism is 'grounded on the assumption that an objective world exists outside of human constructs'. Alternatively, interpretivism makes the contention that, 'in the social realm, there are multiple realities that cannot be fully or objectively understood, partly because they are constantly changing in relationship to one another and also because they always are observed through a cultural lens' (p. 143).

mediated by the expectations of the roles they believe they are to play, and further mediated by

the social situation, that is, whether they are attending by themselves or in pairs, or as part of a

school class (Treinen, 1993). Thus, there is no *normal* visitor, but details of the visitor's

subjectivity must be taken into any calculation of the possible learning outcomes.

In the same collection, Ghislaine Lawrence, argues that the conception of the visitor that

underlay the majority of exhibition evaluation was akin to the conception of rats held by medical

researchers: a creature with reliable stimulus-response reflexes. Lawrence argues that the visitor is

not so predictable and thus cannot be reasonably or effectively treated in the same manner, and

thus new research tools need to be developed to grasp the contingency and complexity of

knowledge reception and interpretation by the visitor in the museum setting (Lawrence, 1993).

The focus of these studies and arguments, and the conclusions they drew began to shift

museum research towards a concern with methods that could facilitate learning how visitors

actively interpret.[63] At the root of this shift was a new, categorically different conception of the

visitor figure as imaginative, autonomous, and self-directed, creating meaning based on its world

view, capacities, and social situation. The visitor in this view is an active collaborator with the

museum in a joint exercise of constructing new meanings. These essays represent a shift in the

museum's professional understanding of the visitor, and a shift in research approaches taken by

those researchers situated outside the museum. This shift in intellectual attitude towards the

visitor generated key studies that began to reshape the discipline of museum studies.

Academic research undertaken at this time generally asked different questions than those

posed in research undertaken to evaluate exhibitions. Academic research eschewed concerns of

exhibit effectiveness for concerns with relatively autonomous disciplinary questions, such as what

social and cultural factors underlay visitors' behavior. Social scientists as well as museum

historians and semioticians sought to use the museum as an area of research to elucidate questions

regarding socialization, ideology, and the relationship of culture to structure. Pierre Bourdieu's

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[63] Journals such as *Visitor Studies*, *Museum Management and Curatorship*, and the *Journal of Museum Education* often
publish these studies and report their results.

work is exemplary of this research. Bourdieu's studies extracted socio-demographic data and information on patterns of use, employing methods that posed questions directly to visitors (or those who did not visit). The study on which *The Love of Art* (1991) [French 1966] is based, examined data gathered on visitors' social class, occupation, education, income, age, and ethnicity. These data were incorporated into a sophisticated explanatory framework to link visitors' attendance of the museum (or lack of attendance) to structural causes, and not simply to social habits.[64]

Nick Merriman (1989) also undertook theoretically informed, in-depth studies. His survey of visitors in 1985 made distinctions between structural and cultural factors that influenced visiting. He found that cultural factors such as people's attitudes towards the past, feelings about the museum experience, perceptions of the type of institution the museum represents (library, school, monument to the dead, etc.) affected the chances of visiting more than structural factors such as age, access to transportation. Here, as with Bourdieu, Merriman was primarily concerned with explaining 'why some groups consistently stay away from museums' (Merriman, 1989, p. 149).

Marilyn Hood's (1981) study of visitors is also exemplary of a research approach that looked at visitors for evidence that would determine attendance. She uses what she terms 'psychographic variables', that is, an individual's values, attitudes, perceptions and expectations to comprehend why they choose a particular leisure pursuit.[65] In her study of the population of a city, Toledo, Ohio, she found that though demographic variables may be correlated to visiting habits, what influences visiting more are the expectations visitors have for leisure activity (Alexopoulos, 2012). These studies are representative of a movement in the field towards a concern with not just 'who' was visiting in terms of demographic identity, but also what reasons underlay making the visit, and to what purposes visitors were putting the visit.

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[64] Though this book was first published in 1966, very few researchers took note of it until it was translated into English in 1990, and therefore it does constitute a part of the wave of research intertwined with the turn to meaning.

[65] For further analysis of Hood's work, Eilean Hooper-Greenhill (1988) reviews her study in *The Museum Time-Machine*.

This turn to meaning conditions study of the visitor in several key ways. The turn is

expressed methodologically: naturalistic research methods that seek out qualitative data began to

be more widely adopted, many of them eliciting information directly from visitors. As Hooper-

Greenhill (2006) summarizes:

> If meaning-making processes are contingent, variable, and fluid, then how can they be
> researched? In order to understand the sense that visitors make in museums, it is not
> enough to observe what people do, and it is not enough to ask demographic questions.
> While some information will be gained from these approaches, a more in-depth approach
> is necessary to probe interpretive strategies and repertoires. This demands a turn to
> interpretative philosophies and qualitative research methods (p. 373).[66]

The establishment of visitor studies as its own discipline, focused on the ways and means of

visitor experience in the museum and is premised upon a shift which this excerpt highlights. More

importantly, a methodological shift in research strategy is representative of what is growing in

importance to researchers of the museum: knowledge held in and by the visitor. This change

indicates that the museum has begun to undertake a project different from the modern museum

project that had assumed an inferior position for the visitor.

This methodological shift is indexically related to a shift in the museum's purpose, not

precisely away from mass education, but rather towards education more broadly defined.

'Meaning', began to replace 'information' as the key term by which the visitor's experience may

be evaluated. Education of the visitor in the minds of museum professionals subsequently begins

to look more like a project of interpretation that is keyed at the institutional end to the abilities

and experiences of visitors, and at the visitor's end as fulfilling particular needs. Simultaneously

this shift is associated with a heretofore unremarked comprehension of the visitor.[67]

The turn to meaning establishes the figure of the visitor (while still constituting an object

of study for researchers) as an autonomous bearer of specific demographic features, as well as

feelings, values, attitudes, and expectations that are not cosmetic, but pivotal to analysis of the

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[66] She cites Sharon Macdonald's ethnographic study of the Science Museum (2002), and Katriel (1997) for her
ethnographic study of settlement museums in Israel, as exemplary of a new tradition of research. This enthusiasm is
premature. As argued in the above, ethnographies of the museum are still seldom undertaken.

[67] Indeed, this is where the discipline of visitor studies gains its unique purchase: its focus on research that treats the
visitor as a central figure in the psychological, museological, historical, social, and epistemological constitution of the
museum visit.

museum experience. A key mediating aspect of the (then new) recognition of visitors as learning

subjects is to understand that they synthesize meaning, not merely receive it passively. The

recognition of this hitherto unrealized aspect of the visitor, that it might be an interlocutor,

conditioning the research questions and not merely acting as an object of study, essentially

revolutionized the field of professional practice. A new visitor figure began to emerge in the

discourse of the museum.

The emergence of this figure began to modify the hierarchical politics of the museum,

which in presuming that the visitor to be an untutored student, presumed that the curator or

exhibition designer would function as a teacher. However, the visitor became a figure from whom

the researcher or museum worker may also learn, and created a more balanced view in which both

actors could be considered co-learners within the museum environment.[68] All these changes

become more than the sum of their parts when they are considered as part of a movement towards

a different way of conceiving the museum's purpose.

A New Museology

The new museology is a movement that occurred towards the end of the twentieth century

and is comprised of an interrelated suite of developments among museums, museum

professionals, researchers, critics, and visitors. It is right to consider it a movement since it was

conceived in the crisis of museum research. The failures of this research were debated over time

and addressed through concerted action. The new museology brought together influential

critiques of both scholarship and professional practice, and brought about a rethinking of what

museums should be and do with regard to visitors. It ushered in an institutional refocusing of

visitor and museum research by questioning how the fundamental guiding principles of the

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[68] This shift is gradual, and does not occur at the same rate in museums across the field, but it augers a new sense of what the museum should be. For Hooper-Greenhill (2000) this turn suggests the establishment of a new type of museum. She cites the 'post-museum' as a co-learning environment for both curator and visitor. Her post-museum has different aims from the modern museum project, and is a complex affair. She imagines that it overturns the positivist and colonialist tendencies of what she defines as the modernist museum. For her it is a place that enacts democratic values and fosters a sense of community particularly for populations that have been politically oppressed or ignored. See Jeffrey Wilson (2004) for a critique of this argument.

museum served or failed to serve the visitor. However, the 'new museology' is a term that is does

not appear often in museum discourse in the United States. According to a former director of the

Philadelphia Museum of Art's education department, the new museology represents a particularly

European view of changes to the museum field (D. Rice, personal communication, November 18,

2014). Nevertheless, it is a view of a suite of changes germane to the conceptualizations of the

visit that pertain to the case study at hand.

The new museology represents a palpable development in museums in two key ways: a),

a shift in focus from the care of objects and collections to the visitor; and b), a growing reflexivity

of the museum, that is an awareness of itself as a cultural institution that participates meaningfully

in the lives of visitors through producing cultural messages, and an awareness that the museum

itself is culturally contextualized (Ross, 2004). More, a new museology means an explicit shift in

philosophical orientation of museums towards a role of social utility. Museums now embrace

their roles in community service and policies that decrease intellectual asceticism and elitism and

increase 'democratic' inclusion, particularly for historically underserved populations (Weil,

1999).

The New Museology, published in 1989, is this movement's primary manifesto (more of a

statement of views and practices that had already been put into use, rather than an argument for

what museum should do), putting forward scholarship that both heralded and argued for changes

in the core philosophy that had undergirded the Enlightenment museum and shaped the policies

and procedures of the 'modern museum' of the twentieth century. The researchers in *The New*

Museology argue that in the then current relation between curator and visitor, the museum had

long privileged the curator as the dominant creator of meaning and relegated the visitor to a role

as a passive receptacle. Moreover, this view, which regards museums as authoritative mechanisms

of knowledge transmission and which centered the visit on the curator, is no longer as useful or

provident as it once was (Vergo, 1989; Ross, 2004; Macdonald, 2006).

The *New Museology* researchers bring to light the distinctions between differing

foundational ideas of the museum expressed in policies and curatorial schemes, essentially

defining for actors in the field these organizing schemes *as* museologies. Initially described by researchers as 'theoretical frameworks', or 'underlying philosophies and consciously stated ideologies', the movement clarified how a set of practices and procedures employed by the museum are generated by an underlying philosophical orientation (Stam, 1993, p. 268; Macdonald, 1990, p. 225). That is to say, this book demonstrated that museum managerial and administrative methods, professionals' behavior, are shaped and conditioned by organizing philosophies. This essay collection did so largely by bringing to light differences between a visitor-centered museology and a collection-centered one, which researchers across the field of museum studies came to see as responsible for shaping policies and procedures that made concerns with the visitor's experience secondary at best.[69] It was shown that a museology conditions the museum, acting through it.

As a corollary consequence, in opposing these two museologies the movement also engendered a conflict over the definition of a legitimate visit. As a visitor-centered museology threatens to replace older policies and curatorial strategies that primarily regard the visitor as an ignorant student, disagreements over the appropriate policies and strategies are debated through texts such as the *New Museology* and *Visitor Studies in the 90s*. The arguments forwarded in these essays are used by Hooper-Greenhill (1992) to demonstrate a link between museums, the actions of visitors, and type of visit enacted.

In *Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge*, Hooper-Greenhill examines the museum guided by Foucault's analysis of classification schemes, which she views as representative of a particular notion of valid knowledge. She parses the prevailing epistemologies in distinct types of museums: the princely palace, the cabinet of the world, the Royal Society Repository, the disciplinary museum, and the modernist museum, showing that each museum is produced by a distinct set of historical circumstances that generate a 'valid' meaning to be had in the visit. Her

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[69] Philip Wright (1989) argues in the *New Museology* that 'art museums are still fundamentally the tools of the working art historian's trade and the grounding for the art collector's business' (p. 122). Based on this he concludes that that what must change in museums at the time of his writing is treating, 'meeting the needs of visitors as users of the art museum as a priority, rather than granting curators a space in which to illustrate the latest construct of art history' (p. 133).

crucial point is that as a particular truth regime becomes predominant, a corresponding type of

museum rises with it, and the meanings of museum objects, and the ways visitors interact with

objects are conditioned by this regime. Hooper-Greenhill demonstrates that a prevailing

conception of the 'valid' visit is correlated with museums' organizing philosophies, which in turn

are conditioned by the surrounding socio-historic context.

This research work is crucial to arguments that represent conflicting views of the proper

role of the museum, but are *expressed* as disparaging of certain new museums, displays or

curatorial designs, and championing others. The new museology movement has developed a

conception of museologies that regards them as operating *through* a museum to produce their

distinct versions of a valid visit. Competition occurs in the field of art museums along the axes of

museologies, and the key unit through which to observe the contention for dominance is not the

individual museum, but rather the underlying museology. Subsequent arguments made against

and in defense of particular museums and displays are analyzed below in light of this pivotal idea:

debates regarding the validity of particular museums are representative of a deeper disputation

with regards to an underlying museology on which particular expectations of the visit rest.

Pivotal changes are brought about by the onset of the new museology. There are also

subsidiary changes associated with it. The new museology moves attention from the curatorial

object onto the object as interpreted by the visitor. In this respect, it sanctions different behavior

by museum professionals. Professionals have subsequently established whole new programs and

departments focused on the experience for the visitor.[70] This reorientation has ramifications for

the museum at the level of administration, with the creation of departments and posts that are

specifically geared to managing visitor experience (Ross, 2004).[71]

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[70] Visitor services departments, adult programs, children's programs, and community outreach departments had begun to be developed in the later half of the twentieth century.

[71] For further information on the development of new departments within museums see Fiona McLean, *Marketing the Museum* (1997). She argues that museums have opened themselves up to the marketplace and rebranded themselves as customer-focused to acquire a larger share of visitors. On the recent trend in visitor research to regard the visitor as an active interpreter, see Theopisti Stylianou-Lambert in *Visitor Studies* (2010). On changes to curatorial strategies and museum programs see Nichoals Serota's *Experience or Interpretation* (1996). These ideas will also be subsequently discussed in relation to the case study in the chapter, 'An Interpretive Museum'.

In relation to this, the museum field has also been expanded by the associated development of museum marketing departments in the 1980s and 1990s (McLean, 1997; Cole, 2008; Rentschler, 2004). Marketing officers discovered that visitor research was double edged: while exploring the perceptions and attitudes of the visitor secured information that promised to increase the efficacy of museum programs and displays, this exploration also secured greater and more sustained visitor attendance as museums responded to visitor data and incorporated suggested changes to signage, displays, and programs. Using the newly employed interview methods, pre-and post-visit questionnaires, and focus groups to uncover the feelings and perceptions of visitors, and feeding this data back into evaluations of the museum's outreach strategies has been shown to make them more effective.[72]

Lastly, the new museology has become related to a new type of museum featuring display methods that are more open to interpretation, contrasting with chronological, legislative art history displays that invite a particularly prescriptive performance of the visit. In turn, unconventional, interpretively open display methods have become associated with a self-directed visitor who can be observed attending these innovative exhibitions.

Implicit Views of the Visit

Despite the paucity of studies of the visit contained in the literature of museums, there are ideal types of visit that have been implicitly developed by prominent researchers. It is useful to look at what had previously been theorized as the ideal visit type and what the latest views have alternatively suggested. These theorizations constitute part of the turn to meaning and the new museology in that they are both responses to the aforementioned crisis in the museum field and studies that prompt considered responses to that crisis.

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[72] The collection of data from visitors has recently raised questions as museums are increasingly 'mining' detailed layers of information (Gamerman, 2014b). This situation is regarded as a subset of the 'big data' revolution that finds businesses relying on quantitative data on customer use to make decisions with regards to logistics and customer retention. Museums such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Boston's Museum of Fine Arts, and the Dallas Museum of Art have enacted programs that seek to get personal information from visitors, such as email addresses, or use visitors' phones as avenues of information giving and gathering.

The most prominent notions of the museum visit intertwined with the turn to meaning are mediated and shaped by the anxiety generated by the museum's Enlightenment endowment. The most influential researchers and scholars of the museum create studies that, more or less beneath the surface, echo questions of how the museum interprets its civic responsibilities and the modes of address it employs to fulfill them. The effects of their scholarship on the new museology are evident in recently emerged views of the visit that largely leave aside the notion of an Enlightenment museum to focus on visitors experiencing the museum as a menu of several options for encounter.

Four key researchers and theorists implicitly define the most salient ideals of the visit that have influenced current conceptions of the visit: Pierre Bourdieu, Tony Bennett, Carol Duncan, and Nick Prior.[73] Despite differences among them, they all share an interest in the historical nature of the museum visitor. Their historical perspective brings to light the central question of museum visitor studies: the disparity between the museum's 'democratic' promise and the reality of its visitor profiles. However, there are clear differences among them. Bennett and Duncan are concerned with the authority wielded by museums in the putative service of educating or civilizing the citizenry, and examine the visit with particular focus on the means and effects of visitor regulation. These researchers identify the mechanisms of institutional inculcation, to then read the visit as a function of an authoritarian agenda.

Bourdieu is concerned with visitor behavior as a function of socio-economic class, and focuses on processes through which identification is made with a dominant group and the set of aesthetics associated with that group. He investigates the museum's underwriting of precisely the systems of representation that affirm and encode the distinctions between social classes within the museum. This affirmation serves to naturalize the consistent appearance of middle-class visitors in the museum.

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[73] Unfortunately there is not room in this overview to discuss the important contributions of Eilean Hooper-Greenhill, whose view of the visit is shaped by her conception of the visitor as an autonomous meaning maker in *Museums and the Interpretation of Visual Culture* (2000). Similarly, Donald Preziosi is left aside, though his conception of the visit is a useful one, characterized as it is by a visitor who is reflexive, gaining a sense of her own agency through the experience of the visit. See his essays 'Art History and Museology' (2006), and 'Brain of the Earth's Body' (2004).

Prior, alternatively is concerned with the hypermodern context for the contemporary museum, finding in it a visit that operates as a menu of options for the self-directed visitor.

The fundamental queries these researchers make, and the answers they find help to train the focus of both academic scholarship and professional evaluation on a fuller and deeper grasp of the institutional, historical, and social factors that shape the visit. The visit seen through their research is a complex interrelation of museum type, underlying social forces, moments of historical transition, and museum discourse. Because, as is argued herein, the museum world is at a point of transition to another museology, the visitor-centered visit that is emerging is not yet made fully explicit in any of these genres of the visit. However, it is implied, and based on this implication the rest of the examination follows.

The Humiliating/Validating Visit

Pierre Bourdieu's model of the visit is primarily informed by his interest in the conservation of social hierarchies, which he thought of as rooted in the unequal distribution of cultural assets or, in his own terms, 'cultural capital' (Wacquant, 2008; Fyfe, 2007).[74] Bourdieu thought that aspects of cultural capital, in particular, 'educational credentials and a familiarity with bourgeois culture' were becoming 'a major determinant of life chances' (Wacquant, 2008, p. 216). [75] In previous research he had encountered the explanation as justification for habituated forms of conduct that members of certain classes 'naturally' found that they gravitated towards or away from activities such as attending the museum.

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[74] Loic Wacquant (2008) offers a detailed explanation of Bourdieu's use of the term 'capital' in a chapter he has written on Bourdieu. He writes: 'For Bourdieu (1986), a capital is any resource effective in a given social arena that enables one to appropriate the specific profits arising out of participation and contest in it. Capital comes in three principal species: economic (material and financial assets), cultural (scarce symbolic goods, skills, and titles), and social (resources accrued by virtue of membership in a group). A fourth species, symbolic capital, designates the effects of any form of capital when people do not perceive them as such (as when we attribute moral qualities to members of the upper class as a result of their "donating" time and money to charities)' (p. 221).

[75] Gordon Fyfe (2007) points out that Bourdieu had a much more ambitious sociological project, which sought to navigate between limitations of subjectivism, and a too deterministic structuralism. 'For Bourdieu, phenomenological sociology reduced society to discrete encounters between individuals, whilst structuralism deleted the human agency that generated "social structures"' (p. 164).

The question he used to operationalise a larger theoretical inquiry was why it was that members of the working class seemed to rarely attend museums in France. To answer this, Bourdieu, with Alain Darbel, conducted a study of the museum-going public in Europe in the 1960s, sampling respondents in five countries by survey, published in the book *The Love of Art*. Bourdieu and Darbel took empirical data from respondents to surveys, on the formal education, occupation, residence location of those who attended museums, and found that among the different categories of visitors, the one consistent characteristic was their level of education (Blau, 1991).[76] They found a prevalence of upper- and middle-class visitors and an absence of working class visitors in the museum.

Based on these data, Bourdieu and Darbel formulate a complex linkage of socialization, social and economic privilege expressed culturally, a set of aesthetics associated with class, the encoding of these aesthetics by the museum, and a kind of violence meted out to those who recognize themselves as not rightly belonging in the museum. Bourdieu and Darbel conclude that the position of one's family in the social order is the prerequisite for a certain kind of socialization (the habitus) that yields an appreciation of art.[77] More, they conclude that the museum allows economic power (existing in differing forms of capital) to be rendered euphemistically, and to be misrecognised as natural traits expressed by individuals in the guise of personal preferences. The museum assists this process of separating out the 'barbarians' from the 'civilized' through the professional and subaltern coding of the aesthetics of display.

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[76] Some researchers, among them Marcus Banks (1991) and Judith Blau (1991), dispute the quantitative data and the ways they are construed by Bourdieu and Darbel. Blau writes, 'But the leap between the assumptions of their overly deterministic mathematical model and the empirical data is one of faith' (p. 895).

[77] The habitus, in other words, does not only shape inclinations but also aspirations. Crucially, the habitus allows one to accommodate oneself to the advantage or disadvantage of one's situation. As Swartz (2002) points out, this habitus consists of dispositions, schemas, and competencies that are deeply internalized by the individual in early-childhood socialization (p. 64S). In *Distinction* (1984) [French 1979], Bourdieu says that it is, 'a disposition that generates meaningful practices and meaning-giving perceptions; it is a general, transposable disposition which carries out a systematic, universal application' (p. 170). What he means is a particular orientation to the world, a point of view, that is expressed in attitudes and preferences. The habitus is particularly recognizable when used to make distinctions, particularly in the areas of cultural or material consumption. In these instances, the habitus is expressed as a distinctive preferences. A recent cartoon appearing in *The New Yorker* magazine depicts a man and woman sitting on the floor of a mostly barren cave. They both wear animal skins, while next to them a man in a suit and tie sits in a chair with crossed legs, smoking a cigarette, with a drink in a martini glass next to him. The caption reads: 'What kind of Neanderthal uses vodka instead of gin?'. See: http://www.condenaststore.com/-st/Liza-Donnelly-Prints_c146957.htm (accessed June 14, 2012). For Loic Wacquant (2008) this aesthetic sense is most clearly deployed in opposition. It is a sense of *distaste* that makes the faculty of taste observable in consumption choices.

Bourdieu concludes that while the working class visitor consents to its domination by the museum by seeing itself as one who does not belong, the museum also participates in this domination. In this sense the museum enacts what Bourdieu and Darbel describe as 'symbolic violence'.

Bourdieu's view of the field of art (and therefore his view of the visit) is that it is a screen that relates an account of a cultural process, but underneath this lays a more fundamental economic reality. The museum is a place of *re*-presentation, shrouding a social process through which class distinctions are internalized by representing these distinctions as though they inhere naturally. The visit is an *expression*, in cultural terms, of a set of essentially economic relations, via the vehicle of consumption. The museum visit is one of the cultural processes by which the economic foundations of inequality are misrecognised. Taking Bourdieu's findings to their logical extent, he argues that in essence that 'art has no meaning in itself' (Banks, 1991, p. 753).

In Bourdieu's conception of the visit, the visitor who does not embody a middle-class habitus is humiliated, while the visitor who embodies this habitus is ratified by the museum. This visit type is little able to countenance the visitor figure's agency, despite Bourdieu's attempts to overcome the subjectivism/objectivism opposition regarding perspectives on the social world. The parameters of the visitor's agency in the visit will have been largely predetermined by its social position. The visitor is confined to two subject positions: bourgeois and working class, validated and humiliated. The paucity of flexibility in the visitor's role is due to Bourdieu's sense that key determinants are social facts that do not vary with the visitor, or the institution. The key determinants of the visit operate on and through the visitor: the habitus, a cultural interpretation of economic processes, and the underlying competition between social groups. The consequent limits to the possibilities of the visit spring from founding this model on the idea that the visit consists of the cultural conversion of socio-economic inequality.[78]

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[78] The ways that intellectual and consumerist agency are relevant to the contemporary nature of the visit are more fully discussed in the chapters, 'Marketized Visitors', and 'Branding, Advertisements, and Partnerships'.

Bourdieu's research on museums has been critiqued in terms of what has been characterized as the faulty link between the mathematical model he constructed and the empirical data gathered (Blau, 1991). Banks (1991) found that the 'naturalistic' argument cited by Bourdieu as unconvincing when applied to explaining why working-class visitors do not attend is precisely what Bourdieu falls back on when confronted with the fact that working-class visitors do respond positively to certain kinds of art in the museum, such as the ethnographic and historic. Banks argues that certain classes may be intimidated by 'high art' but are comfortable with other kinds of objects, and that Bourdieu cannot account for this without contradicting his own theories. The most penetrating critique, however is that Bourdieu's view of the social world is remarkably one-sided. For him, competition for finite resources is the prime determining factor of the social world, and the inherent inequality in the distribution of necessary life resources is what makes this world an unremitting agon, particularly for those who lack social, cultural, and economic capital.

His conception of the visit alerts us to the role museums play in consecrating certain middle-class aesthetics, and constricts consideration of aspects of the visit that have become significant after the turn to meaning has altered the museum field: museum type, display arrangements, museum communication methods, the abilities and expectations of the visitor.

This visit type is unable to account for the sharp increase in mass consumption of the present moment. Bourdieu's humiliated visitor is not a figure able to encompass or explain the actions of consumerist visitors who now populate the contemporary museum in great numbers. As Banks has pointed out in the above, there are indeed different classes of museum objects and some do garner a populist response. Similarly, Bourdieu's concept of the visit cannot encompass a notion of the visitor's pleasure. As the museum is increasingly regarded as 'a playpen of consumption', and visitors arrive in greater numbers, pleasure is cited as a motivating factor for the museum visit (Prior, 2003, p. 54). Yet pleasure is given only a narrow plot of land in which to grow in Bourdieu's visit. His model suggests that the middle-class visitor might find pleasure in being ratified as a valid visitor, in having its aesthetic sense and tutored gaze recognized as

legitimate. However, there is little other room for delight to be recognized as a key component in expanding the museum's audience.

On the other hand, the humiliated visitor would clearly have little reason to attend. In this model, increasing numbers of visitors may only be explained by presuming only middle-class visitors increasing their attendance. While this is possible, the displays in these museum playpens do not suggest a class-affiliated set of aesthetics. Nor is the rampant consumption decried in the contemporary museum indicative of, or commensurate with, the kinds of class distinctions that Bourdieu recognizes. Nor do these distinctions inhere in the same way among consumers. Several scholars (Baudrillard, 1982; Campbell, 1987; Lury, 1996; Abercrombie, 1994) further argue that consumerism as a broad social development also changes the ways visitors regard and approach the museum, conceived as a leisure site that provides excitement and spectacle. In essence Bourdieu's conception of the visit is little able to account for the breakdown of aesthetic hierarchies associated with consumerism, and this breakdown is key to the growth of interest in contemporary museums of art. This is not to claim that the distinctions between high and low art have been erased, but rather that they have shrunk and are not as avidly policed as they were during the height of aesthetic modernism.

The contemporary museum inflected by consumerism now makes visitors into consumers. More, consumerist culture lessens the degree to which hierarchies of art practice condition visitor profiles. The explanatory force of Bourdieu's model is dissipating as the museum that acts a site for the consumption of culture comes into play, motivating greater and greater numbers of visitors to attend it.[79] Essentially, consumerist desire for culture and the institutional response of attempting to harness and amplify it have changed the nature of the visit by transforming the basis on which museums interact with visitors.

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[79] The critique of Bourdieu's concept also brings into question the reflexivity of the museum. In relating the objections to Bourdieu's stance, Nick Prior (2003) poses the rhetorical question: 'if museums are merely conservative agents of social reproduction, how can they ever reflect upon their own function and power, or attempt more open-ended and democratic forms of representation?' (p. 61).

The Civilizing Visit

Tony Bennett's model of the visit is primarily informed by his investigations of the role

of museums in societal power relations, particularly those relations between citizens and the

state.[80] He regards the state as a structure through which systematized discipline is channeled in

order to maintain the social order, and finds evidence in the museum of citizens being disciplined

through ideological and behavioral control. The book that most clearly relates his view of the visit

associated with the Enlightenment museum is *The Birth of the Museum* (1995).[81] In it, Bennett

poses the question of how the museum takes part in reforming the public cultural domain. Put

another way, Bennett asks whether the bourgeois makeup of the museum's visitors and its

aesthetics may be explained in light of the state's use of governmental power in the service of a

reformist agenda that encourages behavioral conformity in its citizens.

Bennett's conception of the social world is mainly comprised of relations of power and

control. In his conception, the state is a hegemonic actor that recruits culture to civilize the

population, and culture is a tool for state use. There are a few museum types that he analyzes. In

his Enlightenment museum, the museum adheres to a reformist agenda: it sifts visitors,

categorizing them as either civilized or vulgar. It takes on the role of a civic educator, where

visitors are sifted into categories of white, non-white, citizen, non-citizen, male, female, etc. For

Bennett, the tension between the universalizing aims of the Enlightenment museum and its

persistent elitism are resolved in the use of power. Bennett essentially is concerned the state's

installation of regimes of control *through* the museum.

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[80] This model does not represent Bennett's latest views on the museum. Rather, this is an earlier account with a focus is on the Enlightenment museum, but it is still a prominent view of the visit. In later work, *Pasts Beyond Memory* (2004), and an essay, 'Civic Seeing' (2006), Bennett acknowledges the current influence of democratic inclusivity and a politics of difference on the current museum. Here, Bennett regards the state through the lens of Foucault's accounts of the development of the modern, liberal, democratic state and the state's use of disciplinary power, as analyzed in his books *Discipline and Punish* (1995), *The Order of Things* (1973), and an essay by Burchell, Gordon & Miller (1991).

[81] His more recent book, *Pasts Beyond Memory* (2004), continues and deepens his investigation of the ways the museum have a role in reforming mass populations in democratic societies. However, this book has a great deal of focus on several concerns besides the visit, including, to paraphrase Witcomb (2005) who reviewed this text: differences between types of liberal theory and the way these theories were represented in cultural policies; distinct modes of liberalism and their relationship to disciplinary frameworks; and manifestations of the relations between social and political theory in visual culture.

Bennett makes an historical investigation by examining the discursive context of the origins of the nineteenth-century European museum, regarded as the template for our modern, public museums. He examines the formation of a discourse around the notion of public order at the public museum's appearance, and its expression in and through the museum. Finding manifestations of this discourse in documents and visual sources, he uses Foucault's drawing of historical development to explain narratives constructed in and through the museum that make it a reform institution.

Bennett argues that the state operates through the museum, inculcating bourgeois attitudes and behaviors. The museum acts as a locus and a prominent symbol of national authority and state power. The visitor is coerced into seeing the state through the museum, and is persuaded to relate to the museum as to the state. This is accomplished by the museum acting in three distinct ways: a) a space of emulation where civilized conduct may be learnt; b) a space of representation of principles of order, categorization, and hierarchy that may be internalized; and c) a space in which people observe and regulate their own and each other's bodies (1995, p. 24). In short, by acting as a behavioral, discursive, and scopic disciplinary chamber the museum attempts to exercise control on the visitor.[82] At the root of Bennett's understanding of the museum visit is that it produces a self-disciplined visitor in the mold of a middle-class citizen.

More, the museum further enshrines bourgeois values by the encoding these values in museum displays and placing implicit limits on intellectual access to the artwork for certain visitors. He argues that the visitor's gaze is regulated in the art museum through a process of subordination. The visitor subordinates itself to the curator in order to extract the appropriate meanings from displays, and thereupon displays make specific forms of address to the visitor that recognizes and validate the visitor's position as ignorant subject. The bourgeois visitor has learned these skills by first recognizing his own gaze as inferior to the curator's superior vision.

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[82] In fact, the gaze, in Bennett's conception of the museum, is an indexical sign of the prevailing regime of social control. In the pre-modern world, surveillance was employed as a disciplinary tool. However, in modernity, as culture is employed as a means for the populace to internalize discipline, citizens, instead of being the objects of the surveillance gaze, became subjects who *employ* the gaze. This gaze is exercised on objects in the museum. This gaze allowed visitors to experience 'objects which had previously been concealed from public view [in] new, open and public contexts' (Bennett, 1995, p. 93).

Once the visitor acquiesces to being tutored by the curator, it is able to 'read' the rational order of

categorization of objects that underlies museum displays.[83] Those who do not posses this tutored

gaze fail to recognize the underlying order, and their failure confirms their position as untutored,

which in turn confirms their social position as working class (or poor). This model of 'directed

seeing' created in a French museum of Natural History, was, according to Bennett, taken up by art

museums to signify and ratify social distinctions (2006, p. 268).[84]

        Bennett's visitor is shaped by the reformist agenda of the Enlightenment museum (with

which, Bennett insists, the modern museum is commensurate in its disciplinary effects). As a

consequence of this core relation there is little diversity of the subject positions held out by the

museum to the visitor. Bennett makes the visitor a subject who internalizes the self-regulatory

impulse at the behest of the museum, thus draws one type of visitor figure. As Louise Purbrick

(1996) notes, 'the important visitor in any of Bennett's museums is the "undifferentiated mass

public" of the late nineteenth century which required, or seemed to require, regulation' (p. 70).

However, the lesson that has been brought forward by the new museology is that visitors cannot

be viewed as an undifferentiated mass or else severe inhibitions to knowledge inhere for

researchers of the museum. The recognition of the specificity of visitor's needs and learning

abilities are fundamental to the notion of a contemporary museum visit in which the visitor is

active, self-directed, carrying meanings into the museum rather than being a passive receptacle.

        More importantly, the regulated visitor of Bennett's conception has little intellectual

agency. It learns to subordinate its gaze to the gaze of the curator in order to properly read

museum objects through the curator's intention. The primary meaning made available in the visit

is limited to the confirmation of an appropriate subjectivity. This model of the visitor is at odds

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[83] As Bennett argues, this directed seeing began with exhibits of natural history, so in this case the object was to see the underlying rationale for the curatorial organizing of objects within 'nature's apparent diversity' (2006, p. 268).

[84] Hooper-Greenhill (1992) explains this differently: she claims this to be the result of the way the Enlightenment museum allocated space for the production of knowledge. She writes: 'At the birth of the public museum, a division was drawn between the private space where the curator, as expert, produced knowledge (exhibitions, catalogues, lectures) and the public space where the visitor consumed those appropriately presented products…. The lack of knowledge of the work of the curator constituted the visitor as ignorant and the curator as expert in respect of the collections. Conversely, the lack of knowledge of the visitor's reactions and responses constituted the curator as ignorant in respect of the audience…. Now, the closed and private space of the early public museums has begun to open, and the division between private and public has begun to close' (p. 200).

with developments in the museum field with regard to the visitor's reflexivity. Bennett's passive

visitor is self-regulating, but not self-aware.

It has been argued that the reflexivity of the visitor is precisely what encourages visits to

the contemporary museum. In the museum an entire panoply of subjectivities become available to

the visitor under the auspices and guidance of art historical and museological discourses, as

Donald Preziosi argues (2004). The museum in its staging of the art object, presents to the visitor

objects that confront the visitor as other subjects and in doing so brings to its awareness its own

subjectivity. The visitor ultimately becomes more aware of its own agency by seeing its agency

operating within the museum, recognizing the agency of other subjects. This argument's

explanatory force rests on the notion that an intellectual agency is at the root of motivations for

visiting. Indeed academic researchers have come to recognize that the question of visitor

motivation is a key query with regard to issues of attendance and participation. Since Bennett's

visitor seeks confirmation of adopting the proper subject position, in this respect Bennett's

conception of the visit is nominally able to account for visitor motivation.

However it has difficulty in explaining the range of experience by the visitor conceived

by scholars such as Eilean Hooper Greenhill (2000) who posit the organization around museum

objects as conditioned by personal understandings influenced by the 'interpretive communities' of

which the visitor is a part.[85] In more detailed fashion, Falk and Dierking (2012) have put forward

a threefold contextual model of learning in the museum that includes a personal context, a

sociocultural context, and a physical context, all of which in combination shape the visitor's

experience. At the heart of these theories is a visitor who deals actively with a welter of practices,

and limitations, intrinsic and extrinsic, rather than responding to the pressure of a hegemonic

institution.

In positing a visitor who lacks a reflexive faculty, Bennett's visit is not equipped to

account for the kind of intellectual engagement on which a visitor-centered visit is premised. The

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[85] An interpretive community for Hooper-Greenhill (2000) is essentially the social context in which an individual participates. This context consists of shared practices for assembling meaning, or in her words, 'shared repertoires and strategies used in interpretation' (p. 121).

implication of the 'create your own collection' campaign, mentioned in the above, is that a robust

popular response consisted in the opportunity for visitors to devise their own meanings. The

visitor idealized by this campaign is a self-aware visitor able to tailor the existing collection to

meet its specific needs, to curate a cultural response to its psychic state. Bennett's civilizing visit

is an influential version of the visit, but it is unable to account for the reflexive visitor recent

scholarship has argued is able to make meaning for itself.

The Ritual Visit

Carol Duncan's model of the visit is primarily informed by her interest in museums as

symbolic and social spaces that inculcate values, beliefs, and ideas about identity (Leathlean,

1999). Duncan understands the creation of values to result from museums acting as conduits for a

society's dominant values and beliefs. In turn, museums function this way because they are

formed in a society's need for monumental institutions able to convey beliefs. This fundamental

view shapes its examinations of the socio-historical conditions of various museums' founding, the

use of the museum by those who visit them, and museums' ideological effects on social relations.

Duncan seeks out of the mechanisms for inculcation of societal values by examining, as Mary

Bouquet (1998) has it, 'art collections *together with* their surrounding architecture and

landscaping as ritual sites, where politically organized and socially institutionalised power seeks

to appear beautiful, natural and legitimate' (p. 559) [emphasis in original].

In relation to her model of the visit, the principal question Duncan poses concerns *how*

'art museums offer up values and beliefs—about social, sexual, and political identity' (Duncan,

1995, p. 2).[86] She begins her investigations in an essay co-authored with Alan Wallach, 'The

Universal Survey Museum' (1980), and continues them in her book, *Civilizing Rituals* (1995). In

both texts Duncan uses historical analysis of a museum's founding context to assess the relation

between the type of museum and its social purpose. She examines their displays, building

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[86] Duncan (1995) also states, the questions in this way: 'what fundamental purposes do western museums serve in the context of western societies?' (p. 3).

architecture and landscaping and interior design, which are then analytically connected with

models of social behavior borrowed from anthropology to explain the experience of the visitor.[87]

Duncan finds in the museum the staging of an iconographic program consisting in a path

given the visitor to follow in order to 'internalize the values and beliefs written into the

architectural script' (1980, pp. 450-451). Duncan argues that this iconographic program creates a

liminal space that allows the visitor to enter a narrative specified by the museum based on its

typology. This narrative is the source of meaning for the visitor. The term that Duncan uses to

describe this process of staging, of prompting the visitor through architectural and design cues to

adopt a particular identity, is 'ritual'. Through this ritual, the visitor is imagined to take on

subjectivities that are utilized outside of the museum as well as inside. Her example is the subject

position of being male and middle-class (Purbrick, 1996).[88] For Duncan, a middle-class identity

has uses beyond the museum in interactions where bourgeois behavior is the expected norm:

schools, libraries, leisure sites. She concludes with Wallach that, the museum is primarily an

ideological machine bent on inculcating visitors with these values and beliefs (1980, p. 449).

The key type of museum for Duncan is the 'aesthetic museum' in which a ritual setting

presumes each object to require a singular focus and contemplation, which is created through

conscious design and architecture. Duncan thus sets the stage for a visit associated with ritualized

contemplation. This space makes possible a 'liminal' experience. In *Civilizing Rituals* she takes

from Victor Turner a definition of liminal as a space removed from practical concerns and typical

social relations that characterize daily life for most (p. 11).[89] What she seems to be arguing is that

the liminal is a threshold, a place that constitutes a border between spaces. This liminal space in

the museum prepares the visitor to enter an iconographic program, and once the visitor enters the

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[87] Duncan's uses the concept of a ritual, borrowed specifically from Victor Turner, who forwarded the notion that rituals provide 'scripts or "doing codes" to be performed by individuals' (Duncan & Wallach, 1980, p. 450).

[88] This description of the visit as a ritual presents some problems. The ritual notion is not specified as belonging to a certain historical time and place, but is generalized in a way that should raise questions about the appropriateness of its applicability. Duncan uses this notion of the ritual like a semi-transparent overlay, mapping it onto the historical and case study evidence she investigates.

[89] A problem here with Duncan's drawing of the liminal is that it is not entirely clear what makes an experience liminal, besides it being out of the ordinary, and causing a distinct change in outlook. In this case, a catastrophic injury could be considered liminal, but this is likely not what she means. There is some imprecision here. Duncan (1995) says that 'western concepts of the aesthetic experience, generally taken as the art museum's *raison d'être*, match up rather closely to the kind of rationales often given for traditional rituals', (p. 20).

program, she enacts a ritual that can and should produce a moment of 'some kind of revelation or

transformation' (p. 14).

Duncan's core argument is that the ritual defines a scripted experience for the visitor. As

she writes with Wallach: 'By performing the ritual of walking through the museum, the visitor is

prompted to enact and thereby to internalize the values and beliefs written into the architectural

script' (1980, pp. 450-51).[90] The visitor psychically takes on a persona designated by the ritual, in

the way that a medieval pilgrim would have traversed a biblical story lain out in an ecclesiastical

setting in order to have a religious experience. The script differs, she asserts, depending on the

type of museum: princely gallery, municipal art museum, donor memorial, modern art museum.

In each case the meaning extracted from the visit depends entirely on the museum's iconographic

program.

There are benefits to this participation, Duncan suggests, that are universal in character.

These include a sense of renewal, a denial of the fact of death through a perpetual reliving of the

past, and an experience of interaction with the immortal spirits of past times. Beyond these

benefits, Duncan sees the visit as convincing visitors to take on subjectivities privileged by the

surrounding society as valid, of particular interest are those associated with bourgeois values. She

finds that beginning in the late nineteenth century, 'The new public art museums were but one

element of a larger agenda to make American cities more civilized, sanitary, moral, and peaceful'

(1995, p. 55). In this agenda she finds that the ideal citizen is the bourgeois citizen and the visitor

who fits this ideal is rewarded by the museum ritual with the confirmation of its identity as such.

The underlying assumption to Duncan's model is the claim that museums function as a

continuation and retranslation of institutions that existed in the pre-modern world.[91] Ideology

being conveyed through museums has taken the place of religious conviction. Whereas the

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[90] Duncan uses the example of the medieval pilgrim following a prescribed narrative path through a cathedral to re-experience the biblical story. This pilgrim is renewed through revitalizing his psychic connection to his belief, and in this respect is reconstituted in his identity as a pilgrim. In a similar fashion, in a contemporary museum the visitor is also prompted to take on suggested subjectivities.

[91] Stephen L. Collins (1989) maps out the intersection of consciousness, social order, and political reality as they come together in sixteenth and seventeenth-century England. He argues that social order becomes less cohesive as traditional institutions for redemption are replaced by the secular sovereign state. He contends that the state ultimately replaces ecclesiastical authority with a rationalist, humanist agenda.

Christian church of Europe once shaped and conditioned the sensibilities, hopes, and expectations

of a medieval pilgrim, the state has largely replaced the church, and uses a similar tool, ideology,

to shape the hopes and expectations of its citizens.[92]

For Duncan, the visitor is largely a passive figure, a figure engaged in a program designed

by the curator, with little or no say in how this program is constructed. The visitor does not

assemble meaning, but absorbs the meaning lain out for her. Here, the visitor is at the mercy of

the curator, lacking agency or self-direction. This scripted visitor, limited in its interaction with

the museum to a ritualized performance does have the possibility of spiritual renewal and identity

confirmation.[93] It is unclear whether this experience would provide pleasure, but it is implied that

pleasure may be had in this socially sanctioned identity being confirmed. This visitor fits squarely

into the mold of the visitor figure that permeated museum discourse before the onset of a new

museology, seems quixotic in the current understandings of the visitor.

Duncan's visitor is also drawn in terms of an undifferentiated mass, though on the

surface, visitors might be imagined to be diversified by the type of museum with which they

interact. This diversity is illusory because the visitor is essentially subservient to the museum's

program. The script of the museum determines the visitor's responses; even in the case where the

visitor resists, she resists a particular script that nevertheless is convincing for the presumed

majority of visitors. The visitor here is universalized as a passive receiver of meanings.

Duncan's scripted model of the visit is clearly at odds with the 'Create your own

Collection' campaign at Tate Britain in 2005, and the notion of self-direction that underlies that

visit. Culture researchers and historians now find choice to be a key aspect of consumerist society

(Bauman 1987; Gabriel & Lang, 1995; Giddens, 1991). Gabriel and Lang (1995) say that one of

the hallmarks of modern consumerism, which sets it apart from earlier systems of consumption, is

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[92] Part of Duncan and Wallach's (1980) argument is that the public museum is a post-Enlightenment institution and that the Enlightenment's project was 'breaking the power and influence of the church (p. 7). As evidence of museums inheriting this religious impulse, they cite public and private investment of wealth in museums, their physical eminence and monumental grandeur, and the fact that they absorb 'more manual and imaginative labour than any other type of architecture' (p. 449).

[93] Duncan points out that not every visitor is able to take on the ideal subjectivity. There are limits, for example, in some museums in terms of gender. In many cases the ideal subject is male.

choice. Whereas choice in a prior generation would have been associated with freedom and privilege, it is now also associated with self-development. It is argued that the contemporary individual is constantly engaged in making choices as an act of self-creation, an action that is never ending, and rather continuously develops a narrative of the self, as the individual is confronted with further choices (Giddens, 1991). The scripted visit is unable to countenance visitors as consumers, consumers who exercise this choice in the museum as an act of will, and do not passively accept meaning.

The visit built around visitor choices makes the opposite claims from that of Duncan's scripted model: the visitor in this case comes to the museum with a set of desires or expectations and the museum provides the materials by which the visitor constructs its own path through the museum, through an experience it has invented. While Duncan is careful to acknowledge that the museum is conditioned and shaped by social and political context, and her visitors are given the option of whether to take on identities that are beneficial, her visit cannot account for the institutionally supported, reflexive, consumerist exercise of choice. It also cannot account for a visitor who is engaged in a process of self-development.

The Personalized Visit

These preceding versions of the visit have for some time held prominence in the discourse of museums. Bourdieu's euphemistic rendering of the competition for social capital, Bennett's disciplinary chamber within a reformist agenda, and Duncan's ritualized script for the adoption of approved subjectivities all posit institutions or practices that impress themselves on the almost helpless visitor. The emphasis in these preceding models of the visit are either on supra-cultural processes, that is class competition, or on the institution of the museum as an epistemic institution, shaped by its historical context, and producing types of visitor in the course of producing certain visits. However, with the onset of a turn to meaning and a new museology the visitor has come to be recognized as a central, active character in the visit, not the plaything of hegemonic forces.

This notion of the self-realizing actor originates theoretically from the crisis of the educative museology, in the recognition that a significant aspect of the museum experience was being largely ignored. To this conception of the visitor Bourdieu might say that the competition for cultural capital still operates beneath the surface of personal agency, but he might acknowledge that museum attendance operates in other sociologically relevant ways such as the part of the culture of self-exploration and improvement. Bennett would likely admit to the drawing back of the reformist agenda in the face of a populism more closely tied to the spread of global capitalism and the recruitment of museum practice to the linked causes of commodification and consumption. Duncan might say that the mechanisms of the current museum still operate in a similar fashion, but simply have displaced the desired subjectivities with others that are linked to the dominant political order. These positions are not wrong, but could not anticipate particular changes that now describe the current social and political context.

The portrait of the visitor as a passive vessel is out of step with the preponderance of the recent literature focusing on the visitor, yet this perspective is in keeping with an overarching view of the museum as an institution seen as ultimately responsible for our education. Discourse analysis and professional evaluations of museums are now beginning to more fully regard the effects on the interaction between visitors and museums when presuming visitors to be self-realizing actors who resist acting as mere signs of institutional power.

The Enlightenment endowment and the modern museum project it has generated deeply influence our understanding of the visitor. In a sense the cumulative heritage of the museum as universal educator still blunts the burgeoning view of the visitor as an autonomous, self-constitutive reflexive agent. In the following analysis of the visit where the personalized visit comes to the forefront of the literature, the analytical account still privileges the museum as more fully engendering the character of the visit.

Nick Prior (2003), in his essay, 'Having One's Tate and Eating it', argues that the contemporary museum has become a reflexive, double-coding institution. He claims that museums combine elements of traditional heritage and teaching programs with leading-edge

displays and events to capture both the audiences that crave spectacle and those that prefer quietly

didactic experiences. Prior cites as evidence the behavior of several leading art institutions: the

National Gallery in London, the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, and Tate Modern.

He examines these museums by way of their discursive coordinates, and their economic

pressures. Discussing their promotions, ticket sales, visitor numbers, stated intentions of the

directors, and the criticism that greeted shows, he finds that these museums, particularly Tate

Modern, consciously frame themselves to appeal to different (particularized) visitors. In order to

do this, he concludes, they have devised ways to monitor themselves in order to satisfy external

demands for compliance with community goals and/or standards, while also creating

advantageous financial arrangements with corporate businesses. The key is their reflexivity.

In essence Prior endows museums with consciousness, a consciousness situated in its

professional staff, and engendered by the pressures brought on in an era where museums are

expected to behave like for-profit enterprises, and yet expected to maintain social utility.

Museums, he argues, have had to learn how to become more financially viable, raising funds by

either commercial means, such as ticket sales for exhibitions, or sales through the gift shop, and

by fashioning partnerships, all of which require careful observation of internal procedures and

adherence to approved practices.[94] Prior argues that this reflexivity is what gives the current

museum visit a protean character, now a 'radically syncretic institution in which variant

tendencies coexist—aesthetic contemplation *and* entertainment, connoisseurship *and*

consumption, private delectation *and* public provision' (2003, p. 63) [emphasis in original].

As other museum researchers discussed above have done, Prior establishes a link between

the surrounding socio-economic context for the museum and the behavior it exhibits. He terms the

current context an era of 'hypermodernity', arguing that what characterizes it is a robust

neoliberal embrace of strategies by which the museum, no longer an educational institution that

holds itself above the fray of commercial viability, remakes itself in the mold of commercial

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[94] Prior makes the case that this institutional self-awareness is not a development that affects only museums. Rather this self-consciousness is a hallmark of many institutions existing in contemporary society. Contending this, he cites Beck, Giddens, and Lash (1994).

enterprises, which means presenting itself as all things to all potential customers. He argues that

hypermodernity shapes the museum world in four particular ways: a) museums' reflexivity makes

them hybrid institutions in which distinct types of visit are simultaneously possible; b) this

reflexivity is in part due to the demand that museums market themselves; c) an increasingly

robust mass consumption of culture now occurs in museums, and; d) at the root of the marketing

of museums and increased consumption is the transformation of the cultural sphere into a

consumerist marketplace where visitors and their commercial activity are prized. These are the

features that describe a 'hypermodern' context for Prior. His description of this context and the

correlated view of the visitor and the museum reveal how present circumstances have outstripped

the explanatory abilities of the foregoing visit models.

Given the museum's conscious ability to navigate the shoals between falling away into

obsolescence and becoming cultural supermarkets that are (quoting Jameson) 'mesmerising

sensoriums', Prior dismisses forecasts of the impending death of the museum birthed in the

Enlightenment (p. 56). In contrast, Prior argues that the museum has essentially become an

institution able to simultaneously hold competing values. For the visitors who desire a set of

options keyed to their personal learning styles and desires, the museum can change its curatorial

demeanor while maintaining its essential chemical composition, Prior's 'allotrope'. Though he

does not explicitly say this, the museum in his conception is a set of options that may be explored

as personality and circumstance of the visitor suggest. This visit is fundamentally a menu made

for a visitor/consumer. The consumptive behavior of visitors is crucial to consider here, because it

is very much a part of the conditioning context.

Hooper-Greenhill (2000) asserts that museums are molded and shaped by particular

socio-historical contexts and thus new socio-historical circumstances produce new museums,

types of visitors, and meanings for the visit. The turn to meaning and the new museology have

brought about a particularization of the visitor, and the institution. They exist together and are

dependent on each other. Hooper-Greenhill's interpretive visitor only comes into being as the

post-museum comes into being. The visitor regarded as a passive, regulated figure gives way to

the visitor as active, self-aware collaborator.

In a similar way, the visitor as consumer may only come into being in the discursive visit

as the museum as a site of consumption also comes into being. Prior recognizes that in his

allotropic museum the art experience is made complimentary or supplementary to commercial

consumption.[95] As he observes, in many museums the café or bookstore are no longer ancillary to

the museum visit, but destinations in themselves. Consumerism is not simply a correlate of this

time, but is a significant, constitutive factor of what the museum and visit are now, shaping the

visit to act as a menu of options for the visitor, and shaping the visitor to act as a consumer. These

are critical points to grasp.

However, Prior misses the point in claiming that the museums might simply provide

assorted services, diverse pleasures to attract visitors across the spectrum of desire. Though a

fairly obvious observation, fundamentally such a space is *not* the museum associated with

Enlightenment values. The museum as a menu of options is an institution of an entirely different

character and import than the museum premised on universal education. In this regard,

researchers and theorists who regard the rampant commercial consumption hosted by the museum

as evidence of its breakdown are not entirely mistaken.[96] However, rather than the museum falling

apart, one based on a different philosophy is replacing it.

Prior contends that the dismissal of current museums that create spaces for escapist

entertainment and spectacle is premature and mistaken. This is insightful, but he somewhat

ignores the history of museums acting as a paternalistic institutions holding out the promise of

self-realization and education. As the museum shifts from an educative, curator-centered

museology to a museology that privileges a customizable, personalized visit, the capacity of the

museum to create collectively enjoining narratives seems to be thrown into question. The

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[95] The brilliant example of this is the advertising campaign for the Victoria and Albert Museum designed by Saatchi and Saatchi that ran during the 1990s and trumpeted the institution as, 'an ace caff with quite a nice museum attached' (Prior, 2003, p. 55).
[96] Here Prior cites Jean Baudrillard (1982), Frederic Jameson (1991), Mike Featherstone (1991), and Robert Hewison (1991).

underlying fear is that these narratives will no longer provide reasons for collective thought and

action.

Prior seems to have a different conception of the underlying forces influencing museum,

not positing museologies as working through museums. Thus does not imagine that the

appearance of a new type of museum will be contested. As will be demonstrated in the case study

to follow, visitor expectations are allied to museums regarded as part of public patrimony, and a

shift in their philosophical orientation will often be met with protest. Visitors resent their museum

being taken away from them, even when amplified agency is held out in exchange.

However, the nature of the visit is not simply a function of the museum alone. The notion

of a personalized visit coming to the forefront of the museum field imagines visitors impressing

themselves on the museum, beginning to condition what museums' exhibitionary content.

Increasingly museums are adopting co-curation strategies, or crowdsourcing the museum content,

using visitor generated work to add to or fully comprise their displays.[97] The visitor now

profoundly affects what museums display and how artwork is organized.

Social scientists, art historians, and museum professionals have long sought a way to

understand and overcome the elitism of the museum. In some ways, the populist consumption of

art (and related products) has done just that. Prior says that seeing museum becoming a playpen of

distraction as a catastrophe has to do with the collapse of an underlying allegiance to an idea of

high culture, its values of transcendence, depth, and contemplation. Prior has attempted to chart a

way out of this collapse of the Enlightenment project, but this may not be necessary. This increase

in and (seemingly) widening out of visitor profiles fulfills one of the fundamental goals of the

Enlightenment institution that has consistently been difficult to meet: to welcome visitors who

more broadly represent the general population.[98] The personalized visit may support this value

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[97] This will be discussed in chapter four, 'Marketized Visitors'.

[98] A key issue that has lately emerged regarding the use of museum survey data is that their reliability is contested (Selwood, 2001; Selwood, 2002a; Davies, 1994). Hooper-Greenhill cites 'difficulties in establishing a reliable overall figure of the number of visits made to museums or of the percentage of the population which uses museums on a regular basis', largely due to the sources from which data are derived (2006, p. 370). Sara Selwood (2002b, 2006) argues that statistics on visitor use are collected and used by government agencies to advocate for museums having a helpful economic impact on communities and helping to prevent social exclusion among those at risk. However, much of this data, according to Selwood, is methodologically skewed by policy intentions.

while meeting it differently. Perhaps it may be that the engagement of the visitor within this unique complex will generate another kind of transcendence not previously experienced in the discursively constituted visit. We seem to be turning back towards private delights.

In the following chapter the examination of the case study museum, Tate Modern, will provide historical examples of the shifts so far discursively traced, and will relate how this visitor figure who energetically employs its interpretive faculties is imagined by the institution. It will also demonstrate how its reflexivity is used to develop an audience that would feel welcome and empowered in this type of museum.

Chapter Three: An Interpretive Museum

Introduction

In this chapter documents are examined to locate the particular *institutional* features and

developments underlying the formulation of a visitor-centered visit shown, in the chapter above,

to be emerging in museum discourse. Developing a clear picture of the nature of the personalized

visit's institutionalization is the essential work of the case study, which, given the complexity of

the public museum's history, the ideological shifts it has undergone, and the socio-economic

circumstances that have come to shape the museum in the late twentieth century, requires some

analytical scaffolding. The framework that organizes the investigation of this instance of the

personal visit's instantiation is a chronology of the Tate Gallery, comprised from documentary

evidence of its historical development, which will show that Tate evolves into an interpretive

museum as it is conditioned by several forces, among them, a new museology.

The focus of this case study is the Tate Modern museum, though this part of its

examination begins with the Tate Gallery. Tate Modern originates from within the Tate Gallery.

Documentary evidence pertaining to the original Gallery shows that Tate Modern develops out of

it, in a process that may be described in terms of biological cell meiosis.[99] Tate Gallery divides

itself creating a 'daughter' museum that contains what we might consider the 'chromosomal

material' of the original. That is to say, that Tate Modern comes into being with features similar

to its progenitor, in terms of institutional values, management strategies, and communication

practices.[100] At the same time, Tate Modern, upon its opening in 2000, in its display schemes

evidenced a demonstrably new curatorial strategy which indicated a unique set of options of

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[99] These documents connote an interpretive museum, rather than directly declaring its existence. The following again relies on implicit views of the museum's priorities and focus.

[100] Tate creates a new Tate gallery in producing Tate Modern, one with an emphasis on modern and contemporary art. The original Tate Gallery opened as an annex of the National Gallery in 1897, becoming independent of it in 1955. (It is referred throughout this thesis as the Tate Gallery to avoid confusion.) Tate Modern opens in 2000. Tate Britain, through still the site of the original Tate Gallery (Millbank, London), also comes into being the same year as its name is changed. Simultaneously, in 2000, Tate, as a term used to refer to the entire family of Tate galleries, comes into being. The entire family of galleries includes Tate Liverpool, which opened in May 1988, and Tate St. Ives, which opened in June 1993. Tate Liverpool, it will be shown, acts as a kind of older sibling to Tate Modern, being the site where strategies of audience development that would eventually be put into play in Tate Modern were first tested.

interaction by the visitor, and conveyed the visitor's awareness and powers. The evidence

analyzed here will show that these display schemes exist in relation with a new museology that

conditions the Tate Gallery to conceive of the visitor as an interpretive entity while the Gallery

reshapes its understanding of how it should serve the public. This conditioning is inflected by

other factors that include economic changes, and political regime change which impact the

Gallery, and together make the Gallery a lens through which to view the institutional

extrapolation of intertwined conceptions of the visitor and notions of public utility.[101]

The following tracks the changes to Tate Gallery in terms of its perception of its mission

and primary duties over a period of 45 years. Tate Modern not only benefited from the experience

that the Tate Gallery had accumulated, it also came into being benefitting from another museum

in the Tate Family that auditioned the strategies of audience development which were

strategically engaged to secure the status of the Tate organization and the future success of Tate

Modern. Given this prior experience, the strategizing around creating the first museum of its kind

in the UK dedicated to modern art and contemporary art, was infused with the Tate Gallery's

agility to respond to political pressures and economic demands that conditioned the ways in

which it could secure funding and public approval.

The new museology's focus on interpretation by the visitor utilized and exploited the

Gallery's savoir-faire and synergistically operated with prevailing cultural policy to reconfigure

the visitor. The following analysis brings these developments to the surface, showing that they

build on each other as the museum is progressively conditioned by a visitor-centered museology.

This analysis also demonstrates that the new museology operating in tandem with the

aforementioned forces, has generated a conception of the visitor as a self-directed, self-realizing

entity and this conception is apparent in Tate Gallery's exhibitionary and educational programs,

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[101] Tate Modern was conceived as the first museum devoted to modern and contemporary art, two historically defined
genres of practice that tend to privilege experimentation and iconoclastic artwork. These displays were underpinned by
the conscious reimagining of the visitor as a self-directed, intellectually autonomous individual by the chief curators,
Iwona Blazwick and Frances Morris (2000) who relate their thinking about the visitors and the displays in the *Tate
Modern Handbook*, an expansive exhibition catalogue.

and its interpretive practices as it evolves over time through to the moment it produces Tate Modern.

The key documentary evidence consists in the Tate Reports, publications that recount the creation of departments, posts, and programs, and in so doing, indicate changes in institutional focus. These documents reveal that Tate upon its inception and through the 1950s and 1960s focused on a collection-centered museology, then in the 1970s, embarked on an educative, curator-focused museology; and by the late 1980s, it reflects the concerns of a new museology. The Reports demonstrate the institution's conditioning by a new museology to become what is being termed here an, 'interpretive museum'. This analysis traces the stages of evolution towards an interpretive museum, offering images of the museum in its moments of transition from one museological orientation to another. There are 'gaps' between the images, which are perforce, akin to snapshots of the Gallery at particular moments in its development. These gaps are bridged by discussions of the historical context. An examination of these Tate Reports, allied with the contextualizing information has the benefit of demonstrating how these changes take place diachronically, showing an increasing institutional interest over time in facilitating the visitor's ability to create meaning in the museum environment.

This 'interpretive museum' is the necessary institutional correlate of the personalized visit, which we have seen implicitly appear in museum discourse. It was shown in Nick Prior's critique of Tate Modern in the above, that the personalized visit he obliquely describes implies a individuated, self-realizing visitor using the museum as a menu of choices from which it could select an experience related to its needs and interests. The interpretive museum is a museum focused on facilitating the personal selection of interpretive experience by the visitor figure through engaging its sensual awareness and critical powers, and encouraging it to be active in constructing meaning out of the materials presented. It recognizes and privileges the visitor's freedom of choice by encouraging choice from among the objects, and potential experiences made available, and by confirming any choice made as valid. The active cultivation of the

visitor's agency in the museum's exhibition programming, is what defines Tate Modern as an interpretive museum.

The foregoing does not imply that there is no role for education in the interpretive museum. It may educate, much as a museum with a curator-centered museology will, by the transfer of didactic information, through wall texts, captions, web-based resources, acoustic guides, docents, docent-led tours, lectures and symposia, and printed bulletins. However, the primary focus of the interpretive museum is to facilitate the visitor's practical and conceptual means to direct the focus of the visit. The conceptualized visitor is active, self-directed, and able to determine for itself the objects requiring viewing, the length of time spent with each, the path through the museum, the connections made between and among objects, and ultimately the semantic resonances that are taken from the objects. The acquisition of expository information by the visitor is certainly possible, and expected, but is not necessary. Even without the conveyance of art historical knowledge, the visit will not be postulated as an unsuccessful or deficient attempt. In other words, the goals of the experience are contingent on the visitor and the *meaning* derived is similarly contingent. Neither is depending on the curator, or pre-determined educative goals. Whereas if the visit is predominantly shaped by a curator-centered museology, the conveyance of information convened around objects precisely and meaningfully organized by a curator to a tractable visitor makes the visit legitimate.

The following examination consists of two related sections. The first section examines the Tate Reports and looks on the diachronic changes in the structure of the museum that are related to the rhetorical construction of the visitor figure in turn linked to underlying theoretical perspectives on the proper work of the museum.[102] The structural changes include the creation of new departments, the addition of administrative posts, changes to the names of departments, and the tasks they carry out. This discussion will show that structural changes made in the museum

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[102] For example, visitors in the 1988-1990 report are referred to as the 'audience'. Between 1998 and 2000 the Education Department is restructured and becomes the Department of Education and Interpretation. It is now called the Learning Department, a change that occurred in 2008.

are subtended by deeper theoretical conceptions of the visitor and the museum's determination of

how this conception should be mobilized to enable it to be perceived as fulfilling its duties.

A second section forwards an analysis of these changes in terms of Tate Gallery's

political and economic context, especially as these contexts shape what it regards as its missions.

The Gallery's professional practices are not only conditioned by a museology, but also are

inflected by economic changes and alterations to cultural policy that are brought about by

political administrations with their distinct notions of what constitutes service to the public. The

museum that will emerge in subsequent chapters is shown to develop a remarkably fluid and

dynamic character, able to respond to competing claims on its educational practice and to shifting

funding priorities that require different approaches to management and internal structure.

Prologue to the Reports

The first Report offers a brief sketch of the history of the gallery and how it became, in

1955, an art museum independent of the National Gallery in Trafalgar Square, London. In brief,

The Tate Gallery was established in 1897 as an annex to the National Gallery, and was controlled

by the larger museum's board. The Tate Gallery initially had no purchasing fund of its own.

There was a good deal of discussion in the early 1900s regarding the question of the Tate

Gallery's intertwining with the National Gallery (and the Royal Academy of Arts), and this

discussion resulted in the government appointing a separate Board of Trustees for the Tate

Gallery in 1917. However, this appointment of a separate board gave no real independence to the

Gallery, since its collection continued to be held under the authority of the National Gallery

Trustees. Essentially, control over the collection lay with the National Gallery, thus the Tate

Gallery lacked autonomy. The two institutions were also administratively enmeshed: for example,

the National Gallery Director also acted as the Accounting Officer for the Tate Gallery.

The issue of the Tate Gallery's lack of autonomy was not resolved until 1944. In that year

the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the president of the Board of Education set up a committee,

the Massey Inquiry, to examine several London art institutions, including the Tate Gallery, the

National Gallery, and the Victoria and Albert Museum, to ascertain what each museum was

supposed to be and do. In essence they sought to differentiate the institutions. The Parliamentary

bill that gave Tate its fiscal and administrative independence was introduced into the House of

Lords in 1953, and came into full force in 1955. From the year that the bill was introduced, Tate

began to compile and publish public records of the gallery's development from year to year.

These public records constitute the Tate Reports.

   To provide a useful analytical spine, the majority of the content gleaned from the Tate

Reports is laid out in a chronology. This timeline begins with the first Report, written soon after

the museum's inception, and follows subsequent Reports up through the moment when Tate

Modern opens. Information on new departments, and new items pertaining to visitor concerns are

highlighted and summarized. Not every report is cited, since only the developments pertaining to

changes in museological focus are of interest here, and a detailed analysis of each and every

report would not serve the purposes of creating a synoptic view of the overall nature of the

changes to the Tate Gallery. Analysis of the chronology's highlights demonstrate alterations to

department titles, the creation of new paid posts, the creation (and ending) of new programs, and

the appearance of new categories that constitute areas of focus for the museum.

   To help understand these reports, the first Tate Report published in 1954 is examined in

detail and each section that appears in it is explained. As an initial example, the 1954 Report

offers the reader a baseline understanding of how the Reports are structured and what they

convey. With this Report acting as a template, it will be feasible to track how the Reports change,

and how the museum signified in its pages also becomes different. The timeline organizes and

summarizes changes to the museum given through the reports, 1953 through 2000-2002,

inclusive. This will give a picture of the museum's evolution as a curator-centered museology

comes to prominence, and then its transition as a visitor-centered museology begins to replace it.

In particular the institution's conception of the visitor, and its construction of institutional

structures in response to that conception are key.

Tate Reports

The Tate Gallery Reports consist of, as the Tate website claims, 'What our priorities are and how we are doing'.[103] The reports refer to the business carried on by Tate in the previous year.[104] These accounts provide information on what the gallery had accomplished in that year, how it had spent the funds used to support it, and what it hopes to accomplish in the coming year(s).

Several categories of information are given in each Report. Many of the categories related below are repeated in subsequent Reports, but some are left aside as the institution grows and changes. The following summary conveys the headings of categories given in the first record, along with a brief explanation of each category:

- **General**—This section pertains to the general state of the gallery, including the outlook for the next year, and major changes in the culture or the government that affect it.

- **Acquisitions**—This is the largest section, and by all indications the most important at this time. It pertains to artworks that the museum seeks to buy or for which it looks to trade. This section includes a discussion of particular schools or movements and the museum's need to fill in its collection in particular areas.

- **Exhibitions**—This category refers to the presentations the museum arranges and includes details of who the leading curators are, dates, and how well they are attended.

- **Loans of Works of Art**—This is a running record of pieces the museum has loaned to other institutions and works borrowed from other museums.

- **Finance**—This section refers to the state of available funds permitting the museum to run. It lists major donations and money taken in from sales, and the monies available for purchasing works.

- **Trustees**—This section details the people who occupy the Board of Trustees, tracking who has joined in the previous year(s), and who has left.

- **Staff and Administration**—This section relates the leading positions that are open, have opened or closed, and who has filled the open positions.

- **The Publications and Information Department**—This passage refers to the publications the museum has produced, including exhibition catalogues.

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[103] This information is given through the Tate website on the page 'What is the publication scheme?' under the subheading "What's in the Publication Scheme?', at
http://www.tate.org.uk/about/freedomofinformation/pubscheme_about.htm (accessed February 20, 2012). Tate's website has since had a complete overhaul and the above link may not be active. The archived version should exist at the UK National Archives for the web. The link above may be accessed via web archives at:
http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110108071817/http://www.tate.org.uk/about/freedomofinformation/pubscheme_about.htm (accessed May 19, 2012).

[104] Until 1968 all of the Reports are published yearly. In 1968 the Reports change to a bi-annual format and continue that way to through the report dated 2002-2004. Thereafter it switches back to a yearly format.

- **Restoration and Cleaning**—This refers to the objects the museum looks to have cleaned, repaired, or restored. This section gives the state of the objects and relates the dates when the objects are anticipated to be repaired.

- **The Gallery Building**—This segment has to do with the physical state of the building, regarding what parts of it need to be repaired or reconditioned.

- **The Library**—This section relates what the library contains and what has been donated to it.

- **Guide Lectures**—The passage lists major lectures planned by the museum for the upcoming year.

- **The National Gallery and Tate Gallery**—This section details the relations between Tate and the National Gallery. At one point they are completely meshed, but once Tate gains administrative independence and control of its collection, this section details the winding down of connections between the institutions. Once they are fully separated, this section disappears.

- **Bills**—This section relates the gallery's outstanding bills.

- **Miscellaneous**—This refers to subjects not covered by the other categories, including at this point, audience attendance figures.

This is the first published Report, thus the categories are destined to fluctuate. The museum at this point is beginning to explore the significance of its independence from the National Gallery, and beginning to create a template of action for its future. Here, many of the sections detail concerns with the resources the museum relies on: acquisitions, finance, the gallery building. Some of these categories disappear over the course of the museum's growth as its resources shift and become more diversified: for example, partnerships with other institutions or businesses later become a large concern. However, some categories do persist for many years.[105] These categories include 'Acquisitions', 'Trustees', 'Staff and Administration', and 'Finance'. The 'General' category is soon replaced by the 'Director's Report' which itself will grow to include several subcategories. Some of these subcategories are mentioned in the following timeline. The reader should note that this is not an exhaustive retelling of the Tate Reports, but an examination of selected moments.

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[105] The Tate Report 2010-2011 lists the following main categories: Collection; Programme; Audiences; Improving Tate; Future Developments; Financial Review; Donations, Gifts, Legacies, and Sponsorships.

Chronology

1970-1972	'Education' appears as a category in the 1972-1974 Report. The Education department is opened in 1971. School trips to the museum are discussed, as are the ways these trips are handled, that is, what accommodations the museum makes for the students. This Report relates a collaborative project between the museum and Brighton Polytechnic, in which Tate staff work alongside Brighton Polytechnic tutors to assess students' projects.
1982-1984	An Information department is opened. This mainly consists of an Information Desk, which is said to now have a permanent site, so that visitors 'can obtain any kind of information to enhance the pleasure of their visit' (p. 43). At this time school children are attending the museum in numbers between 50 and 60 thousand per year.
1988-1990	'Education' as a category in the Reports is no longer present. 'Reaching the Audience' and 'Engaging the Audience' become subsections under the 'Director's Report'. The new director for the entire Tate collection of galleries is now Nicholas Serota, who replaces Alan Bowness. In the Director's Report, Serota relates that the Gallery commissioned a three-part survey in 1989 on the expectations of visitors and what influences them to make a visit (p. 22). Tate Liverpool Opens.
1990-1992	'Communicating with the Visitors' appears in the 'Achievements of the Biennium' section. This section mentions the use of captions as an important part of communicating with visitors (p. 17). The 'Information Department is renamed the 'Communications Department'. This department includes marketing, publicity, and press relations arms. A Development Department is established.
1992-1994	A research project on visitor services is engaged from June to October 1993 (p. 20).
1994-1996	The Tate café is entirely refurbished. A comprehensive 'Visitor Care Programme' is developed to train members of staff and volunteers who work with the public (p. 18).
1996-1998	In summer of 1997, BDDP GGT an advertising agency is hired to 'improve attendances at the smaller paying exhibitions, and to attract a larger and wider public to the Gallery, especially those who do not visit galleries regularly' (p. 23).
1996-1998 (continued)	An ad campaign is launched with the message 'A visit to Tate can change how you see the world' (p. 24). A website is launched that includes over 8,000 images and the details of displays and exhibitions for those who are considered part of the audience who cannot make a physical visit (p. 24). A new category appears in the Report, 'Visitor Services and Research'. It mentions that 'The Gallery conducts a regular programmed of quantitative visitor research to

	get at the effectiveness of the press and marketing activities, audience profile and visitor satisfaction'. (pp. 24-25). A new category appears in the Report, 'Public Events and Education'. It relates the current state of, 'Record levels of participation, income and funding' (p. 26). New Education programs are discussed, including: 'Tatextra' after school sessions for teens, and 'Sunday Art Trolley' for children and their carers (p. 27). It is recognized that, 'There are some audiences which the Gallery is still not addressing fully, either through its programming and related promotional activities, or through visitor services' (p. 25).
1998-2000	The Education department is restructured at both London sites (Tate Modern and Tate Britain, which was previously the Tate Gallery, but in 2000 is itself renamed) and is renamed the department of 'Interpretation and Education' (p. 34). The Report includes a section 'Communicating with Visitors' which relates that Tate now has a corporate identity created by Wolff Olins, that the ad agency TBWA is now responsible for exhibitions and launches, and that Tate employs an external PR consultancy. Several promotional sponsorships are mentioned including a shop in Selfridges, uniforms by Paul Smith, branded beer by Gruppo, a Tate Modern supplement in *Time Out* Magazine, a branded coffee by Coffee Republic, and partnerships with the Guardian and Observer.
2000-2002	A full-time Families Curator is appointed (p. 14). The Section 'Communicating with the Public' appears. It relates that, 'Promotional partnerships were also an intrinsic part of Tate's marketing mix, providing excellent opportunities to communicate to new and broader audiences' (p. 28).

The Tate Gallery in the 1960s

One of the keys to understanding the significance of this chronology is grasping the

family of rhetorical changes signifying a transition from one area of institutional focus to another.

At the outset, in its first Report, the largest section is 'Acquisitions', indicatively positioned at the

top of the Report. The breadth of the section and its position signal that this is an area around

which there is a great deal of curatorial consideration and activity. There is much discussion of

the collection, with specifications of categories such as, 'British Painting', 'Modern Foreign

Painting', 'Modern Sculpture', used to demarcate intended areas of focus for an acquisition

program. There is discussion as well of the 'Purchasing Policy', and clarification is sought as to

how the museum intends to purchase art and manage the funds made available for these

purchases. While a concern for the strength of the collection is to be expected at the

commencement of the museum's life outside of the auspices of the National Gallery, there is no

corresponding rhetorical concern for public education as a policy direction or for visitors as the

recipients or beneficiaries of the museum's curatorial labor. No section is named for the visitor.

Rather, a concern with the collection persists for several years, as demonstrated in the language of

these Reports.

This emphasis on the collection, on organizing it, tallying its contents, and engaging an

acquisition program to augment it, particularly in areas perceived as weak, continues through the

sixties. Most of the discussions summarized in the Reports of the 1960s concern problems with

purchasing works due to the five-year block grants the government at that time provides national,

public museums. In the 1967-1968 Tate Report, the Director's section claims that this policy

prevents Tate from acquiring the works needed to fill in gaps in the collection and enhance the

collection in important ways.

The acquisition policy alluded to in these Reports presupposes a conception of the

collection as appropriately comprehensive. The pieces are taken to be the 'best' representatives of

a body of work, or able to adequately relate and illustrate an art historical narrative of progression

in an artist, technique, or school of practice. At its outset, Tate seeks to establish itself as a

guardian of public heritage, a heritage made both visible and legible through visual

representations contained within the works of recognized British artists, and by the works

themselves that comprise the collection, such as paintings and drawings by J.M.W. Turner,

William Hogarth, Thomas Gainsborough, and Joshua Reynolds. These artists feature prominently

in the Gallery's early collection, but their work is deemed sufficiently representative if they

constitute by virtue of their breadth and depth a more or less comprehensive narrative of the

development of a style or practice. The focus of Tate Gallery on caring for its collection is key to

its then current role and status as dutiful custodian of artistic cultural heritage, and therefore it is

where the primary attention of the institution is focused.

Additionally, at the time of its inception the Tate Gallery was founded as the 'National

Gallery of British Art', and more than safeguarding this cultural inheritance, its collections

management policies were directly responsive to the questions of what constituted a 'British

artist', or 'British art'. These notions were (and still are) contested given the nation's social and

political legacies shaped by colonialism, imperialism, and migration. [106] Questions arose around

whether British artists (with some correlation to the art they produced) could rightly be deemed so

if born outside of national environs, or born within Britain, but of parents who had emigrated

from countries that are ethnically unrelated, or those born in former British colonies. Through its

acquisition and exhibition programs the Gallery took part in institutionally elaborating 'the

significance of nation and the meaning of British art' (Fyfe, 1996, p. 221). In regard to its

exhibition program and display arrangements the Gallery also drew together spatial narratives that

brought disparate nation states within a coherent account of the 'national'. This articulation of a

notion of Britishness brought together the abstract concepts of the local, national, and

international into the space of the Gallery where the theoretical borders between these ideas could

be contemplated and even brought into (precarious) coherence (Morris, 2002; Morris, 2003).

The Gallery's care for its collection must therefore be understood within a wider matrix

of cultural stewardship that nurtured and mediated notions of identity and citizenship and had

deep social and political effects. Public service was in crucial ways not at all alien to the Tate

Gallery in the 1960s, though 'pubic service' would be notionally constructed very differently as

cultural policy shifted with the priorities of a conservative government that would rise in the

1980s. That regime's agencies and funding bodies that followed suit would use the rhetorical

device of 'public service' to define the value of Tate and other public museums.

In these early Tate Reports, there is a sense in which the visitor is not yet visible to the

museum. For the curatorial staff, which at this point represents the primary public face of the

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[106] The exhibition (Re)presenting Britain which was opened in the same year as Tate Modern revived and exacerbated quarrels around the nature of Britishness and the proper role of the museum in adjudicating these issues. Andy Morris (2003) discusses the array of underlying notions of Britishness contrasting an image of, 'Britishness-as-process', as a nodal point existing within a larger web of international networks comprised of gender, ethnicity, geography, versus an historically articulated fixed set of attributes.

museum, the visitor figure is subsumed into numbers representing visitor attendance which appear only under the categories of 'General' or 'Miscellaneous'. An 'Education' category does not yet exist. The visitor does not appear as an index of popularity, nor as a pupil to be educated, nor as a consumer to be engaged. The visitor is in essence taken for granted.

These Reports betray the presumption that the visitor attends because the Gallery has upheld its end of the tacit bargain between it and its publics by safeguarding and presenting for public use public patrimony. Discussion and consideration of the visitor does not occur, except as an index of the popularity of a particular exhibition, described as well attended or not. This oblique quantification of the visitor is in turn an indication of curatorial clarity and insight, in assembling a convincing narrative that visitors might more enthusiastically register as pertinent to them. While the visitor plays as part as confirming curatorial competence, there is little else for the visitor to constitute with regard to Tate's mission.

The Tate Gallery in the 1970s

When education does appear in the Reports as its own category, its appearance is a significant transition point, for from that moment on, the museum can be observed putting structures in place that facilitate reconceptualizing the visitor as a figure to be educated. This does not mean that the appearance of the 'Education' category in the Reports engenders or is engendered by an educative museology acting through the museum as though it were a torrent pouring through a sieve, but rather that the flows of policies, information, and practice are shaped by the educative museology acting in concert with other dynamics.

Through structural reorganizations signaled by titular alterations, the Tate Gallery demonstrates it is influenced by an educational museology from 1971 onwards. In 1971, 'Education' appears as a category in the report, and an Information Department is opened, with a desk made available to visitors. The 1970-1972 Report conveys the pressures of meeting the needs of a school curriculum, suggesting that these pressures are associated with the Education Department's development. At the time between fifty and sixty thousand schoolchildren attend

the museum each year, a figure which breaks down to about one thousand school children each

week. This many children attending adds significant demands on staff, who sought to

accommodate them and control the flow of people through the galleries. The Gallery staff offered

guided tours through parts of the collection and provided exercises for the children that connected

their experience with elements of their curriculum. Staff members were engaged in face-to-face

teaching programs, and provided many supplemental lectures and films on art.[107] The Report

dated 1972-1974 relates that the Gallery participated in a collaborative project involving the

Brighton Polytechnic, in which Tate Gallery staff worked with the Polytechnic tutors to assess

students' projects. As the museum shifts its mode of address with regard to its public service role,

towards the discursive transfer of knowledge to the visitor, the visitor becomes visible in these

documents, primarily as a subject in need of tuition. Educational work in Tate Gallery at this time

is the principal means of engagement with the public (Dewdney, Dibosa, & Walsh, 2013).

It is important to recall what was occurring in influential organizations within the

museum field at this time. In the early 1970s, a shift towards recognizing the museum's potential

role as an educator and thus the visitor's potential role as a pupil was rising to prominence among

the professional bodies that shaped principal museum policies and concerns. As Eilean Hooper-

Greenhill (1991) George Hein (1998) point out, public service organizations from decades prior,

during the interwar years, saw the potential of museum education in supplementing the school

curriculum and had begun to exploit this capability by publicly advocating that museums enact

education programs.[108] The first book outlining appropriate methods for museum education

officers was published a few years prior, in 1967, *Museum School Services*. Its author, Francis

Cheetham methodically relayed the ways in which school subjects could be related to museum

collections. Within this decade the Group for Education in Museums had become the biggest and

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[107] This teaching program ended in 1983. It is not clear when it began.

[108] According to Hooper-Greenhill (1991), the Board of Education published guidelines for museum education in 1931.
The Carnegie United Kingdom Trust funded many of the education initiatives, including travel to the US for a schools
officer to observe museum educational work in the US, and the establishment of loan programs that allowed schools to
borrow museum materials (pp. 40-42).

most dynamic of the specialist cadres of museum staff, and by 1983 there were 362 education

posts in 154 museums in the UK (Hooper-Greenhill, 1991, pp. 57-60).

In supranational organizations that influenced museum policy, the urgency to educate was

beginning to have traction. The International Council of Museums (ICOM) at its ninth General

Conference in 1971 adopted a resolution that rejected the 'traditional concept of the museum'

with its priority of the objects of cultural and natural heritage (Weil, 1999, p. 237). Preceding that

resolution by a few months, an International Museology Seminar in Germany, which took place

under the auspices of ICOM, resolved that 'Museums, in effect, are institutions that supplement

school and adult education,' and, 'Museums the world over have a role as centres of research and

education to assume in modern industrial society which can be given to no other type of

institution' (*ICOM News*, 1971, p. 40).

In the United States a similar notion of the museum's educative powers was gaining

institutional recognition and imprimatur. Just two years after ICOM's conference, the largest,

most prominent body organizing the museum profession in the United States, the American

Association of Museums, also manifested the call on museums to take up this burgeoning

identity. A group of museum educators threatened to secede from the AAM because of lack of

voice in the governance of the organization. Almost a decade later, the AAM was able to state its

unequivocal support for the notion of museum as educator. In 1984 it published a report,

Museums for the New Century, which explicitly embraced education as a primary purpose for

museums (Weil, 1999, p. 234).

A year later, the wave which was still swelling in Europe, began to be felt in France, and

the ICOM publication *Museum* acknowledged the presence of a 'movement of criticism and

reform incorporating new developments in the social and human sciences with the aim of

revitalizing techniques of display, exhibition, and communication' (de Varine, 1985, p. 184). This

was the new museology which would cohere disparate and shifting professional and academic

perspectives on the museum into an influential movement. This harbinger of change to the

museum field does not state that museums in general were shifting towards adopting an explicitly

educative duty, however the rhetoric of this new museology had effectively placed the visitor's

experience in position as the primary index of the museum's effective fulfillment of its public

service responsibility.

Though this push for the adoption of an educational role in the general field and in the

Tate Gallery in particular expressed itself as primarily concerned with meeting the needs of

school curricula by teaching through museum objects, this initiative was founded on a deeper

conviction. The growing desire among museum professionals who were shaping the governance

policies, ethical codes, and core missions of public museums under the auspices of bodies such as

ICOM, was to have museums generally operate in the service of the present society.[109]

As Stephen Weil (1999) points out, the public-utility role of the museum is integral to

ICOM, which has steadily moved towards promoting the view that museums may help in

informal education, community empowerment, and bringing about social change (p. 236). Weil

points out that ICOM's statutes were revised in 1974 to redefine those institutions recognized as

museums eligible for membership as those that have included in their characteristics the 'purpose'

of public service. This contrasts with the private storehouse collections that were the precursors to

the modern public museum, functioning as social markers of status and arenas of controlled social

rendezvous. The danger with this private model is its tacit legitimizing of exclusive collections of

wealth that deprives the public citizenry of what in ICOM's eyes should be part of their

patrimony. The international body's current definition of a museum continues to advance this

view that the museum must provide social, that is, collective utility. This description begins with

'A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development,

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[109] This is in contrast to acting in the service of an abstracted idea of society, for which the museum object might serve as a compelling proxy. The professional practice of caring for works of art owned by museums has at its core the notion that these objects are agglutinations of skill, historical resonance, and meaning intended to be experienced by people who are present, but also by those who stand one day to 'inherit' them. Museum curators and conservators must imagine a future society that will benefit from the preservation of objects. In a subtle way public service is deferred. The mobilization of objects to serve present needs, particularly for those who have not been traditionally welcomed into the museum is supported by a new museology that urges that public service not be sublimated by object care.

open to the public …' (ICOM Statues, Article 3, 2015). To paraphrase Stephen Weil, the museum

was developing towards being for somebody, as opposed to being about something.[110]

The infusion of the new museology in the field palpably expresses an underlying urgency

to make museums institutions of demonstrable public utility. Rather than dismissing the education

of the visitor, the new museology, seen in terms of a set of concerns and professional principles,

rather seeks to retain the model of the museum that pursues public service in an educative mode,

instead of the model that represents collections of cultural heritage comprised of professionally

determined hierarchies of taxonomic certification and value, set out in highly aestheticized

presentations intended to be understood by those equipped with the requisite training and

education. Museums acting as supplemental educative organizations responding to school

curricula supported the perception of museums as responsive to public needs, a fundamental

aspect of the new museology's conception of the proper social role of the museum.

Didactic knowledge transfer would only constitute one means of fulfilling what would

turn out to be an expanding and politically pliable set of duties for the UK museum in general and

Tate Gallery in the specific. In subsequent decades, this notion of public service would shape

expectations that served as pivot points for disputes regarding *how* the museum should serve, who

is considered part of its audience, and the measures by which to assess the quality and

effectiveness of its service. In the Tate Gallery, the educative, curator-centered museology did not

inhere for very long before the Gallery began to be inflected by an encroaching visitor-centered

orientation. In the space of approximately 20 years, almost the span of a generation, signs of the

visitor-centered museology began to make their appearance.

Best Practice for Public Service

A new emphasis appears in the 1988-90 Report, a key transition point. Here, 'Education'

is dropped as a category, and in the 'Director's Report' section, 'Reaching the Audience' appears

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[110] The title of his much cited essay is 'From Being about Something to Being for Somebody: The Ongoing
Transformation of the American Museum' (2005). Weil was an emeritus senior scholar at the Centre for Museum
Studies in the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC.

for the first time. A new sort of institutional awareness of the Tate's visitors comes to the surface,

and diffuses throughout the organization, manifesting in a virtual cascade of departmental shifts

and changes in terminology. These alterations which express differences in institutional outlook

indicate a growing awareness of the visitor figure, but also a shifting one since this awareness was

conditioned by economic changes and shifts in cultural policy to which this perception is linked.

In 1989, a survey is taken of visitors regarding their expectations and the influences they

recognize as spurring them to visit. This is the first mention of such a study being undertaken. An

institutional concern with comprehending, and ultimately meeting the desires of the visitor is

further signaled by the undertaking of a research project in visitor services in October of 1993

(Tate Report 1992-1994). Here, the informational flow is bi-directional. While the museum

conveys information to the visitor through its educational and exhibition programs, it

simultaneously collects information from the visitor that includes demographic data. Still, the

project is mainly weighted towards understanding the requirements, needs and expectations of

visitors. Subsequently, the information gleaned about the visitor is operationalised in the

development of a Visitor Care Program.

In the opening of this program we can observe the museum being transformed by its

perception of the visitor figure, in that information procured by Tate about visitors feeds into a

process by which Tate staff are trained. The precise nature of this visitor figure is only hinted at in

these accounts, since the details of this program are not given in the text of the Report, though

allusions are made to training and educating docents and junior staff to treat visitors in a way that

encourages them to return. Information gleaned from a text which analyses interviews with key

department leaders at Tate Liverpool, an outpost of Tate that was fashioned to anticipate and

negotiate the challenges that would eventually face Tate Modern, will shed some light here.

Tate Liverpool's history is instructive in mapping the visitor figure implicit in the shifting

emphases of successive museologies expressed in museum practice, in combination with cultural

policy and economic changes because Tate Liverpool was the first instance where 'the Tate

Gallery had to consider how to create and build a new and sustained audience' (Dewdney et al.,

2013, p. 24). In creating the structures and practices that allowed it to successfully do so, it is

regarded as a test case for the then imagined Tate Modern museum.[111] One of the first changes it

institutes is to have those who had been previously hired as security personnel take on the hybrid

designation of 'information assistants'. This was instituted by the first head of education in

Liverpool, Toby Jackson, who also became the first head of education at Tate Modern, and whose

innovations in many ways set the stage for the London gallery. These assistants were trained in

the art historicized narrative of the museum and in cultural studies discussions regarding the role

of the museum in society, to prepare them for dealing with a public sometimes hostile to

contemporary art. This staff change is one of the key ways in which the visitor is posited as an

active, speaking participant, one who is recognized as questioning and potentially skeptical and

requiring a considered response.

This communicative interaction with the visitor begins to foreground the interpretive act

in the interaction with the visitor. The Tate Liverpool education department moved towards more

vigorously engaging an adult audience, rather than schoolchildren, with the creation of 'public

programmes', that were 'designed to encourage debate and dialogue' (Dewdney et al., 2013, p.

26). To further draw the visitor into a dialogic exchange, Jackson oversaw the reworking of

standardized artwork labels that generally resonated only with specialist audiences through their

technical references to provenance and art historical scholarship. Jackson managed the creation of

extended labels that opened up the work to multiple accounts of its meaning through inclusion of

a range of disparate voices and disciplinary perspectives. This reformulation of interpretive

materials allowed 'the work of art to be understood as a site of dynamic meaning and contested

knowledge' (Dewdney et al., 2013, p. 27).[112] These sorts of expository texts in turn presupposed a

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[111] Tate Liverpool had a different set of circumstances. People in the city of Liverpool were actively hostile to the incursion of an art museum in lieu of needed public housing developments, and the local community expressed distrust in modern art. More, It did not have recourse to the kind of neo-classical architecture that read as legacy and powerful tradition as the London gallery did. Thus, though it was a precursor for Tate Modern, its programs were also molded by and responsive to different pressures (Dewdney, et al., 2013, pp. 23-25).

[112] Hilde Hein (2000) regards this innovation as a key marker of the contemporary museum. She writes, 'The showing of objects has been the museum's historic mission. Exhibition traditionally put objects "on view", inviting visitors to inspect and contemplate them, guided by the epistemically privileged museum authority. But what is observed in the museum today is no longer unequivocally an object; objects have been reconstituted as sites of experience, and museums increasingly hold themselves accountable for delivering experiences' (p. 5).

visitor willing and able to engage in parsing meaning, equipped to accept the premise that

meaning can oscillate in a work of art without rendering the work arbitrarily meaningless. Tate

Liverpool's education department developed an interpretation approach that both attracted visitors

to the museum and helped to build public trust in and acceptance of modern and contemporary

art. More significantly, the visitor figure is active, engaged in developing a sense of their role in

constituting meaning.

Underpinning this development is a conservative government's targeting of state

managed and funded institutions such as the Tate Gallery for reconditioning under the banner of

'rolling back the state' and rolling forward private enterprise. This conservative agenda

comprehensively committed to adopting policies of privatization, deregulation, and free-market

economies that step by step, beginning in the 1980s, transformed the cultural and civic landscape

of the United Kingdom to align with the standards of enterprise culture.

Longstanding suspicions about the governance of so called third sector, that is, not-for-

profit industries had existed before the 1980s, but utilizing the three E's of successfully profitable

business: economy, efficiency, and effectiveness, a Thacherite administration remade the system

of governance and management of museums. Crucially it imposed the idea of 'value for money'

(VFM) as the chief rubric for assessing the merits of public institutions. VFM was in turn used as

an assessment technique to determine the worth of museums and galleries, and as a goal for

guiding the practice of museum managers. A value-for-money prescription levied under a New

Public Management program implemented under the Conservative party's cultural policy

encouraged the use of outside consultants and specialists from the private sector to support

important projects and the formation of partnerships consisting of strategic sponsorships (Power,

1997, pp. 43-52). Initiatives that positioned the museum as a trading business in the marketplace,

such as management restructuring, the use of performance indicators, customer care programs,

corporate image-making, and promotion became part of the professionalisation of museum

practice (Ross, 2004, pp. 86-89). In this regard the idea of public service was transformed into

'one of professional expertise based on best practice' (Dewdney et al., 2013, p. 35).

In this vein, under the 1992 legislation, the *Museums and Galleries Act*, the Tate Gallery

was transformed from an institution within the civil service to a corporate entity, 'responsible for

its own financial management, buildings and staff employment' (Dewdney et al., 2013, p. 35).

Essentially the Tate organization was privatized, though it was still reliant on government

funding. Now, simultaneously being conditioned by a new museology with its emphasis on asking

and answering questions about visitors' needs and by a new professional outlook and correlated

set of tools by which to engage the visitor as a purchaser of goods, the visitor presumed to be the

beneficiary of public service is reconfigured, as is the way that public service is understood.

The visitor figure correlated with this corporate entity is the shareholder, the person

endowed with a part public ownership of the business' assets. According to Dewdney et al.

(2013), the visitor is reconfigured to constitute this shareholder who is granted access to the assets

based on the provisions of service that the market bestows on consumers (p. 30). Accordingly,

these parallel conceptions of the visitor are supposed to act in tandem. Within a deeply and

comprehensively market driven cultural policy, the shareholder aspect privileges a conception of

the museum as desirous of growth, and connotes a rise in the status of the visitor, from being

merely an invited sightseer, to being regarded as one empowered to partake of the dividends of a

cooperative into which one has invested.[113] At the same time, the consumer aspect empowers the

visitor to claim greater and greater specification of the terms under which it is recognized by the

museum.

New methods of communication with visitors evidenced in the Tate Reports bring these

facets of visitor conception to light. The 1990-1992 Tate Report indicates that the

Communications Department is formed in the same year the Museums and Galleries act. This

office is set up to contain marketing and publications and creates a newly integrated strategy to,

'transform the public image and reputation of the Tate Gallery as a national collection of works to

a dynamic, contemporary, and homogenous institution with a clear, corporate vision. (Dewdney et

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[113] Signs of this transformation of the idea of public service were already appearing in the museum field in the late
1980s. As Rosalind Krauss wrote in 1990, in her essay 'The Cultural Logic of the Late Capitalist Museum': 'The notion
of the museum as a guardian of the public patrimony has given way to the notion of the museum as a corporate entity
with a highly marketable inventory and the desire for growth' (p. 5).

al, 2013, p. 35). Semantic differences within the Reports' terminology echo this reconfiguration

of the visitor as shareholder and consumer. There is a shift from the rhetoric of 'educating', or

'reaching', to a use of the term 'communicating'. In the 1988-1990 Report, the Director's Report

includes a section on 'Reaching the Audience'. This section also includes a subsection on

'Engaging the Audience'. By the 1990-1992 Report, a new section, 'Communicating with the

Visitor' appears.

The term 'education', as it relates to didactic procedures is linked to an educative

museology, and while suggestive of service to the visitor, also as the visitor/consumer figure is

elaborated in museum discourse, begins to connote a relationship of superiority/inferiority and

expertise/ignorance with the visitor presumed to be in the subordinate position. In contrast the

term 'reaching' suggests benevolence, and does not denote a hierarchical relationship, or impugn

inferiority to the visitor. The term 'reaching' is often associated with 'outreach' and outreach may

refer to social welfare activities, in particular activities to contact members of a community

recognized as having been traditionally excluded or underserved.[114] However, outreach also is a

term used to describe proselytizing, or sales, or marketing activities. Similarly, the term

'engaging' implies attracting a subscriber or participant, capturing its attention, and securing its

involvement.[115] 'Communicating' like the terms, 'reaching', and 'engaging' sidesteps the

implication of hierarchical relations, conflict, paternalism, or pity. It suggests a parity among the

participants, and implies a relation of exchange. These terms must be understood as elements of a

growing lexical arsenal of corporate communications brought on by Tate's embrace of

professional public relations and branding strategies for relating to visitors.

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[114] There are many shades of meaning for this term used in a museum context. In *The Handbook for Museums*, Gary Edson and David Dean (1997) suggest that outreach is much like marketing, and requires the museum to look to both internal training and procedures, and the development of activities to bring in visitors. Vivien Golding (2009), in *Learning at the Museum Frontiers: Identity, Race and Power*, suggests that the term may be self-reinforcing, emphasizing an outcast status.

[115] It also has slightly more aggressive connotations in suggesting recruitment to a cause.

Inclusion and Interpretation

As the 1990s come to a close and the millennial opening of Tate Modern looms, an educative museology vies with a visitor-centered one within the Tate Gallery for primacy in shaping the visitor's relation to the museum. Each museology conveys a distinct orientation towards the visitor, and the nation's political administrative change feeds into and complicates the opposition between them. Cultural policies pushed forward by a conservative government that commended value for money as the principal criterion for evaluation of the museum's public merit cede place to a new set of policy objectives as a New Labour government comes into power in 1997. The New Labour cultural policy may be summarized as a focus on access and privilege with the goal of providing culture for all (Dewdney et al, 2013). In light of this agenda, museums and galleries were viewed with particular interest as key instruments for social change, especially with regard to issues of social inclusion, and expanding participation through the categories of ethnic diversity.

A newly christened Department of Culture, Media and Sport, (DCMS) which under the previous administration had been called the Department of Heritage undertakes a comprehensive reconfiguration of cultural policy. Under the title of creating a 'new cultural framework', the DCMS formalized the provisions of its relations to organizations that received funding from it, with a focus on the delivery of the government's objectives for access and inclusion (Selwood, 2002a, p. 13). After a 1997 review of its policies, the DCMS formulated access standards, and a code of practice, and required that museums, Tate included, devise access plans in order to receive funding (Selwood, 2002a). In the year that Tate Modern opens, the DCMS issues a report, *Centres for Social Change* (2000), setting out the more fundamental aims for museums and galleries underlying the ostensible DCMS priorities: 'Their goal should be to be to act as vehicles for positive social change' (p. 9). The range of tasks included in this broad remit include museum based education, economic regeneration of blighted communities, enhanced community self-determination and empowerment, increased political and social equality through addressing the attitudes and values of audiences, and augmenting access to culture through displays and events

staged in museums (Sandell, 2002; Gee, 2007; Gray, 2008).[116] Essentially museums and galleries

are pressed into service to use the salve of culture to heal social wounds.[117]

This overly broad set of objectives markedly expanded the criteria of service to the public

and presented Tate with a challenge. The museum had to decide how to meet performance

indicators mandated by the government by way of the DCMS, and address the expanded remit for

fostering positive social change, while continuing the program of remaking itself into successful

twenty-first century institution charged with increasing the public's knowledge and appreciation

of art. Tate was already benefitting at this point from their status as a preeminent institution that

organizes and manages the public patrimony. However, it still had to win the trust and consistent

engagement of a public that had not previously enjoyed a collection dedicated to modern and

contemporary art, and so were unfamiliar with these genres of art.

The key strategy that Tate used to grasp these disparate policy threads was to construct

itself a cache of cultural goods to be accessed by a visitor figure presupposed to have the

interpretive faculties required to self-determine the valuables worth possessing. The avenues of

access to this cache that Tate formulated are based on differentiating the visitor figure,

recognizing the specific needs of the visitor and crafting a personalized experience for it. The

visitor has theoretical claim to these goods by virtue of being a shareholder in the nation's legacy

held in common, but actually *lays* claim, takes possession of them in the visit, by being conceived

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[116] The conscription of museums in this cultural policy agenda had generated a series of debates around the idea of 'instrumentalization', one aspect of which was carried out in a series of articles in the journal *Cultural Trends*. Clive Gray (2008) sets out the terms of the debate. He says that instrumentalization constitutes: 'The museum sector, in particular is effectively being used as a tool for the attainment of the specific policy objectives of actors and concerns that have traditionally been seen to either lay outside of the museums sector itself, or to be, at best, a peripheral concern of the sector' (p. 210). The debate has included museum scholars, cultural theorists, government officials and officers in think tanks who have attempted to carve out a space for determining the value of museums outside of New Labour policy objectives. John Holden (2006) defined a notion of intrinsic value in his monograph *Cultural Value and the Crisis of Legitimacy*. This value looked to the individual as the yardstick for the conveyance of emotional and spiritual sustenance, but could not avoid the crucible of museums having to measure effects and deliver outcomes to funding bodies. Carol Scott (2009) relates the varied notions of value now in use and how they are indicated and measured, and finds that museums have little other option than to create ways to better compute and quantify the benefits museums bring to their audiences. This capitulation does not bode well for the sector since museums are increasingly asked to compensate for gaps in the social safety net, or for problems of the social realm that relate to educational and economic poverty that ultimately may not be effectively addressable by cultural participation.

[117] It is not clear what the precise relation is between the adoption of these extensive service remits and the pressure applied by a New Labour government. It may be argued that the government acting through agencies such as the DCMS generated a desire in museums to go to further lengths to prove their value. It may instead be the case that museums were and are spurred on by a critique mounted from within by professionals such as Richard Sandell (2002) who seek to make the museum less elitist and more socially relevant. It is likely that these two dynamics occur together, supporting and enabling each other.

as a consumer, though the lens of marketing and branding tools. In this way, the welcome made to

visitors to this new museum could be both universal and individuated, actively behaving as an

agent of social change by holding out the promise of access to the potentially transformative

experiences waiting within Tate Modern.

When Tate Modern opens in 2000, the avenues of access to the Gallery for the visitor are

conveyed through a range of marketed media, commercial, informational, and experiential

channels, not only their exhibition or public programs. Each of these channels posit an

individuated consumer, and through them Tate establishes contact with the visitor, now a

visitor/consumer. The museum is essentially divided into different platforms for experience.

The visitor who views the collection via the Tate website has an experience of the

collection that is more akin to that of an internet user who interacts with the world wide web as

with an archive. The Tate web site containing thousands of images is intended to make the

museum accessible for those unable to physically visit. For those making a physical visit to the

Gallery with children, age-specific education programs such as Tatextra, and Sunday Art Trolley,

intended for specific age groups, were constructed to give visitors the option of having a museum

visit that includes activities for the family unit. For those who are more engaged by conversations

around the issues brought to the surface by artwork, a series of lectures and symposia presented

by the museum make it an educational space. Promotional sponsorships engaged in with

Selfridges, Paul Smith, and Gruppo, *Time Out* Magazine, and Coffee Republic, target the person

who is brand conscious and makes choices of leisure activities or discretionary spending based on

associations with previously known brands. In this regard the museum offers conduits into the

'goods' of the collection based on individual needs or personality traits of the visitor.

Mediating the visitor's interaction with Tate Modern is a visual identity package created

by Wolff Olins that intends to foster a personal connection to the visitor. It features an out-of-

focus Tate logo and a name without the preceding definitive article. This logo creates a coherent

corporate identity, part of an overall branding strategy to draw consumers into relating to the

institution as they would another person.[118] Giving the organization the name 'Tate' without a preceding definitive article gives Tate the grammatical equivalent of someone's name (Phillips and O'Reilly, 2007, p. 189). This branding strategy operates by successfully binding particular associations to a corporation and/or its products. It aims to create loyalty on the part of consumers, and attach reputational value to Tate, by creating associations with something identifiable, relatable, and concrete. It is less feasible to develop feelings of loyalty for business seen as a conglomerate with hundreds of employees. Having 'Tate' appear in marketing materials instead of 'the Tate' encourages a casual relationship to the institution, not one of hierarchical difference, but one of casual parity.

As Tate becomes increasingly adept at 'reaching' the visitor, 'education' shifts from being the primary means of relating to the visitor and becomes one of several options with regard to the Gallery experience. The 'Education' department is restructured as 'Interpretation and Education'. Education in the sense of discursive exchange, is not abandoned, rather it is made subsidiary to an interaction in which the visitor's desires begin to constitute a more fundamental part of the conceived interaction. Underlying this is a view of the visitor as a self-selecting, self-directed agent, a development that will more fully demonstrated when this discussion turns to marketing reports below.

The key developments here in the institutional evolution of the Tate Gallery and the birth of Tate Modern are: a) The construction of Tate Modern as an interpretive museum which presumes the ability of the visitor/consumer to identify the appropriate avenue of access to the museum's storehouse, and so begin to delimit and shape an experience; b) the mobilization by Tate of contemporary sales and recruitment tools, specifically branding and marketing programs to differentiate the visitor and recognize the desires that will in large part construct the visit; c) the elaboration of these strategies within a cultural policy of art for all, pursuing the goals of inclusion and access by way of the paradigmatic neoliberal relation of consumption of cultural goods and service provision.

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[118] The significance of branding for Tate and Tate Modern will be further discussed in the fifth chapter, 'Branding, Advertisements, and Partnerships'.

These complexes are brought into greater clarity by examining the methods by which the Gallery gathers knowledge of the visitor. Visitor information is garnered by intensive, commercial survey methods. These methods, as the subsequent chapter will show, have significant implications for the evolving perception of the visitor as Tate Gallery becomes further shaped by the visitor-centered museology within a cultural policy scheme that views public service as expanding access to culture. As the new museology interweaves with Tate to presume a self-selecting agent in the visit, the interpretive program of Tate becomes the primary face of the museum. In this way Tate Modern constitutes an interpretive museum, a museum that partners with the self-determined visitor figure to construct a customized visit.

Chapter Four: Marketized Visitors

Audience Research and Audience Development

As the above chapter demonstrated, Tate Modern issued from its progenitor the Tate

Gallery, which, in the late 1980s with the opening of Tate Liverpool, had embarked on a

comprehensive program to make and assemble an audience for the Liverpool site under

challenging circumstances. Many of the lessons acquired there in terms of making the museum

more open to interpretive, dialogic interaction with visitors were applied within Tate Modern,

which would display modern and contemporary art to an audience initially skeptical and

mistrustful of these genres of visual practice. Though the Tate's audience development agenda

encompassed initiatives and methods employed by the exhibitions, public programs, and

educational departments, the primary focus here will be on its marketing activities, because

marketing has become the principal means of Tate's contact with the public.[119]

As will be demonstrated below, the communication mechanisms that seek to convey the

value of the museum to visitors, do so through essentially creating a variety of products and

services to the visitor acting as consumer, and these mechanisms permeate the museum. These

communication methods are largely shaped by the marketing profession. Tate's marketing

program has become the initial and primary means of establishing contact with its audiences and

potential audiences, and generates a particular notion of the visitor as a creative, consumptive

bundle of needs, and of the visit as an associated occasion of customized consumption and self-

directed meaning making.

Tate's marketing program must be viewed not as a static set of approaches but as an

evolving set of methods for seeing the visitor and relating to it, methods that are conditioned by

new professional perspectives on museum practice, economic changes, and governmental cultural

policies that gave particular direction to Tate's mission. In the 1980s and early 1990s, the cultural

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[119] The definition for the term 'marketing' used herein is adapted from Denis Cole's (2008) definition given in her essay, 'Museum Marketing as a Tool for Survival and Creativity': the systematic employ of methods to generate desire by meeting (realized or unrealized) needs, to identify target groups and formulate products and services relevant to them.

policy issued by the Thatcherite government emphasizing 'value for money' helped to reshape the

museum field by fostering a perception of the museum as a cultural storehouse that delivers its

cultural goods through employing the 'best practices' of the commercial sector. It has been argued

in the above that the effects of this policy on the Tate organization can be seen in the records of

Tate's institutional history. Tate's Communications Department, inaugurated in 1992 at the time

the Museums and Galleries Act came into force, moved to a crucial position in Tate's audience

development program, using its marketing and publicity arms to devise new modes of visitor

interaction with the museum which also operated as conduits for access to the museum, setting up

different modes of visiting.[120] Encouraged to employ new management principles that include the

hiring of outside contractors with expertise in the areas of professional practice that lay outside of

the museum staff's typical purview, and needing to secure a skeptical public's trust, Tate began to

utilize market research firms, such as Morris, Hargreaves, McIntyre to systematically collect

information about visitors. As cultural policy shifted in the late 90s towards a New Labour focus

on providing access to culture for those in socially excluded or underserved populations,

collecting data on visitors, became doubly pertinent to Tate. Data on visitors served to help

demonstrate Tate's compliance with government targets for organizational performance with

regard to enhancing social inclusion, and the utilization of market research indicated that Tate was

a dynamic institution, astutely employing the tools of for-profit, market-based businesses. This

key marker also demonstrated that the museum was re-conceiving though not abandoning its role

as guardian of a public trust.

Tate's program to develop audiences is partly founded in its marketing efforts, as has

been shown in the above (and it is also founded in interpretation, public programs and the

exhibition program). The following analysis will show that systematic audience research has

come to be an indispensable part of these efforts. Audience research in the museum field in

general is a crucial part of marketing efforts, serving several purposes: it helps gauge interest in

current and potential exhibitions; it indicates the effectiveness of display techniques, and the

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[120] Previously it had the title of 'Information Department', and currently the department that manages the same suite of services is called 'Media and Audiences'.

reach of didactic materials; it measures the appeal of elements of public programming. In essence, audience research feeds into plans identifying target groups for which to develop relevant programs, products or services, and to which to promote these products and services (Cole, 2008). For Tate, audience data is key for the institution's internal process of determining the feasibility of proposed projects and the prospective outlay of departmental funds.[121] The audience research program has accelerated since the late 1980s, now producing a consistent and steady stream of information into the museum with regard to visitor demographics, habits, expectations, and desires.[122]

The systematic acquisition of information on visitors by Tate is only partially conditioned by the continuing impact of a visitor-centered museology on the institution. As mentioned in the above, Tate had been charged by a New Labour government with the mandate to expand access to its storehouse of cultural wealth, and it had to contend with public suspicion that modern and contemporary art constitutes an elaborate joke at their expense (a suspicion in some cases fueled by the very publicity engines employed by Tate, such as the Turner Prize, which is awarded annually to a British artist).[123] While the visitor-centered museology has urged the museum to pose questions to visitors regarding the nature and effects of their experiences, to pursue a public service role of demonstrable social relevance, the Tate's commissioned audience research has generated answers that feed into a different agenda. It is a particular agenda of differentiating, categorizing, and quantifying visitor profiles. This agenda is first made possible by conceiving the visitor figure as a marketized figure expressing individuated, commodified desires.

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[121] This was communicated to the author in a private conversation with the curator Marko Daniel, a Public Programmes curator, at Tate Modern in November 2010. Daniel related that any initiative put forward in the Public Programmes department had to have audience research accompanying it for it to be seriously considered.

[122] The following lists a sample of studies Tate carried out between 1997 and 2012. A complete list was not available to the author: Tate Liverpool quarterly and annual visitor survey reports, dating back to 2006; *Seasonal Visitor Survey* reports from 2007 to summer 2010; Tate Liverpool exhibitions reports for *Klimt* 2008; *Engaging with Displays* 2009; *Tate Members Survey* 2009 and 2011; *Tate Online Survey* 2010; *Visitor Audit* 2010 (follow up research to *Anatomy of a Visit* 2004); *Visitor Barometer* 2010; *Picasso* 2010; *Magritte* 2011; *Tate Britain Collection Displays* research 2011; Quarterly and annual visitor survey reports for Tate Britain and Tate Modern from the third quarter of 2010-11 to the first quarter of 2012-13; *Tate Shop Focus Groups* 2012; *Transforming Tate Britain Archive* qualitative research 2012; *Tate Britain Signage* research 2012; *Tate St. Ives Seasonal Visitor Survey* reports (three times a year) and an annual report, dating back to 2006 (J. Kennedy, personal communication, October 17, 2012).

[123] Sara Selwood's (2002a) note of her own unpublished research on British audiences' associations with contemporary art says that it suggests that 'respondents specifically indentified contemporary art with Damien Hirst, Tracey Emin, formaldehyde, unmade beds, the "bricks", and "crappy nappies"' (p. 12).

The recognition of difference is key in order for Tate to align itself with New Labour cultural policy. However, the evidence will show that the methods used to interpret visitor data that express differences among visitors, are methods that issue from a program that essentially markets Tate Modern to its customers.[124] The analysis below indicates that the visitor/consumer being constituted in the audience research/marketing reports incorporates the aspect of the visitor figure that came to the forefront as Tate Modern was formulated to be an interpretive, visitor-oriented space: that of a self-directed maker of meaning. As the visitor figure is further elaborated within a marketing discourse, being conditioned by technological platforms and new ways of conceiving commercial participation more than being regarded as a meaning-maker, this figure begins to be understood as a producer and collaborator.

Audience Research Documents

The documents through which this part of the examination is made issue from the consultancy firm Morris, Hargreaves, McIntyre (MHM), which, for the studies examined herein, and for subsequent studies commissioned by Tate, operates as Tate's professional proxy.[125] The first document results from MHM's commission by Tate to make a study of bodily visitors in 2003. The consultancy's staff, working with museum staff at both Tate Britain and Tate Modern from August through October 2003, carried out a comprehensive research study using a variety of methods including observing visitors, accompanying them on visits, focus group dialogues, and

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[124] Fiona McLean and Mark O'Neill (2011) relate museums engagement in a social justice agenda with an acknowledgement of diversity in identity. In their account of what they term a 'social museum', that is a museum that takes a deliberately interventionist approach to expanding social inclusion through the representation of different identities, in their example, the Kelvingrove Museum and Art Gallery in Glasgow, the museum is only able to encompass all its potential audience through this recognition and acknowledgment.

[125] These reports are proprietary documents, not currently available to the public. Copies were initially obtained by making requests to officers who were employed at Tate. Inexplicably, requests made after 2013 were refused. The firm of Morris, Hargreaves, and McIntyre is a Manchester-based management and research consultancy that works with museums and galleries on audience and organizational development. It has offices in New Zealand and Australia. MHM has a great deal of experience with the arts sector and museums in particular. In 2008 it was awarded the Market Research Society's Research Magazine's Business Transformation Award for its work with the British Museum. In 2013 it received an award for best market research agency of the year from the Recommended Agency Register (itself a gateway consultancy), which was the result of voting by clients.

exit surveys.[126] The study examined the motivations, learning styles, needs, and expectations of visitors to both Tate London sites. There were two stated aims of the study. The first was to 'analyse the ways visitors construct their experience at Tate'. The second was 'to understand the motivations, attitudes, perceptions and reactions of visitors in relation to Tate' (p. 5). Ultimately Tate was concerned with collecting as much pertinent knowledge as possible on their current visitors in anticipation of its next phase of audience development. The report conveys a detailed analysis of the ways that visitors are perceived to connect to the museums, and makes prescriptive recommendations for changes to Tate Modern and Tate Britain to meet more visitors' needs, and meet them more consistently.[127]

MHM produced the report *Tate Through Visitors' Eyes: An Anatomy of a Visit* (2004) to relate the results of this systematic study.[128] On the basis of its findings, MHM recommends that Tate modify several aspects of both galleries, including: signage and orientation guidance, internal marketing of displays, wall-texts and floorplans, the website, building brand awareness, and developing new audiences, particularly under-represented socio-economic groups (pp. 18-19).[129]

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[126] The researchers gathered information from visitors on their experiences using five main tools: A.) Observation of visitors: watching them in galleries and tracking their movements upon entering the museum until exit. B.) Documenting visits using a variety of methods, including: 1. Control maps—floor plans carried by visitors on which they noted feelings at various stages. 2. Family tapes—audio tapes on which family members recorded their responses, later transcribed and analyzed. 3. Visitor diaries—used by visitors to record their thoughts before, during, and after the visit. 4. Fulfillment Maps—on arrival visitors completed a mind map, filling in their expectations, returning to it at the end of the visit to note what expectations were met and what unexpected things occurred. C.) Accompanied visits: a member of the research team accompanied the visitor throughout the visit. D.) Focus groups: members were divided into groups that represented different visitor types. They sat for a pre-visit conversation, an accompanied visit, and a post-visit conversation. E.) Arrival and exit surveys: these were structured to provide quantitative data.

[127] This is not to say that Tate was not succeeding at being visitor oriented. MHM commences their study of visitors acknowledging that 'The Tate is already more visitor-focused than many museums or art galleries' (Morris, Hargreaves & McIntyre, 2004, p. 17).

[128] The research is documented in two separate records. The record published as 'Document 1' is *Tate Through Visitors' Eyes: An Anatomy of a Visit*. The record published as 'Document 2' is *Anatomy of a Visit: Understanding the Visitor Experience at Tate*. The second document provides specific details on the market of visitors MHM sees as available to Tate; specific areas of each site that may be rethought and changed, including signage and orientation, captions, wall texts, audio guides, etc.; and specific visitor segments and the ways each segment potentially views each site and what each group requires from either museum. The first document provides an overview of the study including methodology and methods used, along with analysis of how different visitor segments perceive the Tate brand, and the conclusions drawn by MHM and delivered to Tate. The majority of the evidence drawn on here is taken from *Tate Through Visitors' Eyes*.

[129] The report's 'Recommendations' section list five strategic action areas: 1) Orientation and Visitor Services; 2) Redeployment of interpretation; 3.) Helping visitors engage with Tate; 4) Reviewing the Tate brand; 5) Audience development. In each action area there are further specifications; a) signage and orientation guidance; arrival and welcome services and staff; Internal marketing of displays and programme; Guides, floorplans, and information

Tate Through Visitors' Eyes is an important document because it relates the specific

categories of visitor motivations, which, more than demographic categories, shape the

professional assessment of the bodily visitor for Tate. The visitor figure that emerges from this

assessment evidences concerns that refract Pierre Bourdieu's influential critiques of the museum's

alleged complicity in creating and maintaining itself as an elitist and exclusive environment.

Bourdieu's notion of the habitus, that set of ingrained faculties by which one is equipped to

understand and appreciate particular aesthetics and art displays, in light of this marketing report,

has not been left out of the rhetorical construction of the visit by Tate, but rather taken to a logical

extreme. The Bourdieusian claim, in a crude form, is that for the visitor to feel welcome in the

museum, the museum's appearance should align with the individual visitor's habitus or

worldview. Though the categories of visitor specification conceived in market segments are

reductive, they also represent, within a market mindset, legitimate means by which to make a

good faith attempt to subvert or overcome the persistent middle-class profile of the majority of

museum visitors. *Tate Through Visitors' Eyes*, brings to light the complex manner in which

consumption, positioned by marketing-based logics as the gateway to individuated museum

experience for the visitor, may also be seen to act as a corrective to the exclusion of the visitor

figure based on that figure's inherent, personal traits.

The report also raises the question of what is sacrificed in the structuring of the relation

between the museum and visitor as entities in a free-market partnership of product delivery and

service. It brings to light the pivotal importance of the notion of engagement, acting as a link

between the museum and the visitor who is not simply *presumed* to be active, but whose activity

is now deemed necessary and therefore is vigorously sought.

MHM also conducted a study of virtual, online visitors who accessed the museum

through its website in 2010, the result of which is *Tate Online: Analysis of the Findings from the*

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distributed. b) intellectual orientation—on wall-texts, floorplans, etc; Audioguides; labels; printed and electronic
interpretation. c) the website; membership; keeping in touch through e-bulletin and mailing lists; programming and
marketing of special exhibitions and events programmes; stratified timing and programming. d) clarifying the rationale
behind the identity of the two London Tates; encouraging cross-over between the two Tates; building brand awareness.
e) Developing new audiences, especially families and under-represented socio-economic groups; increasing frequency
and involvement; increasing cross-over between the Tates (pp. 18-19).

Online Survey (2011). This study was commissioned in order for Tate to, 'gain a deeper

understanding of its online audience' and to, 'inform the re-design' of its website (p. 4). More

specifically the study was broken down into four main aims. The first was similar to other

audience studies carried out by MHM, in its seeking to identify the profiles of online users in

terms of demographics, motivations, and behaviors. The second aim was to correlate these data to

(physical) gallery visitor profiles that had been segmented in previous studies, such as *Tate*

Through Visitors' Eyes. The third aim concerned identifying the elements of success and failure

of the site that related to the generation of income, such as ticket sales. Lastly, the study sought to

create a methodology and a selection of questions to use for long-term audience monitoring. The

study gleaned data from visitors via online surveys sent to members and subscribers to Tate's e-

newsletter, during a major exhibition of Paul Gauguin at Tate Modern, and via visitors who

responded to a pop-up invitation that appeared on the website. This study's brief was considerably

less rigorous than the study outlined in *Tate Through Visitors' Eyes*, in that users were not tracked

during their virtual visits. There are also no results given for subsequent testing of their survey

responses; this phase of the project had yet to be enacted at the time this report was generated.[130]

The *Tate Online* report makes recommendations with the primary goals of lengthening

visits to the website and deepening engagement, citing the formation of an emotional connection

as the key way to achieve these goals.[131] While the report relates very high rates of satisfaction

with the website, with 80% of users, or virtual visitors, rating the website as excellent or good, it

also cites a figure of 10% for users who were not able to accomplish what they sought to do, a

figure that represents a considerable number of site visits (p. 7). The writers of *Tate Online*

ultimately find that visitors crave more of a 'journey of discovery' and desire to have the online

experience mirror the experience of a visit to the actual gallery.

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[130] This is not to suggest that the online study was cursory, but rather to clarify the depth and breadth of the studies relative to each other. The online study analyzed 2803 surveys completed via the website pop-up, 4470 surveys completed via invitations to the e-newsletter list, 227 surveys completed via invitations to members list.

[131] The specific areas that are recommended to address are the following: making the ticket booking process easier; ensuring the smooth operation of the Online Shop; redesigning the homepage to be less cluttered; making the website more exciting and inspirational; implementing an online query device; providing clear links to existing information; offering more detailed information about the artwork on display; encouraging users to consult the blog; allowing for the search function to operate through keyword and theme; providing large, high-quality images (pp. 45-52).

This report is crucial in the examination of the institutionalization of a personalized visit in that it marks out important distinctions between the museum perceived as a physical space versus the museum perceived as a virtual expanse. Though users express a desire to have the two experiences align, there are ways in which the two separate spaces ask for different modes of interaction by the visitor, while yet depending on a similar construction of the visitor as consumer.

One order of distinction between the physical gallery space and the virtual space contained and framed by pages of the world wide web, is an order of magnitude. The website has many more visitors than the actual Tate Modern gallery, though the gallery was and is still is a world leader in audience attendance for an art museum. It is reported that more than one million visitors make use of the Tate website each month, a number that far outstrips the number of monthly physical visitors (Rellie, 2006).

The other important order of distinction is qualitative. In several ways the virtual visit both limits and privileges different actions for the virtual user compared to those of the visitor to the physical gallery space. There is an experience of information value versus object value. The mobile nature of technological tools for access to websites, such as smart phones, tablets, and laptops means that the museum, as seen through a screen, is constantly being recontextualized by the user. The user navigating virtual space also has a comparatively more private experience: users consume, organize, and in essence create their own narrative and thus their own content. As the virtual museum is negotiated much like the world wide web, the museum in this context constitutes an archive for private exploration (Bartak, 2007). The visitor figure is viewed as conditioned by this development and linked with new curatorial strategies such as crowdsourcing and co-curation that amplify the role of the visitor in the museum's research and exhibition programs by actively involving visitors through soliciting their contributions of time, labor, and narrative or visual artwork. The technological apparatus of the web and its associated user behavior add dimension to the theoretical construction of the visitor by bringing the issue of the visitor's agency to the surface.

Analysis of *Tate Through Visitors' Eyes*

MHM engaged in a research study in 2003, the results of which are conveyed in *Tate Through Visitors' Eyes,* in order to assist Tate with fulfilling its mission, which at the times was articulated as focused on increasing 'the public's knowledge, understanding and appreciation of art' (p. 3). The research aims of the study are: 'To analyze the ways visitors construct their experience at Tate; to understand the motivations, attitudes, perceptions and reactions of visitors in relation to Tate' (p. 3).[132] There is no obvious necessary connection between the putative goal of helping Tate to fulfill its mission and the aims of the research, which are to acquire intimate knowledge of the visitor. The concept that brings these two disparate agendas into alignment is visitor engagement.

In order to achieve the enlargement or amplification of public knowledge and understanding of art, 'visitors must first engage' MHM concludes (p. 2). This assertion now seems both self-evident and intuitive, in a time when the visitor is presumed to be an active meaning maker in the mold of the figure implicit in Nick Prior's (2003) version of the visit examined in the above, or the visitor figure alluded to in the 'Create your own Collection' campaign. The influence of a visitor-centered museology is evident in this insistence on the engagement of visitors as a necessary part of an institutional agenda of public service in the mode of education. Significantly, this visitor is not a passive figure, nor one whose attention may be taken for granted. Tate's ability to effectively carry out its mission is reliant on this figure's active participation.

The term substituted for 'engagement' in the previous sentence is 'participation', presuming the terms are interchangeable. In professional museum discourse, the terms 'participation', 'engagement', and 'collaboration' are often substituted for each other. Neither

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[132] Guiding MHM's pursuit of this data is Tate's mission statement, which is cited as the mandate for their research. As MHM understood it in 2003 (the statement has since changed), Tate's mission was: 'Tate exists in order to increase the public's knowledge, understanding and appreciation of art' (Morris, Hargreaves & McIntyre, 2004, p. 3).What is now given via the Tate's website reads: 'Everything we do, from the programme we present in our galleries and with partners in Britain and around the world, to the books, products and food we sell in our shops and restaurants, supports our mission: to promote public understanding and enjoyment of British, modern and contemporary art'. Accessed February 12, 2015. The change from 'appreciation' to 'enjoyment' represents a shift in emphasis of the visitor's experience towards sensorial pleasure. This emphasis on pleasure in engagement is part of the correlated changes that occur as the visit is conceived as a personalized, visitor-centered activity.

Tate Through Visitors' Eyes nor *Tate Online*, offer a specific definition for 'engagement', and an

investigation of MHM disclosed no instances of their articulating an explanation that is particular

to them, as opposed to an meaning customary to the field. This term has thoroughly permeated

museum discourse, and in most instances, its use refers to the palpable state of involvement of the

visitor in some aspect of the museum, and the state is usually signified by the voluntary granting

of the visitor's time, attention, and (in many cases) money. However, engagement has other key

institutional, professional, and discursive valences.

Engagement is also an institutional function, one of the museum's responsibilities.

Engagement is considered in museological discourse one component of a triad of key

responsibilities that encompasses and describes museum practice. The other elements of this triad

include the work convened around collecting and caring for material objects, and the research,

curation, and formation of a narrative or conceit that are components of the process of presenting

objects to an audience'.[133] One researcher describes engagement as encompassing the ways in

which, 'Museums seek to establish relationships with a wide variety of people, … and

reciprocally, the ways that people establish relationships with the museum' (Welsh, 2005, pp.

105-6). This definition importantly recognizes that a connection formed between visitor and

museum is a kind of relationship even when that relation is fleeting, as it may be in an episodic

visit. More, viewing engagement as the forming of relations, which is a core part of the museum's

function, places education, programming, and exhibitions, but also marketing, publicity, and

donor development all on similar footing.

These means of relating do not function in the same way. The former three engagement

tools are geared towards the development of the visitor for the visitor's sake, that is, as the visitor

was conceived within an educative museology that principally took visitors to be ignorant and in

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[133] Peter Welsh (2005) places engagement in his conceptual model of the museum's three main areas of concern and action, which he terms its 'domains. In Welsh's model the other areas are materiality and representation. He defines materiality as configured around the fact that, 'museums are repositories for certain categories of the material world, which circulate within a number of regimes of value, morality, and meaning'. He further says, 'The domain of materiality encompasses these regimes and is concerned with how different kinds of things come to be in museums.' Welsh describes representation as 'the processes by which museums create their subject', and he says that it 'explores the scope of information that emerges from the museum institution'. See his essay, 'Re-configuring Museums' in *Museum Management and Curatorship*.

need of guidance to receive the 'best' exemplifications of the collective heritage as discovered

though professional expertise and rigorous scholarship. On the other hand, marketing, publicity

and donor development come to be regarded as existing under the same rubric of visitor relations

only in the context of a new museological perspective of the visitor alloyed with a socio-

economic reshaping of the museum as a market based service provider rather than a public utility.

Importantly, these visitor relations are geared towards developing the visitor for the museum's

financial enrichment and maintenance.

Modes of engagement with the museum are generally categorized by the aspect of the

visitor involved: physical, intellectual, social, or emotional (Perry, 2012). Physical engagement

has to do with corporeal behavior, the amount of time that visitors spend with an exhibit, what

they read, whether they sit or stand, and the associated activities in which they participate.

Intellectual engagement has to do with the connections visitors make to their own knowledge, the

concepts that are grasped and the questions that arise in interaction. Social engagement entails the

influence that visitors have on each other's experience and include directions, observations,

guidance, assistance, cooperation, and competition. Emotional engagement involves the character

and intensity of affective responses, a range that includes awe, enjoyment, confusion, and disdain

(Tisdal & Perry, 2004). Activities through which connection are made include attendance in

galleries, or in lectures and symposia, or meetings, volunteering, outreach participation, and

interaction with partners (J. Jacobsen, personal communication, January 19, 2015).

Crucial for museum professionals and for Tate, is the question of how to recognize

engagement. Engagement is more appreciable in the way its current versions differ from versions

associated with an educative, curator-focused museology. Gretchen Jennings, the editor of the

Museum Journal *Exhibitionist*, produced by the National Association for Museum Exhibition,

(affiliated with the American Alliance of Museums), describes it primarily by negation. She sees

engagement as a kind of interaction that is *not* based on learning goals, plans, or curriculum

standards, involving both the visitor's body and mind, and relating to the visitor's prior

knowledge (Jennings, 2014).

More than recognizing when engagement is occurring, professionals are concerned with

their ability to measure its extent and depth in visitors. Aside from primary research based on

naturalistic observation, which was discussed in the above, researchers now use membership

levels, program participation, volunteer activity, and media responses, such as tweets, Instagram

images, and Facebook posts as metrics of visitor engagement (R. Gutowski, personal

communication, February, 18, 2015). In particular, the use of social media tools both extends the

relation of the visitor to the museum while it serves as a measure of involvement. Many of the

tools used to gauge the extent of interaction with the museum also seek to make the visit

protracted, to maintain a connection to the visitor. When engagement is not manifest, the

presumption made by MHM in *Tate Through Visitors' Eyes*, is that the museum, rather than the

visitor, is failing in some manner.

With regard to the question of what precisely constitutes being 'engaged', how the state

comes to be manifested in the visitor, a consideration of its use in other discourses from which

museology borrows, reveals an odd, unresolved opposition.

An influential American museum director and blogger, Rebecca Herz, situates her

comprehension of engagement somewhere between a structural understanding of it as composed

of certain necessary elements, and an operational understanding that regards it as a quasi-

psychological, quasi-neurological state of flow.[134] These two valences of description issue from

separate sources: the discipline of psychology, represented by the work of Mihaly

Csikszentmihalyi, and a management discourse exemplified by the work of Daniel Pink, the

author of popular management theory books.[135] Pink's concern is with the necessary components

of intrinsic motivation, and he focuses on the ability of the participant to have choice and control,

that is autonomy, and additionally, mastery, or a sense of improvement over time, and purpose in

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[134] Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi has written a great deal on the development of and conditions for human motivation. His work is referenced by museum professionals interested in having the ability to construct the conditions under which visitor engagement will occur. See Csikszentmihalyi and Hermanson (1995) 'Intrinsic Motivation in Museums: What Makes Visitors Want to Learn', in *Museum News*.

[135] Daniel Pink has written several best selling books, among them, *To Sell is Human: The Surprising Truth About Moving Others* (2012), and *Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us* (2009). Pink purports to reveal the undisclosed components of internally constructed, individual motivation, which he claims are autonomy, mastery, and purpose.

the activity, feeling that one is part of some larger scheme. Alternatively, Csikszentmihalyi

regards unambiguous goals, suitable rules, and opportunities for action that align with a

participant's abilities as providing the means for being internally motivated (Herz, 2014).

The hybrid nature of Herz' definition is representative of twinned concerns regarding the

visitor that are characteristic of the museum field: the desire is to acquire psychology's grasp of

the nature of happiness and creativity, yet tellingly, also acquire control over these affective

registers via managerial theory that claims knowledge of how to manipulate individual

engagement.

A disparity is manifest in these underlying views of the visitor figure within marketing

discourse. The visitor is imagined to simultaneously be self-directed and autonomous, and also

manipulable and suggestible. The self-directed individual who is able to make choices with regard

to leisure venues and pursuits is presupposed by marketing discourse, which is structured around

wooing the consumer. This same discourse must imagine the visitor to be amenable to the

machinations of the marketer because of the visitor's needs. Needs make the consumer tractable.

These opposed versions of the visitor are not resolved in marketing discourse, but are held in

synchronous orbit around the figure of the visitor/consumer who is self-governing, but is also a

bundle of needs. In turn, this figure with oscillating aspects, is seen orbiting around the evolving

brand that is Tate.

The indications are that 'engagement' for MHM does carry the conventional connotations

of involvement, participation, occupation with, and attraction to an object or activity. In speaking

of visitors' engagement, MHM consistently refers to the requirement to deepen it. This

intensification of the visit experience appears to mean both visitors extending their time in the

museum, and increasing the number of their visits. The key determinant of the *quality* of

engagement seems to be time spent in communion with the museum, regardless of whether this

involvement is with the art or with other aspects of the institution, including commercial areas

such as the gift shop and ticketed events.

Having linked Tate's mission to engaged visitors, MHM (2004) surmises that in order to

have these engaged visitors, 'visitors must first have their needs met by Tate' (p. 2). This crucial

turn transforms the visitor figure from a creature of distinctive views or learning abilities to a

bundle of identifiable, manipulable needs. The connection of these needs to the process of visitor

engagement is regarded as necessary for Tate to fulfill its mission. The chief labor of MHM in

investigating visitor response to the Tate galleries is the discovery and appropriate categorization

of these needs. This characterization of the visitor as a set of needs does not issue from Tate's

audience development program, nor does it issue from MHM. Rather, this notion is rooted in a

consumerist conception that imagines the art experience as a commodity object, and the visitor as

the figure who pays (either in time and attention, or in financial currency) for an experience of

engagement with an object.

Visitors' needs are not necessarily readily palpable, but must be uncovered. By their

account, MHM encounters a series of challenges in procuring data on these needs. The first

challenge they encounter is the assumption that there is such a person as a typical visitor, or that

there is a typical visit. They write: 'Attempting to construct a 'typical visit' to either site would

lead to broad generalisations that would obscure the diversity of visitors' perception, knowledge,

confidence, approach, motives, needs and responses. It would neither help us understand nor

measure visitor engagement with Tate' (Morris, Hargreaves, McIntyre, 2004, p. 8). MHM

eschews idealization of the visit, which would ignore variations in visitors' perceptions,

knowledge, approach, motives, etc., and thus not bear true witness to the visit 'through the eyes of

the visitor'.

MHM (2004) understood that positing an idealized visit would provide a methodology

too inflexible to properly assess the range of visitors' experiences. Yet, they also want to avoid

erring in the opposite direction by struggling to analytically accommodate, 'an impossibly

complex picture of 2,000,000 different types of visit.' (p. 9).[136] Sifting through two million

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[136] MHM estimated that Tate Modern had a market at the time of approximately 1.71 million visitors (Morris, Hargreaves, & McIntyre, 2004, p. 6).

separate visits would not, as they explain it, help them create an, 'actionable programme'. They

write:

> We steer a path through these two potential traps by embracing the complexity of
> segmentation to meet two of the report's three functions: to understand visitors
> and to measure engagement. But we return to the simplicity of generic
> recommendations to meet the third function: to ensure that Tate has a practical,
> actionable programme to increase that engagement (p. 10).

Tate's aims of audience development mean that MHM was required to produce measureable,

quantifiable data, actionable data that references groups, rather than a torrent of individuals. The

mission for MHM was to recognize relevant needs, ascertain what they mean, and give them

appropriate classification by which they can be manipulated. The classifications they chose

correspond to market segments.

Market segments were created to classify homogenous groups of consumers, that is

consumers who share similar characteristics. These categories are tools MHM employs to

navigate between an idealized visit and an unwieldy assortment. In conventional marketing

methodology, consumers are placed into segments according to specific characteristics, and then

certain strategies (particularly if these strategies are repeatedly effective) are employed to target

that segment (McLean, 1997, p. 99). According to Fiona McLean, a researcher who writes about

the intersection of the contemporary museum with the profession of marketing, the characteristics

that determined market segments in the early days of marketing were demographic traits such as

where one lives, one's level of education, occupation, household income. (McLean, 1997, pp.

102-3). However, subsequently, marketing has become adequately sophisticated to allow the

marketer to step into the shoes of the consumer, as demonstrated in the *Tate Through Visitors'*

Eyes report. As McLean (1997) writes: 'Marketing then is a set of tools used to achieve a

philosophy—a philosophy that sees what museums are doing through the eyes of the people they

are doing it for' (p. 49).

It is not coincidental that this report has its title. This report is informed by and generated

from a view of the visitor as a consumer whose key desires must be understood in order to 'sell'

the museum, or rather, *market* the museum. The distinction between sales and marketing is that

marketing rests on procuring knowledge of the consumer. As Stephen Weil (1999) writes,

> In the selling mode, their efforts had been concentrated on convincing the public
> to "buy" their traditional offerings. In the marketing mode, their starting point
> instead is the public's own needs and interests, and their efforts are concentrated
> on first trying to discover and then attempting to satisfy those public needs and
> interests. (p. 233).

Information gleaned about the visitor is being mobilized by market-based reasoning which begins

to modify and configure the visitor figure for Tate.

MHM forms the visitors into segments, primarily dividing the audience on the basis of

individual motivation. From that point, four main criteria for making the visit are considered:

motivation; frequency and familiarity with the museum; whether they possessed specialist

knowledge; and composition of the group. The fundamental criterion is motivation. Uncovering

the visitor's motivation yields what MHM (2004) describes as 'Key Drivers' for visitors:

'Spiritual, Emotional, Intellectual, and Social'. (p. 10). Those who are primarily motivated by a

spiritual aspect see Tate as a church. Those primarily motivated by their emotions, view the

museum as a spa. Those principally motivated by intellectual concerns perceive Tate as an

archive, and those who are predominantly motivated to be social, look on the museum as an

attraction (p. 10). This conception of the visitor is exemplary of developments across the museum

field that manifest in visitors' psychographic segmentation, that is, categorization by way of

psychic proclivities.

An indicator of the growth and spread of the perception of market segmentation as a

valued tool for museums is the evolution of its rhetorical position in the consciousness of the

major funding body that disburses government monies to museums in the UK, the Arts Council

England. An Arts Council report of 2003, *A Practical Guide to Working with Arts Ambassadors*,

acknowledges that ambassadors, who disseminate information about a project by technological

word of mouth, are important marketing tools within a plan for audience development (Jennings,

2003, p. 10). This report only tentatively explores the use of audience segmentation, relating that,

'adopting an audience development approach demands sensible long-term budgets', and

mentioning only in passing that segments may be part of that approach. However eight years later, in the *Arts Audiences: Insight* (2011) report, the writers declare that they have developed an 'art-based segmentation of English adults', because 'segmentation can help organizations to understand their markets, identify groups of consumers they would like to target and develop products and communications that anticipate their needs' (p. 4). Even as the Arts Council calls for increasing the diversity of the museum's audience and widening the museum's reach to take in those members of communities regarded as historically underserved, the visitor as consumer slips in unannounced into that agenda for increasing access.

Lately for the Arts Council, the use of market segmentation within studies that track the behaviors, motivations, and preferences of potential audiences has become indispensable. In their 2014 report, *Equality and Diversity Within the Arts and Cultural Sector in England*, the consultancy writing for the Arts Council states, 'such segmentations aim to be a key audience profiling and marketing tool for the arts and cultural sector, and Arts Council England has encouraged the sector to collect and profile audience data and develop audience development plans on the back of such work' (Consilium Research & Consultancy, 2014, p. 19). The segmentation method that has long been employed by successful for-profit businesses has become absorbed by the museum field that views it as a necessary audience development tool. However, the concomitant reconfiguration of the visitor as consumer goes unremarked by the writers generating these reports, at least partly because the *effectiveness* (one of the so called three E's of commercial industry) of the marketing efforts is a paramount consideration.

Each of the visit types outlined in the *Tate Through Visitors' Eyes* text yield specific types of visitors. Spiritual visitors who see Tate as a church are classified as 'Aficionados' and 'Actualisers'. Aficionados are said to be 'visual arts professionals looking for inspiration and escapism', and Actualisers are 'non-visual arts professionals seeking inspiration and soul food'. Those who use the museum as a spa are 'sensualists'. Sensualists are defined as 'culture vultures seeking uplifting, moving, sensory experiences'. Visitors motivated most by their intellect, who regard the Tate museums as archives are further described as either 'researchers' or 'self-

improvers'. Researchers are 'visual arts professionals on research and development visits'. Self-improvers are 'people wanting to develop their knowledge of visual arts'. The last category is the class of visitors who operate primarily via their motivation to be social. They see the Tate museums as attractions. They are divided into 'social-spacers', 'people meeting with others who want to make space their own', or 'site-seers', who are 'mainly tourist visitors wanting to "do" Tate', and 'families', 'people wanting an enjoyable and educational trip for children' (p. 11).[137]

MHM states in this report that once the visitor's personal traits are discovered the museum may then appeal to these personal traits through tailoring various aspects of its structure, appearance, or branding (p. 3). After the subsequent discussion of the online experience report, a consideration of the background of marketing and the development of several intersecting economies will further demonstrate how the visitor is being rhetorically configured as a hybrid visitor/consumer whose agency is an important part of its conception.

Analysis of Tate Online

The initial challenge for the Tate website that MHM acknowledges in the *Tate Online* report, is to, 'firstly satisfy all users' motivations for visiting the site before trying to encourage them to engage more deeply with the site, and therefore Tate as a whole organisation' (p. 6). This is similar to the challenge that MHM took on for the study behind *Tate Through Visitors' Eyes*, except in this case, the emphasis in not on understanding the visitor, as much as it is on satisfying recognized needs.

This shift in emphasis suggests that in the six years between the generation of these reports, there had been further development of the consumerist configuration of the visitor. The visitor figure has shifted from being an object to be investigated and categorized; in this report the visitor more constitutes a set of needs to be met. This is also the case because the work accomplished for this report builds on the previous work MHM performed in segmenting visitors.

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[137] A more recent pamphlet, *Understanding Tate's Visitors* (date circa 2011), which is intended for use by Tate staff only, adds the visitor segment of 'urban cool', who have a primary 'social' motivation.

Additionally, the visitor to the website has a more limited menu than the physical visitor, since

group activities are not included in the virtual visit, and certain kinds of sustenance, that is

spiritual, are assumed not to be pursued in an online environment.

In the case of the virtual visitor, the pivotal determination of motivation yielded

identifications that are framed as 'user modes'. These user modes are construed as such in order

to facilitate the description of the *state* of the visitor, thus allowing visitors to perform different

visits while interacting with the site. Several user modes might be employed by one visitor to the

website.

There are nine main categories of user mode conveyed in the report, which are as follows:

'Extenders' look to extend a visit recently made to the gallery, seeking more information or

wanting to see other objects that were missed. 'Planners' have already decided to make a physical

visit to the gallery, and seek information by which to facilitate making the visit, such as opening

times, current exhibits. 'Opportunity Seekers' seek a reason to make a physical visit, and pursue

information on current exhibitions and events. 'Surfers/Browsers' happened upon the site

unintentionally, usually having been brought by a hyperlink. 'Virtual Visitors' are those users

who seek a similar experience to the experience of the physical gallery. 'Shoppers' are interested

in using the Tate online shop to make a purchase. 'Researchers' are concerned with obtaining

specific information about the art in Tate's collection. 'Givers' arrive at the online site with the

intention to make a monetary contribution, either by making a donation or signing up to become a

member or patron. Lastly, 'General Information Seekers' seek miscellaneous information from

the site (pp. 9-11).

Much of what is conveyed in this report is quantified data detailing the behavior of the

specific segments in relation to Tate, for example: what percentage of the total audience a

particular segment comprises, how often the users visit, what areas of the site is primarily used,

how much time is spent in a session, whether social networking tools are used, and satisfaction

ratings. For the purposes of this analysis, the crucial data lies underneath these facts and concern

conceiving the museum as a virtual space by way of a technological platform.

It was suggested in the above that the virtual visit could, in certain instances, be imagined as replacing the corporeal visit, particularly for those who are limited by distance and/or physical impediment. However, the physical space of the museum gallery and that of the virtual reality contained within a coded web page privilege very different actions on the part of the visitor, and one space holds out a prospect that further reconfigures the visitor beyond the conditioning effects of governmental cultural policy and consumerism.

For virtual visitors the experience is weighted towards engaging with information rather than with objects. Particular physical features of objects situated in the gallery cannot be fully related through visual means alone: the smells, or textures, and the variance in the ways the object appears depending on the vantage point. Particularly with regard to sculpture, the proprioceptive response of the body comparing itself to and responding to another 'body' is lost in the virtual rendition. The virtual space privileges the value of information that is organized around the art, while the value of knowledge of the object acquired by bodily interacting with it, moving around it, is diminished.

Because the technology for viewing the museum digitally is mobile, the virtual museum can be transported by the user operating a smart phone, tablet or laptop, thus potentially putting the 'museum', or its virtual surrogate, in circumstances of the user's choosing. The virtual museum space can be almost infinitely recontextualized by the user who makes the platform for display of virtual contents portable. The context within which the museum is experienced depends on the activity and location of the visitor/user. Though Tate's galleries are tightly controlled chambers of aesthetic engagement which have a pronounced effect on the objects displayed within and on visitors, this power dynamic is reversed in the circumstance in which the visitor figure views the collection in a setting of its choosing.

The most key distinction between the virtual and physical spaces is the level of autonomy for the online user. In contrast with the physical visit, this user does not contend with crowds to view the work, or with temporal limitations. This user may spend as much time as wished without the concern of people moving past or the gallery shutting down at the appointed hours. This is not

to claim that the virtual user has unmediated access. Clearly this is not the case. Rather the access

is mediated in much the same way that internet use is mediated: the user is able to treat the

website as though it is a personal archive. There are no authoritative templates indicating the way

the visitor/user should negotiate the space, what directions to take or what durations are

appropriate. The user essentially organizes, creates (in so far as the entire session can constitute a

narrative), and consumes its own content. In fact, in navigating the Tate website, the contents of

the museum's collection are remade into *content* for this visitor. This level of control, similar to

the self-directed exploration of the web, but contrasting with the crafted, directive curator-

constructed museum display, suggests that a virtual visit grants amplified agency to this visitor.

The curator Steven ten Thije argues that internet technology is spurring on a

transformation in 'how public narratives operate in general', which has implications for how the

museum visitor shifts between different modes of visiting as the museum is encountered in person

or through a screen (Latitudes, 2013). In essence, ten Thije argues that internet users have become

conversant with continually constructing haphazard, diminutive, personal narratives out of the

seemingly infinite stream of information available via the web. In this narrative construction by

the user, two key elements of the corporeal museum visit are lost.

One missing element is the tension between information and the narrative that is

primarily relayed by the artist or curator who installs the work in the display space. The curator

crafts a particular view in this instance, constructs an argument or a way of seeing the work and

the ideas signified. Nicholas Serota himself has argued vigorously for reimagining the museum

display as less didactic and directive and more open to the conceptual manipulation of the visitor.

He lays out the contention that this view represents the future of contemporary art display in a

museum in his lecture that became the book *Experience or Interpretation* (1996). However, as ten

Thije argues, these two possibilities of art display are not mutually exclusive, and in fact he

regards the comingling as a primary goal of his construction of an exhibition display. However,

the intellectual intervention of the curator while determined, is not necessarily coercive and can

also be understood as providing the visitor with a reasoning against which to mount alternative

views. In any case, the tension set up by the formulation of a narrative by the curator within an

exhibition context is missing in the experience of the website user who is solely self-directed.

The second element that is lost is the potential for common judgment. The museum space

brings visitors in close proximity to art and to each other, and most crucially, with public critique.

The nature of exhibits, their subject matter, design, content, didactic materials, and layout are all

subject to discursive conditioning, which, by various media, visitors are exposed to, and of which

visitors often avail themselves. Magazine articles, blog posts, editorial advertisements, journal

pieces, books, and review sites constitute sites of collective consideration that facilitate dialogue.

This potential for participation in the rhetorical conversation convened around meaning in art

objects is part of the museum experience. The private user navigating a website greatly limits this

possibility because there is no narrative or critique in place by which to measure or otherwise

consider the experience being constructed solely by the user.

These limitations are met with equanimity by ten Thije who says that now, 'We have

much more agency since we are constantly constructing narratives—organizing information in a

meaningful way—but these narratives we construct function in a different way to the traditional

narratives told in museums' (Latitudes, 2013, para. 8). Referring to a series of projects in which

he participated as a research curator at the Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven, the Netherlands, to

stretch the theoretical borders of the museum, ten Thije describes a 'Viewing Depot' which

allowed the visitor to choose works from a catalogue to be displayed in one room in the museum.

Visitors who participated filled out a small form and related a reason or motivation for seeing the

work, and subsequently the visitor was notified when the work was put on display in a manner

typical for the museum. Over the course of the project, several hundred works were shown

without the benefit of a conceptually contextualizing narrative, but simply displayed on request.

Exhibitions like 'Viewing Depot' look to accomplish several things at the same time: they

attempt to bridge the gap between digital and physical museum demesnes, they seek to amplify

the agency of the visitor, and they fulfill marketing objectives by forming intimate attachments to

visitors who are able to see the effects of their personal choices made manifest in the museum's exhibitions.

The notion of a virtual visitor more robustly exercising agency due to the conditioning of frequent use of the internet, and having this amplified agency supported and extended by the crowdsourcing of museum displays, is a key aspect of the construction of the visitor figure that emerges from the tension between the physical and electronic museum environments referred to in this report. The potential enlargement of visitor agency exists in the putative experience of the virtual visitor devising hermitic narratives, and potentially carries over to the corporeal visit through visitors desiring to treat the physical museum similarly, that is, as an information archive.

By itself, this correlation is not strong. Visitors are able to shift between different modes of interaction and able to read the underlying social codes that mark out differing expectations for behavior in, for example, a lecture hall versus a room filled with interactive toys for children. The behavior expected and permitted in one arena of interaction does not necessarily carry over into another arena. However, this correlation is made much more secure when one considers the movement in the field towards permitting the exhibition of objects or images chosen by visitors, a movement that consciously echoes and extends association with internet based technologies under the banner of 'new media', or 'social media'.

Besides the 'Create your own Collection' campaign discussed at the opening of this thesis, several recent museum marketing projects have brought visitors' choices into the display spaces of the museum. The Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, from March through September 2014 displayed drawings collaboratively made by visitors while present in the museum. The drawings for 'Your Line or Mine' were made on pre-printed sheets of paper that included drawing instructions, and they were linked together in a dynamic animation that was projected on screens in the museum.[138] In August of 2014, Seattle's Frye Museum launched *#SocialMedium,* an exhibition consisting entirely of selections made by visitors using social media. Users of

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[138] From: http://www.creativeapplications.net/featured/your-line-or-mine-crowd-sourced-animations-at-the-stedelijk-museum/). Accessed January 5, 2015.

Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Pinterest were requested to choose their favorite painting from

the museum's collection of 232 works. The museum director Jo-Anne Danzker, in describing the

project, refers pointedly to 'citizen curators' exchanging their ideas with the museum (McMillan,

2014). The Portland Art Museum engaged in a similar project in 2014, titled

'#captureParklandia', comprised of electronically tagged photographs of parks in the city of

Portland, conveyed via Instagram to the museum's webpage dedicated to the project. The photos

were displayed in an up-to-date feed, located on a map of Portland, and some were printed as

trading cards to be taken by visitors (Murawski, 2014). The Museum of Fine Arts in Boston used

popular vote to select the paintings to be included in an exhibit titled 'Boston Loves

Impressionism'. Voters were able to register their votes via the internet, and received vouchers for

free admission on the exhibit's opening night (Asquith, 2014b). Similar projects have been carried

out in the last few years at several more American institutions, including the Santa Cruz Museum

of Art and History, the Chicago History Museum, the Georgia Museum of Art, and the Brooklyn

Museum (Gamerman, 2014b). In the UK, similar projects have been carried out at the Museum of

London, The British Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum, and the Royal Pavilion and

Museums of Brighton and Hove, though the emphasis in these cases have been on mobilizing the

labor of volunteers to complete research rather than on displaying visitors' preferences in museum

exhibitions (Carletti, McAuley, Price, Giannachi, & Benford, 2013).

These participatory campaigns are recognized in the museum field as 'crowdsourcing' or

'co-curation' projects. Crowdsourcing is the more nebulous of these terms. It originates in a

technological business discourse and originally referred to taking functions that once belonged to

employees, outsourcing them to a network of people who respond via an open call and may

complete the project collaboratively.[139] Since being coined, its definition has become quite

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[139] The term was originally coined in an article in the magazine *Wired*, in June of 2006, in which the author, Jeff Howe (2006), discussed crowdsourcing as an alternative for entrepreneurs who required inexpensive alternatives for professional goods and services. Rather than seeking out these goods or services in other countries, Howe found an expanding network of local individuals that offered these alternatives. See:
http://archive.wired.com/wired/archive/14.06/crowds.html?pg=1&topic=crowds&topic_set=. Accessed January 14, 2015.

elastic, with crowdsourcing being used to refer to a range of both commercial and noncommercial

activity (Carletti et al., 2013).

Within the humanities and more specifically within the field of fine arts and museums,

the term has come to designate a slightly more limited range of collaborative behavior. Nina

Simon (2010), an American museum director who has written a book on emerging forms of

engagement in the museum, *The Participatory Museum*, defines four distinct types of public

participation projects.[140] Simon discusses contributory projects in which visitors are requested to

give particular and limited objects, ideas or actions for institutional use, and collaborative projects

in which visitors serve as active, creative partners. In co-creative projects visitors work closely

with institutional staff to envision and carry out a project based on the concerns of a group lying

outside the museum. Lastly, there are 'hosted projects' in which the museum turns over to an

outside group its tools and facilities to be used by that group to mount their own event or project

(Simon, 2010). Largely, museum initiated or hosted crowdsourced enterprises have digital

interactions with audiences, but in many cases there is a combination of physical and online

exchange. Co-curation projects have recently emerged as a defined subset of crowdsourcing

projects, entailing processes usually associated with curation, such as social tagging, image

selection, exhibition curation, and classification (Carletti et al., 2013). Co-curation however

entails not only exhibition of visitor derived content, but also enlisting visitors to carry out

research and organizational work (Asquith, 2014a).

These participatory projects are noted with increasing interest for their demonstrated

effectiveness at making the museum available to more audiences, and for their potential to

increase a sense of collective ownership of cultural patrimony, and for generating or deepening

relations with visitors. They also contribute to an evolving reconfiguration of the role of the

curator, a reconfiguration sometimes read as displacement.

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[140] Simon (2010) does state that there are two ideas central to her own book that are similar to ideas at the core of this thesis: a) that the museum should be audience-centered and as relevant and accessible as a shopping facility or a train depot; and b) that visitors develop their own meaning from their experiences with culture. Simon cites as influences for these ideas some of the researchers also cited in the above, including Stephen Weil and George Hein.

Whereas the curator, particularly under the auspices of an educative museology is understood to be a steward of material objects and a creator of conceptual schemes by which to interpret these objects, the curator who operates in an exhibitionary/marketing matrix that privileges the involvement of amateur visitors becomes in many respects a facilitator of collaborations and conversations. This shift is at times regarded as a devaluing of curatorial expertise and a correlating relinquishing of the educative role of the museum in favor of populist ideas such as crowdsourcing that invite the consumption of unserious content. This argument in museum professional discourse has a generational cast, wherein traditionalists who tend to be older, having been trained in a curator-centered museology, are pitted against younger, progressive practitioners who employ methods of audience engagement drawn from marketing that emphasize consistent and enthusiastic visitor participation rather than the achievement of predetermined educational goals or in-depth scholarly exposition (Rodley, 2014).

These are false oppositions, or surface ones. The dispute is essentially rooted in different, museologically conditioned conceptions of the museum that carry with them correlating notions of the visitor, the curator, and the visit. The (relatively) new, visitor-centered museology as it is instantiated in Tate, conditioned by governmental cultural policy, the marketing profession's development of Tate into a corporate entity, and marketing's configuration of the visitor as a consumer and autonomous agent, has concomitantly generated a new way of conceiving the visit. The visit is now seen as a collaborative exercise in which visitors and curators switch back and forth between roles as producer and consumer, student and teacher. Visitor participatory action in museum displays can seem ersatz and fraudulent to some, but such assessment is based on assumptions concerning the relevance of the continuation of a universal education project as the museum's core mission, rather than an acknowledgment of the recent neoliberal reconfigurations of this project. Museums have become institutions that accomplish several tasks at once, offering a menu of options for experience to different types of visitors, and thus constitute a public service institution in the mold of commercial customer service, rather than in the mold of bureaucratic service (the individual is subservient to the institution and the institution's needs are principal) or

ecclesiastical service (the individual is a deserving supplicant, but the options for service are

known by the authority figure and guessed at by the petitioner). [141]

More to the current point, the increasing frequency of the employment of these co-

curation projects suggests a market-derived conception of the visitor has worked its way into the

departments of exhibition and public programming in the museum. The museum is not merely

oriented towards the visitor, it is developing a relation to the visitor figure that is regarded as

possessing individual, consumptive desire and desiring its fulfillment. Fulfillment might occur in

several ways; visitors may contribute their labor to research or organize collections. They may

simply relate their thoughts and feelings in visitor books.

However, one of the most, if not *the* most direct way to reconcile the notions of the visitor

as autonomous consumer, the visitor as shareholder, and the visitor as engaged participant is to

place visitor produced content in publicly promoted museum exhibits. In co-curation practice the

visitor becomes both a producer, allied with the museum's mission by creating content for it (and

in some cases is acknowledged as such), and consumer, viewing the displayed works as other

consumers do. More, the visitor's agency as a valid producer and collaborator with the museum,

in co-curation practice, receives the kind of recognition that the museum does not otherwise

regularly offer the visitor. Indeed this is marketing's unique strength: an ability to harmonize the

ostensibly opposed concepts of the visitor as autonomously directed and engaged agent, and the

visitor as manipulable consumer made pliable by its needs.

The usefulness of the elaboration of the visitor figure within a marketing discourse is

becoming apparent, but to understand how marketing has become so integral to Tate in the

specific and the museum in general and a primary engine of audience development requires a

consideration of the origins of marketing.

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[141] More, education, via technological platforms that are web based, have become more widely available, but many are
built on a private, for-profit model: Khan Academy, Codecademy, Youtube. These platforms often accessed by
personal devices also tend to privatize experience. So digital platforms of collectively shared knowledge created to
instruct users on demand, both widen out the notion of public education, but also makes it more individuated. The
subject of the anxiety expressed around the curator's or museum's supposed obsolescence in the face of these changes
will be dealt with in chapter six, 'Tate Modern Displays'.

The Marketized Museum and Relevant Economies

This strategy of market segmentation, founded on differentiating the visitor, and constructing the visitor figure as a private, self-directed consumer endowed with the agency to make meaning underlies these marketing reports issued by MHM. However, as has been shown in the above, marketing has not always been the primary way that Tate interacts with the visitor. Marketing as the principal method of audience development or principal mode of visitor interface has not always had this status among museums in the field. Previously it had been education in this role, and in many cases, it still is. More, consumers were not always conceived as figures possessing manipulable desires that could be exploited to expand the available pool of customers for a particular product or service, but rather this conception has developed over time. It is useful to consider for a moment how marketing as an approach to expanding consumption originated and the routes through which it embedded itself in museum practice and discourse.

The key idea that supports and underlies marketing is the notion that consumers *have desires,* to experience leisure pursuits and to own products and services they cannot themselves fashion. Marketing comes into being at the moment that commodity producers become aware that this capacity to desire to own one thing rather than another, apprehended as a collective force, translates into demand, and in the manipulation of consumer demand, producers could have greater control over what is purchased.

The exemplary historical situation which gives rise to this thinking is the 'deal' put forward by Henry Ford, the American car manufacturer and factory owner, to his employees, which is, '*ever increasing standards of living in exchange for a quiescent labour force*' (Gabriel & Lang, 2006, p. 10) [emphasis in original]. With the support of the government, eager to provide jobs and carry through on guarantees of improved living conditions, the US post-war economy experienced almost limitless demand for the raft of successive products that promised improvements to one's life. This economic model of mutually enabling cycles of manufacturing and consumption helped to produce a 'plethora of constantly mutating and highly desirable consumer products' (Gabriel & Lang, 2006, pp. 14-15).

However, desire had to be constantly buoyed up to create a market for these

manufactured goods. It soon becomes necessary to create mechanisms by which to manipulate

consumer desire (Mishan, 1967). As Gabriel and Lang (2006) write, 'Modern Consumerism really

takes off with the growth of effective advertising campaigns, where the systematic moulding of

consciousness can take place' (p. 16). On discovering that consumers may be influenced to buy

certain products, concerted and systematized efforts began to be formulated to differentiate

potential consumers of a particular product, in essence to separate the likely buyers from those

less likely to make a purchase. The quasi-discipline of consumer psychology was invented to go

further, not only recognizing the likely buyers, but also applying strategic tools to condition the

audiences to think more like the likely buyers, essentially to turn members of an undifferentiated

consumer market into paying customers.[142]

> Drawing on the experimental tradition of behaviourist and animal psychology, this
> industry-oriented approach was dedicated to finding out who the consumers are (their
> psychological profile, income, class, and so on); how they decide between goods
> (studying issues like what sources of information do consumers trust, when is information
> about products worthy of confidence); but above all how consumers may be influenced
> by personality, family, group and peer group dynamics, leaders, as well as by mental
> processes, such as cognitive dissonance (Gabriel & Lang, 2006, p. 32).

Methods of consumer psychology consist of gathering information on the consumer figure: how it

thinks, and to what it attaches value in order to manipulate it, constructing demand for a product it

did not realize was desired. Much of this manipulation consists of the use of communication tools

to affect the consumer's perception of the business or product suggested for purchase. These

communication tools address at least two key aspects of the product to be purchased: the value of

the product offered, and what the product will convey about the consumer purchasing it (McLean,

1997, p. 48). The vehicles that convey these aspects of the purchase to the consumer are tools for

relaying information, such as marketing, publicity (which is essentially a subset of marketing),

advertising, and branding.

Consumption is a complex process, and perhaps more so when considered in the museum

context. The conceptual models that organize and the rules that make mutually comprehensible

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[142] Gabriel and Lang (2006) write: 'The marriage of consumer psychology and business was complete and one of its
first offspring was the obsession with brands and the power of advertising to place them (p. 33).

the action of markets, producers and consumers through processes of production, exchange and

distribution are economies. We may speak of an economy of visitors purchasing products and

services at museums, given that we have a producer in the museum, and a consumer in the visitor,

and the distribution of goods or services, in the events, exhibits, and experiences. There is also

exchange of monies for the goods and services purchased, though under certain circumstances,

such as free events, or admission to the permanent collection, no currency changes hands.

However, a considered questioning of the nature of the actual goods being acquired, brings to

light their intangible nature. Essentially what is being sold is a kind of experience, at the centre of

which theorists imagine an affective response.

Boswijk, Thijssen, & Peelen (2007) relate that businesses that participate in what they

term an, 'experience economy', have increasingly abandoned a now antiquated model of

production and consumption. [143] When marketing first began to cohere as a set of defined

strategies it, 'attempted to bring together the demand for and the supply of products by organizing

their physical distribution' (p. 50). But this approach was largely abandoned once marketing,

working primarily through advertising, turned towards the creation of demand as Gabriel and

Lang pointed out in the above. Now, according to Boswijk et al. (2007), in the current economic

paradigm, businesses must look towards the various markets or target groups that they desire to

serve *and then* develop products and services for these desired groups through collaboration with

them. As they write it, 'it will be about constructing a context—together with the customer—in

which the latter, lives, experiences, and gives meaning to his life' (p. 52). This is to say, the

approach of classic marketing was the marketer taking the customer by the hand to a storehouse

of goods, pointing out the available objects, one of which it was hoped would meet the customer's

desire. However, within an experience economy the marketer requests the customer take the

marketer's representative by the hand, and describe the class or kind of experience which is

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[143] This book is preceded by and founded upon the insightful work of Joseph Pine and James Gilmore, *The Experience Economy: Work Is Theatre & Every Business a Stage* (1999). It first made many of the arguments reiterated by Boswijk et al, and their book is considered a landmark work, but the more recent study is referred to here because it has updated certain aspects of the argument around visitor created experiences.

particularly relevant to the customer, and then the two agents work collaboratively in fashioning that experience.

This concept of the co-created experience is at the foundation of what this author has termed the personalized visit. This way of framing the museum visit is clearly at home with MHM's formulation of the 'aficionados' visitor segment, in a scenario such as that of the 'Create your own Collection' campaign, with the role of marketer played by Tate, requesting the visitor indicate the objects that fit in a narrative of the visitor's devising. As the visitor complies, an individual, personal visit that gives the visitor the status of producer and consumer emerges from this collaboration.

A key claim of this process of cooperatively developed experience as described by Boswijk et al is that supposed long-term effects of well being result from the self-realization that occurs in the experience. They write: 'The goal of marketing essentially amounts to helping people realise their possibilities and in that way, contributing to the process of giving meaning to things in the lives of individuals. It's no longer about consumer satisfaction, but rather consumer happiness and well-being' (p. 55). In the effort to distinguish participation in an experience economy from more quotidian consumption, pleasure is made to seem not episodic, but continuous, not fleeting, but part of the way that the consumer regards itself.

The more valuable prize of being able to bring to fruition one's potential abilities, untapped preferences, or passions is held out as a greater prize than mere happiness, though the means by which this manifestation would be accomplished are not given. Rather than making clear distinctions among their terms, 'possibilities', 'happiness', 'well-being', 'satisfaction', the experience described is left a mélange of psychological and spiritual pleasure that is yet somehow related to a deeper knowledge of the self manifested through purchases of experience. Rather than being taken at face value, this claim (unstable and opaque as it is) deserves to be regarded as an ideal that is an important component of the construction of the visitor/consumer existing in marketing discourse, an ideal that conditions the conception of this figure for Tate. The promise that is held out by cultural experience viewed through the lens of the critique given by Boswijk et

al is that the consumptive transaction leads to greater self-fulfillment and a state of elevated well-being. The promise held out is that the self can be better *known and realized* through consumption.

This theoretical component of the visitor/consumer figure underlies the figure implicit in MHM's reports, because market segmentation and user modes exist in a discourse of marketing that also produces crucial ideas that organize and describe visitor experience, such as engagement, crowdsourcing, and an experience economy. As has been shown in the above, these terms develop through market discourse and this discourse overlaps the discourse of museology to generate a visitor/consumer figure that is imagined by museum professionals along the valences of autonomy, agency, creativity, and happiness. The visitor/consumer is imagined to make a useful and satisfying visit to Tate Modern because it makes a visit of discovery of itself and is able to manifest potentialities of this self in using interpretive faculties.

Nick Serota, though perhaps not explicitly referring to this hybrid conception of the visitor, nevertheless exploits the promises held out by the visit associated with this figure when he declares, referring to visitors to Tate Modern, that, 'When you watch people walking round this building, what you see is a sense of exhilaration, delight, people finding things in themselves— moments of self recognition—or recognising something in the world that has been presented to them in a new light' (Marr, 2000, para. 23).[144] In other words, Tate Modern participates in an experience economy.

To say that we exist in an experience economy is to recognize the extent to which the experience economy has a claim on the ways that consumers are conceived in marketing discourse. It is also to register the degree to which thinking about visitor activity within museum professional discourse has been colonized by market-driven logic. Brand leaders such as Tate exemplify what is occurring in the field, but other museums are following its lead. Particular structural causes and recent developments have made museums fertile ground for the incursion of marketing.

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[144] Serota in this instance was responding to a question from a reporter Marr asks Serota what the director believes the curators at Tate Modern were offering visitors.

Marketing understood as the systematic employ of methods to generate desire by meeting (realized or unrealized) needs, to identify target groups and formulate products and services related to them has become crucial to museums in the last few decades (Cole, 2008). In the UK it is a principal means for audience development as museums have been pressured by the government to be economically viable, accountable for effective use of public funds, and to provide evidence of positive social utility (Selwood, 2006; Rentschler, 2007; Bartak, 2007; Cole, 2008). Positive social utility is interpreted by the government's Department of Culture, Media and Sport, as related to museums specifically because they are putatively, 'encouraging favorable economic impact; creating employment; stimulating the development of ancillary services; tackling social exclusion; … and playing a part in the well-being of local authority areas' (Selwood, 2006, p. 67).

Adding pressure on museums, they are not only competing with each other for limited government funding, they are also competing with for-profit entertainment venues, theatres, public attractions, and other institutions in the culture industry. [145] While for-profit venues may limit their concerns regarding visitor numbers to rising above the threshold of profitability, given New Labour cultural policy, museums must consider the makeup of the visitor population, with historically disfranchised groups emphasized as targets for increased attendance. It is not enough that overall visitor numbers increase, but is crucial that the particular types of visitors are shown to attend.

Furthermore, UK museums do not have one set of stakeholders, the British public, but their allegiances are diversified and require complicated strategic thinking in order to secure their finances via these stakeholders. In this instance, the term stakeholder refers to those actors 'who have a decisive impact on the survival of an organisation' (Lindqvist, 2012). In order to secure long-term financial support, museums must recognize that in addition to the government and the

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[145] The culture industry is a term that originates with the philosophers of the Frankfurt School, Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno who first used it in the chapter, 'The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception', in their book Dialectic of Enlightenment (1981 [German 1966]). It refers to the idea that popular culture consisting of television, radio, film, and magazines essentially lulls its consumers into passivity, because they use culture to escape reality not to interrogate it. In recent times it has come to less critically make reference to the economic power and reach of the parts of society that produce cultural objects.

public, there are visitors and customers, donors who provide money or objects for collections, friend-of-museum associations, volunteers, developers of endowment funds, board members, and grant-awarding agencies (Lindqvist, 2012). These groups all require maintenance policies that are tailored to their specific needs, therefore a good deal of institutional attention and energy must be devoted to the effort of sustaining stakeholders.

Added to this, the almost world-wide recession that began about 2008 has worsened the situation of a steady decline in government subsidy for museums in the UK. In the last three years alone, Tate has seen its Grant-in-aid provided by Parliament through the DCMS decrease by more than two million pounds (Tate, 2013). Though museums have, in the last few years demonstrably improved their ability to self-generate income through activities such as exhibition sales, program entrance fees, or concession purchases, such as in a café or bookshop, they are still dependent on public funds which are diminishing (Newman & Tourle, 2012).

This suite of developments has made utilization of marketing programs crucial for museums that recognize the benefits to engaging in audience development. The trend towards adopting marketing strategies has spread throughout the museum field. Ruth Rentschler (2007) periodizes the museum's evolution with regard to the use of marketing tools, describing a scheme that roughly aligns with the rudimentary timeline the author has developed for Tate in the above. Rentschler describes a 'foundation' period as existing between 1975 and 1983, in which 'museum marketing was dominated by issues of educating visitors; raising staff awareness of the benefits of visitor studies; and, occasionally, the impact of the arts on the community'. In the 'professionalization' period of 1988-1993, the museum is said to have become more democratized, with a 'shift in power from producer to consumer'. This change, Rentschler claims, runs parallel with the restructuring of the public sector towards an entrepreneurial model, carried out through demands for greater accountability and the practice of contracting outside expertise. In the 'entrepreneurial' present moment, from 1994 onwards, Rentschler says there is evidence of 'collaborative marketing models and a new view of visitors', which obtain 'new audiences, products, venues and multi-art experiences' (pp. 15-16). These new forms of collaboration are

correlated with the new, emerging view of visitors implicit in Tate's audience research. There are clear and pressing necessities for the mobilization of marketing strategies and institutional benefits to shaping visitor personae in these ways, but these constellated developments also mean more than the institutionalization of private pleasure.

Losses and Gains

Marketing discourse's assembly of the visitor figure as a self-determining consumer, endowed with the agency to treat the museum as an archive, and as a producer enabled to collaborate with the museum in developing pleasurable narratives in the service of individuated self-realization ultimately benefits Tate. Through this assembly Tate is articulated as a place of pleasure, a social space in which emotional, spiritual, and social forms of engagement ranging from the carnivalesque to the commercial to the contemplative. The facilitating of the visitor's pleasure is echoed in Tate Modern' exhibition and public programming, achieving a kind of apotheosis in the word-of-mouth and institution promoted social events of the Turbine Hall commissions, such as Olafur Eliasson's *The Weather Project*. This work, which is exemplary of the kind of sociality cultivated by these commissions, found visitors lying on the floor for long periods of time in the Hall activated by an enormous, light emitting orb, mimicking an indoor sun.[146]

The social aspect is a significant one. The marketing program has successfully grown public awareness of Tate through not simply presenting the museum as a potential island of pleasure, but also a place of connectedness and invested engagement. This combination of the promise of self-directed pleasure with the *potential* for group participation and deep engagement make Tate an exemplary case of the discursive, institutional personalization of the visit. This hybrid promise of personal pleasure and interconnection develops a compelling implicit account

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[146] It was exhibited from October 2003 to March 2004. Tate has a page on its website dedicated to explaining the significance of the project: http://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/exhibition/unilever-series-olafur-eliasson-weather-project/understanding-project. Accessed January 23, 2015.

of the visitor experience, so much so that Tate's reputation is manifestly resistant to critique that

aims to tar Tate Modern as a place of meaningless entertainment (Block, 2005).

The advantage of this description of the visitor figure is apparent in Tate's reputational

value, particularly that value's ability to withstand criticism. Tate has sustained specific critique

for its collusion with enterprise culture that has been read as making Tate increasingly responsive

to private interests. Chin-Tao Wu (2002) and Julian Stallabrass (2014) have raised serious

questions about Tate's complicity with an agenda to become a high-society club or an agent for

big business through its corporate sponsorships, its branding schemes, its exclusive corporate

membership programs, and its renting out of the museum for private business events. Tate's long-

term sponsorship arrangement with BP has caused additional controversy for Tate, seeing it

accused of collaborating with a business that is harmful to the natural environment. Public

attendance and interest in the institution appears to be unabated despite these pointed critiques

that suggest the institution has created an elite class of partnerships to which ordinary visitors

cannot subscribe.

Tate, as a marketized and marketizing institution uses its enterprise aptitude to

synergistically enable and amplify its cultural authority and its position as steward of the public

patrimony. The public image of Tate that is being generated through its marketing and coalescing

around its 'brand' is one of dynamic, nimble astuteness, which instead of suggesting that Tate is

no longer a steward of British heritage, suggests that Tate will continue to act as a sensible

custodian of public goods. This synergism allows that when Tate is charged with being a

distraction machine, its discursive visitor figure is nevertheless imagined to be an active

participant, in a space of free sociality, and this figure exploits the public desire for an active civic

sphere in which exchange and connection are possible. Tate's marketing program hides its

strategic elitism and amplifies its facilitating of collaborative social interaction, rendering a view

of Tate as a dynamic institution that produces audience delight and satisfaction.

Its embrace of enterprise culture threatens to become problematic when Tate is regarded

as completely abandoning its Enlightenment values of universal education supported by a cadre of

professionals dedicated to connoisseurial scholarship and practice.[147] The supposed relinquishing

of these values is significant because of public education's historical role of providing a means for

social mobility, which in the public imagination can mitigate the stultifying effects of class

structure (Brown, 1995). Education is regarded as an egalitarian means to raising one's social

class and status, and in such regard holds out the idealized hope of creating a fairer, more

inclusive society, one consistently enacting meritocratic principles.[148] In the UK the conservative

economic policy of rolling back the state and rolling forward private enterprise gained ideological

footing based partly on a notion that individual entrepreneurial endeavor would create greater

opportunities for social mobility than the state could. Tate risks its custodial authority if it

becomes generally perceived as no longer defining its public service through underwriting an

ideal of universal education. There is at least a rhetorical allegiance to this principle apparent in

Tate's mission statement that centers on augmenting public 'understanding' and 'enjoyment'.

However, the consumer identity which underlies Tate's conception of the visitor holds in

abeyance the difficult issues of Tate's duty to support widespread education and widen access to

culture, particularly with regard to a persistently middle-class visitor profile. Market segmentation

of the visitor seems to promise a different approach to these issues. The visitor is universalized

under the status of consumer, while its particularity is acknowledged and respected. Tate

audiences are being developed under this rubric. Clearly there are certain *types* of particularity

acknowledged, those at the level of preferences that can be categorized and met by market

responses. Cultural access is channeled through a marketplace of desires. 'Engagement' is

increasingly displacing 'education' as the primary descriptor for what the museum does for the

visitor. It remains to be seen whether the substitution of the consumer identity for that of tutored

student will shape a view of Tate as capitulating to a neoliberal hegemony in which personal

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[147] This subject will be fully discussed in chapter six, 'Tate Modern Displays'.

[148] It has been argued *pace* Bourdieu that education, along with familial socialization allows one to become acclimatized to one's class position, so that the children of working class parents are taught to manage their expectations through the process of schooling. See David Swartz (2002). However this argument has not affected the degree to which education, particularly higher education is prized as an instrument of self creation and has become part of a neoliberal narrative of competition creating a channel for the rise of excellent candidates for employment. See Michael Apple (2010) who finds an intense competition for cultural capital and credentials in the education system in his essay, 'The Measure of Success'.

experience is commodified and the museum is reduced to being yet another commercial service provider.

Tate's use of campaigns that tacitly corroborate the figure of a visitor/consumer who is also a co-producer of its own experience, hinders the potential for Tate to be viewed as a shopping center for art experiences. The visitor who acts as a productive collaborator in creating meaning differs from the consumer who is passively entertained. The engaged visitor constitutes the sign of an interpretive activity and an interpretive institution that nurtures this capacity in the visitor. This is why engagement has become such a key concept and term in museum discourse: it separates out the museum from other spaces that entertain consumers.

However, in the collaborative museum space sociality as a means of developing and honing a critical consciousness is losing ground to sociality as an exchange of self-made products. In the individuated assembly of meaning, the risk is that the visitor's meaning will not have the benefit of critique. Particularly in co-curation projects which present visitor generated content without the benefit of an organizing narrative, collective critical engagement is restricted. Visitor participation in this way, while increasing visitor numbers and widening access, encourages a solipsistic experience that is not unlike other consumerist behavior. [149] The assumption founding a view of an autonomous, consumptive visitor is that the self is the ultimate beneficiary of the visit.

In this next chapter, the penultimate chapter of the case study, we further explore this visitor figure, examining its articulation in and through branding and advertizing images produced through business partnerships. The visual representation of the visitor figure and Tate Modern further demonstrate the implicit, underlying ideas that discursively shape this figure.

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[149] Colin Campbell (1987) in *The Romantic Ethic and the Spirit of Modern Consumerism* explains consumption as essentially a highly internalized, self-directed process. He describes consumers as modern hedonists who exert control over the self through concocting fantasies of appropriation of desired objects that momentarily satisfy. Rather than outwardly expressing these desires on objects, and thus placing oneself at the mercy of the objects that vary in levels of attainability, the consumer makes a fantasy object to take its place and manipulates that to achieve satisfaction.

Chapter Five: Branding, Advertisements and Partnerships

The Visitor in Branding and Advertizing

In this phase of the examination of Tate's conditioning of the visitor figure through the employ of marketing tools, we look at evidence of the articulation of this figure in and through branding mechanisms, corporate partnerships, and a group of advertisements that organize and express key corporate identities. The visitor figure that has so far been examined through the lens of the historical development of the Tate Gallery, audience research and marketing reports, now is viewed through visual and textual representations in the form of advertisements. Advertisements give further insight into how the visitor figure is conceptually constructed in these communiqués intended to secure the interest and loyalty of Tate's potential and existing audiences and potential clients for UBS, a Swiss financial services corporation. In a manner similar to the implicit portraits analyzed in the above, these advertising images indicate a complex and hybrid conception of the visitor, a conception conditioned by archetypes of bourgeois professionalism, expectations of the visitor's self-awareness and performativity, and the promise of an exclusive experience.

Advertisements are important to examine because they further elaborate underlying notions of the visitor and the visit that are associated with Tate's consciously constructed and heavily marketed institutional persona, that is, being a museum that privileges the interpretive activity of the visitor. This constructed persona we can understand to constitute a 'brand'. How a brand persona is formed, how it operates in general and specifically through Tate, and how it relates to the advertisements to be analyzed will be explained through discussing the development of Tate's brand.

Tate's Brand Formulation

As discussed in the above, in the 1990s, Tate had embarked on a program to transform itself into a corporate entity. Marketing strategies employed to effect this transformation include

the hire of the BDDP GGT advertising agency in 1997.[150] Its first major campaign for Tate, which

ran in late 1998, was intended to excite interest in the Turner Prize exhibition. The campaign

consisted of an enigmatic four-sheet poster containing a typographical puzzle that spells out a

headline: 'Surely you didn't expect an advertisement for the Turner Prize exhibition to be too

easy to understand?'. In Tate's subsequent aggressive pursuit of further and varied marketing

activities, including opening a shop in Selfridges, having branded beer supplied by Gruppo, and

branded coffee by Coffee Republic, the institution sought to present itself as shrewd and

progressive, not skeptical or distrustful of enterprise culture, but adaptive to it, able to harness its

tools.

The range of products that have been packaged with Tate's distinctive logo, that is to say,

branded, is extensive: sugar, mince pies, sketchpads and pencils, paint, wallpaper and artwork

frames are among them. Additionally, Tate has used outside celebrity designers to devise products

for sale in its museum gift shops (Stallabrass, 2014).[151] These products, which are essentially used

as vehicles of positive association, are tools by which Tate makes itself a part of an increasing

number of consumers' lives. Tate's brand has widespread presence in the market, but its brand is

constituted in the particular associations that the name evokes for the consumer.

Branding entails the creation of a coherent and consistent corporate identity, which for

Tate was accomplished through the hire of a business management consultancy, Wolff Olins. In

1998 Wolff Olins created an identity package featuring an out-of-focus Tate logo and a name

without the usual preceding definitive article. As discussed in the above, attaching the name

'Tate' without the article 'the' gives Tate the syntactic equivalent of person's name, suggesting

and encouraging a casual relationship to the institution, a friendly coequality (Phillips & O'Reilly,

2007). This syntactical contrivance is part of an assemblage of an institutional persona, drawing

consumers into relating to the Tate institution as they would to another person, a crucial aspect of

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[150] The firm began its life as the creation of four principals, Boulet, Dru, Dupuy, and Petit. In 1996, it merged with another firm based in the UK, Gold, Greenlees, Trott. It had previously produced well-known advertizing campaigns for French Connection, Waterstones and John Smith's bitter ale. Two years later that firm was absorbed into a much larger company, TBWA, France.

[151] Orla Kieley and Ally Capellino have designed a range of items that were for purchase in the gift shops.

its branding program since Tate is an enormous enterprise comprised of hundreds of employees

whom the majority of visitors will never meet. This phase of the branding process makes this

corporation humanly relatable.

Creating the grounds for this relation is fundamental for brand building, because the

creation and nurturing of a relationship is critical. Dick Hebdige (1989) is one of the first to

identify a profound shift in economies, which he relates in his essay, 'The Image Religion'. In his

examination of business practices he demonstrates an accelerating appreciation in the business

world of the degree to which control of the perception of a corporation in consumers' minds is

crucial to commercial success. Hebdige terms this conception a 'corporate identity', a descriptor

that prefigures 'brand'. He writes:

> Increasingly, the solution to the convergent pressures of globalisation and standardisation
> is for large conglomerates to buy in identity programmes designed to introduce the
> corporation to itself, to clarify its aims, coordinate its activities, integrate its workforce
> and to express all this in an appropriately dynamic image…. Factors as imprecise as
> 'reputation value', 'product image' and 'brand loyalty' may be unquantifiable but they
> can have long-term impact on the financial viability of corporations (pp. 40-41).

Prior to the 1990s museums were not constrained in the ways commercial businesses were, that is,

subjected to the pressures of globalization and standardization in a context of market-based

competition. However, with the growth of museums in general, their rising popularity, and the

growth of museum brands such as the Guggenheim and MoMA, an international arena of

competition for museums has developed at the uppermost levels. Museums compete with each

other along several valences. They certainly compete in terms of visitor numbers. They also

compete with regard to labor force talent. Low ranking staff are generally not aggressively

recruited, but because there is a limited labor pool of well trained, senior museum personnel, there

is a good deal of recruitment in the field at the higher echelons of the curatorial service.[152] These

museums compete for greater notoriety for their physical spaces, with the unique architecture of

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[152] For example: In 2011, Gregor Muir became the Institute of Contemporary Art's new director leaving his post as
director of the international gallery Hauser and Wirth. Sheena Wagstaff, the former Chief Curator at Tate Modern was
recruited by Thomas Campbell to direct the Modern and Contemporary Art department of New York's Metropolitan
Museum in 2012. In 2013, Doryun Chong was appointed the Chief Curator at M+ Museum in Hong Kong. His previous
position was as an Associate Curator of Painting and Sculpture at MoMA. In 2013, Glenn Adamson was appointed
director of the Museum of Art and Design in New York transferring from the Victoria and Albert Museum in London
where he was the head of research.

the Guggenheim Bilbao, the Pompidou Center in Paris, and Tate Modern's own Bankside location

garnering a great deal of public attention and transforming them into 'destinations'. In these ways,

though globalization in the standard sense of the transfer of manufacturing operations to locations

of reduced labor costs is not a principal valence for competition, museums are influenced by a

kind of global contest for visitors, skilled personnel, and publicity.

Standardization as representative of a conduit for competitive pressure is also rising in

significance in the modality of curatorial design, though top-tier institutions like Tate have

enjoyed distinction based on their curatorial methods, or in other cases, by their collections. As

has been demonstrated in the above, co-curation practices are beginning to be widely shared.

Thematic arrangement, which was initially a distinguishing quality of the Tate brand, is becoming

better known in the museum field. In the months before Tate Modern opened, the Museum of

Modern Art in New York mounted an exhibition called 'Modern Starts' that divided their

venerable collection into themes. In 2009 the Pompidou Center rehung its permanent collection as

a partially thematically arranged paean to women. At the Kunsthalle in Kiel, Germany, each year

the entire permanent collection is given a new presentation since its opening in 2003. The once

radical thematic arrangement has in the last few years come to be viewed as conventional (Curtis,

2013). It would likely be overstating the claim to describe the cross-pollination of thematic

strategies of presentation as a standardization of the museum experience. However, the

concurrence of this curatorial practice is a significant factor in museums seeking to distinguish

themselves as exceptional in the competition for new audiences.

The pressures on commercial enterprises including globalization and standardization

caused more than a shift in approach to the manufacture, distribution, and sales of their products.

A 'marketing renaissance' as Naomi Klein (2000) describes it, creates a definitive break with pre-

existing business practices (p. 21). Corporations have begun to divest themselves of the process of

manufacturing products with all the attendant difficulties and limitations, reorienting their

collective will and financial power towards giving themselves and their trademarks meaning,

meaning that founds a relation to the consumer. A brand secures consumer loyalty by

transforming the preponderance of publicly shared information about a company into a narrative

or suite of associations that have resonance with consumers. These associations connect

consumers to a corporation.

The bond that a business seeks to form with the consumer at the level of meaning is

essentially an emotional one.[153] Therefore in creating brands, the underlying aim is to *embody* an

enterprise, give it a personality to excite affective responses, preferably positive responses of

loyalty and trust. Given this is the primary aim of brand formulation, there is an inherent

concurrence of branding with Tate's own aim of providing meaning and understanding to the

visitor/consumer. The modes of meaning making overlap and become easily intertwined: Tate

becomes associated with British contemporary art, and twenty-first century art presented in Tate

galleries is correlated with intellectual liberty and pleasurable exploration, and subsequently Tate

comes to stand for visitor freedom and agency. Thus Wolff Olins is warranted in describing Tate

as 'brand-led rather than institution-led' (Hyland, 2006, p. 9). This is to say that Tate comes to

exist in the minds and perhaps the hearts of visitors as a series of conjoined associations that are

discursively designed to constitute a persona. Communication with this persona is initially

established through marketing methods designed to establish this relation.

This process of *affixing* associations to a brand or company, which Celia Lury (2004)

describes as 'hyperlinking', is part of the formulation of these associations. Lury uses the example

of the Nike brand and its image of the Swoosh logo to discuss how it has become associated with

'sports, determination and competitiveness'. She writes, 'the making of one link after another, and

in the process making associations—is both what makes brands not only visible and identifiable,

and also gives them dynamic object-ive unity. And having a dynamic unity, the brand is able to

present itself as having a *personality* or *face* (p. 12) [emphasis in the text].[154] Essentially branding

describes a process of personalizing a business. Linking the Tate logo and its tagline 'Look again,

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[153] In Phillips and O'Reilly (2007), 'Major Case Study: Rethinking Tate Modern as an Art Museum Brand', the authors cite Wolff Olins as regarding museum visiting as an emotional experience and a social occasion.

[154] In her book *Brands*, Lury (2004) relates a complex and multivalent understanding of brands which exceeds the scope of this study. Among the definitions Lury has devised for brands is: a 'set of relations between products in time', 'an object that opens up how it is that the economy is organised', 'a frame that organises the two-way exchange of information between the inner and outer environments of the market in time' (pp. 2-8).

think again', to its 'Create your own Collection' campaign, with its blockbuster exhibitions, its

Turbine Hall commissions, its thematic hang, the Turner Prize, and its encouragement of visitors'

interpretive faculties, Tate establishes a reputation through creating a personality that is known

for offering a certain kind or quality of experience while in its company. Tate has become

associated with an art experience that is an adventure in discovery of new meaning.[155]

The major practical effect of establishing this brand with regard to the issue of diversity is

that, counter-intuitively the brand unifies the institution in a manner that supports diversification.

The Tate brand unifies Tate's separate outposts under one sign. This fusion allows for

diversification of experience and location, while the brand's associated values are still preserved

for visitor/consumers. Whether one visits Tate Liverpool, or Tate St. Ives, Tate Modern, or Tate

Britain, the logo on signage, web sources, and advertisements makes the larger organization

instantly recognizable, though the building architecture may differ, and the exhibition selection

vary. Visitors are assured of a quality of experience. A unification of venues under a branding

sign allows for the converse: diversification. Tate is able to create not only outposts, but also new

programs for the public with the assurance that visitors will be prepared to attend Tate unfamiliar

programs and galleries because familiarity with the brand has been achieved through use of the

marketing program's vehicles.

On the basis of the brand Tate is also able to diversify the visitor. The values of discovery

and freedom and adventure are nondiscriminatory enough that, as *Tate Through Visitors' Eyes*

has shown in the above, the varieties of preferences in visitors will be accommodated by Tate's

brand. As Wolff Olins (n.d.) claims in their online description of their work for Tate, 'With help

from Wolff Olins, Tate reinvented the idea of a gallery from a single, institutional view, to a

branded collection of experiences, sharing an attitude by offering many different ways of seeing.

The new Tate would become a part of everyday national life, democratizing without dumbing

down.'. The claim of offering a variety of experiences and ways of viewing art through one

institution via a branding program is an ambitious one. This claim is supported by Tate's

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[155] The tag line 'Look again, think again' was developed by Wolff Olins.

marketing research, but it remains to be seen how the advertisements organized around Tate's

collaboration with UBS reinforce, undercut, or complicate these claims.

Brands' Relation to Advertisements

It is argued, by Wolff Olins, that a categorical difference exists between advertisements

and brands, with advertisements amounting to a promotional strategy that has lately been

superseded by brands, which are constructed to appeal to more than only consumers, but

additionally to all those involved in the production, distribution, and publicizing of a product.

More, branding is used to distinguish among products that are more or less equal in quality,

pricing, and service (Stallabrass, 2014).

It is true that brands are distinct from advertisements. They are intended to psychically

implant feelings of loyalty and trust in anyone who comes in contact with brand communication

vehicles: public signage, business partnerships, and advertising campaigns. As Julian Stallabrass

(2014) writes, 'The brand is an attempt to stamp all of an organization's products with the same

swiftly recognizable identity which acts as an assurance of reliable quality (p. 149).[156] However,

while brands are constructed to nurture a long-term relation rather than deliver episodic, short-

term sales enticements, advertisements are still very much in widespread use and cannot be

considered an almost obsolete consumer development method. Advertisements, in fact, are used

with brands to support and convey the desired associations specific to the brand.

Advertisements are herein considered *promotions* of the underlying brand. An

arrangement of a constantly evolving promotional program that finds varied means for conveying

a stable set of values is precisely what bestows freshness on brands with which consumers have

long association. The advertisement acts as an envoy for the brand, allowing the brand to stay

consistent while the ways in which it is promoted change. Thus new promotional techniques can

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[156] Naomi Klein (2000) argues in *No Logo* that the trust which once existed between producers and consumers,
epitomized in the era of the Fordist economy, has been severed with the exportation of jobs to places where labor costs
much less for the manufacturer. The trust in the manufacturer lost because of outsourcing, Klein argues, is what
branding seeks to restore.

exploit the excitement generated by the shock of the new. In the case of the series of

advertisements to be examined below, they are treated as sophisticated tools for communicating

with existing and potential consumers of the Tate brand, and taken to act as branding messages

intended to provoke desire for Tate.

A key relation underlies these advertisements. Tate does not produce them. Rather, they

are produced by UBS, a financial services firm based in Zurich and Basel, Switzerland, with

offices in at least 50 countries. UBS is in essence an investment banking firm that proclaims itself

to be in the business of wealth and asset management.[157] UBS AG (the full corporate name) was

formed in 1998 with the merger of the Union Bank of Switzerland and the Swiss Bank

Corporation and was ranked the largest wealth management company in the world in 2014,

though at the time the partnership was created it was not ranked so highly (Broom, 2014). UBS

(2006) was a 'Founding Corporate Partner' with Tate, and had, beginning in 2006, sponsored

several major contemporary exhibitions at Tate Modern and Tate Britain. The partnership was

ended by UBS in 2010, one year later than it was originally slated to end (Nayeri, 2010). The

partnership consisted of sponsorship of particular long-term exhibitions. These events include:

UBS Openings: Tate Modern Collection, which refers to the 2006 rehang; 'Family Zone', an

interactive games area for parents and children; 'The Long Weekend', a cultural festival that took

place in May 2007; and 'Saturday Live', a bi-monthly set of live events with artists, film, talks,

and live DJs.

It bears noting that Tate's relationship with UBS is not one in which Tate simply

benefited from corporate generosity.[158] Their relation has entailed some controversy. In an event

sponsored by UBS in 2006, Tate loaned its gallery space to temporarily display works chosen by

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[157] According the lexicon of the Financial Times, 'Wealth management is a practice that in its broadest sense describes
the combining of personal investment management, financial advisory, and planning disciplines directly for the benefit
of high-net-worth clients.' See: http://lexicon.ft.com/Term?term=wealth-management. Accessed May 10, 2012. Asset
management refers to similar systems of monitoring or maintaining objects of value to an entity or group, including
intangibles such as intellectual property or goodwill. Investment banking refers to the work that particular sorts of
banks do for clients, (in the UK they are known as merchant banks) which include underwriting the issuance of
securities, mergers and acquisitions, trading on capital markets, among other things:
http://markets.ft.com/research/Lexicon/Term?term=investment-bank. Accessed May 10, 2012.

[158] The precise amount of financial support that Tate received is not yet publicly available, it is likely comparable to the
amount of support Tate received from BP, which has recently come to light after a protracted legal battle. Over the
course of seventeen years BP's sponsorship of Tate averaged £224,000 per year (Brown, 2015)

Tate curators from the art collection owned by UBS, ostensibly to supplement particular Tate

exhibitions. This practice caused the press to declare that Tate, an institution supported by public

funds, was being exploited by a commercial business, that UBS in essence used Tate as an

extension of its own gallery space, thereby increasing the value of its own holdings by having

them displayed in a major museum of art (Brooks, 2006; Cumming, 2007).[159] The accounts in the

press have characterized Tate as either unprincipled or naïve or both.

Despite this difficulty, for the commercial business seeking a partnership with a premier

art museum, such an association signals social prestige and power, while for the art museum there

is a financial incentive buttressed by a greatly reduced, though still appreciable benefit of social

prestige (Wu, 2002). The assumption that undergirds the creation of these partnerships is mutual

benefit, that differing agendas can meet synergistically. Visual representation of these differing

corporate agendas in these advertisements involving Tate and UBS, it is argued, can be decoded

to ascertain what effect the underlying partnership agreement has on the visitor figure and

associated notions of the visit. These advertisements are also useful to examine in order to

understand the effect of marketing on the visitor figure more generally, because the corporate

partnerships that produce them are typical associations for the marketing programs of

contemporary museums of art.[160]

This study is also critical because visual representations of the branded Tate experience

bring to the forefront complications of its marketing agenda, the largest and most robust

component of its audience development program. Branding both enables and is enabled by the

corporatization of Tate as a private entity offering ostensibly public goods. However, branding

makes these goods *seem* commensurate with goods produced for private consumption. Celia Lury

(2004) argues that brands are poised to accomplish precisely this consumerist alchemy. Brands,

according to Lury behave as though they are public currency, but they are protected as private

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[159] This increase in value would operate in two ways: one, it would expose the private collection held by UBS to more viewing eyes and therefore increase its public exposure; two, it would increase the collection's reputational value.

[160] Phillips and O'Reilly (2007), make the point that there is a 'cooptation of a certain kind of artistic aesthetic by global media and business conglomerates'. This cooptation as evidence of, 'the wider corporatization and consumerization of the arts and heritage through co-branding deals' (p. 191).

property in the law. They are designed to have such widespread public appeal that they seem like

a birthright. Yet, simultaneously they are marketed to consumers in such a way as to make the

pleasure of imagining the use and possession of these goods a private interaction (except for when

a romantic partner or a family is built into the vision of the visit). The advertisements here

provide examples of how this transmutation is carried out in image and text: by making the

museum a particular kind of transformative context, one in which public goods can morph into

private ones.

It is understood, given the analysis in the above, that marketing's strength lies very much

in its ability to reconcile seemingly oppositional states: consumer and producer; autonomous

agent and manipulable buyer. The following visual depictions of a Tate visit have encoded within

them reconciliations that demonstrate, for example, how the visitor figure might be represented as

a public patron who privatizes the experience. Advertisements are significant sources for this

data, in that they are designed to present an image of a desirable situation and a desirable persona

with which a viewer might identify. Analysis of these advertisements will also demonstrate

whether the visitor figure implicit in Tate's marketing reports has the same or similar contours as

the visitor figure suggested in advertized images.

The UBS Advertisements

Print advertisements found in the *Tate Etc.* magazine were selected over other types of

promotional work because these advertisements most clearly signify an image of an idealized

visit.[161] The images found in these advertisements show both people and the space of Tate

Modern: putative visitors interacting with the museum space and with each other. In these regards

they offer important data about the discursive, highly marketed visitor figure by depicting the

ways in which this figure is imagined to engage with the museum and visit partners.

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[161] Several sources offer advertisement images of a visit to Tate Modern. Web sources exist alongside print sources, as well as radio broadcasts (J. Burton, personal communication, May 12, 2012). Jane Burton at the time was the Head of Content and the Creative Director of Tate Media, which is the division of Tate that builds the Tour Guides. For more information see: http://www.apple.com/uk/pro/profiles/tatemedia/. Accessed 24 May 2012. Burton related that though Tate does not advertise on television, its staff does participate in producing informational shows that feature Tate Modern.

The following is an analysis of each of the ads produced by UBS to endorse a series of

openings at Tate sponsored by UBS, some of which feature exhibitions of art privately owned by

UBS. There are three different advertisements.[162] Similarities exist among them, but they all

depict different scenes. Each advertisement consists of a main image in which figures are

portrayed within the space of Tate Modern, and each image is accompanied by a few sentences

explaining the nature of the collaboration between UBS and Tate, what the UBS Openings are,

and rhetoric regarding how the two organizations are connected. Following the granular analysis

of each image, there will be a final analysis of the overall messages relayed about the visitor

figure and the visit to Tate Modern.

The discussion here will concentrate on the images, and the texts that accompany them.

Two of the three advertisements also include a few phrases attributed, in each case, to a well-

known photographer. It is not clear whether the photographer indicated has in fact produced the

image contained in the advertisement, therefore the images are not treated as though they have

been. A quotation attributed to the photographer is placed over the image and thus functions as

commentary (literally) on the image. These captions are treated as attempts to have an authorial

and authoritative voice add meaning to the image and direct its interpretation.

These images are evaluated as if they are layered signs. These signs are accompanied by

text that also requires exegesis, and both forms of communication receive critical interpretation.

Critical evaluation is particularly necessary in the case of the advertisement because it is an

abbreviated form of communication intended to manipulate the viewer and compel action. It often

operates in a didactic, direct manner, giving the viewer clear and evident information about the

product being promoted. However the advertisement is even stronger and more insidiously

manipulative when operating at a semiological level, conveying a series of coded signals behind

which lie associative meanings that affect the viewer despite the associations being latent. More,

the multiple meanings conveyed are relayed in the tightly limited space of a single page;

advertisements are layered with compressed meanings. The following analysis identifies these

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[162] There is another image, the first one to appear in this campaign. However, this image was not available for use. The images are all reproduced in appendices D through F.

coded devices and the meanings to which they point as they relate to the implicit visitor figure,

UBS, and Tate (who together with UBS helps generate this visit narrative), and the relations

between UBS and Tate.

The advertisement signifies and suggests these meanings through both formal modalities

inherent to the advertisement and modalities of reference to that which lies outside it, such as

dominant codes, mythologies, and popular culture tropes. Both modalities will be considered in

the following analysis in order to demonstrate how each advertisement operates in relation to

broader systems of meaning that relate to museums, visitors, the process of making meaning and

the process of social interaction. The emphasis will be on extracting the preferred or obvious

meanings, and other meanings that lie behind these. For example, an advertisement depicting a

person in an art museum who seems to be looking intently at an object that is not within the

picture plane may be presumed to be studying a piece of art. A secondary meaning may have to

do with reading the bodily disposition as a signal for the correct behavior in a museum

environment. Preferred meanings will be acknowledged as such while also reflexively

acknowledging other germane readings that indicate implicit notions regarding the visitor figure

collaboratively imagined by Tate and UBS.

Each advertisement has its own compositional qualities that will direct a specific set of

meanings. However, there are concerns that apply to the examination of all. In each advertisement

there is a subject who is addressed, a subject who is implied, and usually, a subject who is

pictorially or linguistically represented. Additionally, within the image there is an implied,

intangible product that is in essence the experience of the visit. These are the 'goods' that are

being offered by Tate, and they are signified in image and in the language that complements the

image. Since each advertisement seeks to provoke desire for the experience and the corporations

who have produced them, discussing the nature of these goods and the businesses that furnish

them is crucial. The main semiotic tools by which this fine-grained analysis will be undertaken to

bring implicit signifieds to the surface are borrowed from the critical visual methodologies of

Gillian Rose (2001).

Tate Etc. Magazine

The advertisements to be analyzed appear on the back cover of the *Tate Etc.* magazine in

2009. This magazine began to be published in the summer of 2004.[163] *Tate Etc.* provides

information on current and upcoming exhibitions, artists and issues of art, with an emphasis on

the content of the art criticism. Its features offer a scholarly tone overall, and give detailed

explication of artists' concerns and practices. It has a print run of 100,000 issues and the majority

of its readers are Tate Members.[164] The magazine is sent to those with a membership subscription

(those who have joined the museum by paying a yearly fee), and it has a subscriber base of

several thousand. *Tate Etc.* is on sale in bookshops and galleries around the world.[165] The Tate

website claims that it is the largest art magazine published in Europe.[166]

The first few issues feature advertisements of high-priced goods, along with

announcements of upcoming sponsored exhibitions. For the first time, in the seventh issue of *Tate*

Etc., two people suggested to be visitors are depicted within Tate Modern, in an advertisement for

UBS openings. The advertisements are featured on the back covers up to issue number sixteen in

2009, spanning the three years the partnership agreement was designed to be in place. UBS

produced these ads to announce and publicize their partnership with Tate and their sponsorship of

particular events.

Couple in the Turbine Hall

The image shows the ramp of the Turbine Hall leading to the front main entrance that

forms the background of the image. The hall is entirely empty except for two figures. These

figures occupy the middle distance between the foreground and the background. They are caught

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[163] There are two prior iterations of a magazine associated with the Tate Gallery and subsequently, Tate. The first magazine produced by Tate was *tate: the art magazine*. It was first published in the winter of 1993 until the summer of 2002. The second magazine was published by Condé Nast International and titled *TATE International arts and culture*. It was produced for only 8 issues.

[164] The membership fee now starts at £60 per year.

[165] The information on the print run, subscriber base, and where the magazine is sold comes from an assistant editor at the magazine (M. Finch, personal communication, November 29, 2012).

[166] This is found here: http://www.tate.org.uk/about/business-services/tate-etc-magazine. Accessed September 30, 2012.

in mid-stride as they walk down the ramp towards the interior of the museum. Sunlight streams

down in a dappled pattern descending from the ceiling and lighting the floor around them so that

it forms a shining path of light the figures presumably have been traversing and will continue to

traverse. To the left of the photographic image a statement is superimposed at a ninety-degree

angle to the picture plane, so the viewer has to turn its head to read the message. The letters

follow the rules of perspective so they decrease in size the closer they are to the horizon line

within the interior of the picture plane. The phrase is followed by a name, Massimo Vitali. The

statement reads: 'I like complicated pictures, I like pictures that I do not understand'. The text

beneath the image reads:

> For the next three years, UBS is delighted to be partnering Tate Modern, whose rehang of
> its permanent Collection promises to make us all think a little differently about art.
> Together we have created UBS Openings, a dynamic and wide-reaching programme that
> includes a series of displays from The UBS Art Collection at Tate Modern. It's a
> partnership that promises to open up art to wider audiences. Sharing new perspectives.
> It's what drives our business, and it's what drives our partnership with Tate Modern. **UBS
> Openings: Photography from The UBS Art Collection. 22 May – 26 November**
> [emphasis in original] (Appendix D).

Compositionally and textually this advertisement equates spatial freedom with intellectual

freedom, foreclosing the possibility of feeling overwhelmed or intimidated by contemporary art,

but rather encourages feeling invigorated by the possibility of investigating it. This is the

preferred meaning of the advertisement.

First, the disposition of space is key. The image is full of empty space. The two figures

are dwarfed by it. As a unit they occupy approximately 1 centimeter by 1.75 centimeters in an

image that measures approximately 14.5 by 19 centimeters. The composition suggests that Tate

Modern is a huge expanse to explore, a wide and free space in which to roam. The dappled,

golden efflorescence flowing onto the back wall and bending onto the floor under the main

figures' feet suggests something like divine or celestial imprimatur. At the very least, the golden

light signifies the optimal weather conditions for venturing out: clear skies and no rain, a situation

that is almost a rarity in London.

The textual interjection of Massimo Vitali is made to connect the viewer's sense of

spatial freedom to an intellectual liberty, that is, the freedom to lack expert or experienced

knowledge. Massimo Vitali is an Italian-born photographer and cinematographer who has lived

and worked in London. He began as a photojournalist and has a famous body of work depicting

people at the beach. He is an artist well versed in the mechanics of image making and the

possibilities of extracting meaning from putatively quotidian scenes. His voice is authoritative

because of his experience with producing skilful imagery. His testimony attests to preferring

complication in pictures, to being comfortable in the state of not understanding what an image

means to say. This authoritative statement from a prominent, celebrated photographer

communicates to the viewer that a state of ignorance does not need to trigger shame or fear.

Rather it is a normal state. Vitali naturalizes ignorance of contemporary art and thus provides

visitors with rhetorical protection for the untutored gaze.

For the visitor who is not equipped with the training or education to understand

contemporary art, an emotional response to the work is made legitimate. Vitali states that he

'likes' work though it is not easily comprehensible. This declaration subtly validates intuitive,

non-intellectual responses. Therefore the exploration that begins in the Turbine Hall under the

blessing of nature and that of a famed artist is a hopeful one. It is inaugurated not with the

expectation to have one's gaze trained or educated, but with the expectation that the vast expanse

of Tate Modern is suitable for inexpert exploration.

The image also suggests that the visit should be a collaborative endeavor. In the image,

both figures are wearing trousers, but one is signified as male by his wearing a blue, collared

shirt, and the taller figure in a white shirt, but with longer hair signifies femaleness. They both

signify middle-class occupation given their business casual wear. They are interacting with each

other, their heads oriented towards each other having a conversation as they walk. The optimal

exploration of the gallery is suggested to be accomplished with a partner. Picturing a man and

woman together engaged in dialogue projects a narrative of a normal, that is to say, hetero-

normative partnership. The visit is in this way further normalized. It is depicted as something that

a middle-class couple would do on a lovely day in London.

However, a closer reading of the advertisement demonstrates that it aestheticizes

exclusivity and a kind of intellectual freedom that accommodates ignorance of the contemporary

art object and thus lays the ground for a private experience. Chin-Tao Wu (2002) in his

examination of enterprise culture's colonization of the museum field discusses the involvement of

top executives in sponsoring corporations and their exercise of high culture as part of their

lifestyle. Wu argues there is no necessity for executives to involve themselves in the detailed

negotiations around partnership agreements, though they often do. The cause for this is that for

this elite rank, as for the corporation generally, associating with an art museum is a sign of their

social prestige, because the art museum is still considered an institution of high culture (even

though recent populist exhibitionary choices have suggested otherwise).

Wu argues that the public performance of social status is enacted generally by the

sponsoring corporation with the museum's cooperation, and he uses the example of Tate's

corporate membership program to illustrate this. Tate, through this program, offers various ways

to construct an exclusive environment for these corporate members: private views, tours and the

hiring out of the gallery space for private events. Through holding these elite, private affairs, UBS

personnel are able to further demonstrate their elite status, which in turn demonstrates for their

clients that they are the sort of people who respect and understand elite status. This suggestion of

respect for status carries through their professional practices. Through the dexterous money

management of UBS staff , their customers' social status is recognized and protected, insofar as

the wealth that undergirds their status is protected.

This advertisement, while prima facie making a case for intellectual liberty, also makes

an argument for exclusivity. It depicts only two people in the vast space of the Turbine Hall, with

not even a guard or docent in sight. The experience, though ostensibly shared between the two

figures, is a private one, an experience removed from the teeming crowds that normally populate

the space. In this light, the Vitali exhortation seeks to foreclose the intervention of outside

commentary, intellectually sealing off the private experience from those in the museum (now

made invisible) who might have a hand in shaping the meaning found in objects: docents,

curators, and other visitors. The text beneath the image which declares that the exchange of 'new

perspectives' drives their business is belied by the connotative meanings of the image,

particularly when one considers the exclusive nature of wealth and asset management. The clients

that UBS desires are those who have wealth that already places them among the financial elite.

Exclusivity is what their clients are used to and what they expect in their relations with UBS.

The person being addressed in the advertisement is precisely the person who desires this

exclusive experience. The person who is implied is the visitor/consumer who imagines that what

they purchase is indicative of their social position rather than the wealth they own. The person

who is represented is the white, hetero-normative couple who are a cultural paradigm in the

political and ideological order. In effect UBS announces that its private collection will be made

public, but the goods are really intended for those current and future clients of UBS for whom the

art museum is an arena for private investigation under the auspices of the individual's concerns.

The text that accompanies the advertisement image stands in contrast to the image's more

complex signification. It largely consists of the announcement of a relationship and the assertion

that this partnership will achieve intertwined social and private goals simultaneously. The joining

of the two enterprises is supposed to yield in the public both invigorated and novel thoughts about

art, and a widening out of access to audiences that do not typically attend the museum. The latter

is a goal the achievement of which has long proved elusive for the art museum.

The text subtly implies that this goal may be attained by the hand-in-hand cooperation of

commercial business and the museum, a cogent rendering of the proposition comprehensively

brought to bear in the museum field by Thacherite cultural policy. This idea of private-public

partnership having the potential to improve the reach and scope of museums continues to

permeate the field, particularly as the UK government reduces funding for the arts.

Characteristically of the advertisement, which elides information that might be interpreted as

contrary to the primary message, there is no mention of the profit in both economic and cultural

capital that UBS stands to make in this association with Tate, by being able to present its private

holdings as part of the public patrimony.

Tate's concern with social inclusivity is used to rhetorically leverage UBS into a heroic position, being regarded as accomplishing what the museum by itself, or even with the help of government subsidy could not accomplish.

The claim that this collaboration is a 'shared' one is misleading. Tate is subsumed within an agenda in which UBS profits from its cooperation. Tate is allowed to play a junior role as the cultural resource made more effective by the intervention of a firm adept and efficient at manipulating the levers of private wealth and the needs of public institutions. However, it is important that the claim of shared values is made, and UBS' corporate collection is presented as a smaller part, 'included' in Tate's larger holdings. By representing Tate as an equal partner UBS can present private goods as public patrimony, which makes UBS appear to be an enlightened and principled corporate partner.

Interior and Exterior View with Couple

This advertisement depicts two separate and distinct spaces, an interior and an exterior. The exterior perspective is positioned at the left of the image in the foreground, viewed through a large floor-to-ceiling window. The view is of the city of London with the Thames, the Southwark Bridge and buildings on the other side of the river visible. The interior view, which takes up about three-quarters of the space of the image shows a long hallway, lit at the end and empty except for two people. The image is overlain with text that purports to be the words of Beat Streuli. [167] The text is positioned in the middle of the image at a ninety degree angle to the picture plane so the letters align with the other vertical objects in the image: the window frames and a black pillar in the distance. As in the advertisement discussed above, the letters follow the rules of perspective. The text reads: 'My art is close to storytelling. The theatre of modern life is at the centre of my work'. In the hall two figures face right peering at objects or text not visible to the viewer. The text below the image reads:

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[167] Beat Streuli is a Swiss visual artist who uses photography, video, and installations. He is known for his work in street photography, depicting urban dwellers around the world.

> At UBS we believe in sharing new perspectives. This approach is at the heart of our long-term partnership with Tate Modern and it's why together we've created **UBS Openings.** Every two months we bring it to life through UBS Openings: Saturday Live, a cutting edge programme of works that aims to make us all think a little differently, which is our goal in business as well as in art. **UBS Openings: Saturday Live. Matt Mullican Under Hypnosis – 27 January 2007. Actions and Interruptions – 10 March 2007** [emphasis in original] (Appendix E).

The formal elements of the image, including the complex tones and background elements, in addition to the textual intervention putatively given by Beat Streuli, are intended to make the image read as 'modern' and therefore the persons within the space as modern as well. The modern character of the situation is signaled by the overall tonal register of the image. Everything in the image, with very few and key exceptions, has muted gray tones and is suffused with a soft, dispassionate glow. The temperature of the image is urban cool, reserved, unhurried, urbane.[168] The outside view offers a sky that is a cloudy, gray haze with the most contrasting elements being dark clothed figures at the bottom of the picture frame. Inside, the highest contrast is thrown up by the black hallway pillar, the lit doorway at the end, two hallway lights, and the collar and cuffs of the white shirt on the male figure.

Modern life is further signified by the content of the image. The bifurcated perspective given the viewer delineates and emphasizes the status of the city, which is outside. The viewer can see the riverside walk, the Thames, and several buildings that connote 'city life', including the iconic Gherkin building. Separating out the city from the museum's interior suggest that the museum is a different place, but not *entirely* different. The same tonal qualities carry across from the external city. Both views are depicted along the same axis, only separated by the walls of the museum.

There is a preferred reading that would focus on the difference between the two spaces, suggesting the museum as a place of reserved contemplation that contrasts with the bustle and demands of the city. The image may be interpreted as asking the viewer to identify with the figures of the man and woman withdrawing from the city in a moment of escape from its demands.

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[168] In their examination of Tate Modern as an art museum brand, Phillips and O'Reilly (2007) relate that Tate was designated 'Cool Brand Leader' in 2003 in an award given by the brand council (p. 188).

This identification is not simply rooted in escapist fantasy, but has an important social class component. The 'city' acts as a sign of the business sphere, a space of the proficient manipulation of the levers of economic exchange and the skilled workers who operate in it. In turn, one's status as an actor in the city is used as a metric for urban life. The degree to which one must respond to and work with the city and its business representatives is often indicative of high levels of responsibility with corresponding pressure placed on one's time. This suggested status in the business world corresponds with a social status: a skilled, educated, white-collar laborer who operates in a field that is in market demand.

The dress of the figures in the image support this interpretation. The woman is dressed in close fitting trousers and boots, along with a fitted top. The man carries a soft briefcase and wears a white shirt. Though he is wearing a dress jacket, he does not wear a full suit, nor does he wear dress shoes (the shoes are white in the photograph and suggest trainers or tennis shoes). The man's white shirt connotes white-collar occupation in a modern context where he dresses business casual. The woman's clothing, particularly her fashionable boots, connote urbanity. It is suggested that the middle-class, educated worker can have a moment of escape from the city by taking a sojourn in Tate Modern.

However, the assumed commentary of Beat Streuli suggests another reading, one in which the viewer is a kind of flâneur, who, like the photographer, uses what falls into his gaze to construct narratives by and for the self. Streuli is a Swiss visual artist whose practice encompasses photography, video, and installations. The theme of his work and what he is best known for is street photography, depictions of urban dwellers around the world. Streuli renders the complications and vagaries of metropolitan life into a theatrical production and thus interpellates his viewers as voyeurs for whom the entire cityscape can be considered a theatre.[169] If the viewer of this advertisement indentifies with Streuli's position as producer of the image, then the figures

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[169] The notion was originally developed and elaborated by Louis Althusser, a French Marxist philosopher concerned with what he termed 'ideological state apparatuses'. His theory sought to explain how the individual is ideologically conditioned by the institutions of or serving the state. In crude terms, Althusser explained the process using the analogy of an individual being hailed and responding, and in responding recognizing himself as the person to whom the call was addressed, and accepting the terms of the address. Althusser termed this process 'interpellation'.

within the gallery space operate as objects to be observed, a more or less interesting visual

performance.

Streuli's statement not only makes the image consumable as a moment of urban

theatricality, it also makes the viewer aware of the artifice of one's own public performances. As

the viewer realizes that this scene is a kind of performance, with the actors staring at blank walls

and demonstrating the postures one should adopt when seeing work in an art museum, the viewer

becomes aware of their own potential to perform in this context. This realization makes us self-

aware viewers and consumers of this advertisement, and allows us to imagine ourselves in the

halls of Tate Modern as performers on a similar stage. The museum becomes a stage for the

dramaturgical action of making the visitor aware of her social performance. Following this line of

thought, this advertisement presents the museum as a particular kind of performative context, a

context in which we see ourselves behaving as subjects looking at art. The perspective of the

advertisement focuses on the individuals, not on the art. What supports this observation, though it

lies outside the visual and narrative modalities of the image itself, is that the hallway depicted as

though it is a museum space, is in fact not a display space. It is a space adjacent to the member's

lounge. Our protagonists exist in an invented place where they *perform* a visit.

This notion of realizing the performance aspect of the visit leads to a secondary meaning

of the advertisement. The ideal viewer is the person able to be a performer in either realm. The

parallel view of the city of London indicates a relation between the two spheres. The relation is

premised on the business realm providing the means for this visit: the economic capital, the

corporate contributions that went to helping create Tate Modern, and now help to sustain it. It

does not matter in this narrative that the major part of subsidy for Tate actually comes from the

UK government, private donations, and Tate's trade. Attention from the press and media is

generated within and by the city. The city, it is suggested, makes this visit possible.

The implied viewer of this advertisement is presumed to understand that the city is an

environment similar to the museum: it requires a kind of performance. For those able to perform

in a manner that suits the context then both offer similar though distinct prizes: private wealth.

The city offers private economic wealth, while the museum offers a *privatized* cultural wealth. The private nature of the museum experience 'goods' is made more apparent when the couple is considered.

The figures shown are male and female, the white, hetero-normative, paradigmatic couple, who at this point in this analysis are understood to constitute the conventional and standard template on which subtle elaborations of the visitor figure may be layered. The couple occupies the space together, similar to the pair discussed in the above. This couple offers an image of a kind of modern partnership where each person has its own private meaning to which to attend. It is suggested in the placement of the figures that neither refers to the other, or queries the other in the process of making meaning. They do not collaborate. They are with each other but attending to different objects, not engaged in dialogue. The performance or the artwork compels their attention. The viewer watching them does not see the work. It is for each one alone. In this way the museum experience is idealized as both performance and a kind of labor that yields individual, privatized goods.

The viewer who this advertisement addresses is the person equipped and able to perform the appropriate roles in a business environment and in an exclusive cultural context. This presumed viewer is skilled at moving through different frameworks that require particular forms of communication and action. This person represented is the same figure, the white-collar worker employed in industries associated with the city: finance, banking, media management, public relations; accounting, sales, customer service, information technology. The person working in these occupations is required to be flexible, to move between differing frameworks, to be able to communicate well with managers and customers, to colleagues in varied departments, and to function in multiple ways, as an advocate, a technician, a teacher, or a salesperson. The person implied is a visitor/actor/worker who understands there is a direct correlation in their employ between their performance and the compensation they receive. This person also understands there is a correlation between their performance of the visit and the cultural goods they receive from the museum.

The accompanying text, on the other hand, is a much more quotidian and blunt assertion of values putatively shared with Tate that ultimately declare that UBS is a unique commercial concern serving their clients more skillfully than other similar businesses. The key phrases 'thinking differently' and 'sharing new perspectives' are the crucial points of supposed cohesion in this advertisement publicizing the UBS partnership with Tate. Insight, intuitive understanding, innovative ways of confronting situations or problems are the values that these key phrases suggest. The associations generated are similar to the associations brought up by the tagline for the industry leading Apple brand, 'Think Different'. The syntactic similarity is not coincidental. There are more than 500 asset management firms worldwide, so distinction in such a crowded field is far from assured even with competent performance. As Chin-Tao Wu (2002) has observed, sponsorship agreements between for-profit businesses and cultural organizations are used by these businesses to advertize an enlightened corporate image. Tate, much like other museums in similar agreements, has been recruited to fulfill an aspect of the public relations program of UBS. UBS' brand is being shaped by association with Tate to make UBS appear to be inventive, creative, and pioneering.

The text below the advertisement is a much less sophisticated communiqué than the image. It represents a concern that the reasons for embarking on the partnership with Tate will be lost in the nuanced and layered connotations contained in the image. It is the equivalent of a failsafe, a message that conveys in plain terms the values the corporation wants consumers to recognize it possesses should the more finely shaded meanings in the image be lost on potential clients of UBS. It has been found that the audience for art museums is more educated, more affluent, and have more prestigious jobs than visitors to other museums (Wu, 2002). In advertizing in *Tate Etc.* magazine, UBS has specifically targeted these demographics as their potential customers, and the text confirms, even if the coded visual message is not grasped, that the viewer will see UBS is an innovative business leader.

Couple Facing a Screening Room

In the third advertisement, a couple is depicted in profile in a small gallery space in Tate Modern. The superimposed text is a simple statement announcing the series of UBS openings. The text overlays the image in the upper left corner of the image, in the same orientation as the rest of the page. The statement reads: '**UBS Openings at Tate Modern. New Ways into art**.' (Appendix F) [emphasis in original]. The text below the image reads:

> Together, UBS and Tate Modern have found new ways to share art with everyone. UBS Openings is a series of inspirational gallery displays, imaginative family activities, and participative live performances. Collaboration, openness and creative thinking. They're at the heart of our partnership with Tate Modern, and at the heart of our relationships with our clients (Appendix F).

In its formal and textual aspects this advertisement primarily attempts to make the museum visit to Tate Modern accessible for young audience members by demonstrating that the rules of comportment and the performance of engagement generally followed by bourgeois visitors do not constrain them. It composes a version of the visit open to visitors who are not aware of the codes of proper museum behavior, or lack the skills to mount a public performance representing this awareness, or are bereft of the middle-class surety of education and social status that gives the visitor an assured grasp of the museum experience as a private possession. This is the preferred meaning.

The advertisement suggests a personally derived means of access to an art experience through the placement of the figures in the tableau, and through their bodily gestures and stance. The couple is not the white paradigmatic couple of the previous advertisements. They are hetero-normative, but younger. The male figure's hair is cut in a way that currently signifies youth: it is faded on the sides. The female figure's age can only be surmised from her companion's age because her face is turned away from the viewer. They are dressed in an urban, casual style. Unlike the other images, here each member of the couple is very close to the other, seemingly almost touching. This close physical proximity may also be taken as signifier of their youth, in that public display of affection or close physical relation is behavior associated with those who

are young, ignorant of or resistant to the codes of bourgeois public reserve. Their race is not

clearly signified, though they are not apparently of African or Asian ethnicity.

They both stand awkwardly outside the doorway of the screening room instead of inside

the room where patrons would usually stand.[170] Their postures are not typical for visitors who are

aware of the codes of proper museum behavior. The young man's back is against a wall, a

position that a museum docent or guard would object to, since it runs the risk of marring the

surface underneath his jacket. The woman also has her heel against the back wall and bends both

at the knee and at the hip, moving her head to the side to presumably gain a useful vantage point.

Crucially, they are keeping the viewed screen at a distance.

The figures' engagement with the art is reserved, but in a manner that is not mimetic of

bourgeois sophistication. They are uncomfortable, unwilling to fully venture inside the enclosure

in which the art is meant to be seen. The text that accompanies and overlays the image essentially

supports this 'new' way into art. The young people in this image are stand-ins for the underserved

populations that do not typically attend art museums. That they have *not* entered the room

suggests that they are not convinced of art's salutary or pleasurable effects. However, by

presenting this image to the viewer as a version of the art experience, the advertisement suggests

there is allowance made for doubt, for wary regard from a distance. This advertisement suggests

that the museum is open and available to them in the way that they prefer to perform their visit,

leaning against walls, peering into screening rooms from a distance. The new way into art

suggests unique ways of experiencing art, ways that are not intellectually engaged or performative

in the manner modeled by older, middle class patrons, which have been portrayed in other

advertisements within this series.

The preferred reading is a reasonable assessment of the advertisement, but when

considered with the other images that have been analyzed in the above, there are crucial, glaring

dissimilarities. These incongruities suggest that the couple have been dragooned into this

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[170] The assumption being made here is that the figures are not peering at an art object, but at the work inside a room. This supposition is made on the basis of there being no caption visible, and more importantly, it is very unlikely that the curatorial staff would place a piece of art in a hallway with such a limited viewing distance.

situation, and not only are they unaware of the codes of conventional museum behavior, but the

museum itself is unaware of what they need or desire from the visit. While they, like the couples

depicted in the related advertisements, are stand-ins for a certain type of visitor, these figures are

stand-ins for populations who do not normally attend the museum, and thus less is known about

them, and much less is imagined with regard to what they may desire.

This couple is comparatively treated with much less hope for their abilities.

Compositionally, this image has little depth of field and much less expansiveness in comparison

with the other advertisement images. The contrast in the use of space is stark. The color contrasts

are also stark. The main hues are the white of the walls, the black of the dark room, and of the

piece of art positioned behind the main figures, and the worn wood color of the floor.

Visually, this image is much less complex and varied. The couple is essentially

sandwiched in between the walls and the black doorway of the darkened room that yawns before

the couple. The walls contain them. The male figure literally has his back against the wall, a

phrase that typically signifies possessing severely limited options in the face of impending crisis.

The couple's options are few. Their choices consist of the room they confront, which now appears

more foreboding, a black chasm, or the hallway that curves behind them to the right of the image.

At the far wall and beyond that curve the room brightens. They do have choices for movement

and discovery, but these options are clearly more bounded, markedly differing in scope and

variety from the other advertisements in the campaign.

The blunt and inelegant framing of the couple in the image is mirrored in the framing of

the aim of social inclusion represented in the text. UBS claims to have found ways to 'share art

with everyone', but the ways they have found are framed by a starkly impoverished

comprehension of what 'everyone' might look like or seek in the art experience. Gallery displays,

family activities, and live performances are given as examples of the innovative and collaborative

venture with Tate that might welcome a wider swath of the public, but the image implies that

those who stand outside of the room in which the art is displayed are not prepared to take

advantage of these opportunities. The assumption is not that the gallery is a place of intellectual

expansiveness or a place in which a kind of performance will yield a bounty of private meaning,

but rather that art is an option of nigh last resort for those who lack the habitus that would have

already familiarized them with the museum and its stores of cultural wealth.

The condescension in this approach, which eschews complex framing of the protagonists'

powers and potential, demonstrates that the person who is implied and the person who is

represented in the advertisement image are the same: the young person who rarely visits the

museum. The subject who is addressed by this advertisement is the person who shares this

jaundiced view of those who do not regularly attends the museum. Those who imagine that an

appeal to the underserved must be made in terms that mirror their presumably restricted social

reality will see this image as appropriate and fitting. However, what is being elided is a sense of

desire for active participation in an adventure or the excited exploration of a collective

experience.

There is little indication of the desire for spiritual, intellectual, emotional, or social

sustenance, which correlate to the categories of segmented, marketized visitor behavior Tate uses

to organize its marketing efforts. Rather, the image betrays an implicit sense of dogged duty to the

underserved by corporate benefactors who have limited expectations for the expansion of the

museum's visitor populations, likely as a consequence of there being little expectation that

members of these populations will be able to hire the services of UBS. This is a somewhat

speculative statement, but only somewhat, given that UBS has devised other advertisements that

clearly allude to middle-class patrons who would constitute part of their customer base, and those

advertisements are more generous in the signified expectations of the visitor.

The Campaign

This campaign considered as a whole suggests that the museum visit is personalized

insofar as it is configurable by the visitor figure to yield a bounty of privatized meaning and

experience. The advertisements that convey these connotative definitions of the visit are

significant in the discursive formulation of the visit in that they harness the idealizing and

aspirational powers of those to whom these brand promotions are addressed. This viewer is a

person who either occupies or desires to occupy the middle or upper economic classes, works in a

white-collar occupation, and perceives the art museum as a space and catalyst for cultural

exploration.

Perceiving the museum as a free choice environment is not in and of itself a perception

that privatizes the cultural patrimony, which Tate for the most part gives to audiences. However,

the correlative perception of the visitor as a figure of self-directed interpretation has undergirding

it particular notions of private wealth and wealth's relation to exclusivity and the proper

performance of a visit. The ways that these presuppositions about the role of private wealth in the

museum condition the imagined experience of the visitor come to the surface in this advertizing

campaign in a way that challenges the rhetorical claim that the museum is becoming a more

democratized space by privileging the interpretive faculties of the visitor.

Ostensibly the visitor does have more intellectual freedom than the visitor who takes on

the persona of a pupil, as would occur in the museum space more conditioned by an educative

museology. It seems on the face of it that the implicit personalization of the visit that occurs with

positing the visit experience as not reliant on expert knowledge, but on an intuitive, feeling grasp

of the work encountered, would encourage increased access to the museum. However, the visit

depicted in these advertisements is predicated on private wealth supporting or engendering public

institutions, and this depiction presumes that the experience apprehended by the visitor will be a

private one.

The above has shown that UBS clothes its appeal to potential customers in the guise of

an exclusive experience of culture, which in one advertisement is subtly compared to the

expectations and privilege associated with the sphere of business. The exclusivity is so crucial to

the idealized construct of the visit that it is overdetermined. UBS is comprised of a cadre of

highly trained workers taught how to manipulate legal and actuarial systems so as to protect and

amplify the exclusive, private wealth of its customers, thus safeguarding the exclusivity of social

status. UBS enjoys this exclusivity in its commercial partnership with Tate: the views and tours

and private events. Finally, it projects this exclusivity visually in their advertizing images, as a

fundamental aspect of the visit. Exclusivity, for UBS, is the thing without which wealth is not,

and wealth is the thing without which the visit is not.

It must be remembered as well that the foundations of Tate lie very much in commerce, in

the private wealth of the sugar magnate Sir Henry Tate, who upon amassing a fortune through his

purchase and use of a patented design for refining sugar. After assembling a considerable personal

collection of art, he sought to make a gift to the British nation of that collection and in the course

of doing so was also persuaded to donate the funds to purchase the building to house the donated

works (Jones, 1960). In its own history Tate is premised upon commercial, market-derived wealth

and the exercise of private munificence to benefit the public.

Exclusivity is also signified as generated by a performance and knowledge of the codes

that exist both in the cultural and business demesnes. These advertisements address that imagined

customer who is aware of the codes that are required in the business sphere or the 'city' and those

in the high culture precincts, and adept at negotiating these codes in order to reap the benefits.[171]

In this way the visit is further and intimately linked with private fortunes. Through formulating an

idealized version of the visit in the way that has been done in the above, public assets are

presented as accessible primarily by private means, as long as a self-realizing visitor is aware of

the codes for conventional public performance of engagement with objects and with others in the

museum space.

That these advertisements have been designed to project a narrative of privatized,

exclusive experience that is imagined to appeal to Tate members (and those who would read the

Tate Etc. magazine) reveals as much about the aims of UBS as it does about the putative visitors.

Ultimately these advertisements are meant to promote the UBS brand to a consumer segment of

art museum visitors, who, it has been argued in the above, have more prestigious jobs and earn

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[171] There are no individuals present that signify 'working class', for example, men with dirt and paint on their clothing, women in uniform. The visitors depicted are professional, semi-professional, and young people, but the blue-collar worker is not shown. As is well known, the typical demographic profiles of visitors to museums are still stubbornly middle class. More, UBS a banking firm has more interest in procuring customers who are in the market for large-scale wealth or asset management.

more money than other visitors. Tate Members are distinguished in these terms and are desirable

recruits to UBS' customer base. The visitor figure they have discursively constructed is intended

to be attractive to this audience because the visitor is shown as able to enjoy a diversified menu of

visits, and enjoy the museum exclusively while reaping a bounty of meaning.

The putative 'democratic' aspects of a visitor-centered visit, though enjoying wide

appeal, controverts the bourgeois presupposition that appears in the above aspects of Tate's

marketing program. In the following chapter an opposition between the personalized visit and the

educative visit that erupted in public discourse around the opening of Tate Modern is examined to

demonstrate how the self-directed visitor, despite the limitations to that figure that condition it

within the advertizing associated with Tate, has become conflated with a visitor experience of

intellectual freedom and robust agency.

Chapter Six: Tate Modern Displays

The Thematic Displays

It has been demonstrated in the above that the transformation of Tate into an interpretive

museum, its incorporation of an audience development program that relies heavily on market

research, and its commercial partnerships that have generated idealized visit scenarios within

advertizing campaigns have contributed to the discursive conditioning of particularly marketized

and marketable visitor figure. The opening thematic displays or 'hang' of Tate Modern is still

another vehicle for Tate's marketing program that conveyed its attitudes and values and has

generated a professional ideation of the visitor figure and dialogue related to this figure. This

dialogue was engendered by Tate's challenge of the preferred scheme for the presentation of

modern art in museums, termed by some, 'the Gospel according to MoMA', in which objects are

grouped by chronology and recognized schools of practice in a scheme that narrates the

development of Modernism as a progression culminating in abstraction. Tate laid aside this

curatorial orthodoxy in favor of an arrangement of themes: Landscape/Matter/ Environment; Still-

Life/Object/Real Life; History/Memory/Society; and Nude/Action/Body.[172] This arrangement

brought together artworks from distinct historical periods, schools of practice, and conceptual

milieus, works that would not normally be seen in each other's company.[173] Many visitors

experienced the displays' juxtapositions as odd and provocative (Marr, 2000).

The critical responses of visitors, especially those of professional critics, journalists, and

writers tended to differ categorically. Antipodean reactions brought to the surface, in very candid

accounts, an opposition brewing in the museum field since the onset of the new museology and its

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[172] Sybil G. Kantor (2001), author of *Alfred H. Barr, Jr. and the Intellectual Origins of the Museum of Modern Art,* the definitive biography of MoMA's first director, quotes Robert Rosenblum, a scholar of cubism, to make the point. She writes that Rosenblum had said in reference to the chart of modernist art created by Barr, 'most scholars have only been refining, amplifying, or diluting Mr. Barr's initial presentation of the Gospel of modern art in 1936' (p. 325). The chart was an attempt to visually map an historical progression of art movements and practices that supposedly culminated in twentieth-century abstraction.

[173] The displays were not entirely thematic. There were two levels of the museum devoted to the permanent displays. On each level four wings were centered on a hub. The wings were thematically arranged. The four hubs featured Surrealism, Minimalism, post-war abstraction in Europe and the US, and three linked movements: Cubism, Futurism and Vorticism in a layout that presented examples of these art movements.

interweaving with a New Public Management program instituted by the Conservative government

that measured museums according to a value-for-money metric. Being conditioned by both

forces, Tate was subsequently lawfully transformed into a corporate cache of cultural goods, and

transformed itself accordingly, making these goods available to defined audience segments

through the use of marketing tools. The combination of the new museology and governmental

cultural policy and the consciously canny exploitation of the tools of commercial trade have

generated a professional focus on the visitor as a consumerist figure, but quite importantly, a

figure who (in more ways than those suggested by the consumption role) is *served* by the

museum. The notion of the museum providing a certain type or modality of service to this

visitor/consumer is very much at the center of the debates provoked by Tate Modern's opening

displays and is a key postulation for the ensuing analysis.

The opening of Tate Modern in 2000 was a remarkable populist and commercial success,

with the museum taking in unprecedented numbers of visitors. In its first year and the following

few years, the museum boasted attendance figures that made it, by several accounts, the most

popular public museum of modern and contemporary art in the world.[174] Because of this

popularity and the degree of public attention to which it gave rise, the hang attracted much

spirited criticism. The dueling accounts of the value of the thematic display arrangement that

surfaced are constituted in public records. Analysis of a selection of these accounts will

demonstrate that assessments of the value of visitors' experiences are linked to conceptions of

what constitutes 'proper' service by the museum, and what the museum's primary duty to visitors

is.

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[174] According to the Tate's own figures, their first year saw attendance almost reach five million, and subsequently until 2005 remained near four million. See: *Tate Modern: The First Five Years* (2005, p. 42). According to the latest figures from The TEA/AECOM Theme and Museum Index report which 'identifies the top theme parks and waterparks and the top museums around the world – and reflects their performance for the calendar year', Tate is still near the top but not the most popular art museum if other types of art are considered. Tate in 2014 had fewer visitors than the Louvre and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. This report is issued jointly by two organizations. AECOM is a large conglomerate consisting of a capital investment firm and a technology concern. The Themed Entertainment Association is an international organization of developers and producers of themed entertainment such as amusement parks, water parks, and museums. See http://www.aecom.com/What+We+Do/Economics/Theme+Index+Report. Accessed January 6, 2015.

The public criticism about Tate Modern, published in reviews and editorials in newspapers, magazines, and journals, contains common descriptions of visitor experience and key terms that are duplicated in reference to this experience. Some of the repeated descriptions and terms might be taken at their face value, in one view constituting an account of the museum as capitulating to neoliberal forces that mean to transform the museum into a marketplace of sensual and spectacular populist distraction guided less by scholarly, connoisseurial principle than by crass commercial competitiveness for visitor attention. In many public accounts critics decry Tate Modern after examining the displays and visitors' responses to them, claiming Tate has failed in its obligations, accusing the museum of being *invalid*.[175] The 'failed' modes of visiting delineated in these critiques suggest that the museum has developed a counterfeit version of the visit. However, analysis of these arguments indicates that the visit considered counterfeit has certain common features across a variety of accounts, features described as 'postmodern', 'entertainment', 'distraction'. Other accounts, on their face, claim the displays create the terms for a visit that is legitimate because it allows the visitor to employ its interpretive faculties. Several critics describe the visit in terms of playful and engaging stimulation that privileges the pleasure of the visitor. This visit is said to feature more diversified visitors, and to allow for customizable meaning, therefore constituting a more democratic experience. More, this experience is claimed to be the harbinger of a deeper social alteration that is considered welcome. This visit is described as 'fun', 'democratic', and as offering an, 'accessible', experience.

The analysis of these divergent accounts that follows rests on ascertaining how these qualitative assessments are comprehensible within an historical understanding of Tate Modern as a dynamic institution, itself conditioned by social forces and professional movements that cause it to sometimes outstrip and frustrate the expectations projected onto it by its visitors. Beyond this, the challenge is also to determine what features of the visit being described by critics are rightly ascribed to the museum and the visit experience and which are projected onto Tate Modern

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[175] For example, the *Evening Standard* journalist, Brian Sewell (2000), is a particularly strident voice. He says that, 'with its whims and fancies, Tate Modern utterly fails the public, local, national and international', by not living up to the 'prime responsibilities of a great art gallery' (para. 16).

revealing the desire of the individual critical perspective to find in Tate some lack or some munificence.

The useful way to examine these claims and assumptions is to look at them as representative of and correlated with two distinct museologies that reframe the debate around the worth of the opening displays. These museologies generate opposed conceptions of the role of the museum with regard to public service to which are related conceptions of the imagined visitor figure.

The following will demonstrate there are two main classes of perception: the visit as fraudulent, populist caper, or the visit as visitor-directed, democratic, and unique in providing new ways to access public patrimony. Considering the narrative power of the new museology and the curator-centered, or educative museology, to generate the disparity in description of Tate Modern's thematic displays convincingly explains how the same museum may be described in utterly opposed ways and with opposed (and repeated) emphases. Analysis of the effect of these museologies on the visitor figure, through the lens of public discourse, reveals foundational assumptions regarding museums' duty to shape and condition the visitor's experience. The duel between the opposing views feature opposed ideas of what constitute a valid visit experience. However, the concern is not with validity only, but also with the preservation of an institutional role in visitor education.

This analysis is limited to a focus on the role of the curator as museum representative in the visit. This is so because the analysis hinges on the distinction between two fundamental ways of conceiving the museum's purpose, and one of these museologies is characterized by the role the curator plays as the expert producer of knowledge to the visitor acting as pupil. The curator's vision differs from the vision of other professionals operating in the museum. Museum marketers, security personnel, docents, conservators, and registrars have different professional duties, and it follows, differing perspectives on the visit as an indicator of the validity of the museum's project. More, they all have different ways they contribute to shaping the visitor's experience. The museum is not a monolith functioning through the person of the curator, but rather, a collection of

divergent and competing visions of the visitor figure and the duty of the museum toward it.

However, given the analytical framework of this study, curators are the most relevant

representatives of the museum, being most directly responsible for shaping the exhibitions and

displays through which and against which the opposing views of Tate Modern are formed.

Curatorial Intention

The thematic arrangement was consciously developed as a scheme that would hide the

deficiencies of the museum's collection of modern art. The profound gaps in Tate's collection

have been widely acknowledged.[176] However, the curators who developed the conceptual

scaffolding for the thematic display, Iwona Blazwick and Frances Morris, did not attempt to

merely hide these deficiencies, but instead challenged the 'Gospel according to MoMA' in a way

that would differentiate Tate from its American cousin. This was an astute strategy particularly

given that MoMA's collection was and is such a thoroughly synoptic compilation of the

modernist canon that Tate could not hope to compete with MoMA on that field of play. Still, in

challenging the logic of a progressive teleological narrative, they were challenging a prevailing

style of museum art display. Creating a distinction with MoMA was only one of their aims, or

rather should be characterized as a corollary benefit to a scheme that was even more ambitious.

Blazwick and Morris sought to use the thematic display to address ongoing, museologically

potent, political and cultural arguments that made the choice of display style more than a

marketing tactic. The displays constituted a sign of Tate's degree of awareness of the significant

currents in the critical discourse on museums, and, somewhat perversely, in ensuing debates

conditioned Tate against certain critiques (Blazwick & Wilson, 2000).

In their essay (2000) that introduces the visitor to the opening displays, the lead curators

cite several changes to the museological landscape that influenced their thinking on constructing

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[176] Blazwick and Morris (2000) admit this in their co-written essay 'Showing the Twentieth Century' in the *Tate Modern Handbook*, published the same year the museum opens. In the celebratory compendium *Tate Modern: The First Five Years*, though Martin Gayford's (2005) chief aim with 'A New Space for a New Art' is to construct a convincing apologia for the thematic displays, he admits that the collection had serious deficiencies that prevented the curators from following MoMA's example. Dewdney et al. (2013) reiterate the point describing the museum that Nicholas Serota inherited as having, 'a second-rate collection with limited acquisition capacity' (p. 31).

the hang: the ongoing critique of the politics underlying museums and their displays; museums'

absorption and manipulation of that critique; the growing influence of museums on civic and

communal life; the use of exhibitions to propose theoretical arguments regarding politics and the

nature of society; and the visitor reconceived as a figure who desires sociality as much as, if not

more than, art historical knowledge (pp. 29-33).

Anticipating the recurrent lines of critical attack against the museum and wanting to

demonstrate Tate's dynamic, reflexive ability to respond to critique, Blazwick and Morris cite

Pierre Bourdieu, Jean Baudrillard, and Andreas Huyssen, noting that descriptions of the museum

had lately shifted from regarding it (as Douglas Crimp argued) as a mausoleum, to 'either a

modernist palace of the elite or a purveyor of mass spectacle' (p. 30). They claim that under these

two rubrics the public remains a body of undifferentiated, passive consumers. The suggestion is

that the public should *not* be viewed this way. After first guiding the reader through the particular

criticisms that had caused them to consider the disadvantages of a display of chronological

narration, they disclose their conception of the visitor.

Blazwick and Morris perceived that a 'representational critique' had, from the 1970s

onward brought activists, artists, critics, and academics into the discourse to question the absence

or misrepresentation of certain members of heterogeneous communities that, for those ignored,

made the museum a 'triumphal temple to patriarchal and western hegemonies'.[177] Precisely

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[177] Though they do not specifically cite Carol Duncan, Duncan's critique of the museum's institutional power
mobilized to inculcate societal values through architecture and iconographic programs is one of the most influential
critiques conveying these ideas appearing in museum discourse in the 1980s. As discussed in the above chapter that
reviewed the literature germane to the visit, Duncan's essay published in 1980, co-authored with Alan Wallach, 'The
Universal Survey Museum', set forth her main ideas further elaborated in her book, *Civilizing Rituals* (1995). She
argues in both that the main function of this museum is ideological, staging an iconographic program that generates a
path the visitor dutifully follows and thus internalizes certain values and beliefs inscribed into a curatorially designed,
architecturally supported script. The curators do cite Bourdieu whose critique of the museum is also an authoritative
one, though his heavily researched examination of visitors to art museums in Europe, conveyed in *The Love of Art*, was
not published in English until 1991. Bourdieu makes a compelling case for seeing the museum as profoundly
undemocratic, actively participating in the maintenance of class divisions by exhibiting the aesthetics of the dominant
class, and symbolically rejecting the lower classes. In his estimation, the art museum both naturalizes the unequal
distribution of cultural assets, and conceals the unequal distribution of economic assets that undergirds that possession
of cultural capital. Blazwick and Morris would also likely have been familiar with the vein of institutional critique that
convincingly demonstrates that culture is not an autonomous realm of aesthetic production. Rather, in the form of the
museum, culture is frequently made subservient to or at least complicit with a program of relentless commodification of
the art object, and by extension commodification of the visitor's experience. Other key thinkers who mount arguments
in this vein are Theodor Adorno (1981 [German 1966]) in his *Negative Dialectics;* Rosalind Krauss (1990) with her
essay, 'The Cultural Logic of the Late Capitalist Museum'; and Hans Haacke (1986), with his 'Museums as Managers
of Consciousness'.

because of the museum's social, political, and civic status as an institutional repository for

collective memories, the curators understood that the art it collects represents a canon, 'a

pantheon to greatness'. Blazwick and Morris say they recognized that master narratives,

disseminated by, for example, the installation logic of permanent museum displays, asserted

'aesthetic values and 'historical accounts as objective, autonomous and universal'. However the

criticism brought to bear had revealed collections to be 'contingent and western in their

perspective' (p. 30).

Given the cultural significance of Tate Modern as a premier museum of modern and

contemporary art their concerns were well founded. The Modern's displays would indeed count

as an authoritative account of art history, shifting the emphasis in the effort to comprehend the art

object from contextual knowledge of schools of practice, periods, and movements to the object

itself as a nexus of layered aesthetic meanings that may be teased out and grasped by the visitor

under limited curatorial direction.[178]

As models for alternatives to dominant narratives, both curators cite the examples of

temporary exhibitions, loan exhibitions, biennials, and public art projects, which they saw as

celebrating a diversity of viewpoints. Their borrowed idea was one developed in the culture wars

of the 1980s and 1990s and played out in diverse modalities of cultural and political discourse

(not only museum and gallery art exhibitions): dominant representations could be challenged and

countered by conceiving and representing pluralities of aesthetic or art historical argument.[179]

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[178] This shift echoes Serota's (1996) own concerns and predictions for future curatorial practice and successful museums. In his lecture turned book, *Experience or Interpretation*, he argues that the key opposition in contemporary curatorial strategy is between an approach that displays work so as to privilege the experience of the visitor figure, allowing it to come to its own conclusions about the work. On the other hand is a connoisseurial model of curatorial intervention in which the selective interpretation of the curator bestows a particular art historical reading, a reading that then molds the visit to be an exercise in procuring this expertly derived meaning. The key relation for Serota in the generation of a visit of experience is the relation between the curator and the artist. When the role of the curator changes, Serota argues, to that of a collaborator with the artist, manifesting the artist's vision, then the museum, becomes a meeting place for the visitor and the artist. The curator imagined by Serota privileges not simply the visitor's experience, but the artist's ability to communicate with visitors, to convey the meanings or experiences envisioned. In this regard, Serota's main concern lies in keeping faith with the artist.

[179] Respect for the power of institutional representation was greatly aided by the work of Stuart Hall in cultural studies and semiotics. Hall (1997) asserted that systems of representation bear a great deal of responsibility for the circulation and introjection of notions crucial to self regard. In *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, Hall argues that the process of representation organizes and empowers the worlds that it intends to represent. He also examines the shared signs and images of a culture, demonstrating how they organize meaning as opposed to simply reflecting it.

Their concern with the potent force of master narratives being put forward by an institution (the

museum in general, not only specifically Tate) that is culturally powerful, clever at absorbing

criticism, and continuing to grow and spread, was met with a strategic embedding in the

permanent displays of an acknowledgement of the argument that the nature of meaning is open

and subjective. In essence, Blazwick and Morris use the thematic display scheme to continue a

legacy of institutional critique, founding the displays on interpretive contingency and narrative

polysemy rather than presenting an authoritative account that had emerged fully formed from the

curators' minds.

As initially promised in their essay on the permanent displays, Blazwick and Morris link

their constructing the displays to be reliant on the visitor's interpretive faculties, to a particular

image of the visitor. They describe this visitor they envision as a flâneur, the undirected wanderer

popularized by Benjamin.[180] In describing how this visitor might interact with the museum, they

foreground the figure's voyeuristic tendency. They imagine this visitor experiencing the museum

as a place of play and libidinous exploration. This 'aimless stroller' is as interested in art objects

as it is in other visitors. But more than this, they posit a visitor who is immersed in sociality,

surrounded by other visitors. As Blazwick and Morris (2000) write:

> Leaving the chaotic yet regimented routines of the city behind, we are free to wander, to
> become immersed in a complex and shifting set of spatial and visual encounters….
> Works of art are rarely encountered in isolation. They are experienced in relation to each
> other and articulated by the architectonics of a building and the unconscious
> choreography of other people. Museums are activated by wandering groups and
> individuals who are busy looking, at art and at each other (p. 31).

They do not regard the visitor figure in the modernist museum mold, that is, as a contemplative

intelligence seeking deep communion with works of art without distraction or rhetorical

mediation. This notion of isolation and private experience has been shown in the above analysis

of advertisements produced by a sponsoring partner of Tate to be a persistent trope in conceiving

the museum visit. However, Blazwick and Morris eschew exclusivity as a desire of their visitor

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[180] The figure of the flâneur has been popularized in literary criticism. It is first developed by Charles Baudelaire and
Georg Simmel as a person who casually roams an urban landscape at his leisure. Further development of this figure
happens through Walter Benjamin (1999) in his unfinished, *Arcades Project*, a cultural history of the twentieth century.
The flâneur has several aspects, but perhaps the most salient here is the pleasure he takes in looking, and his heightened
awareness of visual stimuli.

figure, and instead construe the visit as a set of encounters inflected and conditioned by the

presence of other visitors. More, the visitor's experience for them has aspects that are sensual.

This is not, by their account to be a permanent collection that calls for the Kantian, analytical,

disinterested gaze, or for purely intellectual engagement, but rather calls for a visitor figure open

to various modes of visual stimulation. Nor is this figure configured to be a conventional pupil,

expectant of instruction, reliant on the specialist knowledge of the curator.

This conception of the visitor as flâneur would appear in impassioned arguments over the

worth and value of the displays that appeared around the time of Tate Modern's opening, seeming

by some accounts to be a sign for the absence of rigorously considered art historical knowledge

consciously related in a program intended for the visitor's instruction. In constructing this visitor

figure the curators again indicate that the meanings to be derived from the thematic display are

contingent and subjective, and this visitor lays the ground for an experience to be personalized.

However, as public contentions erupted around these displays, the arguments made in their

defense often relied on a formulation of the visit as public wealth procured through private

experiences.

The Fraudulent Visit

Published criticism of the opening hang at Tate Modern found many critics and

journalists disparaging the museum's display method seemingly on the basis of several criteria.

However, the majority of critiques focus on three principal ways Tate Modern had, in their

estimation, created a fraudulent museum and by extension, an illegitimate visit: by abandoning

traditional methods of museum instruction, by privileging pleasure over pedagogy, and by

allowing the market to dictate the curatorial approach, with the museum using visitor attendance

as its prime rating metric.

Jonathan Jones, a well-known journalist in London's art community, looks back on the

opening hang from the vantage of a subsequent rehang in 2006, making a comparison of the two

displays. He writes, 'Tate Modern rejected such "traditional", "hierarchical" and "conservative"

histories of modern art—but could offer nothing in their place. The resulting collection displays

screamed a chaotic denial of meaning … people could go around and laugh at everything without

being enabled to understand' (Jones, 2006, para. 8). Jones argues that the displays contrasted with

sober, more conservative, historical layouts, by privileging pleasure. The 'screamed' denial plays

against the quiescent 'traditional', suggesting that the more loudly demonstrative, that is, populist

display, the more at odds such a display is with the evocation of historical meaning. Elaborating

on this rejection of the traditional teaching role, Jones goes on to compare Tate Modern to the

Museum of Modern Art. He says that unlike Tate Modern, which displayed 'a chaotic denial of

meaning', MoMA, after reopening in 2004, 'reasserted its values as a historical museum that

enlightens and educates' (Jones, 2006, para. 12).

   Jones is in thrall to an educative museum and expectant of a set of displays that instructs

the visitor. However there is an important assumption beneath this obvious preference for the

traditionally didactic museum. Coming to the surface is the presumption that pleasurable

responses, such as laughter, are by-products of entertainment alone, and not of intellectual

engagement. On the face of it, this seems a facile understanding of intellectual engagement, which

in the case of comedy elicits laughter only when the intellectual connection is effectively made.

Laughter can operate as an index of the visitor's grasp of an idea, even considering other genres

of art and activity besides the comedic. More, the modern and contemporary fields of visual art

are known to contain artists who employ humor among other strategies to involve the viewer in

the work.[181] Jones' argument is not simply supportive of traditional methods of instruction, it also

betrays a classist inflection, and a cultural bias towards the expectation that the pedagogical

environment be a sober, likely silent space of internalized rumination. Jones unnecessarily and

without sufficient reflection opposes delight with the solemn consideration of art activated within

an historicizing framework.

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[181] There are many examples of this and any list here cannot help but be unsystematic. Nevertheless, some
contemporary artists who consciously use humor in their work and have had exhibitions in leading museums including
tate Modern, include Christopher Wool, Nicole Eisenman, Paul McCarthy, Carsten Holler and Chris Ofili. Some
modernist artists who also use humor are Robert Rauschenberg, Claes Oldenburg, Roy Lichtenstein, and Yves Klein.

The critic Jed Perl (2000) takes this argument further, making an opposition between traditional instruction methods and manifested bodily pleasure grounds for seeing the museum as illegitimate, and then links this illegitimacy to a disproportionate concern for market success. He writes, 'Chronology, that backbone of the historical sense, has been collapsed into some kind of postmodern time warp. And out of the time warp comes the new funhouse museum, where art past and present are no more than raw materials to be bifurcated and cloned in order to produce bigger museums or smaller museums or more museums—whatever the market will bear'. (p. 31) The dispensing with chronology makes, for him, Tate Modern a 'funhouse' and a 'fraud' (p. 30). Perl sees in Tate Modern an expansion scheme perfected by Thomas Krens, the then director of the Guggenheim museums who has spoken of the museum industry as though it is a machine to generate leisure pursuits.[182] Krens famously described the museum as a theme park that should, in his estimation, contain 'good architecture, a good permanent collection, prime and secondary temporary exhibitions, and amenities such as shops and restaurants' (Newhouse, 1998, p. 191). This vision of the museum as a space of populist recreation was supported by an aggressive program of international expansion. At the time of Perl's writing, Guggenheim museums were open in New York, Bilbao, Spain, and Venice, Italy. Since then, the Guggenheim has opened branches in Mexico, Las Vegas, Lithuania, Berlin and Helsinki. This vigorous expansion for Perl is evidence of, 'a kind of megalomaniacal populism that makes hash of the modern museum as a center for the collection, study, care, and exhibition of the best of twentieth-century art' (p. 31).

Perl's criticism attempts to be more than mere reactionary nostalgia for the modernist museum. He endeavors to utilize elements of the critiques forwarded by theorists such as Theodor Adorno and Frederic Jameson, hinting at the linked processes of the expansion of global capital that colonizes institutions of culture and aesthetics, and the frenzied production of commodities and experiences that together feed a seeming insatiable consumerist culture founded on an

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[182] Krens left this post in 2008 to take a position as the Guggenheim's Senior Advisor for International Affairs overseeing its expansion into Abu Dhabi.

ideology of ever-expanding markets.[183] However, these links are only hinted at as Perl (2000)

refers to the 'Disneyization' of the displays, that in his view offer experiences similar to those to

be had in the cinema or via TV (p. 32). Thus Perl describes the art displays at Tate Modern as a

form of populist entertainment that does not meet the needs of more discerning visitors. His

contention is with the consumption of low forms of art validated only by the market, and Tate and

its visitors appear as co-conspirators in this denigration of the museum. However, the distinctions

that he makes between the low 'funhouse' art form and the art reflective of the putatively

transcendent values of 'collection, study, and care of the best' rest on notions of the visitor that

starkly contrast with conceptions of the visitor held by Tate.

Perl essentially claims that Tate Modern has turned to serving a market made up mostly

of consumers, a class he sets aside from those to whom the museum is putatively responsible,

who are the 'public'. He imagines the two to be separate audiences, having distinct desires and

expectations. Tate, on the other hand, conflates the two, using its marketing program to segment

the public into categories of sensibility and desire to which specific appeal may be made. Perl

sees the art-viewing public as distinct from the market, and he assumes that the visitors who are

attracted to Tate Modern's displays represent audiences conditioned by genres of art primarily

produced to entertain. Perl proposes that those visitors who care more for the 'collection, study,

and care of the best' are a different class or category of visitor, and that they belong in a different

sort of museum. For Perl, the passive consumer of experiential pleasure does not have a legitimate

experience, if that experience is indeed founded on apparently simple amusement. Perl therefore

regards Tate as pandering to passive, uncritical consumers, and taking advantage of their

increased numbers to fund their exhibition program and further expansion of Tate's gallery space.

Though Perl does not state this, the increased visitor attendance also has the synergistic effect of

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[183] The foundational critique begins with Theodor Adorno (1981 [German 1966]) in his *Negative Dialectics*. In it, Adorno discusses the transformation of cultural life in the cultural industry that, in his view, produced and distributed objects and experiences as cultural commodities. For Adorno, capitalism has for the most part limited critical consciousness through its creation and delivery of standardized popular culture pleasures that are fashioned to seem customized to the individual. Frederic Jameson (1991) argues that global corporate capitalism founded both in the multinational reach of corporate entities and in the forms of labor distinct from a preceding period of Modernism has colonized the cultural sphere. This conclusion is made in the course of a comprehensive analysis of postmodernism, through which he also explains the intellectual movement's skepticism of meta-narratives.

further generating publicity for Tate and further securing public appreciation of the organization, thereby increasing the likelihood of the continued utilization of this, as he has it, design of an experience of vapid stimulation. Aside from the willingness to be seduced by empty distraction, there is more to the passivity of Perl's visitor that underlies his reasoning.

Perl sees the curator as the primary agent determining the shape of the visit. He writes that it is, 'a new generation of curators who have a theme or a thesis to fit any occasion, and select the art … mostly on the basis of how closely it resembles what people are seeing in the Multiplex or on Cable TV' (p. 32). Tate Modern curators are imagined by Perl to have the power to mold the visitor's consciousness, and misuse this power when they utilize popular but shallow ideas that garner larger audiences for their work, instead of relying on the established pedagogical usefulness of chronological narrative. Rather than portraying visitors as only lacking an active role in developing the visit, he also depicts them as victims of the curator. Consequently his argument positions his critical awareness as not only defending an education tradition, but also defending the unknowing, distracted visitor.

A lack of useful periodization and historical analysis of developments in the museum is evident in this critique and limits Perl's appreciation of the ways the visitor figure has changed in professional museum discourse. In referring to the displays being indicative of a 'postmodern time warp' Perl suggests that eschewing a chronological display of art means ignoring the time-honored educative values of hierarchical assessment of quality, and the tracking of the development of a style or practice. While the postmodernism movement has generated certain critiques of history that dismantle the presumptive value of a teleological account, and the development of associated canons, as indicated in the above discussion of the reports of the displays given by Blazwick and Morris, Perl conflates it with several other issues, which include the spread of experiential consumerism, the colonization of the aesthetic by commerce, and the reconfiguration of the museum space as a space of pleasure.[184]

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[184] The considered definition supplied by the online Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy is useful here. Therein postmodernism is defined as a set of critical practices that intend to 'destabilize other concepts such as presence, identity, historical progress, epistemic certainty, and the univocity of meaning'. The first occurrence of the term is said

A fundamental lack of historical understanding causes the critic's argument to be scattershot, relying on the bogeyman of postmodernism to further distinguish his position as a staunch traditionalist defending the Enlightenment mission. However, though the transformation of visitors into consumers is a relatively new development in the history of the museum, the use of pleasure as the key instrument for visitor engagement is not. As Victoria Newhouse (1998) argues, 'to think of art in terms of entertainment is simply a return to the astonishment and delight associated with the first private Renaissance museums: a sensuous, thought-provoking discovery' (p. 191). Visitor pleasure had been fundamental to museums' core activity at their inception, but it is conflated with late twentieth-century developments, and mistakenly assumed to be a sign of causation rather than one of mere correlation.

However, in a way that is *partially* correct, Perl cites postmodernism as a philosophical perspective on art history that has conditioned a curatorial approach justifying the setting aside of chronology as a teaching tool. For Perl, this perspective has helped to bring about a profound change in Tate, however it is more accurate to claim that the use of a perspective respecting divergent meanings that challenge authoritative art historical accounts is a symptom of a shift occurring in the larger museum field that is merely manifested in Tate.

Perl (2000) writes, 'The anti-chronological installations that you see at MoMA and Tate Modern suggest exactly how badly the foundations of these museums have been shaken. Going through the shows, we watch all the underpinnings collapsing, and that collapse cannot be disguised by fancy theories or jazzy building schemes' (p. 36). For Perl, Tate Modern fails because its core purpose of educating the visitor has been abandoned. What is left is an apparatus that hardly resembles the Enlightenment museum of the connoisseurial program. While Perl targets Tate with his contentions, it is clear that he means to invoke the collapse of a larger project in which the museum is to act as a universal educator.

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to be in Jean-Francois Lyotard's, *The Postmodern Condition* (1984 [French 1979]) in which he analyzes the loss of a continuous meta-narrative through which subjects might have a stable identity, instead of merely a series of heterogenous instances of subjectivity. It is really this loss of a compelling meta-narrative and the epistemic coherence that comes with it that Jed Perl mourns. See http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/postmodernism/. Accessed May 10, 2015.

Other critics point to similar extensive ramifications of the thematic hang. Oliver Duff (2006) writes, 'The gallery was no longer an archive of art history. It was an art theatre. It wasn't at the service of the artwork. It put the artwork in the service of a larger spectacle. History was abandoned. Themes ruled' (para. 5). In this debate, terms such as 'theatre', and 'spectacle' are frequently used as synonyms of the art-as-entertainment notion that contravenes the values underlying the conservatism of the traditionalists. These terms are meant to again contrast considered, historicized, and therefore authentic narratives with that which is considered unserious, ersatz, more geared towards pleasure than education. The *Evening Standard* art critic, Brian Sewell (2000) writes:

> But one of the prime responsibilities of a great art gallery is to be, as it were, a library, to categorise its possessions and make them easily accessible, to teach through order and comparison between the comparable, to give a structured sense of the development of an artist, a school, a period or style, and to encapsulate the essence of all these. In this, with its whims and fancies, Tate Modern utterly fails the public, local, national and international (para. 16).

Invoking the library, Sewell cites a fraternal public institution founded on the idea of an intellectual commons providing widespread education and thus alludes to the core merits of the Enlightenment project and the advantages that it still holds out. For Sewell, the alternative to having the museum guide visitors to an understanding of art history through structured comparison is the ignorant citizen. Andrew Graham-Dixon (2006) concludes after viewing the rehang at Tate Modern in 2006: 'at the level of most visitors' experiences, the "restatement" of Tate Modern's original ambition means that its galleries are still—by comparison with, say, the British Museum or the National Gallery—fairly confusing places' (para. 8). The confused visitor in these critiques is also the ignorant visitor, who is in turn construed as the sign of an abandoned museum project and thereby indicates a failed museum.

The critics and journalists excerpted in the above do have a stake in labeling Tate Modern a failed institution. In the personalized experience of meaning privileged in Tate Modern's display arrangement, the critic and journalist enjoy less authority and status. In this visitor-centered experience, there is reduced need for critics to establish critical frameworks for comprehending the art presented. Critics notice their diminished role in shaping public discourse

under the auspices of a new museology. Their description of the museum as a failed institution

has aspects of transference: the frustration of their own creeping obsolescence being shifted onto

the museum while several constelled developments bear responsibility for their fall in status.

Perhaps unconsciously for these critics the museum is seen as failing *them*.

Their statements in the above taken together indicate the expectation of a visit generated

by a curator-centered museology which features a museum committed to teaching visitors by

traditional methods of comparison, chronology, and hierarchical definitions of quality, and

features a tractable visitor. The visit generated under these auspices is the visit in and through

which these critics have the most cultural capital, and the most cultural significance. As the notion

of a citizen critic fuels the spread of the blogosphere, and novice writers achieve recognition and

public attention commensurate with that of established critics, and a commitment to marketplace

'bottom lines' of buying and selling displace the cultural critic as an arbiter of taste, the art gallery

and museum field is becoming increasingly resistant to authoritative critical intervention.

Indeed, the argument made by the sociologist Zygmunt Bauman (1987) in *Legislators*

and Interpreters is that cultural critics had once held the social role of legislating collective

sensibility and opinion, but have been displaced in a pluralistic and relativized postmodern

environment by those intellectuals who act instead as cultural interpreters. With regard to these

distinct roles, what Bauman essentially describes are methods of intellectual practice (Stehr,

1989). For Bauman, a preceding modernist historical period (in line with the generally accepted

art historical period) was characterized by intellectuals who maintained a commitment to

universal standards, and a disposition towards reforming cultural practices in light of these

standards. This disposition gives rise, according to Tony Bennett (1998), to a legislative

orientation towards culture, and a reformist stance against 'all those forms of life which seemed

immature, backward, imperfect, primitive, vulgar, or merely local and limited' (p. 102). Bauman

argues that in this cultural moment when the grand modernist narratives can no longer confidently

resort to justifications premised upon universal standards, the key intellectual work to be done is

fostering mutual understanding between and among discrete communities of shared practices and

views, in other words, cultures. The chief critical work for interpreters in the postmodern world is to establish communication between diverse cultures that are all engaged in developing their own narratives.

In this light, the critical positions discussed in the above are representative of allegiance to a modernist evaluative scheme that doggedly adheres to presumed universal standards of educative relevance by which Tate Modern and visitors' behavior are judged as invalid. These positions represent a desire to regain this unassailable ground for critique, and also represent the retrograde desire for the legislative power that is associated with an almost tyrannical hold on definitions of valid culture. Perl's and Sewell's underlying tone of contempt seems formed in the union of anger and resentment at the inefficacy of their critique, which is decisively *not* definitive of Tate Modern, since its art audiences continue to attend the museum en masse, and it maintains a leading position in the museum world. Still, though the desire for an educative museology is a conservative position, seeking to preserve the terms of this older museology, the museum is being considered a fundamentally public enterprise, though an inculcating, reformist one, that produces clear public benefits.

The position of these critics is complex. Their tendentious arguments are self-serving and mired in the appreciation of a waning museology without full regard for its shortcomings. Yet they are also committed to a notion of the museum as a public institution, which in its educative role may seem more robustly universal and supportive of a collective vision, when compared to the museum that presents itself as a public cache of cultural wealth to be procured through consumerist, corporatized, private means. In a similar fashion, though the following views to be discussed appear on the surface to starkly contrast with the above critiques of Tate Modern as a failed museum, there is a commitment to an idea of the public weal though it is formulated in a distinctly different manner.

The Pleasurable Visit

Critics and journalists who responded positively to the opening displays of the museum cite three essential components of the visit experience that make it successful for them: the focus on providing a pleasurable experience, the sensorial and intellectual engagement of visitors, and the 'democratic' nature of the visit.

The descriptions of the visitor's experience employ a language that emphasizes bodily and affective stimulation. The journalist Brian Reade (2000) talks about how visitors 'stroll along wooden floors bathed in sunlight', and how 'some bits [of the hang are] juicy and mouth-watering' (para. 4, para. 21). Though lacking in critical purchase this description importantly places the visitor's body and bodily responses into the discussion of the displays. The emphasis in the above conservative critiques was consistently on the intellectual needs of the visitor, whereas here the direct corporeal experience is referred to as the starting point for an assessment of the visit experience. Reade's evaluation of the opening displays is simplistic, and might be dismissed as irrelevant for being so, but the grounds of his consideration are significant in that they privilege the corporeal and affective responses of visitors.

The journalist Andrew Marr follows on this point, writing, 'There were shivers of delight and thrums of sensual pleasure, and other rooms where you struggle to understand, and strain to feel' (Marr, 2000, para. 27). Despite the opposing accounts that characterize the visitor's enjoyment as a simple, almost mindless enthrallment, in Marr's narrative, the entire experience of the displays is itself a series of contrasts in which the sensual play off the abstruse. This suggests that the sensual and the analytical are not mutually exclusive within the visit. In Marr's account, the visitor is imagined to oscillate back and forth, inhabiting both demesnes of experience. Sensual stimulation is imagined as drawing the visitor towards potential discovery.

Descriptions of the hang as, 'original and unflaggingly inventive', making for an experience that was 'extremely impressive and exciting' suggest that the displays act as stimulating puzzles that reward the participant visitor with an experience of surprise and delight. (Lubbock, 2000, para. 4). For Marr (2000), the exciting nature of the displays rests on their

holding out the promise of discovery for the visitor where meaning is not obvious. In these cases

the visitor is pushed to engage in labor, to 'struggle to understand'. Marr suggests that intellectual

labor does not need to appear in the sort of sober disciplinary mold of conventional schoolroom

behavior. Work and delight are linked. The intellectual stimulation brought on by the displays

spur a sensorial involvement that *leads* to intellectual engagement. This engagement, described as

a puzzle, provides the visitor with work to do, work that will be rewarded with discovery.

The nature of this discovery is not clearly explained by these critics. It is not clear how

the visitor figure knows when it has arrived at a meaning that is sufficient. The description of the

visitor's hypothesized experience suggests that whatever is discovered will not be apparent to

anyone besides the individual visitor. However, the insularity of the visitor's experience of

meaning is not an impediment for critics forwarding the claim that work and pleasure are

intertwined. In fact it is expected that this meaning will be experienced primarily, and perhaps

only, by the individual.

The critic Carol Armstrong (2006) extends this idea. Writing about Tate Modern on the

occasion of the 2006 rehang, she says 'The onus is on the audience to make all the aesthetic,

structural, and historical judgments—not to forego those judgments, but to make them' (para. 11).

The visitor who is left to its own devices to construct meaning, here is assumed to be active. In

the above this visitor was imagined to be confused or mired in ignorance. Armstrong's visitor,

unlike the visitor presumed by co-curating practices, mostly eschews collaborating with the

curator, but rather is almost fully responsible for assessing artwork in the sophisticated valences

of meaning Armstrong defines.

On the face of it, these seem outsized expectations of the non-specialist visitor. For the

lay visitor to assess the art in terms of its phenomenological resonances, medium-based and

material specificity, and its position within particular movements, schools or practices calls for a

good deal of individually held knowledge. This is the case unless Armstrong means to imply that

the meaning developed by the visitor may be as thin or as rich as the visitor determines. This is to

say that if Armstrong is presupposing the kind of pluralistic experiential environment in which

there are no universal standards by which to judge visitor derived meaning, then the judgments

made are not subject to critique or judgment by anyone but the visitor who makes them. Either

this, or the visitor posited is an idealized one equipped with the degree of art historical knowledge

that would allow the deft negotiation of these aspects of art object analysis.[185] Given the overall

tenor of her argument, it is more likely that Armstrong presumes a solipsistic visitor experience in

which the degree of pleasure and intellectual engagement is individually determined and felt.

An anonymous writer for the Guardian further explains the nature of this personalized

interaction in writing, 'The viewer is invited to look for connections and serendipity between the

pictures, so that a visit becomes a democratic engagement with the art, rather than the usual sense

of a gallery being a history book through which the viewer has to walk deferentially' (*The

Guardian,* 2000, para. 1). This writer suggests this visitor is an active figure, not deferring to the

narrative construction given by the curator. However, the use of the term 'democratic' suggests

more than robust intellectual activism. Being paired with a refusal to defer to other meaning

makers, its use here suggests either the removal of the curator from the interaction of visitor and

art object, or the leveling of curator and visitor in the act of making meaning, both being

suggestions that significantly re-imagine the curator's relation to the visitor when the educative

museum visit is presumed the primary valid model.

In a modern democracy, the enfranchisement of the vote renders citizens procedural

political equals regardless of the circumstances of birth, occupational rank, social status, or

privileges bestowed via possession of cultural or economic capital. (This is a theoretical ideal that

changes in practice, since private wealth can and does influence the political process of selection

and promotion of candidates and their policies.) Following the usage of this term along these

valences suggests that in using the term 'democratic', what is signified is visitor and curator being

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[185] This kind of idealized visit is epitomized in the work of Caribbean writer and critic C.L.R. James (1992). He offers a lush description of the critical engagement he makes with the work of Pablo Picasso and Jackson Pollock (pp. 405-410). For James the visit becomes a point of departure for attempting to solve unresolved issues of Picasso's painting *Guernica* (1937), through close study and through contesting secondary criticism on the painting. Ultimately the visit becomes a way for James to map out the cultural territory to which he would later apply his critical powers. He writes: 'I have seen the Pollock's at the Museum of Modern Art and I must say that when I left the room where they were and passed Guernica, a painting which I have admired and seen any number of times, Guernica looked dull to me in comparison with the blazing impact that the Pollock paintings had just made' (pp. 409-410).

regarded as meaning-making equals regardless of hierarchical distinctions formed due to

possession of credentials, professional training, or specialist education. However, more light is

shed on the meaning of the term with reference to the Tate Modern displays by considering how

the term has been used at key points in professional museum literature.

The Democratic Visit

As the new museology began to infiltrate museum discourse in the 1980s, one researcher

who encapsulates the sentiments then coming to the forefront of the field defined the

democratization of museum education as 'reducing the role of education intermediaries and

increasing opportunities for independent and individual learning' (Ames, 1985, p. 5). Michael

Ames supplies this definition in making an argument for increasing public access to the museum.

Ames views as necessary to foster increased public attendance a lessening of the overbearing

didacticism that had been appearing in museum displays. Tate Modern had intentionally reduced

this didacticism by introducing a series of changes to the display space and to personnel to give

the visitor figure more opportunities to engage its own interpretive faculties. In the 1980s, as the

museum field began a turn to meaning (discussed in the above chapter that reviewed the relevant

texts) and the definition of 'learning' was being robustly debated, the autocratic character of the

curator's imposition of meaning on the passive visitor began to be regarded as an impediment to a

fuller comprehension of visitors' behavior. As the profession's understanding of learning was

made more elastic to encompass the experiences and knowledge brought by the visitor,

independent and individual learning meant increased interpretive participation by the visitor, and

the professional (and institutional) acknowledgment of the part the visitor has to play in

constructing and grasping knowledge produced in the visit.

Since then, as the influence of a new museology has grown, formulations of the idea of a

democratized museum have become more complex, due to this growth occurring along with the

onset of distinct viewpoints through which democratization is theorized, witnessed, and produced.

The most important views for the purposes of this discussion are governmental cultural policy,

discursive elaborations of the idea of participation, and technological advancements that mediate audience participation. These forces reframe and refract the meaning of the term 'democratic' in the museum context.

One area of focus under New Labour cultural policy had been increasing the number and diversity of visitors. The broadening of the art audience, particularly in Labour's bureaucratic rhetoric was referred to using the key terms, 'access', 'inclusion', and 'participation'. Under the aegis of policies of inclusion, the museum that successfully marketed itself and brought in visitors who have historically avoided attending was considered a more democratic space than museums that maintained the status quo. DCMS policies such as free admission to the permanent collection, access standards, and codes of practice sought to diversify the museum's stubbornly typical middle-class visitor profile. The indications are that these efforts have not been greatly successful. The latest statistics from the Museum Libraries and Archives (MLA), the *Digest of Statistics for Museums, Libraries, and Archives* from 2004 show that the lowest rungs of social grade: skilled working class, working class, and lowest subsistence together make up only 24% of the audiences that visit museums and galleries. The middle classes make up the vast majority of attendees. More recently, Arts Council England's *Art Audiences: Insight* report (2011) asserts that the four segments out of thirteen that are least likely to attend museums and galleries are those most highly correlated with black and ethnic minorities, those who have lower levels of education, or those who have a longstanding disability or illness. Still, even theoretically, the democratized museum could not be realized through unidirectional efforts. While public museums supervised under New Labour's DCMS had been encouraged to provide access through their admission practices, exhibition programs, and instructional materials, the visitor was expected to respond to these entreaties by participating.

One of the main sources of data on which the DCMS draws in order to arrive at conclusions about the state of participation in the arts in the UK is the *Taking Part* survey, a country-wide survey carried out yearly, conducted by face-to-face interviews. This survey is commissioned by the DCMS in partnership with Arts Council England, Sport England and

English Heritage. The categories of cultural activity presented to survey respondents are: arts

participation; arts visits; visiting libraries; attending archives; sites of historic interest; Royal

Parks; museums and galleries; and sports/physical recreation. Essentially what is meant by

participation with regard to museums and galleries is attendance. This understanding of

participation devolves from the desire to employ quantified data in justifying the support of public

museums. The use by greater numbers of people in general is taken to be one of the important

indicators of the efficacy of the museum as an agent of democratic social change.

   Despite the ostensible generosity of this agenda, there has been a backlash against what is

regarded as the detrimental effects of New Labour policy of measuring numbers and types of

visitors to evaluate the potential worth of public art projects or institutions. The book, *Art for All?*

(Wallinger & Warnock, 2000), exemplifies this backlash, arguing through a collection of essays

from artists, curators, and critics that the sphere of aesthetic production is autonomous and keeps

its own counsel, and should be unfettered from government's attempts to instrumentalize it. As

this book illustrates, the stances for this argument for autonomy alternate between positioning the

realm of art making as a disinterested, transcendent activity of aesthetic inquiry, set apart from

real world struggles over power, or a subversive, incendiary system of critique that must remain at

a distance from interests of capital and government to remain potently authentic. These rhetorical

stances manifest a fundamental conceit of art world practitioners that aesthetic production being

instrumentalized is tantamount to art makers being shackled and their expressions and insights

being adulterated.[186] This observation is important to bear in mind with regard to the discussion

below which turns toward how the notion of a democratized museum is specifically contested

within an art museum context.

   From the horizon of inclusion policy, participation is largely commensurate with

attendance, albeit with a sensitivity for social diversity. Participation conceived as a quantifiable

cultural policy goal does *not* extend the reach of visitors/participants enough to directly influence

museum practices that nevertheless are involved in representing the systems of knowledge and

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[186] It is important to acknowledge that those making this argument are themselves instrumentalizing art, using art, as they are defining it, to resist exploitation of one kind or another.

social organization at times associated with visitors. Lately, more robust attempts have been made

by museums to be more active agents through 'greater collaboration with community groups

[and] facilitation of interpretive multivocality' (Tatsi & Aljas, 2012, p. 32). This collaboration and

facilitation may be seen in professional areas of activity such as 'exhibition design, interpretive

panels, presentations, and talks', particularly with regard to cultures that have been historically

represented in museums that deal with material culture and design, rather than with art

(Srinivasan, Boast, Furner, & Becvar, 2009, p. 265). Attendees are not generally involved in the

decision making processes that shape museums' exhibitionary or education (interpretation)

programs, or their cataloging and collection usage. These decisions are kept with museum

professionals.

     The demarcation between areas of responsibility that admit visitor intervention and those

that do not have become more widely acknowledged as the museum becomes increasingly

centered on the visitor. Being inflected by versions of participation associated with urban

planning, cultural participation, and design in museum practice, the idea of participatory

democratization has been theorized along the axes of minimalist and maximalist approaches

(Tatsi and Aljas, 2012). As explained by Nico Carpentier, with regard to his access-interaction-

participation model, minimalist participation assumes that the political does not necessarily

extend beyond the sphere of traditional politics, and that professionals should maintain control of

structure and processes that shape audiences. Alternatively, a maximalist framework assumes that

the political underlies social action and that participation should require structural changes and the

sharing of powers. Carpentier's scheme is a useful tool for organizing the valences along which

the idea of participation has developed (Carpentier, 2011).

     The technological abilities of digital media in the areas of social computing, electronic

tagging, blogging, and particularly the raft of modifiable web applications generated for use with

Web 2.0, are seen as extending the possibilities of visitor participation. Museums have for some

time now used blogging, podcasting, and social computing as means to communicate with visitors

and connect to social networks, as well as nurture communication among users in these virtual

communities. With the advent of Web 2.0, an essentially grass-roots transformation of the

technology that undergirds the web by involving users in making and distributing open-sourced

applications and services, a linked movement termed 'Museum 2.0' has also appeared (Srinivasan

et al., 2009). This phenomenon is closely associated with a museum director, Nina Simon, who

started her 'Museum 2.0' blog in November of 2006 (and is also the author of *The Participatory*

Museum, discussed in the above) to advocate for ways to apply the principles that underlay Web

2.0 to museums in order to make museums more engaging and responsive to the needs of their

communities. The tools of digital media are perceived by some to aid in the democratization of

the museum via both minimalist and maximalist frameworks.

In the vein of the minimalist framework, participation has come to be regarded as a

relational principle. In this regard it refers to heightened interactivity of the visitor with the

museum. This interaction involves co-curation activities, such as the emblematic 'Create your

own Collection' campaign. These projects do privilege the visitor's creative agency. They allow

for customization and personalization that incorporate what has been cited as 'the democratic

values of flexibility and creative fulfillment' (Griffin, 2010, para. 12). In this regard, these

exhibition designs contribute to a generalized sense of the museum being a democratized space

without necessarily addressing the substantive politics of negotiating controls over the means and

methods of representation.

Tate largely takes this approach. Tate recognizes the value of personalization as a tool for

creative fulfillment. This claim has been demonstrated in the above where marketing reports

disclose a visitor figure conceptualized as creatively using the museum to meet its needs, and is

apparent in the curatorial strategizing around Tate Modern's opening displays. In the areas of

digital technology, Tate also has embarked on projects that exploit new technology to extend its

reach into the digital realm that promises wider and as yet untapped vistas of interactivity, and

promises to permit further customization of the visit experience.

In 2013 Tate created the IK prize, an award bestowed annually to an individual, team or

company for an innovative idea that uses digital technology to connect audiences to art. Winners

of the cash prize are given the funds and support to develop the proposed idea into a working

model in collaboration with Tate. This year's winners have advanced a project called *Tate*

Sensorium that purports to offer visitors to Tate Britain the opportunity to use their senses of

smell, taste, hearing, or touch to experience artworks.[187] This project heralds the expansion of

sensorial participation by the visitor with, for example, providing the option of hearing the

eruption and smelling the sulphurous exudation associated with an image of a volcano. This

project is similar to other projects in the series of prize winners that seek to extend and magnify

the art encounter through immersive aural experiences, surprise meetings with artworks replicated

through 3D technology, and software applications that allow one to match a mobile snapshot to

artworks existing in the Tate collection.

Tate has also developed programs to integrate with freestanding online platforms with

their own preexisting subscribers. One such platform is the game Minecraft that allows players to

create worlds within a seemingly infinite 3D environment using textured building blocks. For the

Tate Worlds project, Tate software engineers have developed a series of Minecraft 'maps'

inspired by artworks in the collection that users may explore in virtually rendered three-

dimensional space (Blooloop, n.d.). Users should be able to embark on adventures to find objects

that resemble artworks in the Tate collection in invented environments and then view these

objects from a variety of perspectives. The stated aim of the Tate Worlds initiative is audience

development: to attract younger people to Tate through the use of digitized narratives. The Lead

Artist and Project Manager Adam Clarke claims, 'Tate Worlds is different because it is not trying

to teach'. Clarke emphasizes strategies of engagement, particularly intended for the younger

audiences that presume a visitor figure for whom play and surprise are primary goals in the

interaction (Blooloop, n.d., para. 21).

These initiatives may be understood as contributing to constructing a democratized visit

insofar as the sensorial participation of the visitor is extended, the communal space of the

museum is enlarged, and the visitor's ability to customize and personalize the experience is

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[187] More information may be found at the IK website: http://www.tate.org.uk/about/projects/ik-prize. Accessed May 3, 2015.

cultivated. The underlying assumption is that more visitors will attend because of these attractive

options, and that more of these visitors will not be middle-class patrons. However, there are other

ways the democratized visit is being conceived in the museum context.

In a maximalist vein, the museum has been theorized as the key participant in

communities' narrative construction of themselves, in response to calls for museums to more fully

inhabit a role of service to its communities. Importantly, the key social unit in this conception is

not the individual, but rather the community, defined loosely as a group, the members of which

have a shared sense of identification. Jenny Kidd (2014) in her essay that describes current

democratizing practices based in the museum, explains the significance of projects which use the

museum as a communal display space and an archive of personal narratives, particularly with

reference to digital and online collections. As Kidd (2014) writes:

> This means that museum output, including research and curatorial responsibility, has
> become increasingly about dialogue with the communities a museum serves (and also
> crucially those communities *not* being served). As part of this shift it has been
> acknowledged that access is not only about being seen to represent, but also about
> democratising the right to speak and to create (p. 75) [emphasis in original].

There are two important aspects of her argument. The first presumes that using the museum's

powers as a collecting and authenticating institution to include a multiplicity of viewpoints in its

exhibitions that constitute a notion of 'truth' will, in so doing, legitimize the personal narratives of

the community as constitutive of the represented account.[188] The second aspect calls for a more

activist notion of service to the visitor, suggesting that museums should act as mechanisms

through which audiences have and articulate their sense of themselves. This contention implicates

crowdsourced projects that feature visitor generated content in museum displays without (or with

very limited) curatorial intervention as more than mere inclusivity. This idea of participation is

constitutive of a community's identity. It presumes a process of negotiation with the museum to

determine how representations are made, what cultural objects enter the museum's collection,

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[188] The influence of the representational critique referred to in the above discussion of Blazwick's and Morris'
installation of the Tate Modern displays, is palpable here. The underlying logic is that institutional representation is a
legitimizing practice.

how they are described and understood, and thereby is less concerned with interaction than with structural change in the relation of the community to the museum.

All indications are that Tate embraces a notion of participation that rests on heightened interactivity rather than a reorganization of its relationships to the communities it serves. Through customization of meaning and personalization of interaction through new technologies, the visit as depicted in the discourse convened around Tate Modern's opening does signify democratized activity in comparison to the visit framed by the educative museum that communicates through a connoisseurial program. The opening displays were predicated on this individualized interaction with the sensual visitor, and the museum has continued to develop an interpretation program centering on this visitor figure. Yet the promise of the democratic visit associated with Tate Modern is also regarded as more than augmented personalization. There is a masked presumption that this democratic visit together with Tate Modern symbolize more than mere social inclusion or greater respect for the visitor's intellectual agency.

A Promise

In his book *Art Crazy Nation* (2001) Matthew Collings initially criticizes Tate Modern as trivial. He describes the museum as 'a silly, wooly, crowded, meaningless place' (p. 31). Collings cites the sensational, stimulating effects of the displays, the impressive spectacle of the building, the size of the rooms displaying the art, and the public foment rising up around enormous Turbine Hall installations as the chief attractions. These aspects of the gallery, for Collings, are superficial distractions. In a 2005 interview on an American radio program, 'All Things Considered', he further dissects the idea of the museum's success. He says, 'I think its success story is a success of a very shallow idea of art, an idea of art that appeals to, or panders to, the fantasies of a mass audience of what art is; that is, that it should be entertaining and fast and ephemeral, never boring, never difficult, never require any work on the part of the audience' (Block, 2005). In Collings' view visitors become engaged in the museum's massive artworks without engaging their critical faculties. He contends that experiencing a spectacle does not lead to active participation of the

visitor in the service of intellectual comprehension. For him, serious contemplation is a type of

discipline and none of the aspects of the Tate Modern visit lead to this disciplined labor.

The position Collings carves out is reminiscent of Baudrillard's critique of the Pompidou

Center as an edifice that nullifies the art it contains. Baudrillard claims that the Paris Museum

while well intended to give greater access to modern art to more of the public, limits the

unaccountability of the art it displays, making itself a supermarket for art, a place where the

masses rush in to gaze at and touch objects that have lost their incommensurability being made

interchangeable with each other. In this case the museum becomes a stockpile of masses of people

who circulate (as the objects themselves do) among mass produced objects and experiences

(Baudrillard, 1982). In a fashion similar to Baudrillard discussing the Beaubourg quarter, and the

contributors to *Art for All* discussing cultural policy in the UK, Collings regards the art object as

almost antagonistic with the museum, as a work that reorganizes space and thought around it,

against the conscription of the museums displays. In the context of Tate Modern, Collings would

say, art either overwhelms the museum or it is tamed by it.

Five years later Collings revisits the museum to host a broadcast of the BBC's 'Culture

Show' focusing on the occasion of Tate Modern's tenth anniversary, and manifesting a

Damascene conversion. Collings takes the viewer through a walk of the original hang of 2000 to

ultimately broach the question of what Tate means for British culture. Collings chides his younger

self for initially dismissing those earlier viewed juxtapositions as failures. He finds in his

revisiting: 'The way they [curators] put completely different works together kind of nudges you

into thinking you really are making your own connections' (O'Brien, 2010). In his newly found

respect for Tate he makes the case that the thematic curatorial strategy places the visitor in a

situation in which to enjoy greater agency than with chronological narrative displays. Collings

links the strategic curatorial choice to the desire in visitors to feel self-directed.

Elaborating this point, he questions the then senior curator at Tate Modern, Sheena

Wagstaff, on why he initially felt so indifferent to the work, while others seem to respond

enthusiastically. Wagstaff replies, 'The whole point of this installation is that people take from it

what they want to take from it' (O'brien, 2010). Wagstaff offers a view of the visit coextensive

with Collings' own new position: it is constituted by the visitor out of the raw materials of the

displays. For her the displays are a menu of meanings available to the visitor/consumer to be

selected or not. There is no privileged set or 'correct' meanings bearing the imprimatur of the

curator, but rather an individual grasp of meaning determined by the visitor.

   The crucial turn toward a more ambitious sense of democratic promise happens when this

customized experience is used as justification for a larger presumption. Collings interviews

Nicholas Serota, saying to him,

> For a great many people, Tate Modern is a very powerful sign of a sort of social change
> that has occurred. Perhaps at the heart of it is a sort of breakdown of elitism…. It [Tate
> Modern] has become for various reasons more accessible, I guess popular is the word.
> And although Tate Modern is a late arrival in that change, it certainly does stand for that
> change (O'Brien, 2010).

Collings hereby equates the museum's populism with underlying hopes for an adjustment in

British social organization with regard to cultural participation, and with hopes that Tate is acting

as an index of changing social dynamics. Collings enlists the critic Adrian Searle to buttress the

point. Searle says that Tate Modern, 'seems to stand for a more open society … or a more

egalitarian and a more cultured society' (O'Brien, 2010).[189]

   Matthew Collings' conversion is telling in what it augurs for hopes placed in the

democratic visit. In essence, Tate Modern's populism may be forgiven if it is a harbinger for the

erosion of attitudes that have long plagued the art museum by dividing the public into hierarchies

of sense and sensibility that are then reified in display schemes that exclude certain visitors.

Increased accessibility and popularity based on desire may be absolved if Britain's longstanding

anxiety with regard to class might be mediated in one of the core institutions that regulate the

distinctions between high and low art. Even the domestication of the art object is pardoned, as it is

recruited into a system in which it stands as an item in a public cache of similar goods to be

procured by private, interpretive means. The Enlightenment project of universal education in this

light is not abjured, rather it lives on in a different form, through a populist, visitor-centered

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[189] Eilean Hooper-Greenhill (1992) as mentioned in the second chapter (p. 57, footnote), argues that this is due to the
museum's demarcation of a private space for expert knowledge production from a public space for novice consumption.

museum experience that is constituted as a type of institutional public service, yet one that is

realized in wholly private, individual experiences.

Marketing

The instantiation of a personalized visit in Tate Modern as expressed in the discourse

around the thematic displays is the result of the concerted action of interlocking programs,

interpretation and marketing, and the considered response of the lead curators to received notions

of the visitor and to legacy master narratives. The resulting visit experience promises the visitor

amplified and expanded interaction with the museum object, and greater freedom in expressing

intellectual agency. Through this idealized visit Tate has become associated with the idea of

democracy and anti-elitism, despite the robust criticism that seeks to preserve the distinction

between places of serious contemplation and arenas of entertainment. This criticism attempts to

preserve the terms of visitor and institutional behavior associated with a connoisseurial museum

program and the reformist legislative approach to culture that has historically generated it.

However, it is giving ground consistently to an interpretive program that allows for a definitive

break from this vision of the museum and its associated museology.

Still, the specter of the monstrous transformation of Tate Modern into an arena of over-

subscribed, hedonistic abandon is a consistent concern. The worry not only has to do with

rejecting both the Enlightenment ideal, and the visitor who is left ignorant of cultural patrimony.

The concern also encompasses the art object, which is imagined to lose its lustrous inscrutability

and incommensurability as it is both rendered as object of consumptive desire and an object of

amateur exegesis. At the core of the oppositions convened around the opening of Tate Modern are

distinct conceptions of the proper role of the museum, rendered more complex by the specific

issues germane to national collections of art that refract notions of heritage, contemporary art

discourse, social class, and the politics of inclusion. Though Tate did not invent the notion of a

democratized visit, it has used the rhetoric of the supposed breakdown of elitism it heralds to hold

these abiding concerns in a state of non-resolution.

This is the promise that Tate as a brand (perhaps without full knowledge of its effects) exploits to mitigate the critique that the museum is a place of trivial engagement and unserious, solipsistic participation. In arguments defending the thematic displays, the visitor's agency as a self-realized meaning maker is considered constitutive of a democratized space, a space diametrically opposed to the exclusive aesthetic chamber that rejects those lacking the proper habitus, therefore historically rejecting the working class and poor. By exploiting an opposition with a curator-centered visit, Tate is able to blunt criticism of its sponsorship deals, its populist exhibition program, or the weakness of its collection. It, as Matthew Collings admits, seems to 'stand for social change…a sort of breakdown of elitism' (Obrien, 2010). This argument is the rejoinder to the claim that visitors are being underserved by the waning of an educative, curator-centered museology that regards tutelage of ignorant visitors as the foremost responsibility of the museum. The contest between distinct museologies is not specific to Tate, but is representative of a fundamental shift in the museum field. Just so, Tate's response is also representative of the development in the field of having the weight of these complexities be simultaneously borne and held in check by marketing programs.

Tate's positioning itself in this ongoing debate must be regarded not as strategy for resolving these thorny issues, but rather for keeping them active while generating publicity for itself on the basis of its status as an institution charged with the responsibility to mediate these disputes.

Tim Leberecht (2015), writing on new forms of marketing that are successful at retaining consumer attention and allegiance writes, 'Smart marketing crowdsourced and democratized; it was inclusive, open, agile, and conversational'. These are recognizable traits in Tate's marketing program. These traits make the institution seem open and able to provide an experience that is customizable. These aspects of Tate's program its seeming inclusivity, its agility and conversational character, have helped it to stay at the forefront of the British public's consciousness as Tate alloys its status as a brand leader with its heritage status as an institutional facilitator for collective understanding of complex issues regarding public cultural legacy. Issues

regarding this legacy reified in art objects displayed by Tate, that in their presentation and

reception call up the further complexity of the political and social meanings of museum

attendance. Because the effects of Britain's entrenched class distinctions become evident in the

demographics of museum attendance, and because these profiles are bound up with Britain's

colonial and colonizing past, the individualized, visitor-centered visit that is rhetorically remade

into a democratic one is greeted with great hope by those who desire a breakdown of class strata.

However, an amplified sensational experience is not commensurate with a society-wide

adjustment of social attitudes. This personalized visit instead functions as the rhetoric convened

around a brand that is complex and symbolic and keeps its audiences fascinated because it does

not meet all demands. As Leberecht (2015) says, the brands that are successful don't simply fulfill

our needs. They toy with us. They frustrate us at times. Then they deliver what other brands do

not. Leberecht writes:

> We like convenience and comfort, but we love brands that offer us unexpected beauty and
> friction. We look for rebels who interrupt our routines and offer us not just purpose and
> personalization, but a heavy dose of punch-drunk love. We want experiences that are
> unique and precious; experiences that can't be scaled and must not be optimized either. In
> other words, we want romance, the ultimate insurgent in a regime of maximizers and
> optimizers (para. 9).

Leberecht argues that the brands to which we are faithful are those that romance us, the brands

that cause storm and stress and occasional fulfillment. What has become clear with all of this

sifting of the evidence is that Tate is an institution that effectively positions itself in public

consciousness as a brand, and this brand has attached to it promises of fuller and deeper

interaction with art, heightened pleasure, and the opportunity to explore the self and one's desires,

while in some respects remaining inscrutable and aloof. As yet the visit conceptualized in and

through Tate Modern does not admit the visitor to any role in managing or remaking the relation

between Tate and its communities.

By making itself into such a branded institution, it leads in the museum field, and visitors

follow, being rendered into consumers that are also producers, collaborators and even brand

ambassadors. The key here is to understand that the visitor is most fully realized as a customer of

this brand, a figure who actively buys into the narrative of the visit experience that Tate has spun.

This is to say that the brand that Tate has become has subsumed its other public faces: that of the great heritage collection, linchpin of national identity, and radical narrator of modern and contemporary art history. The brand generates a visitor figure that can attain satisfaction and fulfillment, through being romanced by the Tate brand, being recognized as individual and particular and being invited into the museum on the very terms of that particularity.

The compelling nature of this brand effectively hides that the visit to Tate Modern is not representative of a fundamental transformation of Britain's social world, or even of the audience that attends museums. Tate has not democratized the museum visit in these terms, but rather has made the visit more hospitable to those who are willing to regard increased interaction and the employment of their individual agency as good enough. For its researchers this rise of the brand suggests that critique of Tate becomes less effective as the market convincingly defines what constitutes success in a public institution's public service.

<u>Chapter Seven: Conclusion</u>

Aims and Findings

The foregoing sets out to demonstrate the claim that a conceptualized personally customizable visit in a contemporary art museum that is less oriented towards information transfer from a curator (regarded as an educator) to the visitor figure (regarded as a student) and more towards meeting the particular needs of the visitor, currently appears in museum discourse and exists in the minds of influential actors who shape this discourse. Using a case study institution as a primary source of empirical evidence, this thesis traces the institutional appearance and evolution of this kind of imagined visit in and through the Tate Modern museum. In so doing, this thesis relates the questions, structure, and findings of a systematic investigation into the historical, social, and museological conditions necessary for this visit to be manifested in Tate Modern. This hypothesis is examined primarily by tracing the conceptual development of the visitor figure through implicit accounts of the visit in academic studies, historical records, marketing reports, advertisements, and the public discourse convened around Tate Modern's opening thematic displays that then served (and still do serve) as an extension of Tate's marketing and audience development program.

The findings of the analysis of this mix of primary and secondary documentary evidence demonstrate the existence of this conceptualized visitor-centered visit, and show how it is related to three main forces that have conditioned the economic, political, and social dynamics that form the particular context in and through which this visit is generated. A new museology, allied with a 'turn to meaning' has permeated the museum field, and while still emphasizing the education of the visitor, conditions curatorial practice and the methodologies of research undertaken on the visitor's experience in the museum to focus on the visitor and recognize this figure as an individuated meaning-maker differentiated by its own traits and socialization. The cultural policies associated with political regimes that stipulated particular goals for museums and certain procedures and methods for achieving these goals conditioned Tate to adopt management and

governance strategies associated with enterprise culture. This adoption made Tate more of a

marketized and marketizing institution than it had previously been, transforming it into a

symbolic cache of goods made appreciable for cultural consumers through the conscious

application of marketing and branding devices. Third, existing socio-economic relations generate

the conditions of an 'experience economy' through which museum visitors experience

individuated cultural consumption, which is institutionally shaped to meet the visitor's particular

needs and desires via a consumerist conception of the visitor.

This thesis brings several phenomena and their causes that are related to this visitor-

centered, personalized visit into a coherent account with regard to how these phenomena are

correlated to the visit. The major phenomena associated with this visit are: governmental cultural

policies that circulate differing ideas of public service, the elaboration of the visitor as a consumer

within a marketing discourse that rises in prominence as Tate has become more of a commercial

enterprise, the growing popularity of co-curation of crowdsourced projects through which the

visitor takes on simultaneous roles as consumer, producer, and collaborator, and the development

of a populist notion that Tate constitutes a democratic museum that is in turn a sign of

fundamental social shift. Secondary phenomena that appear in recent museum activity include:

innovative curatorial design featuring technologically innovative ways of extending the

interpretive faculties of visitors, heightened levels of interactivity with the museum object, and

the visit becoming representative of lifestyle choices. These circumstances are shown to be

brought together by the aforementioned intertwined forces of the new museology, governmental

cultural policy, and the circulation of a neoliberal redefinition of participation in terms of

consumption that makes the museum visitor primarily a consumer and experience primarily a

commodity.

This thesis opens with an introduction to the issues raised by the 'Create you own

Collection' campaign at Tate Britain, and a discussion of crucial sources, the methods and overall

methodology of the thesis. Following this, the second chapter conveys the relation of this study to

museum discourse and the disciplines that inform it. This chapter relates the paucity of research

on the visit, in terms of the embodied experience of actual visitors and the rhetorical formulation of visitor experience, showing that this lack is due to the preponderance of research focusing on the contemporary public art museum and its central dilemma. The public museum as an object of study is a site of persistently anxious assessment by museum professionals and other researchers concerned with its mutability in the face of social pressures, and its constancy to the ideals upon which its was founded. An investigation of the visit is necessarily shaped by a fundamental issue at the center of this anxiety and the discipline of museum studies: how the European public museum birthed in an Enlightenment value of universal education has become predominantly attended by a visitor population that is not reflective of the larger society. Essentially, the museum's promise is at odds with its visitor profiles. This crucial issue is shown to persist in museum discourse and to influence professional evaluations and deeper academic studies of the museum that in turn inflect the current conceptualization of the visitor's experience and the discursive visitor figure.

It is shown that a 'turn to meaning' occurring in the field of professional practice and in research undertaken outside the museum, develops out of a crisis concerning the 'modern museum project' convened mid-twentieth century around the education of the visitor. The crisis had to do with how to properly regard the visitor as a research object with respect to issues of information retention, that is, the role the visitor plays in the learning process within galleries, and how to use or develop research methodologies that more accurately reflect the meaning-making propensities of visitors. Within this turn, a different conception of the visitor figure emerged, a figure regarded as imaginative, self-directed, and creative of individuated meaning based on its particular capacities and social situation. Associated with this turn is the development of the young discipline of visitor studies, which, in challenging the fundamental presumption of universal means of museum learning, has contributed to embedding within professional practice and research methodologies the idea that an appreciation of differences among visitors is fundamental to understanding and evaluating visitor behavior.

The key development for museums is a movement in the field precipitated by the aforementioned crisis, out of which develops a new philosophical orientation towards the visitor as the central focus of the museum with regard to its duties, a movement termed the new museology. This movement in turn further elaborates the visitor figure as a figure that, rather than the ignorant pupil in need of expert tutelage as is presumed under the auspices of a curator-centered museology, is a figure with particular desires, needs, and perspectives that can extend beyond the horizon of conventional gallery learning.

This turn to meaning was supported and enabled by key (implicit) conceptions of the visit put forward by prominent researchers writing in the museum studies discipline, and four of these conceptions were examined to demonstrate that current conceptualization of the visitor has outstripped the explanatory power of these concepts, despite their contribution to the turn to meaning. The museum as a disciplinary chamber and the extension of a reformist agenda, the museum as iconographic script that combines ideological conditioning with a spiritual experience, the museum as aestheticized misrepresentation of the economic foundations of inequality, and even the museum as menu of visitor options were all shown to be unable to comprehensively explain how visitors are now being conceived in other areas of museum practice, in particular marketing.

Nevertheless, glimpses of the personalized, visitor-centered visit were shown to be evident in an examination of Tate Modern, and this visit presupposes a self-realizing actor experiencing self-realization and pleasure. This formulation of a personalized visit would guide the rest of the study that proceeded to more fully explain the shape and conditions of this visit and the nature of the visitor it presupposes.

Chapter three examines the Tate Reports to develop the argument that Tate Modern had come into being as a kind of 'interpretive museum', a museum that seeks to exploit and extend the visitor's capacity to engage its interpretive faculties to enjoy deep interaction with the work of art, which under the auspices of its interpretive program, is presumed to be a cluster of intertwined meanings to be parsed by the visitor. The history of the Tate Liverpool gallery as a

test case for strategies of interpretation was shown to be significant to the planning and strategizing around the creation of Tate Modern as a space of dialogic exchange with the visitor.

Examining the Tate Reports revealed the evolution of Tate through a succession of distinct museologies indicated by administrative and structural changes. These changes are shown to relate not only to the test case of the Liverpool gallery, but also to the cultural policies imposed on museums in the UK by Conservative and New Labour regimes. A new public management program conditioned Tate to essentially become a commercial enterprise, under the auspices of a value-for-money metric of effective public service, while it was legally transformed into the same by the *Museums and Galleries Act* of 1992. At this point public service is reconceived as the outcome of the professional application of 'best practices' adopted from enterprise culture, and the visitor is imagined to be a shareholder in the museum conceived as a corporate concern.

Subsequently, a policy of social access and inclusion particularly for populations historically underrepresented in the museum is inaugurated by New Labour, and sets out performance markers for Tate. This pressure, combined with Tate's intention to make itself a successful corporate institution and develop an audience for contemporary art, conditioned Tate to remake itself as a cache of public 'goods' the individual visitor could lay claim to by behaving as an interpretive consumer given access to these good by way of Tate's marketing and branding tools. The goals of inclusion and access were pursued by way of a paradigmatic neoliberal relation of customer service provision and the consumption of (cultural) goods.

In chapter four, marketing reports commissioned by Tate are shown to further elaborate the visitor figure. A crucial feature to these reports is the emphasis on visitor engagement. Exploring the evidence of how engagement is understood in the field of professional practice revealed that the concerns characteristic of the field are both scholarly, that is focused on questions about the nature of creativity and active absorption, and functionalist, that is centered on finding ways to manipulate engagement in the visitor.

It is demonstrated that the visitor figure is further altered being inflected by a marketing discourse adept at concurrently holding varied and even oppositional views of the consumer. The

visitor/consumer is understood to be simultaneously autonomous and manipulable. This figure,

under the conditioning of marketing tools, is regarded as a bundle of cultural needs able to choose

how to best meet these needs, and at the same time is persuadable by the marketer because it

possesses these needs, and they are discoverable by the marketer. These opposed conceptions of

the visitor are not resolved but held in stasis by the engineering of a marketing methodology.

The key marketing strategy of this methodology utilized by Tate, and other key

institutions in the field, is segmentation, which is understood to be a method of audience

development. According to its plan, particular visitor traits and desires are categorized within

discrete homogenous groups to which particular 'products' or aspects of the museum that relate to

these desires are promoted. The conceptualization of the visitor is thus inflected by consumerism

that translates desires for particular types of experience into aspects of the museum's physical

spaces, exhibitions, public programs, or technological platforms that may be modified to secure

visitor attendance. Under the auspices of an, 'experience economy', the visitor is regarded as a

consumer who hand-in-hand with the museum marketer creates an experience of customized

meaning.

Chapter four also outlines differences between the distinct spaces described by the two

marketing reports examined: the physical space of the museum, and the virtual space accessed

through web portals. It is demonstrated that the virtual platform encourages a kind of solipsistic

experience in that it eschews the intellectual intervention of the curator, thus decreasing the

tension between information and narrative. The virtual experience of the museum's collection

also obviates the intervention of common judgment. It was shown that the experience of the

virtual space in which the visitor tends to treat the museum as an archive, carries over to concepts

of the embodied visit employed with the use of new media, social media, and related co-curation

schemes and crowdsourced projects. Undergirded by the notion of amplified agency for the

visitor, these projects and curatorial schemes further elaborate a conception of the visitor figure,

using the notion of extended participation to make this figure a hybrid

consumer/producer/collaborator.

Tate's marketing program not only affects concepts of the visitor, but also conditions

public awareness of Tate by presenting the museum as place of pleasure, and a place of social

connectedness and enhanced engagement with art. However, these notions of the museum as a

collaborative space of heightened sociality do not rest upon the value of developing a critical

consciousness, but rather rest on perceiving the museum's social space as a means to exchange

self-made experiences of individual meaning.

Chapter five discusses further elaborations of the visitor figure achieved by Tate's

branding mechanisms, and the idealized narratives of the visit to Tate Modern manifested in a

suite of advertisements. The general nature and reasons for brand construction are explained via

an account of Tate's creation of its unified corporate identity through the hire of an outside

consultancy, Wolff Olins. The primary causes for the fabrication of Tate's brand is to develop

Tate's audience and secure visitor loyalty, however associated pressures of competition in the

museum field around the global market for trained personnel and the standardization of curatorial

strategies are shown to contribute. Tate's brand is shown to be constituted of a targeted set of

associations to do with intellectual liberty, pleasurable exploration, and the discovery of new

meanings. The effects of this unified brand image are shown to support the personalization of the

visit by allowing for the diversification of the organization itself, signifying the same associated

values among different venues, and the diversification of the visitor through its subliminal

promise of experiences keyed to individual visitor's needs and predispositions, though visitors are

essentially treated as market segments.

Advertisements are explained as promotions of the root brand, but also are analyzed as

accounts that reveal the complex and sometimes conflicted partnership Tate formed with the

banking enterprise UBS. While UBS financially supports Tate and is engaged in an exchange of

symbolic status and prestige, through its collaboration with Tate it also generates a set of narrative

accounts in the advertisements that allow the public patrimony held in trust by Tate to be recast as

public commodities destined for possession by private means.

Fine-grained analysis of these visual accounts demonstrates that the advertisements are mainly addressed to middle-class audiences that aspire to the privilege of the depicted exclusivity, and while the visitor is presumed to be a self-directed meaning maker in a free choice environment, this visitor is expected to know how to perform a visit following the customs of bourgeois behavior. Private wealth is the ghost that lurks behind the visit, as the necessary capital for establishing a relation with UBS, as the symbolic ground for Tate's existence, and as the means by which exclusivity in the idealized, private visit is acquired. These accounts of the visit reify and sustain the class demarcations and hierarchies of cultural production that Tate in other aspects of its brand image seeks to dissolve. Through these advertizing narratives Tate Modern is shown to be an institutional catalyst for the transmutation of public wealth into private goods.

In the sixth chapter the opening displays of the permanent collection are discussed as another aspect of Tate's marketing program, one which brings to the surface a conflict between competing ideas of a legitimate museum and visit experience, underneath which rest competing ideas of what properly constitutes the museum's service to the public. The public reception of the displays are shown to give voice, in the main, to two opposed perceptions of the visit endowed by the Tate Modern displays: either a fraudulent, populist escapade, which indicates the waning of the modern museum project, or the visit as self-directed, unique means of accessing public patrimony which is taken as a harbinger of mass accessibility to so-called high forms of art.

Under this examination, the arguments marshaled by critics skeptical of Tate Modern betray a piecemeal understanding of the historical development of the museum and are shown to be fixated on the museum's apparent capitulation to the forces of the market and the lure of greater audience share in lieu of fidelity to the idea of the museum as a public educator for ignorant masses. These critics, while being so in thrall to the legacy of an educative museology they are unable to recognize it as such, are shown to value the legislative shaping of culture by acknowledged experts, while also valuing the principle of universal education to which the educative museology is tied.

Alternatively, the critics who champion the Tate Modern displays justify them on the grounds of providing the visitor a pleasurable, affective experience, engaging visitors sensorially and intellectually. More, these critics claim this visit experience signifies a democratizing of the museum in opposition to the perception, still very present in the public imagination, that the museum exists as an exclusive precinct of high art. While the establishment of the visitor's pleasure as the grounds for museum evaluation is important, the more significant development is the recruitment of the visitor-centered visit into the debate around the persistent dominance of middle-class visitor profiles in the museum.

The term 'democratic' is examined in its uses in museum discourse, and its meaning is shown to morph in relation to the context in which it is articulated. For the purposes of describing the museum visit, the most pertinent definitions are shown to exist on a continuum between minimalist and maximalist frameworks. In these terms, it is demonstrated that Tate constructs a democratic visit by employing participation as a relational value, amplifying the level of interactivity between the visitor and museum object. Tate employs the personalization of meaning as a tool for creative fulfillment in the visitor, and continues to explore material and conceptual innovation that permits greater customization, particularly in the area of digital technology. New initiatives undertaken by Tate may be said to generate a democratized visit insofar as the notion of democratization is limited to deepening the sensorial engagement of the visitor, and extending the visitor's ability to personalize the experience. The visit conceptualized in relation to the opening displays is not one that seeks to reconsider or reorganize Tate's relation to its community, permitting the negotiation of the means of representation of objects or narratives, or the selection of objects taken into Tate's collection.

It is shown that through staging a personalized visit idealized as more robustly democratic than that generated by previous museologies, Tate is associated with an idea of anti-elitism, despite questionable practices undertaken in partnership with UBS, despite the visit narratives presented in advertisements in its magazine, aimed at middle-class and upper-class demographics,

and despite the robust criticism that seeks to demarcate spaces of deep contemplation from arenas of populist amusement.

The 'Create your own Collection' campaign is exemplary of a prevalent current interpretation of the long deferred promise of the Enlightenment public museum, that perhaps though never having fully manifested the ideal of universal education, rests upon this ideal as justification for the museum's being and is referenced when appeals for public support of the museum are made. It is a now a commonplace criticism that the spread of global capital and associated neoliberal ideologies have colonized the spheres of culture, but it is this colonization that is nevertheless at the root of the transmutation of the dream for an egalitarian museum. Perhaps exploitation is a more accurate term to describe the situation in which Tate utilizes a marketing ploy in an attempt to increase attendance by symbolically remaking Tate Britain into a place that affirms, supports, and displays the individuated viewpoints and experiences of visitors. This is rightly termed an exploitive ploy because the visitor *appears* to have more agency and deeper engagement with the objects in Tate's permanent collection, but the visitors' agency is not bestowed by this campaign, only catalyzed. Agency existed in visitors before Tate manipulated an idea of intellectual autonomy enlivened by consumerism to make its museums appear to be spaces of dialogic, open collaboration. The promise of greater agency is intertwined with a promise of the Tate galleries becoming more representative of the general population, which again has not been demonstrated, and crucially this promise is made under the auspices of public relations campaigns and commercial promotions.

It is concluded that Tate exploits its position in the museum field as a particularly exciting brand. Its leadership as a brand allows it to hold in abeyance, that is without resolution, the complex, overlapping conceptions of the Tate Modern museum as interpretive, dialogic space, yet also a cache of public inheritance; as a artistic business partner that exchanges cultural capital for economic capital, while also behaving as a corporate enterprise with plans for growth. The visitor shown to be correlated to Tate Modern is similarly composed of varied personas: the shareholder in the corporatized museum, the consumer, the producer of museum content, a collaborator with

the museum, the autonomous meaning maker, and the suggestive customer of commodified experiences. The brand mechanism has overwhelmed and brought into tenuous coherence the other aspects of the museum. It is concluded that Tate is a very successful brand because it keeps these ideas in the public's consciousness without resolving them, while maintaining its status as an institution that provides the space for encountering and tentatively engaging with the difficult and complex issues of education, class status, art as entertainment, and the politics of agency. It behaves as a romantic object: never fully pleasing while not fully frustrating desire either. In this respect the personalized visit may be regarded as both a unique development in the field of museum practice and the product of a marketing tactic that yields less than it ostensibly promises.

Future Study

This study demonstrates important developments in the conceptualization of the visit, but crucially it has limited itself to the realm of discourse. Other scholars can usefully build on this research by using survey-based methodologies to question the extent to which the discursive figures examined herein appear in the lived experiences and conversations of museum visitors. A study that surveys visitors to other Tate outposts or visitors to museums similar to Tate Modern may yield evidence of a relation between activities associated with a particular museum that assist in shaping the interpretive prerogatives of visitors.

A study of the accounts of actual visitors that examines their responses with regards to generational difference would also aid study of the visit. A carefully formulated comparison to a visits that exist in historical records, described by the parents or grandparents of the current generation may generate useful accounts of the differences between what is experienced now as a conventional visit to a public art museum and what was experienced as conventional in the previous generation.

Other avenues of inquiry might be explored by surveying visitors. A crucial question is the extent to which visitors are willing to do the work of assembling meaning, rather than being led to clear and identifiable meanings. It may be that while some visitors appreciate being able to

construct a narrative framework for the art object, while others, as has been indicated by some

criticism of Tate Modern above, may resent having to perform this kind of labor. Another related

question is whether, among visitors who can recognize and articulate the differences between the

curator-centered and the visitor-centered visit, which is preferred. These questions seem

worthwhile pursuit at this moment when the expanding populism of museums exhibitions excites

impassioned debate regarding the proper role of the museum in society. Though this study has

accomplished a good deal in explaining the conditions that have given rise to this populism and

its effect on the ways visitor experience are conceived, more study is required.

It would be useful to examine evidence of the personalized visit existing elsewhere

besides Tate Modern. If, as has been surmised here, the conditions for this visit exist throughout

the entire museum field, it would be useful to discover whether there are significant differences

between European museums and museums on other continents. It may be that variances in the

history of state or private funding create appreciable differences in how museologies operate in

and through museums.

This study has shown that examining the visit, that is, the theorized options for a visitor's

experience, is a useful perspective by which to gauge changes to the public museum through the

last generation. In light of this work, it seems that prominent theorizations of the idea of

institutional public service would benefit from considering the roles played by marketing,

advertizing, and branding. It remains to be seen if commodified consumption and the consumer

visitor figure can be divorced from marketing promotion and whether the museum can display

visitor produced content and still foster the development of an audience that critical engages with

new and emerging practices in art.

The museum is still an institution of powerful and compelling action, and the visitor

figure is an object very worthy of study. However the relation between the two, the point of

contact where histories, desires, and rhetorical constructions of each come together and inform

each other has been shown to be fruitful ground for understanding what we hope to happen when

we enter the museum and consider what its objects, its curators, and other visitors have to say.

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The I'M HUNGOVER Collection

OK. Right now you're in a very particular emotional state. We understand, so we've put together a mini Collection for you with lots of stops for a sit down. Firstly, we need to run a check on you. Are we talking about a 'Cholmondeley Ladies' hangover or a 'Heads of Six of Hogarth's Servants' hangover? A 'Cholmondeley Ladies' hangover is fine as it is a portrait of identical twins and means you are just seeing double. The other is slightly more serious as Hogarth painted six portraits swirling around on a single canvas, and if this is what your head feels like then you're in trouble. If you are feeling some guilt, a visit to the Vatican might help redeem your soul. Have a look at Richard Wilson's picture of the Vatican in Room 6, showing a splendid morning view from a hill above the Tiber. (Stand still until you see just one Vatican). Now, let's ease your headache. What you need is a strong dose of the 'The Plains of Heaven' by John Martin in Room X. This hypnotizing image oozes tranquillity and harmony, whilst the blissful landscape represents salvation. You should be feeling better now. Just to make sure that the symptoms are completely gone, we need to run another quick check. The painting of 'The Cock Tavern' in Room 7 is a good test as it portrays a classic English country pub. If you can bear to stare at it for a decent amount. of time, it means you're cured. Don't get any ideas about going out again though; it's an eight o'clock bedtime for you tonight.

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The **I'VE JUST SPLIT UP** Collection

We know how it feels. You don't even want to wake up in the morning. Your confidence has taken a bit of a knock and we understand. So much so we've prepared a little Collection to cheer you up. Especially, since you have a little more time on your hands now. (Sorry). Ready to feel better? First, stand in front of the Pre-Raphaelite masterpiece 'Ophelia' from Hamlet by Millais. See? Someone else went through that too. Her loneliness should make you feel... less lonely, strangely enough. Maybe it's not the end of the world for you. Actually, you should look at the monumental 'The Last Judgement' by John Martin in Room 9. Now, that is the end of the world, quite literally. This painting will help you put things in perspective, so no more sobbing, alright? Now we should talk about your future. Think about it, you're facing a moment of endless possibilities, a bit like Simon Patterson's contemporary work 'The Great Bear' in Room 26. (You know, the one with the underground map.) It means that anything can happen. So comb your hair because you never know who's around. Now, you're ready for a Turner Stand in front of 'Sunrise, with a Boat between Headlands.' Its highlights represent the idea of a bright new beginning. Everything will be okay. And remember, we're always here for you (10.00 – 17.50 daily).

Create your own Collection

Admission Free   ⊖ Pimlico
www.tate.org.uk   🚢 Millbank Pier

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BRITAIN
TATE

Appendix C

A NEW FRAME ON ART

BRITAIN

TATE

Executive Summary

Tate Britain is an emblem of British culture.

But by 2005 it was **losing its relevance**.

The launch of Tate Modern in 2000 had repositioned Tate Britain as classic and institutionalised.

Its permanent collection of British art had become over familiar and less appealing.

Marketing's objective was to **change the perception** of the gallery and its permanent collection, whilst **increasing visitor figures** and **frequency**.

The challenge was to make Tate Britain as contemporary as Tate Modern and to reframe 'Old' work through 'Fresh' eyes.

The delivery of the campaign had to be new and unexpected, not just Tate Britain but for art galleries as a whole.

The campaign achieved this by turning gallery marketing on its head.

A breakthrough insight and strategy led to a brilliantly elastic creative idea that moved the gallery in a new direction.

It's been a category defining campaign that's still running after two years.

And one that's been successful in boosting both visitor figures (by over 50%) and broadening the gallery's appeal.

A bit of background

Launched in 1897, Tate Britain displays the largest collection of British art in the world; from 1500 to the present day.

That is both a good and a bad thing.

Good because it's drenched in history, has enviable kudos and is seen as being the 'best of classic British art'.

Bad because many people have an inbuilt perception about what it represents. Many see the gallery as traditional, part of the establishment, stuffy and old school.

Others see it as worthy, educational and dull*.

A place many go to only once just to say they've 'done it'.

It was marketing's job to make Tate Britain interesting again and create energy around the gallery.

* Tate Through Visitors Eyes and Fallon Qualitative Research.

Create your own 'Collection'

Gallery visitors were given the chance to create their own collection of up to six works in a competition.

The winner's selection appeared on a leaflet for other visitors to enjoy.

We also asked celebrities to create their own collections.

Actor and Office star Mackenzie Crook created a 'Paintings from the Olden Days' collection with works from William Hogarth, JW Waterhouse and Ford Madox Brown.

Media

The campaign included the creation of twenty 'Collections' leaflets.

We made long copy outdoor ads; 4 sheets, cross track tube posters and escalator panels.

Online we created a 'make-your-own-collection' website – responding to the way you felt and what you needed.

This media strategy contributed in a number of ways to the campaign:

The use of leaflets was an important progression for media. Although outdoor had and did play an important role bringing Tate Britain to a broader audience, it did little to physically influence the behaviour of our target.

Leaflets provided a perfect means to do this.

The first stage was to use them as navigational tools within the gallery as the public entered. These would be used, then kept or passed on by visitors.

The second stage was to take them to the streets. This provided topical opportunities by exploiting key calendar dates (e.g. 'Valentine's Collection' in Valentine's edition of Time Out) and tactical opportunities by reaching audiences in unexpected places at timely moments (e.g. 'I'm In A Hurry Collection' on Monday, 'I'm Hung-over Collection' on Friday leaflets that were distributed outside key tube stations).

Results

In the first month that the campaign launched (September 2005) the gallery experienced a 22% increase in the number of visitors to the permanent collection*.

And within the first six months (as the campaign began to build momentum) visitors to the permanent collection had increased by over 50% (Jan 2006).

When visitors were asked why they had visited the Tate Britain 35% spontaneously said it was because of the permanent collection (Jan 2006) compared to 25% the year before**.

Between September 2005 – December 2007 the permanent collection saw over half a million visitors through the doors.

In the first 11 months of the campaign (Sept '05 – July '06) the gallery experienced 9 months where more people visited the permanent collection than the exhibitions on display***.

A clear sign that the campaign had **changed visitor behaviour**.

The number of **repeat visitors** to the gallery increased from 34% in the summer of 2006 to 55% in the winter of 2006***.

A national PR campaign that ran throughout 2006 helped to **change perceptions** of the gallery in the minds of consumers'. Articles appeared in everything from the Evening Standard and Time Out to The Daily Mail.

And within the industry,' Tate Collections' has won a number of creative awards;
Amongst which are the Cannes Lions Grand Prix for Best Outdoor Campaign, Poster Campaign of The Year (Campaign), Gold at Art Directors Club, Winner at London International Awards and Silver at Epica and the Clio Awards.

*Tate Visitor Numbers. **MEW Research. ***Ipsos MORI Survey.

"Tate Britain's new set of bespoke tours make it an ideal destination – no matter how you're feeling".

Conclusion

'Tate Collections' is a creative idea that has made people look through 'new eyes' at the gallery's permanent collection.

By understanding the relationship between art and the public, we were able to update and refresh Tate Britain.

We achieved this by focusing on how art makes people feel.

As a result, everyone became free to enjoy Tate Britain on their own terms, depending on their mood.

We provided a set of guides (which we called 'Collections') that gave people an emotional journey through some of the art housed in the gallery.

We also invited them to create their own.

The idea reframed what Tate Britain offered, was motivating and distinctive from the competition.

We made the familiar seem new and helped reposition the gallery as a modern art experience.

I like complicated pictures, I like pictures that I do not understand.

Massimo Vitali

For the next three years, UBS is delighted to be partnering Tate Modern, whose rehang of its permanent Collection promises to make us all think a little differently about art. Together we have created UBS Openings, a dynamic and wide-reaching programme that includes a series of displays from The UBS Art Collection at Tate Modern. It's a partnership that promises to open up art to wider audiences. Sharing new perspectives. It's what drives our business, and it's what drives our partnership with Tate Modern. www.ubs.com
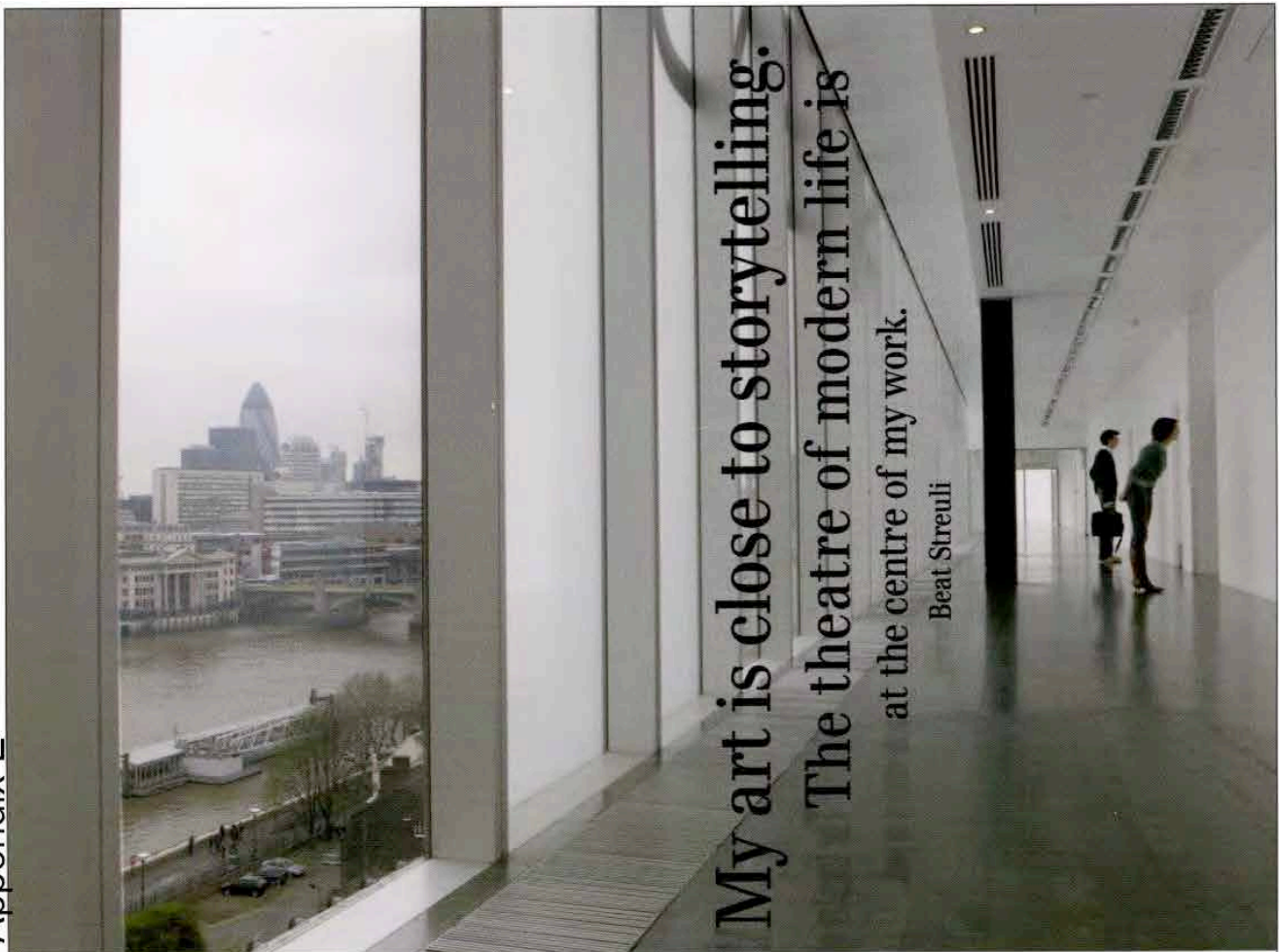
UBS Openings: Photography from The UBS Art Collection
22 May – 26 November

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You & Us

✲ UBS

My art is close to storytelling.
The theatre of modern life is
at the centre of my work.
Beat Streuli

At UBS, we believe in sharing new perspectives. This approach is at the heart of our long-term partnership with Tate Modern and it's why together we created **UBS Openings**. Every two months we bring it to life through UBS Openings: Saturday Live, a cutting edge programme of live works that aims to make us all think a little differently – which is our goal in business, as well as in art.

UBS Openings: Saturday Live
Matt Mullican Under Hypnosis – 27 January 2007
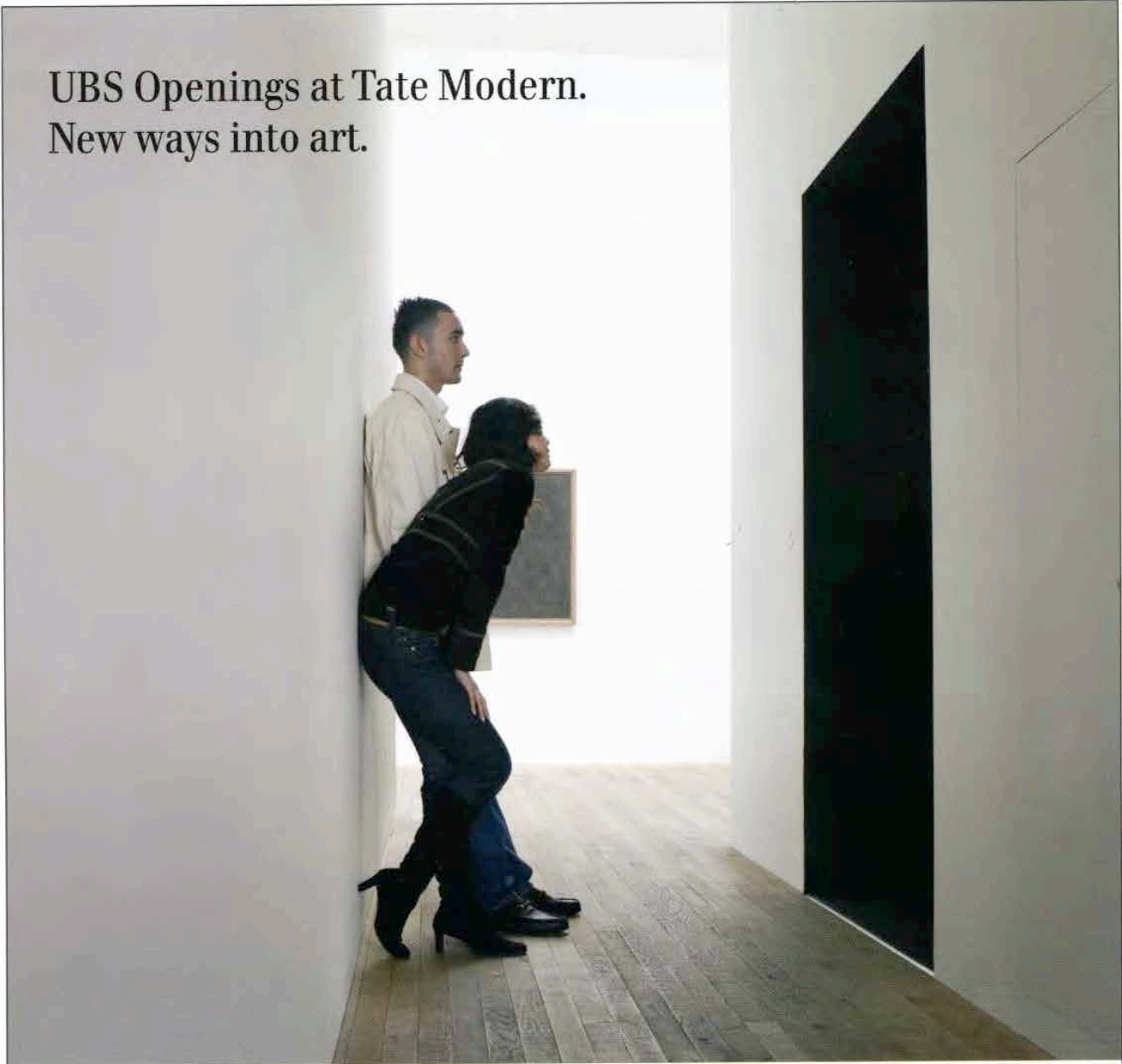**Actions and Interruptions – 10 March 2007**

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You & Us

✳ **UBS**

**UBS Openings at Tate Modern.
New ways into art.**

TATE MODERN

Together, UBS and Tate Modern have found new ways to share art with everyone. UBS Openings is a series of inspirational gallery displays, imaginative family activities, and participative live performances. Collaboration, openness and creative thinking. They're at the heart of our partnership with Tate Modern, and at the heart of our relationships with our clients.

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