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**Moving Beyond Compliance and Towards Diversity Equity Access and
Inclusion: A Case Study of the Programming and Institutional
Initiatives at the Dallas Museum of Art That Embrace DEAI**

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Embrace DEAI**

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Karen Ann Marco

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Dedication

For Mä & Pa, your continued support and belief in education made this possible.

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Abstract

Moving Beyond Compliance and Towards Diversity Equity Access and Inclusion: A Case Study of the Programming and Institutional Initiatives at the Dallas Museum of Art That Embrace DEAI

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This exploratory case study focuses on the ways in which one art museum has implemented its diversity, equity, access, and inclusion (DEAI) work, and investigates the degree to which this policy embodies the institution's aspirations for DEAI as outlined in their mission statement, EDI policy, and accessibility page. Utilizing case study research methodology to employ qualitative inquiry, this project examines how the Dallas Museum of Art (DMA) has attempted to cultivate interdepartmental, museum-wide commitment to DEAI. Through semi-structured interviews, review of online content, and direct site observation, this research has uncovered relevant and timely findings that answer the central research question: How has the Dallas Museum of Art applied principles of diversity, equity, access, and inclusion to their programming, resources, and institutional initiatives? Data analysis revealed both successes and potential areas of improvement in

the DMA's journey toward DEAI. Successes the DMA's process for responding to visitor needs, including integrating identities into educational programming; continuing challenges include institutional dialogue and transparency with the public. This research has the potential to inspire art and museum educators alike to move beyond statements of solidarity, and toward informed and radical action in support of DEAI in the field of Art Education.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

INTRODUCTION

The role of museums has been changing with each arriving decade. Museums are some of the oldest remaining institutions in society creating a specific complexity to their ever-changing purpose (Sandel, 2019). Museums are often reflective of the zeitgeist, because of the nature of their functionality as public institutions. Museums are institutions that archive, display, and communicate ideas, concepts, and artifacts (Lindsay, 2020). A museum's fluctuation of purpose happens often without specific intention. In Richard Sandel's book, *Museum Activism*, he points out that “[p]aradoxically, and despite their inherent conservatism, museums have existed for centuries, unlike the vast majority of business enterprises. Museums have always had some sort of ‘adaptive intuition’ to reinvent and transform themselves, however slowly and unconsciously” (2019, p. 32). If museums have this ability to reshape themselves, where does that leave museums today?

A museum must adapt and serve its constituent community in order to stay relevant. The Dallas Museum of Art (DMA) is an example of a museum that is adapting to fit the needs of its visitors. The DMA places emphasis on diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion (DEAI) in the mission of the museum, stating:

[We] [p]lace art and our diverse communities at the center around which all activities radiate... [We][p]ursue excellence in collecting and programming, present works of art across cultures and time, and be a driving force in contemporary art... [s]trengthen our position as a prominent, innovative institution, expanding the meaning and possibilities of learning and creativity. (Dallas Museum of Art, 2020)

In addition to stating support for these critical issues, the DMA has created programming and resources dedicated to providing visitors with inclusive, welcoming, and inspiring experiences. The DMA's visitor services provide programming for individuals with autism, dementia, cognitive disabilities, sight disabilities, Parkinson's disease, hearing loss, and limited mobility (Dallas Museum of Art, 2020). In providing services to visitors with varying abilities, the DMA promotes inclusion and accessibility. In proclaiming DEAI as central to its programs and mission statement, the DMA demonstrates an intention to go beyond legally mandated ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990) compliance. Here lies the distinction between embracing DEAI and basic ADA compliance. While it is ADA compliant to provide assistive infrastructure in a museum, creating programming and tours catered to individuals with varying abilities, socioeconomic backgrounds, cultures, and identities is a practice that hinges itself on the principles of DEAI (Dallas Museum of Art, 2020).

In this case study I examine how the DMA's programming, practices, and institutional initiatives are associated with principles of DEAI and inspect how the DMA has responded to the needs of their community. This study provides particular focus to issues of accessibility for community members with special needs. Through my research I examine the DMA's practices in relation to how it implements DEAI in the museum. My research illustrates how the staff of the DMA create and implement museum programming that orients itself towards fostering an inclusive and welcoming environment for visitors of all backgrounds and abilities. In conducting this research, I have explored the political, cultural, and societal motivations behind The Dallas Museum

of Art's educational and community programming. In addition to looking closely at the DMA's programming I examine how the museum has and is upholding their mission statement, EDI policy, and commitment to access in order to better understand how a modern museum has handled issues of DEAI.

Program Director and Lecturer for the Department of Museum Studies at the University of Leicester, Suzanne MacLeod (2013) argues in support of the shift in purpose of the museum in her book *Museum Architecture: A New Biography*, by pointing out their value to local and international economies:

Governments all over the world are recognizing the power of culture, and particularly cultural buildings, to spark international interest, speak of economic investment and growth- regardless of the realities- to generate tourism in post-industrial centers and to make global and local statements about national and subnational identities. (p. 2)

MacLeod is emphasizing the significant economic impact that museums have, as well as their cultural significance. This connection to economic interests and cultural identities is an important factor in understanding the dynamic between museums and their constituencies and how it has changed over the past several centuries. In considering museums cultural buildings with the potential to inform visitors, MacLeod frames museums as cultural institutions with local and (inter)national power. The power of museums lies in what they provide to the public, and how they decide to curate their contribution to culture and society. In order to maintain relevance and purpose as public tax-exempt institutions, museums must take the next step: moving beyond basic ADA compliance and toward DEAI.

The DMA's website (<https://dma.org/>) includes statements of equity, diversity, and inclusion as well as a resource page for accessibility. The inclusion and definitions of these concepts on the DMA's website parallels current museum practices in the United States (AAM, 2018). However, committing to DEAI takes more than merely issuing well-crafted statements to the public. Museums must take radical action to promote change and showcase their dedication to combatting centuries of systemic racism, classism, and ableism. Kaywim Feldman, Director of the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C, touches on this in an article discussing the importance of listening over speaking out:

As America changes, so too must its museums. We cannot simply make statements of solidarity and talk about our commitment to diversity. To be and to remain relevant, we must have empathy for our audiences and stakeholders. It is time for museums to move from making statements to material change in what we do and how we do it. That means being humble and normalizing the inclusion of historically marginalized voices in our work of collecting, exhibiting and interpreting art – from the very beginning of projects. To foster DEAI museums have to evaluate multiple aspects of their institutions. (2021)

As Feldman emphasizes, museums must look at the physical space, content, exhibition materials and strategies, employees, and leadership at the museum.

In conducting a case study that examines the DMA's programs, resources, and institutional initiatives, I was able to analyze and investigate the steps the museum has taken in response to issues of DEAI. Through researching the history, context, and key factors of the DMA's relation to DEAI, I came to better understand how the museum creates and implements its resources and what they prioritize at their institution.

CENTRAL RESEARCH QUESTION

How has the Dallas Museum of Art applied principles of diversity, equity, access, and inclusion to their programming, resources, and institutional initiatives?

PROBLEM STATEMENT

DEAI is a process, not a destination. Encouraging application of DEAI strategies can be challenging. Museum spaces must work continuously to inspire and maintain aspects of DEAI. DEAI is a journey that is ongoing, difficult, and ever changing. The problem for museums presently is the method of identifying what practices work best and foster an authentic and earnest cultivation of DEAI. Every museum serves a different audience, so there is not a one size fits all solution. What I address in this study is how one museum put their institutional initiatives (i.e., mission statements, EDI policies, accessibility pages and outreach programs) to foster DEAI into practice. This case study examines the current disconnect between intention and action by museums in the United States. I intend for this research to provide resources, information, and context relating to the DMA and how their practices attempt to uphold the principles and practices of DEAI that their website and mission statement declare. Through interviews, field notes, and document review I examine the institutional practices of the museum, and its relation to issues of DEAI as a modern museum in the United States.

As public tax-exempt institutions, museums have a responsibility to be diverse, equitable, accessible, and inclusive environments to all that visit. In America's Alliance of Museum's (AAM) Code of Ethics for Museums it states that, "Although the operating environment of museums grows more complex each year, the root value for museums, the tie that connects all of us together despite our diversity, is the commitment to serving people, both present and future generations" (AAM Code of Ethics for Museums, 2000).

This intentional commitment to serving those who enter the museum space is a large part of the foundation of my research, as well as a part of the criteria through which I deem the DMA's DEAI practices successful.

Through conducting a case study of the DMA's programming and resources, I highlighted examples of the museum's commitment to serving the diverse Dallas community. Though a commitment to DEAI is cited in the DMA's mission statement, I intentionally analyzed specific ways in which the DMA puts their mission statement into practice. My research provides a snapshot of how the DMA has planned, created, and implemented pedagogy, exhibitions, and programming that intentionally seeks to create diverse, equitable, accessible and inclusive experiences for all who visit the museum. In doing so, this study provides an example of the internal processes the museum went through in their DEAI work. Delving deeper into the DMA's institutional practices and programming in search for elements of DEAI has allowed me to acquire a firsthand understanding of the journey towards DEAI for the DMA. Looking closely at what they have done and need to do in order to better serve their community and commit to the ambitious and aspirational statements on their website that are embedded in their mission statement. Additionally, it has added to my understanding of where the DMA is today in the journey toward DEAI and where they need to go in order to both stay relevant as an institution and provide visitors with the best possible museum experience. I hope to bring the potential benefits and insights that I glean from this experience into my career as a museum educator.

As a white able-bodied woman entering a field that historically lacks diversity, it is important and necessary that I educate and familiarize myself with issues of DEAI so that I can contribute positively to the field of art education and more specifically museum education. Maintaining an awareness of my privilege and recognizing that it affects the

way that I experience the world and the way the world views me, is not enough. Just as I believe that museums must do more than simply acknowledge their own history of elitism and exclusion, I too must reflect on my own privileged perspective and advantages. I too must take informed action.

Rooted in the Code of Ethics for Museums provided by the AAM (2000), a museum has an obligation to go beyond ADA (American's with Disabilities Act of 1990) compliance and create programming that is inclusive, equitable, and accessible to a diverse range of visitors. The importance of and distinction between diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusivity is something that I discuss in depth in my case study. I define the nuance of each word and what they mean in the context of museums. To make sure that definitions of diversity, equity, access and inclusion are clear and uniform in my case study I use the definitions provided by Facing Change: Insights from AAM's Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion Working Group (AAM, 2018). These definitions are listed and fleshed out in my definitions of terms.

DEAI encompasses everything from hiring and retention of museum employees, the content of the art hanging on the walls, to the artists chosen to be included in the galleries- even the way that museum educators frame their tours. At the core of these concepts and ideas is the importance of being mindful and aware of the visitor experience. However, awareness is not enough on its own, this awareness needs to be coupled with informed action and a commitment to change and growth.

MOTIVATIONS FOR RESEARCH

Personal Motivations

Museums have always been educational, inspiring, and entertaining environments for me. I remember going into museums in my early childhood and feeling intrigued and

amazed by what was contained within the walls of the grand and mysterious buildings. The freedom and acceptance I felt in museums led to my love of art as well as my dedication to education.

When I entered graduate school, worked as a museum educator, and began to study museum theory, I was awakened to my privilege and ignorance tied into my experience in museum spaces. I was previously unaware that most people feel uncomfortable and alienated inside a museum. I learned of this feeling through articles and texts but more importantly from students in tour groups at the museum where I worked.

With a career as a museum educator as my goal, it is my intention to make visitors feel the same sense of belonging that I did and do inside a museum. My personal motivation lies in the desire to ensure that visitors of all physical capabilities, cultural backgrounds, and socioeconomic status can experience a museum in a positive way.

To me, an effective museum curates a space that can be easily navigated by visitors of all capabilities, making sure that physical, social and aesthetic barriers do not hinder the museum experience or the opportunity to have meaningful connection through artworks. Through conducting a case study that at its core intends to explore elements of DEAI in a museum space, I strive to gain knowledge and insights surrounding how to assist in eliminating barriers and help make museums more diverse, equitable, accessible and inclusive to a wider demographic of people.

Professional Motivations

My professional motivation for conducting a case study of the DMA and its relation to DEAI, lies in the potential of a museum's practices and programming to empower its visitors. I believe that an ideal museum does not simply seek to make its spaces ADA compliant, it strives to be a tool of empowerment.

I regard personal agency as a large part of true inclusivity. A visitor in a museum has the potential to feel a sense of belonging, but this can only be achieved when they feel empowered in the space, not hindered by it. Museums can become more effective institutions if they expand their physical functionality, and their understanding of what diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusivity mean in an art related space.

My motivation for research is to provide the field of art education with a thesis that not only explains and advocates for DEAI, but exemplifies potential successes and deficits present within the programming and practices of the DMA. Additionally, I would like to glean information and perspectives from current employees of the museum in order to gain a more holistic view of how this type of programming is made, implemented, and fleshed out over time.

The catalyst for my professional motivation has been my interest in accessibility in museum spaces. I not only want to understand where museums stand today in relation to accessibility, I want to understand what museums can do to become more diverse, equitable and inclusive institutions. Driven by my interest in accessibility, this case study provides particular focus on the physical accessibility of the DMA's architecture and navigability for individuals with special needs. This research has the potential to benefit museums, art educators, museum visitors and the field of art education.

HYPOTHESIS/SPECULATION ABOUT INVESTIGATION

Through conducting this case study, I hypothesize that I will better understand the Dallas Museum of Art's institutional initiatives and how principles of DEAI have been applied to its programs, practices, and resources. I expect that through interviews, field work, and researching the DMA I will be able to gain a thorough comprehension of the ways in which this museum is navigating issues of DEAI.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research utilizes case study research methodology. I chose this research method because I want to gain a “holistic and real-world perspective” (Yin, 2017, p. 5) of how principles of DEAI are implemented at the DMA. The phenomena that I observed includes the programs, institutional initiatives, and resources at the DMA that intentionally seek to promote DEAI. Case study research methodology best suits my research because I observed contemporary phenomena and my formal research question was anchored in uncovering ‘how’ the DMA embraces DEAI at their museum. Conducting a case study has allowed for me to participate in the “direct observation of... events being studied and [interview]... the [people] who may still be involved in those events” (Yin, 2017, p. 12). By applying case study research methodology, I was able to “deal with a full variety of evidence- documents, artifacts, interviews, and direct observation” (Yin, 2017, p. 12). In summation, I conducted a “case study because [I] want[ed] to understand a real-world case and assume that an understanding is likely to involve important contextual conditions pertinent to [my] case” (Yin, 2017, p. 15). Through the examination of programs, resources and institutional practices at the DMA, I observed real-world examples of DEAI work within the context of the museum.

This case study is exploratory in nature, intended to uncover how the DMA has sustained its mission statement, EDI policy, and dedication to accessibility. My research examined how the DMA incorporates concepts of diversity, equity, access, and inclusion in its museum practices. The purpose of this exploration was to provide myself with a thorough understanding of what the DMA has done and is doing to work toward DEAI in their resources and practices. The criteria by which I judged the DMA’s commitment to DEAI was by comparing specific real-world examples of how the museum is holding itself to the standards of DEAI that it declares on their website and mission statement to that

of practices advocated for by the AAM, John Salmen, Rebecca McGinnis, and other advocates of DEAI.

To identify the data that I needed to collect for this case study, I first began with defining the following: my research question(s), the case, and data collection methods. The data collected for this study included three semi-structured interviews, an on-site visit to the DMA, and review of online materials.

The interviews that I conducted with current DMA employees were formatted as semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews provided the structure of pre-written questions, with the flexibility to shift into other topics and areas of interest. The structure helped with relevance and time, and the flexibility aided in the comfortability of my interviewee and provided more organic responses (VanderStoep, 2009).

I used social justice theory and critical disability theory in this case study as a lens to position my study. Social justice theory is “a political philosophical concept originally centered around equality among people along various social dimensions” (Walters, 2020). Critical disability theory looks at how individuals with physical or developmental disabilities are affected by societal norms and conditions (Hall, 2019). Hall explains the theory as one that is tied closely to social justice and looks to “... [work] in solidarity for the purposes of liberation with people ‘devalued’ or ‘pathologized’[by society]” (2019). I choose to use these theoretical frameworks to guide my research and analysis because they allowed me to take a critical perspective, grounded in promoting equity and access, of how the DMA has attempted to become a more diverse, equitable, accessible and inclusive space. Using these theoretical frameworks in tandem guided my research specifically toward looking at how the DMA makes choices that affect the social, emotional, and aesthetic experience of the visitor. Analyzing the DMA from this standpoint informed my observation of the actions taken by the museum in relation to DEAI.

DATA COLLECTION

The data collected for this study came primarily from interviews conducted with DMA three employees, field notes from direct observation, information from the DMA's website and articles from sources outside of the DMA that analyze and or critique the programming provided by the museum. Through direct observation, I gained valuable firsthand data relating to the physical space, architecture, and navigational experience of the museum. This data came from field notes typed on my phone as well as photographs taken at the site. Due to COVID restrictions, I was not able to directly observe educational or access programming provided by the museum. Because of this restriction, I gathered information about the programs offered by the DMA from the museum's website and blog. I chose to interview three employees at the DMA that had positions within departments at the museum that dealt with issues of DEAI, as they would provide information relevant to the central research question.

DATA ANALYSIS

Case study data analysis is uniquely challenging because no specific guide or blueprint for it exists. Due to the particular difficulty of case study data analysis (Yin, 2018) it was crucial that I created an organized strategy for my analysis. I implemented the strategy of working with my raw data from the ground up in order to identify themes and commonalities across my various data sources. I used pattern matching as a method to both identify thematic patterns found in my data as well as organize my findings. The raw data that this study yielded was sourced from semi-structured interviews, field notes, and review of online content. Data collected from my interviews was recorded over zoom and transcribed and edited for clarity. Content checks were performed for each interview: a copy of the final transcription was sent to each participant to ensure that their words were

accurately represented. My field notes were typed on my phone during direct observation of the case site, the DMA. Lastly, I reviewed online content from the DMA as part of my data collection. The content I examined included the DMA's EDI policy (<https://dma.org/about/equity-diversity-and-inclusion-policy>), accessibility page (<https://dma.org/visit/accessibility>), and mission statement (<https://dma.org/about/mission-statement>). I coded my raw data by highlighting and color-coding relevant information pertaining to my central research question. These color-coded sections were then organized into two broad categories that I further scaffolded into various subthemes. I finalized the data analysis by explanation building through implementing data triangulation of my three data sources: semi-structured interviews, onsite observation, and review of online content. Data triangulation is the theory of using multiple sources of information to strengthen the internal validity of a study.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

- **Accessibility:** “giving equitable access to everyone along the continuum of human ability and experience. Accessibility encompasses the broader meanings of compliance and refers to how organizations make space for the characteristics that each person brings” (AAM, 2018).
- **ADA Compliance:** Basic adherence to legislation that asks for businesses and public institutions to provide “[a]ccommodation[s]... made to remove any barriers to full participation by people with physical or mental impairments" (R. F. Null & K. F. Cherry, 1998, p. 2).
- **Aesthetic Barriers:** A sensory inhibiting barrier brought on by a space that restricts a visitor's ability to fully experience a built environment.

- **Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA):** Legislation passed in 1990 by President George H.W. Bush that acts as an extension of the Civil Rights Act, “provides protection against discrimination on the basis of disability” (Null & Cherry, 1998, p. 2)
- **Assistive Infrastructure:** Underlying framework provided by public buildings intended to assist individuals with special needs; includes ADA-compliant entryways, bathrooms, elevators, and parking as well as available wheelchairs and seating.
- **Barrier-Free:** An environment that does not contain barriers to individuals that keep them from experiencing a space. Barriers include anything that may hinder an individual from participating in various aspects of a public environment’s aesthetic, social, or conceptual experience.
- **Beyond Compliance:** Efforts by organizations, businesses, and or public institutions to move beyond “basic compliance with minimum requirements... [of] building codes [and] replace [them] with creative, comprehensive design services [and] practitioners who are well trained and sensitive to the full range of human needs in the environment and who actively support a philosophy of maximizing abilities and independence for people of all ages, physical sizes, and abilities” (Mace, 1998, xi).
- **Disability:** Disability as defined by the ADA is: “A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities” (Null & Cherry, 1998, p. 6).
- **Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion (DEAI):** Acronym used to encompass the movement of making meaningful change in institutional environments in order to promote diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion.

- **Diversity:** “all the ways that people are different and the same at the individual and group levels. Even when people appear the same, they are different. Organizational diversity requires examining and questioning the makeup of a group to ensure that multiple perspectives are represented” (AAM, 2018).
- **Equity:** “the fair and just treatment of all members of a community. Equity requires commitment to strategic priorities, resources, respect, and civility, as well as ongoing action and assessment of progress toward achieving specified goals” (AAM, 2018).
- **Inclusion:** “the intentional, ongoing effort to ensure that diverse individuals fully participate in all aspects of organizational work, including decision-making processes. It also refers to the ways that diverse participants are valued as respected members of an organization and/ or community. While a truly ‘inclusive’ group is necessarily diverse, a “diverse” group may or may not be ‘inclusive’” (AAM, 2018).
- **Museum Architecture:** Constructed environment of a museum, including galleries, entry points, and parking garages.
- **Universal Design:** Coined by architect Ronald L. Mace, UD is a theory, movement, and practice that aims to design architecture and products for people of all capabilities (Null & Cherry, 1998)

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study focused on the efforts made by the DMA to create programming and resources that intend to foster DEAI. This research focused attention to issues of physical access to the museum space. My research included observation of specific programs offered at the DMA, institutional initiatives such as the museum’s mission statement, EDI

policy, and accessibility page. This research examined the steps the DMA has taken in relation to their mission statement, accessibility page, and EDI policies. Through interviews, field work, and examining online resources related to EDAI programming at the DMA, I provide an analytical investigation of the museum's DEAI work. The findings offered in this case study are limited to the DMA and specific to the programs and DEAI initiatives offered by the museum. I believe that this research has the potential to provide insight into how a modern museum integrates its DEAI policy and mission statement into their real-world practices.

BENEFITS TO THE FIELD OF ART EDUCATION

The results of this case study will benefit the field of art education because it provides a clear and informative examination of the DMA's initiatives that seek to promote DEAI. In conducting research that is focused on specific content analysis of the DMA and its DEAI programs and policies, I hope that art educators and museum educators use this research as a resource to their own DEAI work as well as their own personal and institutional goals. This case study provides the field of art education with a thesis that not only explains and advocates for DEAI, but exemplifies potential successes and deficits present within the programming and practices of the DMA.

COVID RELATED RESTRICTIONS

The limitations of my research are mostly due to the restrictions that COVID-19 has placed on the DMA and its facilities. Unfortunately, the Center for Creative Connections (C3), a gallery within the museum that provides sensory based experiences, was closed due to the pandemic. Thus, I was unable to experience C3 programming firsthand. The DMA is also not offering any in-person programming or tours for the

foreseeable future. As such, my observations and data relating to the programs offered at the DMA are sourced online through the DMA's website and blog, as well as articles previously written about these programs, rather than direct in person observational field notes.

CONCLUSION

This case study examines efforts made by the DMA to create programs, practices, and resources that intend to promote DEAI. I used case study research methodology to explore the DMA's adherence to both their mission statement, accessibility statement, and their Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy. I provide specific attention and analysis to issues of accessibility for individuals that require assistive accommodations. Prior to collecting data, I read and synthesized pertinent literature surrounding museum theory, museum architecture, ADA compliance, and DEAI in museum spaces. Data collection included field notes through direct observation, interviews with DMA staff members, and online DMA resources. Anchored in my belief in art access and the potential of museum education, this research supports the importance for modern museums to expand their dedication and commitment to cultivating DEAI

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The following literature review pertains to museum theory, museum architecture, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), beyond compliance, and Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion (DEAI) in museums today. This combination of elements is important to build a holistic understanding of the modern museum. In order to provide myself and my reader with a base from which to examine the modern museum, I began my research by delving into museum theory. Next, an understanding of the historical background of museum architecture provides context and insight into how space informs both an institution's intentions as well as the visitor's experience. The 1990 ADA is a pivotal piece of legislation that acted as a catalyst, driving museums to consider accessibility and issues of DEAI in spaces throughout the United States. Nonetheless it is important to distinguish between ADA adherence driven by regulation, and the concept of "beyond compliance", the more involved initiatives to promote physical access separate from legal requirements. The chapter concludes with a broad examination of DEAI in museums today. This section will provide examples of successfully implemented DEAI practices in museums in order to emphasize the value of integrating these ideals into museum spaces.

MUSEUM THEORY

During the past century the purpose of museums in society has shifted, and this is reflected in their architecture. In her book, *Contemporary Museum Architecture and Design* (2020), Georgia Lindsay discusses the question of how museums fit into society and how that relationship impacts their purpose and architectural form, "[l]ike cathedrals, [museums] represent the ideals society holds, gathering objects and people together in service of knowledge and beauty. In creating collections, they delineate whose culture,

history, and art is important” (Lindsay, 2020, p. 1). Lindsay additionally emphasizes the messaging of a museum's physical form: “Architecture can be a fortress, or it can invite people in” (2020, p. 63). Indeed, from one century to the next, the purpose(s) of museums have changed, and museum design/architecture has changed in order to accommodate shifting priorities and needs.

Museum’s societal role and their intended purpose for their constituents has transformed throughout history. This ever-evolving function has been reflected in the architectural design, further supported by Patterson who states that: “architecture, as a concrete manifestation of otherwise abstract political and cultural logics, serves as a useful lens through which to understand larger socio-historical trends” (2020, p. 156). Tracing the history of museum architecture illuminates how the physical form of the museum is intended to inform individuals who enter the space. What precise information is conveyed has changed drastically from one era, or one decade to the next.

Duncan Cameron analyzes this concept in his journal article “The Museum: a Temple or the Forum”, arguing that museums are still struggling to define and understand their identity. Cameron (1972) states, “...the crisis at the moment, put in the simplest possible terms, is that our museums and art galleries seem not to know who or what they are. Our institutions are unable to resolve their problems of role definition” (p. 189). It is important to note that he differentiates activity centers and community exhibitions from museums. Cameron points out the frustrating ambiguity of the word ‘museum’ and how it has been appropriated by public institutions, such as the aforementioned activity and community centers and or exhibitions, further muddying the definition and understanding of a museum (Cameron, 1972).

Museums initially came to prominence in the Renaissance era (Norrie, 2020), but the broader concept “firmly rooted in the practice of collecting and scholarship that has

existed since antiquity” (Norrie, 2020, p. 178). Norrie argues that from this initial practice of collection and display to the dynamic institutions that museums are today, museums have gone through “...three distinct stages, each reflecting the dominant values of its era.” (Norrie, 2020, p. 178). The first stage is that of the ‘storehouse’ where private collectors accumulated and displayed items of interest and intrigue. The second stage, inspired by the scientific advancements of the time, focused on ‘observable objects’, and the third stage aimed at more abstract concepts such as the distinction between ‘display’ and ‘communication’ (Norrie, 2020). Norrie notes that “[t]hroughout these stages, there was an increasing curatorial shift from passive to active engagement, and the architecture of museums was orchestrated to establish dynamic relationships that were central to the construction of meaning and lived experience” (2020, p. 179). This relationship between the architecture of the museum and the visitor’s experience as well as level of engagement, provides a historical through line that showcases how museums have evolved over centuries.

While Norrie delineates three distinct phases of museum development, the first stage began in the 15th century and took the form of collected items or ‘cabinets of curiosity’. These collections of objects were mostly attained during travels and exhibited by the upper echelon of society. Cabinets of curiosity existed as spaces where invited visitors could gaze at collections intended to “entertain and amuse rather than to address any didactic or devotional agenda” (Norrie, 2020, p. 179). In contrast, the concept of the ‘public museum’ came to fruition during the 19th century. Cameron makes the important point that when these private ‘cabinets of curiosity’ became public, they were just that, private collections: “...[t]he trouble began with the introduction of a new idea, the democratic museum... [c]ollectors [then became] members of an academic, curatorial elite whose members were most familiar and most comfortable with the models that were

specific to their academic disciplines” (1972, p. 194). Problematically, these newly public museums were intended to inform and educate the public on what was considered by the aristocracy as items of cultural importance. Cameron concludes that “[w]e created great art museums that reflected the heritage of bourgeois and aristocratic culture to the exclusion of popular or folk culture” (1972, p. 195). Museum architecture underpinned their own “instructive and didactic agenda” (Norrie, 2020, p. 182), with grandiose and formal institutions that evoked the architecture of authoritarian buildings like churches and municipal buildings.

The 20th century brought about new expectations for museums. Museums were tasked with “counteract[ing] the perception of their status as elite institutions, and engag[ing] with [the] economic, cultural, and social life of the city [they resided in]” (Norrie, 2020, p. 184). As museums began to cater to the needs of their communities, they adopted a more open and accessible philosophy for their built form, “museum architecture began to challenge and subvert the classical associations, producing new patterns of formal and spatial order” (Norrie, 2020, p. 184). Museums abandoned the notion of the ‘temple of culture’ that kept visitors in a passive role and embraced newer conceptual ideals that emphasized personal connection and experience. Cameron aligns with this shift away from museums that function as temples and urges movement toward the concept of museums as forums:

There must be concurrent creation of forums for confrontation, experimentation and debate, where the forums are related but discrete institutions... [w]hat they have to say must be subjected to public judgement and to the test of time. These are the functions of the forum. (1972, p. 197)

The museum that Cameron envisions is one that embraces the concept of continued growth, one that does not shy away from the difficult issues of the world and the community that it is located in.

The shift from private collections to public educational spaces was a rather cumbersome one, and the repercussions of this change is still reflected in museum architecture today. Cameron notes that while these spaces were made public there was no alteration to the architecture or the items and concepts and ideals being communicated, as “[o]ne might almost say that the private collectors had been replaced by an exclusive, private club of curators... [t]he public was still being offered private collections but with a new name over the door” (1972, p. 194). Here Cameron further highlights the necessity of institutional change within museums.

The 21st century ushered in a new era of social responsibility, mindfulness, culturally specific museums, and civically minded museums. The Denver Art Museum (DAM) is an example of a museum that “place[s] people at the heart of [their] work that is human centered and community focused” (Lambson, 2020, p. 65). The DAM has recognized that

[t]here is an increased desire for museums to be places of connection and conversation. 21st century museum audiences expect to experience spaces that are welcoming and provide equitable access to the arts, that invite participation in personal learning and discovery, that give opportunity to be part of something bigger than oneself, and that reflect multiple perspectives and points of relevance. (Lambson, 2020, p. 66)

The DAM has embarked on the creation of a new Creative Hub, and has taken their previous statements of community centricity, and visitor inclusion and put them into practice by “involving the community in developing and programming [the new] space” (Lambson, 2020, p. 68). This is a primary example of how a modern museum has embraced

its dedication to community and inclusion by integrating visitors' voices into the architectural planning and development.

MUSEUM ARCHITECTURE

Due to the shifting purpose(s) of museums, an examination of how their architecture alters the experience of the space is needed. John Cotton Dana, a champion of the public library and founder of The Newark Museum in 1909, emphasizes the importance of museum architecture to visitor experience and education. In *The New Museum* he attributes poor visitor engagement to the insufficient design, content, and management of museums in the early 20th century (Dana, 1917). Dana (1917) states, in opposition to the canonized architecture of museums of his time,

[t]o build first an expensive home, a palace, a temple or any grandiose and permanent structure on the conventional lines of so-called museum architecture was, so we seemed clearly to see, to do a foolish, wasteful, antiquated thing; a thing possible only to those who knew little of modern community life, still less of American educational practice, and least of all modern museum ideas. (p. 12)

Here Dana addresses the disconnect between architecture and audience in museums. Coming off of decades of museums functioning as aristocratic collections parading as 'public museums', Dana emphasizes the need for drastic reform, as he further discusses the concept of the new museum in opposition to the traditional 'old' museum that dominated the United States in the early 20th century. He suggests that the grandiose architecture of museums is a hindrance on visitors and their education describing the experience of such museums as: "... depressing and numbing to the sensitive visitor in direct ratio to the self-conscious grandeur and refinement of its architectural container" (Dana, 1917, p. 14). Dana believed community outreach and integration was important to a successful and effective museum. Dana also believed museums should be integrated into their communities for the

betterment of community members rather than ‘collections’ of the upper echelon of society. Educational in purpose, and accessible, “... the kind of museum best worth having in your community is the kind that is alive and active... doing some rather definite work in the field of entertainment, and enlightenment and education” (Dana, 1917, p. 22). These intentions begin with the design of the museum galleries and building facades. The following section provides specific examples of various museums that exemplify how architecture can demonstrate a commitment to community, visitor experience, and education.

Located in Melbourne, Australia the Monash University Museum of Art (MUMA) “exemplifies how architecture can be a catalyst for urban repair and can expand the reach of the museum by bringing art into the adjacent public realm” (Thompson, 2020, p. 106). As part of a campus wide initiative to revitalize campus life and the communities integrated within it, this architectural project, completed in 2010, “[b]rings the inside out, art now infiltrates and activates the surrounding landscape, providing a cultural and social focus” (Thompson, 2020, p. 106). This project utilizes architecture's potential to create shared spaces that inspire community, social interaction, and a connection to place. “[T]his project at MUMA demonstrates how an integrated vision for art, architecture, and landscape can enhance the public realm and make the experience of art more accessible and incidental” (Thompson, 2020, p. 109). This project highlights the new role and need for communal cultural spaces at museums. This type of architectural approach places community and connection at the core of the museum’s functionality, “...demonstrat[ing] that the architecture of the museum is a powerful force in both enabling an institution to expand its vision and in connecting communities of citizens with each other through the enjoyment and appreciation of place” (Thompson, 2020, p 118). Conversely to creating an ‘iconic’ flashy facade to attract tourists or stakeholders, MUMA aspires to promote connection from both outside and within the museum's architectural form.

Some contemporary museums have begun to expand what they offer and involve their constituents in, as opposed to the typical secretive and exclusionary institutional processes. William Smart, a self-described ‘architectural tourist’, touches on the concept of institutional transparency and access urging for the creation of open and integrated museum spaces. Smart advocates that in opening up more aspects of a museum, i.e. expanding transparency of function, they can reach wider audiences. Smart explains that an “ ‘open and integrated’ museum extends the traditional model of a museum from a place that displays art or hosts object exhibitions, into a place where the process of its creation is part of the show’s content” (2020, p. 139). Smart references 21st century museums in “The Open and Integrated Museum”, and recognizes the shift in intent for museum spaces, however, he has observed that “... many museums... have struggled to keep up with changes in society, and, expectations of many visitors, often creating a disappointing experience” (2020, p. 153). Smart concludes his chapter by stating that a “museum’s design should concurrently focus on how to attract more visitors... [an] aspiration... generated and supported actively by the architecture of the museum” (2020, p. 154). Again, scholars reinforce the importance of museum architecture in relation to its identity, culture, and voice.

An additional vital component to modern museum architecture is physical accessibility. Issues of access for museum spaces have historically been challenging because “[w]hile all types of buildings should aim to optimize the relationship between user and environment, museums have an added challenge of integrating a third variable: the exhibit material, i.e., the contents” (Banasiak, 2020, p. 231). In embracing civic responsibility, museums aim to “serve and educate the public. Such a mission implies that museums would thereby adopt an inclusive approach to the design of their environments, learning programs, and aesthetic experiences to best serve a diversity of public visitors”

(Banasiak, 2020, p. 232). It is imperative for the design elements of a museum to contribute to the purpose of the space. With contemporary museums attempting to change the way that they are viewed by society they must embrace new theories of design.

A design theory that has been created in response to the ADA is Universal Design (“UD”). UD is a concept beginning in architecture and expanding to product design and education. Universal Design’s defining aspect is that it is all-inclusive. In Roberta Null’s (1998) book *Universal Design: Creative Solutions for ADA Compliance*, she defines the design concept, “[u]niversal design features are good for almost everyone, and as they become incorporated into the everyday world, the similarities between people, as well as their needs for similar products and environments, will become more readily apparent” (p. 26). UD negates the notion that making a space accessible is only to the benefit of a select few and to the detriment of the space’s aesthetics and finances. As quoted by Null, Susan Behar, an interior designer, describes UD as addressing the ‘four A’s’: accessibility, adaptability, aesthetics, and affordability. Null takes this concept a step further and lists the four essential principles of UD: Supportive, Adaptable, Accessible, and Safety Oriented.

Beginning with aesthetics, UD addresses the way some businesses view accessibility. Accessible mechanisms are often added to a space after its design and construction to comply with ADA regulations, which can unfortunately result in an “unattractive, costly, Band-Aid” (Mace, 1998, xi). Rather than retroactively making a space accessible, UD would create a space with aesthetics and inclusivity in mind. For spaces that already exist, like most museums and art galleries, Universal Designers strive to create accessible changes that keep the aesthetics of a space in mind. “Universal design... adapts products that are already accepted by the population at large or creates ones that will be pleasing to everyone” (1998, p. 31). In the architectural magazine *Access by Design*, they make a case for the viability of this concept in their article “Making

Existing Buildings Accessible: Museums and Art Galleries” (2006) in which the importance of nuance and creativity in making a museum space more accessible is emphasized, as well as three factors that make museum spaces and art galleries unique in the struggle for accessibility: large numbers of diverse visitors, a high percentage of first-time visitors, and the historic nature of the buildings. Having a diverse audience attending museum spaces is certainly not a negative, though it is important for museum spaces to be able to provide information and aesthetic experiences to individuals of all capabilities. This leads into the next factor: most visitors will be coming into the space for the first time and it is important to the success of the visit that people are able to easily navigate the space. Finally, making a museum more accessible often requires that the physical architecture be reconfigured to accommodate enabling mechanisms. This is a challenging part of accessibility for museums that wish to not compromise the architecture or aesthetic experience of the space. These cumbersome elements can largely be eliminated by UD, creating a more cohesive process (Cave, 2006).

A core element of UD is empathy. UD’s foundation is ‘people first’, thus “(a) firm grasp of this concept will be driven by one’s capacity to empathize with people in a variety of circumstances” (Null, 1998, p.46). The shift in purpose and intention that has been reflected in 21st century museums that embraces accessibility and inclusivity lends itself to UD’s core beliefs. “(W)hat is central to the ADA and the universal design movement is a belief that the built and imagined world does not work for many. Universal design can be further defined as informed, empathic, creative activity focused on altering the known environment” (Null, 1998, p.47). Here Null is supporting the necessity of UD because of the limitations still present in the built world, recognizing the hindrance that architecture presents to many individuals. Modern museums, if they intend to strive for greater

accessibility and inclusion, need to consider how their physical form affects those who enter the space.

In addition to the accessibility of a museum's architectural approach, continuity and consistency between container and content is of the utmost importance. The container being the [built] form, the architecture of the museum, and the contents being the exhibition materials and items. Recent studies show that a “building[s] geometries can influence a user’s aesthetic experience and contribute to differences in perceived emotion and meaning” (Banasiak, 2020, p. 239). Museum professionals have come to understand that the [built] form of their institution does not elicit a neutral effect on those who enter. Lindsay (2020) contends that “[w]hile public buildings are usually required to be minimally accessible to people with impairments... museum architecture [has the potential to] go beyond accessibility to including and celebrating the diversity of embodied experiences” (p. 229). To individuals with different needs who are often accustomed to facing challenges in public spaces, experiencing a seamless museum design is vital to fostering a sensation of belonging and societal acceptance. Museums have the opportunity to showcase their ability to be community institutions. When done mindfully, museums have the potential to be inclusive and all-encompassing with their design and the results can yield strong experiential outcomes for visitors whose senses are factored into the exhibition. Banasiak (2020) explains that “...museum architecture and art comeingle and [are] experienced by the whole body and multiple senses interacting” (p. 241) when executed correctly. Banasiak (2020) concludes the article on spatial and exhibition cooperation by emphasizing that “[s]uch a strategy not only promotes good design, but also ethical design by providing an experience supporting diverse perceptual abilities so that the museum can remain an accessible place for all” (p. 244). Lindsay and Banasiak support the ideal of ethical design in museums tying good design to effective visitor engagement

and experience. Architecture has the potential to be a tool of the museum to promote visitor comfort, and connection to the physical space.

Museum architecture is complex, political, costly, and time sensitive (MacLeod, 2013). With the rise in museums as cultural institutions and tourist attractions, architects strive to be involved with such large projects like designing or redesigning a museum. Suzanne MacLeod states in her book *Museum Architecture: A New Biography* (2013), “[m]useum commissions have almost become barometers of professional success and the result has been a whole raft of books that celebrate this work” (p. 2). The process and agenda of creating a museum space involves multiple fields, committees, boards, organizations and sometimes government. This involvement further clouds the architectural intentions and “[a]ll too often it can seem as though there is a fundamental disconnect between the actual practices and intentions of museums and architectural planning processes and outcomes” (MacLeod, 2013, p. 6). MacLeod highlights how some museums often lose sight of or are steered away from their mission because of the involvement of so many stakeholders, board members, city councils, and architects.

It is important to note that the field of art education and museum studies “has traditionally ignored the physical museum building and the process of shaping museum space, focusing instead on objects and practices in space” (MacLeod, 2013, p. 6). A museum’s physical space is important to understand and pay attention to, because it is a large portion of what shapes an individual’s experience. Architecture and “built forms are the medium in and through which life is lived and which are, as a result, implicated in processes of identity formation and selfhood” (MacLeod, 2013, p. 8). As supported by MacLeod architecture informs visitor identity and sense of self, because of this modern museums have a duty to create spaces that are welcoming, accessible, and inclusive to the widest visitor demographic possible.

A lot is placed on the creation of a museum space and often it becomes a frustrating battle between “personal agendas and goals...institutional ambitions and visions, economic development plans, the expectations of funding bodies and the broader social ideals and expectations for the museum’s role in society” (MacLeod, 2005, p. 10). It is important to note the complex nature of creating and altering a museum space. Ultimately the space informs the experience. Visitors and museum employees alike have a responsibility to make the best of what is available to them.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT 1990 (ADA)

Movement toward accessibility began in the United States as early as the 1940s, when WWII veterans began to reintegrate themselves into society with new levels of physical ability. There were several pieces of legislation leading up to the creation of the ADA: the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 (“ABA”), and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The ADA was passed on July 12, 1990, by President George H.W. Bush. The ADA acts as an “extension of the Civil Rights Act of 1964” and “provides protection against discrimination on the basis of disability” (Null, 1998, p. 2). The ADA aims to integrate individuals with disabilities into mainstream society. It acts on the basis that disabled individuals wish for independence and agency, which it aims to ensure by eliminating physical barriers. Prior to the passing of the ADA, the ABA was passed “mandate[ing] that all facilities funded partially or wholly by federal funds and intended for public use should be designed and constructed in an accessible manner” (Null, 1998, p. 4). These pieces of legislation formed the foundation of what accessibility would come to look like in museum spaces in the United States. Each law addressed issues of physical barriers as well as design of public spaces.

In the years following the passing of the ABA and ADA, John Salmen wrote a diagnostic manual, *Everyone's Welcome: The Americans with Disabilities Act and Museums* (1998). Salmen, an architect specializing in UD, created this manual in response to the passing of the ADA in 1990. A mere eight years after the ADA was passed, this manual was published by the American Association of Museums ("AAM") in order to assist U.S. museums to comply with the ADA's legal requirements to make public institutions accessible to all. The manual provides museums with definitions, examples, and explanations relating to the ADA and accessibility. Salmen (1998) specifies that "[t]his book was written to help museum staff identify needs and solutions and to make adequate and appropriate changes so that the museum experience is integrated, rich, dignified, and satisfying for all people" (p. 1). This manual is a benchmark for access and inclusion in museum's spaces due to its emphasis on advocacy for individuals with varying abilities. In this diagnostic manual, Salmen both defines and connects physical accessibility to the successful creation of inclusive museum spaces.

Salmen (1998) argues that, because of the nature and intention of museum spaces and what they intend to offer their constituents, they should "go beyond who we are or what we can or cannot do, they should be places without barriers to participation" (p. 2). Salmen also discusses that "[m]any of the features that make a space accessible for people with disabilities also make life easier and more convenient for everyone else. A person does not have to be disabled to benefit from access" (p. 3). Part of making a museum accessible in an effective way is not drawing attention to the individual's disability, which is accomplished through creating seamless and integrated museum spaces that prioritizes access. Rather than creating separation through what businesses and corporations often deem as ADA compliant, such as separate entrances for those that cannot climb stairs, or elevators that do not incorporate art or the aesthetic experience of the individual using it,

museums should strive to integrate access into their institutions for the benefit of all their visitors in order to foster access and inclusivity. Salmen (1998) notes that “people with disabilities can benefit from the museum, site, or program that is as accessible for them as for others without calling attention to their disabilities” and “[u]nder the ADA, accessibility means compliance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act Standards for Accessible Design for new construction and alterations. To museums, accessibility means making the site’s exhibits and programs available to all visitors” (p. 3). It is important to notice the distinction that Salmen makes here, between ADA compliance and what access should be in a museum space. Salmen (1998) further distinguishes between ADA compliance and accessibility stating that “[a]ccessibility, therefore, pertains not just to buildings and programs but to attitudes of tolerance and sensitivity as well... [while] the ADA [simply] requires access to goods, services, and benefits offered to the public, and prohibits discriminatory exclusion because of a disability.” (p. 7). Modern museums should embrace this notion of creating spaces that go well beyond ADA compliance and center the effectiveness of the institution around the experience of the visitor rather than adherence to legislation.

In 2004, a complaint from a visitor in relation to the physical accessibility of an exhibition prompted museums in the United States to rethink the experiential aspects of their exhibitions:

[A] complaint was filed against the International Spy Museum in Washington, D.C. for being inaccessible to those with visual impairments. It was a case of ‘not enough’ perceptible information to support the sensory needs of all users. The Department of Justice reached a settlement agreement with the museum in 2008 requiring significant facility revisions to ensure access citing Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). (Banasiak, 2020, p. 233)

This event brought on by inaccessibility and supported through the ADA, acted as a “cautionary precedent” (Banasiak, 2020, p. 233) for museums in the United States and was a catalyst for the movement toward multisensory exhibitions. This shift toward more dynamic exhibition materials and focus on visitor experience in a more nuanced and inclusive manner marks the intention and institutional shift beyond ADA compliance.

BEYOND ADA COMPLIANCE IN MUSEUMS

McGinnis (2007) summarizes the need for museums to move beyond basic ADA compliance and toward DEAI:

Many museums offer accommodations such as assistive listening devices, large print and braille information, sign language interpretation, and wheelchairs. These services are important, but they are too often conceived of as add-ons, rather than an integral part of what museums have to offer. Instead, we must consider these accommodations as core services and plan and budget for them accordingly (p. 141)

As illustrated in the quote above, ADA compliant assistive technologies and services are not enough- they are the simply the baseline of what museums should be doing to be accessible. 21st century museums have a responsibility to attempt to move beyond this, offering a plethora of resources and programs that are accessible to the widest demographic possible.

While most museums have, since the passing of the ADA, attempted to become barrier-free environments, there is a lack of continuity regarding what successful DEAI implementation looks like. After the passing of the ABA in 1968, the ADA in 1990, and the creation of *Everyone’s Welcome* in 1998, the next step for museums to further embrace principles of DEAI is to utilize these resources and embark on an implementation of more inclusive practices. Museums must “establish an institutional commitment and culture within each museum and in the museum community that supports inclusiveness”

(McGinnis, 2007, p. 147). What McGinnis is emphasizing here is that it is not enough for museums to provide assistive infrastructure and/or programming, inclusivity and accessibility has to be ingrained into a museum's values, ethics, mission, as well as continuously advocated for.

Though this movement toward DEAI is difficult and ongoing, there are many museums at the forefront of this movement utilizing the resources available to them to embark on radical and revolutionary practices, implementing new and sometimes experimental technologies to become better and more integrated institutions. An example of this is the innovative multisensory exhibitions offered at the 2015 Tate Sensorium at the Tate Britain: “This temporary exhibit enabled visitors to experience a small collection of visual art works through all senses, including through the use of a novel haptic technology using ultrasound pressure-induced tactile patterns congruent with the visual paintings” (Banasiak, 2020, p. 233). The Tate Sensorium embraced the neuroscience behind the connection of sensory and emotional stimulation to visitors' level of engagement, in order to provide a deeper connection with the art works provided. In order to gauge the success of the multisensory exhibition, visitors voluntarily participated in a “study sharing their... experience [of] the art... [r]esults indicated that the multisensory correlation embedded in the exhibit experience for each painting supported greater stimulation, immersion, opportunity to focus, and emotional connection” (Banasiak, 2020, p. 233). This exhibition moves beyond basic compliance with ADA regulations, providing inclusive programming that offers multisensory experiences that are intended for the use of all visitors therefore not isolating individuals with varying abilities.

In 2018 the Cooper Hewitt designed an exhibition titled “The Senses: Design Beyond Vision”, created to “expand the discourse on inclusive design” (Baumann, 2016, p. 6). In this exhibition, the Cooper Hewitt attempts to communicate hundreds of different

experiential sensations ranging from “[a] bag of microwave popcorn [to] snowstorms” (Banasiak, 2020, p. 234) in the winter. Both the Cooper Hewitt and the Tate aspire to spark conversations about inclusivity within exhibition design which leads into the larger issue of access and inclusion in museum spaces. Banasiak (2020) notes that “[a]ccess to perceptible information is a fundamental need pervasive across all perceptual abilities, and most acute among persons with sensory processing differences” (p. 235). Attention to sensory experiences in museums spaces is important to fostering access and inclusion and showcases a museum's dedication to doing more than simply adhering to national and institutional legislation. Banasiak (2020) concludes her chapter on sensory immersive exhibitions by further emphasizing the importance of sensory connections, claiming “Integrating sense information and maintaining sensory connections is a key strategy which can support sensemaking for all museum visitors” (p. 236). As supported by Banasiak’s quote, acknowledging sensory stimulation as part of what contributes to visitor needs is vital to promoting diverse and engaging programming and exhibitions in museums today.

An article in *The International Journal of the Inclusive Museum* titled, “Blind and Visually Impaired Visitors’ Experiences in Museums: Increasing Accessibility through Assistive Technologies” (Vaz, Freitas, & Coelho, 2020), advocates for and explains visitor needs and experiences including a detailed account of the barriers and challenges that visitors face accompanied with examples of new assistive technologies utilized in museums to increase experiential access. Vaz, Freitas, and Coelho (2020) begin the article by calling attention to the need for assistive and inclusive technologies that go beyond ADA compliance by citing statistics on the percentage of the population that identifies as having disabled vision. In stating the large number of individuals that have sight impairments, further emphasis is placed on the relevance of assistive technologies: “patrons with total and partial visual impairments represent an important potential market for museums, and

positive economic effects are expected with the implementation of inclusive technologies to promote access to exhibitions” (Vaz, Freitas, & Coelho, 2020, p. 57). It is also noted that most museums default to audio guides in order to check the box of accessibility and inclusion to their exhibitions. Though ADA compliant “most of the available audio guides designed for blind visitors merely provide a description of what is seen, which does not allow those persons to create accurate mental images of the exhibits” (Vaz, Freitas, & Coelho, 2020, p. 58). Vaz, Freitas, & Coelho (2020) argue further that visitors with vision impairments gain the most out of museums visits that supply multisensory experiences stating that “multimodal approaches are necessary to give blind and visually impaired people the opportunity to fully experience museum visits, allowing them to adequately understand the exhibits’ characteristics and appreciate their aesthetic qualities, besides benefitting from the emotion inspired by museum objects” (p. 58).

In addition to multimodal approaches, it is important that museum staff are properly trained in how to interact and handle issues of access. The deficit of proper sensitivity training is mentioned as problematic especially within American museums, “lack of training provided to staff in American museums as an emergency necessity, especially for those who interact directly with visitors” (Vaz, Freitas, & Coelho, 2020, pp. 58-59). Because of this lack of training and experience with visitors with varying needs and abilities, often museums rely on pre-scheduling their accessible practices. Museums often ask on their website that visitors with special needs must call ahead in order to plan for such needs. Another example of pre-scheduling is that most museums that offer ASL tours only offer them on specific days of the week or month. Because of this, visitors that require assistive technologies or personal assistance cannot organically experience museum visits, therefore excluding such individuals from the social experience of attending a museum in-the-moment. Vaz, Freitas, & Coelho (2020) agree with this sentiment expressing that “[i]n

order to promote more democratic inclusion and avoid the need to schedule visits to museums, multisensory tours should, ideally, be part of the general museum's exhibitions instead of only for the visually impaired" (p. 61).

In tandem with these types of inclusionary and accessible practices and resources, museums dedicated to moving past ADA compliance have been exploring new technologies that provide unique sensory experiences for individuals with sight impairments. Haptic interfaces are one of the newer technologies that museums have been experimenting with in order to provide more involved experiences with art. Haptic interfaces "are, in essence, immersive systems that provide kinesthetic force feedback to users, allowing them to acquire perceptual information such as shape, weight, texture and material properties, while manipulating three-dimensional virtual objects or other computer-generated environments" (Vaz, Freitas, & Coelho, 2020, p. 62). These types of interfaces solve several problems that museums face in attempting to become more inclusive and accessible spaces, as "there is no need [for museums] to produce physical models, haptic devices allow visitors to explore tactile virtual replicas of museum objects, with the advantage that it can also solve the issue that some museums face regarding the storage of a duplicate collection of physical replicas" (Vaz, Freitas, & Coelho, 2020, p. 62).

In 2016, the National Museum of Transylvanian History of Cluj-Napoca utilized a haptic device as a "cost-effective solution that allows tactile experiences of three-dimensional digitized objects" (Vaz, Freitas, & Coelho, 2020, p. 63). The haptic device manifests as a pen that provides force to the user's hand as they make contact with the virtual models, "different mass properties have been added to support feeling distinct force feedback when picking up an iron or a ceramic virtual object, for example" (Vaz, Freitas, & Coelho, 2020, p. 63).

A similar project, that took place in Vienna, Austria, titled “Probos Sensory Console” utilized a haptic device with audio descriptions that accompanied it to enhance the users experience and comprehension: “Th[is] haptic interface... allows visitors to explore the space by holding a stylus between their fingers, and hearing sounds while making contact with a virtual object, as well as it provides vocal instructions on how to hold the handle” (Vaz, Freitas, & Coelho,2020, p. 63).

Another approach to access has been the use of 3-D printing to replicate objects found in the museums and provide tactile experiences for visitors. One example is a program at the Art Institute in Chicago where “blind and partially sighted visitors can hold and touch three-dimensional replicas of selected objects from the collection at several points of a multisensory tour, while discussions about the original works of art are being promoted by museum staff” (Vaz, Freitas, & Coelho, 2020, p. 64). Through providing additional tactile and sensory experiences and experimenting with new technologies, modern museums can begin to showcase their dedication to accessibility.

In addition to physical access and moving beyond ADA compliance, assistive navigation for self-guided tours is another factor to cultivating an inclusive museum. To promote personal visitor agency, museums need to provide resources for individuals with sight impairments to navigate the museum space. Vaz, Freitas, & Coelho (2020) mention that “technology is also being used to provide... better physical access, indoor navigation and wayfinding in [museum] environments, enhancing [visitors] ability to move independently through different galleries, without the aid of guides or another escort” (p. 67). Navigating a new architectural environment is a major deterrent for visitors with sight disabilities because of the social and emotional implications. The Museum of Science and Technology of the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil has created an interface that aids in navigating their museum environment. The technology uses:

An audio interface assists the user by providing audio-descriptions about elements' physical appearance, functioning and how to use them in the real context of the museum, while the smartphone's vibration function is used if the user crashes into an object. Evaluation results demonstrated a positive impact of the system on orientation and mobility skills of blind users, allowing a more autonomously and safely visit to the museum. (Vaz, Freitas, & Coelho, 2020, p. 64)

As the quote above illustrates, there are many ways in which museums can work toward becoming more intuitive to visitor needs that go well beyond adherence to the provisions cited in the ADA legislation.

DEAI IN MUSEUMS

Diversity Equity Access and Inclusion are not new concepts or ideas but have been reprioritized within museums in recent years. In accordance with the AAM this reprioritization was inspired in 2015 by Dr. Johnnetta Betsch Cole's keynote speech at the AAM's annual meeting where she called upon museums to "be of social value by not only inspiring but creating change around one of the most critical issues of our time—the issue of diversity" (Cole, 2015). When the AAM set out to create their 2016-2020 strategy "the board of directors and leadership team started by listening [and] learning what museum professionals believe are the issues most vital to the field's viability, relevance, and sustainability. At the top of many priority lists were issues of diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion in all aspects of museums' structure and programming. These issues, abbreviated as DEAI, became [their] first focus area" (AAM, 2018). This intentional shift in direction for museums, made official by AAM's acknowledgement of the lack of DEAI in the field, emphasizes the new understanding of the intention and purpose behind what a museum should provide to its visitors. Within the past five years DEAI in museums has become a priority (AAM, 2018).

As mentioned in AAM's report, *Facing Change: Insights from AAM's Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion Working Group* (2018), the movement towards DEAI is a journey, not a destination. Concepts of DEAI began as early as the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s, beginning with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Null, 1998, p. 2). Each decade following this act brought new legislation that would expand upon the Civil Rights Act's foundational concept of access, equity, and inclusion. In an (Hoth & Levitt, 1973) article in 1973 titled "Museums and the Handicapped", an argument is made for specialized programming for individuals with disabilities,

Another important consideration for museum educators is the handicapped person's self-image. He may feel very self-conscious and not anxious to appear in public. Special attention may be given to informing handicapped people about museum programs, but they will not feel welcome if they discover that their basic needs have been overlooked. The addition of ramps in gallery areas easily could make a handicapped visitor feel welcome. Another suggestion was to integrate other visiting school groups with the handicapped groups, another important step in making the "invisible" a part of our society. (Hoth & Levitt, 1973)

It is important to observe in the above quote that self-image and feeling welcome are highlighted as vital to fostering an inclusive environment in a museum space. Hoth and Levitt also point out the need for individuals with disabilities to be reintegrated into society. This article showcases that this journey toward DEAI in museum spaces has roots in many areas of society and has been slowly expanding what a museum's purpose is to its visitors.

In 1981, Alice P. Kenny, director of Museum Access in Del Mar, New York, wrote *Compel Them To Come In* for the Museum Education Roundtable. In the article, Kenny encourages museums to go beyond compliance when it comes to museum programming and resources for the differently abled. Kenny opens the article by explaining that museums are often disappointed when they create programming for individuals with disabilities but are not immediately greeted with hordes of disabled visitors. In examining this, Kenny

concludes that due to historical inaccessibility of most cultural buildings, “most disabled persons have been unaccustomed to think of themselves as museum visitors, and instead assume that public places in general are inaccessible” (1981, p. 3). Kenny argues that “[r]eaching this audience, therefore, requires modification of the premise that a museum's function is merely to display its collection to persons who seek it out for themselves” (1981, p. 3). This notion of modifying a museum's purpose to suit a more diverse audience that Kenny is suggesting, is the foundation of what DEAI stands for. She also goes on to include other minority groups in her call for museum reformation, “[d]eveloping a handicapped audience is not only an important part of Section 504 compliance, but a significant aspect of audience development in general. Persons who happen to be disabled may also be members of other groups like ethnic and racial minorities, which have not in the past been frequent museum visitors” (Kenny, 1981, p. 14). In this article, Kenny plants the seeds for the radical reshaping of a museum's function in society. She goes on to state that, “[a]ll audience development efforts assume that the museum's responsibility to its public goes beyond conserving the collection to interpreting it as part of the common heritage” (Kenny, 1981, p. 14). Her concluding argument urges museums to modify their spaces to be more accessible in order to draw visitors in: “It will therefore be well worth the trouble for any museum to make its collection accessible and interpret it so irresistibly that it compels them to come in” (Kenny, 1981, p. 14). The concept of inclusivity, and access for individuals with disabilities supported in this article are an important reminder that while this demographic of society had been fought for as early as the 1980s, there still are many other marginalized groups that need the same focus and attention from museums.

In addition to the accessibility of physical space, programming, and social aspects of museums; diversity of content, narratives, and leadership are vital to fostering diversity and equity in a museum. Sandell (2020) recognizes a shift in the world of museums, stating:

Over the past two decades, we have begun to see a shift—still nascent and uncertain—in the way we think about the museum. Museum roles and responsibilities are being questioned and reimagined, enabled by a steady but growing recognition amongst museum workers of the artifice, implausibility and untenability of institutional claims to neutrality. This recognition of the agency and untapped potential of museums as agents of change has brought with it an exciting, but still tentative, body of experimental practice, as well as a backlash from within and beyond the museum world. (p. 23)

This change that Sandell references is important because it holds museums accountable for what they communicate to their audience through more than just the artwork hung on the walls. Sandell encourages the reformation of how museums function as institutions, and sheds light on the multiplicity of what makes a museum as well as what goes into decisions that are made on an institutional scale. In Sandell's text, *Museum Activism* (2019), she includes a chapter entitled "Detoxing and Decolonizing Museums" by Sara Wajid and Rachel Minott. In the chapter, Wajid and Minott discuss a group that they themselves are part of, called Museum Detox. Museum Detox is "a network of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) museum workers in the UK... [i]t is both a professional network and a space for support, recovery and solidarity for workers who face systematic racism in their day-to-day working life" (Wajid & Minott, 2020, p. 25). The members of Museum Detox write of their experiences in the museum field with the perspective of "insider activists... working within [the] system to try and make it better" (p. 25). Wajid and Minott (2020), as members of Museum Detox, discuss the necessity of challenging the notion of the "neutral museum", the importance of supporting each other within a historically white field, decolonizing museum spaces, and avoiding "diversity-schemes" (pp. 25-26). Because of the historical and current presence of racism and oppression, considering any part of art history or art as 'neutral' is inaccurate and a disservice to the individuals that are and have been systematically oppressed. Wajid and Minott (2020) expand on this concept stating:

This racism is evident in the language used to discuss race; it is enacted in the perpetuation of the concept of ‘neutral history’ when discussing the enslavement and the eradication of cultures and peoples across the world by the British; it is in the constant demand made to People of Colour to be grateful for things that their white counterparts are allowed to complain about. (p. 25)

It is evident from the quote above that a change in narrative and approach is necessary when handling issues of diversity and equity in a museum setting. These issues are cumbersome in nature and immensely important, making this process difficult for museums. As a field, museums need to embrace what Wajid and Minott explicitly state:

The emphasis here is on ethical ways of working, without the expectation of obedience or gratitude but instead with space for People of Colour to exercise ownership over the stories told in public spaces, such as museums, in a manner that creates meaningful change to a seemingly unchangeable system. (2020, pp. 25-26)

Diversity and equity have in some cases become a method for museums and other public institutions and businesses to virtue signal in order to stay relevant and avoid the critical eye of the informed citizen. Nightingale and Mahal (2012) discuss this unfortunate outcome of the pressure to diversify museums spaces and urge museums to avoid this type of dismissive tactic:

Policies that gather dust or are merely a ‘tick box exercise’ are inadequate. A broad understanding of the issues shared across the staff of the museum, though important, is also not enough. Diversity and equality need to be incorporated into strategic planning with the setting of specific objectives that are regularly reviewed whilst, at the same time, avoiding overly bureaucratic and time-consuming procedures. (p. 34)

In a similar vein to Nightingale and Mahal, Wajid and Minott quote Kassim (2017), supporting an organic and earnest dedication to decolonizing museums spaces:

Decolonizing is deeper than just being represented. When projects and institutions proclaim a commitment to ‘diversity’, ‘inclusion’ or ‘decoloniality’ we need to

attend to these claims with a critical eye. Decoloniality is a complex set of ideas—it requires complex processes, space, money, and time, otherwise it runs the risk of becoming another buzzword, like ‘diversity’. (p. 29)

The process that Museum Detox adhered to in order to best embrace decolonization in the most effective and respectful fashion includes multiple methods. They include “trying to democratize the decision-making process; abdicating institutional control over the tone of voice we used in the interpretations; and acknowledging that museums are not neutral and have played a large part in the misrepresentation of cultures around the world for hundreds of years” (Wajid & Minott, 2020, p. 30). In recognizing that museums are not neutral spaces, employing institutional change for and from BAME museum workers, and avoiding ‘diversity-schemes’, Museum Detox contributed to the decolonization of contemporary museums in the UK. In doing so Museum Detox is an example for museums in how to approach issues of DEAI in a more nuanced, respectful, informed and authentic manner.

CONCLUSION

This chapter discussed relevant research surrounding museum theory, architecture, the ADA, beyond compliance, and DEAI in museums. Guided by my central research question, this chapter provides context for my exploration of the DMA as an institution that is attempting to foster DEAI in their museum. The next chapter provides contextual information surrounding the history of the location of the DMA, information about the DMA itself, and descriptions of the DMA’s DEAI programs, and institutional policies and resources that I will pay specific attention to in my data analysis.

Chapter 3: Situating the Study

In the preceding chapter I discussed the relevant literature significant to my research of the Dallas Museum of Art. These guiding sources aided in my navigation of this exploratory case study. In the following sections I scaffold my research by addressing aspects of the DMA relevant to my research. Providing contextual information surrounding the site of my research is pertinent to case study research methodology (Yin, 2018). As Yin explains, observational evidence from the site that you are studying can add invaluable information and dimensions to your research. I begin by situating this study with a historical discussion of The Dallas Arts District. I then go on to provide an overview of the history of the DMA with specific focus on the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) policy and accessibility statements, as well as a short discussion of the museum's on-site and outreach programs that will be part of my analysis.

THE DALLAS ARTS DISTRICT

The Dallas Museum of Art, designed by Edward Larrabee Barnes, was the first of many art related spaces to occupy the Dallas Arts District in 1984. Beginning as The Dallas Arts Association, organized in 1903 (Dallas Museum of Art, 2020), the DMA moved through several locations and incarnations before finally settling at its current home within the Dallas Arts district, which is located in the northeast corner of downtown Dallas (Dallas Arts District, 2021).

The origin of the Dallas Arts District can be traced back to the 1970s when the city of Dallas began to make efforts to improve the city's cultural institutions. Consultants involved in the project suggested that “Dallas take the scattered major arts institutions from across the city and move them all together” (Dallas Arts District, 2021). The initial plan drafted by Sasaki, a design firm, in 1982 (Colombo, 2019) intended for the district to be of

‘mixed-use’ containing restaurants, housing, and shops mixed in with the art and culture buildings.

The Arts District of Dallas includes in their mission statement a dedication to “...enhance the value of the city’s creative and economic life by engaging artistic, educational, and commercial neighbors through excellent design, practices, and programs” (Dallas Arts District, 2021). Though intent is stated on the district’s website, not much is shown showcasing informed action to follow through on their ambitious mission statement. The Dallas Art District additionally expresses a philosophy of “[c]ollaboration, [e]ducation, [c]ommunity, [i]nclusion, and [i]nnovation” (Dallas Arts District, 2021). The District, operating as an independent non-profit organization, articulates that it offers time, resources, and programming that prioritize access and inclusivity; however, it is hard to identify specifically what they have done to promote their aspirational mission statement and philosophy. On the Dallas Arts District’s website, they specifically state that they have intentionally sought to connect with the surrounding Dallas communities in order to foster “safety, connectivity, and accessibility with strong urban design in a multimodal neighborhood” (2021). Due to lack of visible examples, these well-crafted statements present on the District’s website seem merely aspirational. To further support such claims the Dallas Arts District must, as Feldman (2021) urges, not only issue statements but enact institutional evaluations in order to promote effective and radical change. As Simek (2019) points out in his article, “Assessing the Dallas Arts District, 10 Years Later”, there has been minimal change addressing the issues that remain within the district.

The Dallas Arts District came out of a desire to revitalize downtown Dallas. Weeks comments on the effects of this initiative stating:

...after the city came out with the plan 35 years ago to help revitalize a neglected corner of downtown, real estate developers bought up much of the remaining land

— and rents went through the roof. No normal commercial outlet could afford to set up shop on the street there. (2017)

This outcome worked counter to the primary goal of the district to create a dynamic space that contained a variety of businesses and housing.

Colombo, however, points out, “developers weren’t willing to build housing in downtown Dallas [, but] wealthy donors were eager to contribute to the arts” (2019). Because of this, the district did not grow into the bustling cultural center of the city, rather it became “a collection of big buildings by famous architects” (Colombo, 2019) closed off from the rest of the city. Jerome Weeks argues that “...a chief complaint against the current layout of the Arts District has been that it keeps the arts away from major streets by clustering them into an enclave, almost an enclosed community, perpetuating the old image of the arts as aloof and elitist” (2017). Here Weeks calls attention to the devastating effect that arts districts can have on their surrounding communities.

The Dallas Art District effectively clusters the city’s cultural institutions in a single location. Placing all of the art and cultural buildings into one area of downtown is “...a significant missed opportunity...when they could have brought life to many neighborhoods” (Colombo, 2019). Many of the arts and cultural institutions have attempted to mend this issue through outreach programs to bring art to other areas of the city, suffice to say “... such outreach efforts might never have been necessary had the original neighborhoods here been preserved and the cultural resources spread out in the first place” (Colombo, 2019). Redressing these issues and changing the physical space of the Dallas Arts District has proved to be a difficult endeavor.

In 2016, Lily Cabatu Weiss, executive director of the Dallas Arts District (Colombo, 2019), began to reimagine the district in an attempt to rectify lingering problems

that the first design plan left behind. An article written for *Texas Architect Magazine* entitled, “Worrying the Arts Enclave” (2019), looks critically at the district’s new plan:

Today, city and neighborhood leaders are endeavoring to steer the District back towards the vision of a truly dynamic place, with a new master plan in the works. But its already-built legacy — and that legacy’s high-powered financial underpinnings, representing hundreds of millions of dollars of investment from public and private entities — may prove difficult to overcome. (Colombo)

Weiss places faith in new programs and events aimed at pulling in new audiences and promoting engagement, such as the district’s annual block party. Though well intended “even with such intense programming as live music and food trucks, the large spaces, poorly defined by the architecture, barely felt lively. On a normal weekend evening — not to mention a weekday — the streets and open spaces in the Arts District are mostly empty” (Colombo, 2019). Evidently the district is still struggling to draw in visitors due to the ineffective nature of the architecture and location of the art and culture buildings.

Peter Simek discusses the Dallas Arts District’s recent attempts at reformation in *Assessing the Dallas Arts District, 10 Years Later* (2019). Simek cites the intent of the district to expand its reach to communities in the greater Dallas area. The district has begun initiatives aimed at “improv[ing] connections between the district and the surrounding neighborhoods—including Klyde Warren Park and Uptown, the Main Street District downtown, and future development south of Ross, toward the Pearl Street DART station” (2019). Simek additionally highlights the new master plan’s focus on incremental change rather than large scale innovations, stating the importance of “simple solutions that could improve the legibility of the Arts District’s urban space, things like traffic calming, improved wayfinding, sidewalk sizes, signage, lighting, and trees” (2019). He goes on to emphasize that the new plan

... has taken 10 years, but organizational leadership in the district is thinking about collaboration and neighborhood engagement in the right way. They finally have the will, resources, and bandwidth to make a real difference. The Arts District Master Plan is taking the right steps to fix the neighborhood's streetscape and connectivity problems. (Simek, 2019)

While Simek provides a supportive and hopeful outlook on the 'The Arts Districts Master Plan', more can still be done in an effort to improve it.

Colombo takes a more critical standpoint in relation to the district's attempts at revamping the Dallas Cultural Plan. Colombo contends that “[r]eal, organic accessibility can come only with a rich diversity of uses in an urban district” (2019). His point being that because of the inherent nature of both the architecture of the existing buildings, and the cost of real estate in downtown Dallas, access to this space is limited to individuals of higher socioeconomic status. Colombo explains this in detail in the following excerpt:

With the high cost of land and construction in downtown Dallas, though, it's hard to see the Arts District ever really becoming the kind of mixed-income neighborhood Jane Jacobs wrote about. Hall himself admitted his \$2 million condominiums were “not an affordable option for many people.” So unless more concerted efforts are made to incorporate affordable housing, the District will likely continue to primarily be an enclave of the wealthy, even if more of them are able to “live, work, and play” — as the trendy phrase goes — all in one place. (2019)

Financial barriers as well as physical architectural ones seem to be ever present in the Arts District, even close to 40 years after its creation.

Contextualizing the location of the DMA within the Dallas Arts District is vital to understanding the museum's history and sense of place within the city of Dallas. Providing information surrounding the DMA's sense of place was important to answering my central research question because the location and history of the museum informs the cultural identity of the DMA as an institution. Through researching and learning about the district I was able to gain a more grounded comprehension of the identity of the Dallas Museum of Art. This aided in my analysis of the museum's programming and resources.

THE DALLAS MUSEUM OF ART

The Dallas Arts Association was created in 1903 stemming from the Art Committee of the Public Library. In March 1909 a contract formally transferred ownership of the art to the city of Dallas. The gallery was opened to the public a month later that same year. The name was changed in 1933 to Dallas Museum of Fine Arts (DMFA). In 1939, the museum showcased its first exhibition exclusively dedicated to Black artists. That same year, the education department was officially established. In 1941, the museum created The Museum School of Art which contained classes for both children and adults. Due to apparent redundancies in program content with the public schools of Dallas, in 1970 The Museum School was discontinued. In its place the museum established a creative learning youth program that provided free drawing courses. 81 years after its original founding, The Dallas Museum of Art gained its current name and location in the Dallas Arts District. The museum began to charge for admission in 2001 but returned to free general admission in 2013 (Dallas Museum of Art & Dallas Arts District, 2021).

Throughout its history, the DMA has presented itself as a public facing institution, providing programming, resources, and statements of solidarity directed at promoting community engagement. The Dallas community supported and advocated for the museum's creation, with its origin in the Public Library. It is also important to note the return to free admission in 2013, removing the barrier of socioeconomic status is part of embracing access, equity, and inclusivity. While this history indicates a broad commitment to being a public museum, it does not acknowledge the varied barriers to participation for many people.

EQUITY DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

As highlighted by the AAM's Center for the Future of Museums yearly report *TrendsWatch*, issues of diversity, equity, access, and inclusion are the top priority of museums presently. This can be seen in the statements of solidarity that many museums have made in reference to racial inequities, systemic oppressions, and exclusionary practices inflicted by museums in the past (AAM, 2021). In line with the trend, The DMA's website includes an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy (EDI) alongside definitions of each concept. Their EDI policy states:

The Dallas Museum of Art fosters equity, celebrates diversity, and supports inclusion. We acknowledge that diverse backgrounds and voices of visitors, volunteers, trustees, staff, and communities represented in the collection make us stronger and better equipped to make positive impacts locally, nationally, and internationally. (Dallas Museum of Art, 2021)

Providing this description of the museum's EDI policy fosters a stronger connection to the concepts of EDI that is more authentic than simply stating definitions of each word. Though definitions are helpful for clarification and continuity of content, including the museum's policy on these topics is a more fleshed out strategy of communicating support and dedication to EDI.

Dedicating a page on their museum website that is entirely for EDI (<https://dma.org/about/equity-diversity-and-inclusion-policy>) is an important step to beginning the journey toward moving away from basic compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Publicly stating devotion to these causes not only shows support and validation for issues pertaining to EDI, it holds the museum accountable. The DMA now has a blueprint for what kind of institutional environment they are aiming at cultivating and can continue to grow and change with EDI in mind.

While acknowledging inequities, lack of diversity, and commitment to inclusionary practices is important, it is not enough. The DMA must showcase how they are carrying out these statements as an institution, as well as prove dedication to their EDI policy and accessibility initiatives. As Dowell and Jackson astutely point out, “[w]hile statements of solidarity are a starting point, we are at a critical juncture as a nation and the moment demands more” (2020). The DMA cannot simply rely on such statements to absolve them of responsibility, informed action must be taken. Later in my data analysis I describe an effective framework created by Erin Dowell and Marlette Jackson (2020) intended for companies and institutions to implement in order to move past basic statements of EDI and embrace tangible institutional change.

ACCESSIBILITY RESOURCES

The DMA’s website additionally provides resources and information about accessibility on a separate page (<https://dma.org/visit/accessibility>). Located under the ‘visit’ tab on the museum's navigation bar, visitor accessibility has a page dedicated to assisting with physical navigation of the museum. The accessibility page offers suggestions on how one might best handle navigating the space if they have additional assistive needs or requirements, it does not offer, however, provide detailed enough options and guidance to visitors with varying abilities. The DMA provides general information and advice about guest services, drop off locations, ADA compliant restrooms and entrances, parking information, and a link to access programs provided by the museum. Including this information is important, however, more should be expected from modern museums in relation to access. Lindsay (2020) argues that museums must, in contrast with other public buildings, reach beyond minimal ADA compliance in order to truly embrace accessibility and provide inclusive and welcoming visitor experiences. Banasiak (2020) adds to this

sentiment that museums have a civic duty to create inclusive and accessible spaces for visitors, arguing that this begins with the museum's built form.

Access is a complex and nuanced concept. It is not based in basic ADA compliance, but anchored in specific assistive resources and attention to detail. The deficit present on this page as well as areas that were lacking from the DMA included a detailed navigational map, clearly identifiable ramps and or alternatives to stairs or steep inclines, and available hearing devices.

As exemplified by Vaz, Freitas, and Coelho (2020), there are many inclusive and assistive technologies that modern museums could begin to not only research but implement. Vaz, Freitas, and Coelho showcase the importance of new assistive technology for visitors with varying abilities and point out specific deficits that remain in museums that need improvement. Navigation of the physical space is a significant shortcoming for most art museums. Navigating a new space can be extremely difficult and stressful for individuals with sight, hearing, cognitive, or physical disabilities. In order to help with these issues, museums need to provide detailed navigational maps on their website, train museum employees on how to handle visitors with issues of access and encourage the usage of assistive infrastructure in the museum space such as clearly identifiable ramps, alternatives to steep inclines, and hearing devices (Vaz, Freitas, & Coelho, 2020).

PROGRAMMING AT THE DMA

The DMA provides a variety of programming geared towards adults, families, communities, teens, visitors with special needs, and schools through offering classes, tours, and workshops. I will expand on and provide descriptions of the DMA's accessibility programs, the Center for Creative Connections, and Go van Gogh® in the following sections. I later analyze these programs under the lens of social justice theory and critical

disability theory. In addition to my theoretical framework, I apply criteria made up of and supported by suggestions and diagnostics made by the AAM, leading museum figures, scholars that focus on accessibility in museums, as well as diversity, equity, and inclusion practitioners (Dowell & Jackson, 2020).

Access Programs

The access programs offered by the DMA include programs for visitors with autism, dementia, varying cognitive abilities, sight impairment or blindness, Parkinson's, hearing loss, and limited mobility. Each access program listed above is accompanied by detailed and informed programming and events.

For visitors that fall on the autism spectrum, the DMA offers weeklong Hands-on Art Camp annually that is "co-taught by an autism specialist, a music therapist, and a DMA educator" (Dallas Museum of Art, 2021). The DMA additionally hosts Sensory Days for individuals with autism and their families. This sensory friendly event was created in collaboration with local art and culture organizations (Dallas Museum of Art, 2021). Music therapy, staff led gallery experiences, and access to occupational therapy students are all part of this initiative to provide developmentally appropriate and engaging interactives for individuals with autism and their caretakers and or families.

Meaningful Moments for Care Facilities and Individuals are two programs that the DMA has for those with dementia. The programs occur monthly and work with "...groups from assisted-living facilities specializing in memory care" (Dallas Museum of Art, 2021). This program is held at the DMA as well as is available as an out-reach program. This project is free and serviceable for individuals as well as groups upon reservation.

Guided tours, and outreach programs are facilitated by the DMA to assist and promote art access to visitors with intellectual and developmental disabilities such as:

autism, dementia, blindness, Parkinson's, hearing loss, and limited mobility. Tours are specifically designed to foster an effective and inclusive learning environment. Multi-sensory activities are implemented to ensure productive visitor participation. The museum's art outreach program, Go van Gogh® (discussed below) supplies art activities and pedagogy suited for special needs audiences of varying ages.

In October each year, the DMA celebrates Art Beyond Sight Awareness Month by partnering with the organization providing programming for individuals with sight impairments. The DMA has worked with John Brambitt, a blind painter, as well as Stephen Lapthisophon and Leslie Ligon, two artists that embrace multisensory art processes. Additionally, the DMA offers visual description and touch tours upon request.

The DMA has partnered with local Dance for PD Movement Disorders class to work together in creating events and performances that promote agency, confidence and combat the mental and emotional side effects of diseases that inhibit physical movement.

For visitors with hearing loss and limited mobility, programming is less specific and narrower. Under the tab for 'visitors with hearing loss' (<https://dma.org/programs-access-programs/visitors-hearing-loss>) hearing aids for lectures and certain programs are offered upon request from guest services. For those with limited mobility, it is mentioned on the 'visitors with limited mobility' page (<https://dma.org/programs-access-programs/visitors-limited-mobility>) that wheelchairs are available on a first come first serve basis. The page also communicates information about ADA compliant parking, entrances, and suggests that visitors call guest services for more specific information. While this is all ADA compliant, it feels less substantive than the other programming and resources provided by the museum. (McGinnis, 2007).

Salmen (1990), a leading advocate for accessibility in museum spaces, emphasizes this connection between physical accessibility to inclusive museum practices. While the

DMA demonstrates ADA compliance for visitors with disabilities, there is more they could do to cultivate a more welcoming physical space. For example, a starting point could be comparing their institutions architectural design with that suggested by Salmen (1990) in his diagnostic manual, *Everyone's Welcome: The Americans with Disabilities Act and Museums*. Salmen outlines accessibility and inclusive practices that museums can adopt in order to move beyond basic adherence to legislation and move toward DEAI.

Center for Creative Connections: C3

The Center for Creative Connections, or C3 as dubbed by museum employees, is a dynamic gallery space intended to inspire visitors of all ages to connect with exhibitions deeply and with ease. C3 is located within the DMA on the first floor of the museum. The gallery space and learning environment is designed to “examine works of art related to a common theme, respond to works of art in new ways, [and] interact with local artists and our community” (Dallas Museum of Art, 2021). The gallery space holds exhibitions that integrate topics relating to contemporary issues that are relevant to both the greater Dallas area and the United States. The current exhibition *My/gration* tackles issues of immigration. The Dallas community is an extremely diverse one; 56% of individuals born outside of the U.S. are from Latin American and 32% speak Spanish at home (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019). Inspired by the wealth of different cultural backgrounds of Dallas residents, this exhibition “... examines how the movement of people is expressed through art and illuminates ways cross-cultural connections inform artistic production” (Dallas Museum of Art, 2021). The gallery space is child friendly and contains multi-sensory activities for visitor participation.

C3 has several program spaces, the gallery space inside the museum, studio I & II, and a theater. In dedicating spaces specifically for art access and interaction that function

outside of the traditional institutional and archival role of museums. Through offering studio spaces for art making, a gallery for hands-on interaction, and a theater for story telling video screening and lectures, C3 breaks the mold of the 20th century art museum (Norrie, 2020).

Go van Gogh®

The DMA has an outreach program that brings art to students throughout Dallas county who may not have the opportunity or means to visit the museum space. The Go van Gogh® program spearheaded by the Schools Program Creators at the DMA is described on the museum's website as:

Go van Gogh® brings the Dallas Museum of Art to Pre-K through 6th grade classrooms free of charge through programs that encourage students to engage with works of art, develop and express ideas and opinions, and make personal and academic connections. All programs include art-making activities that provide opportunities for individual creative expression and are offered in both English and Spanish. (Dallas Museum of Art, 2021)

The program provides a variety of thematic topics for students and teachers to utilize listed on the DMA's website. Free of charge, the program functions to provide art access and promotes the belief that art is something that is for everyone.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter I included contextual information surrounding the Dallas Museum of Art's history, location, as well as incorporated a detailed list and description of the particular programs that I go on to analyze in my next chapter. Through providing context for my research, I have been able to situate this case study in its real-world environment, as well as provide my reader with pertinent information regarding the specific programming and institutional initiatives at the DMA that I examine in my next chapter.

I equip my reader with a history of the location of the DMA in order to highlight the museum's sense of place and connection to the Dallas community. I then go on to discuss the history of the DMA showcasing the museum's evolution over time. I concluded this chapter by listing and describing each program offered by the DMA that I chose to analyze for my research, in order to identify the scope and content of my research.

Chapter 4: Methodology

RESEARCH APPROACH

This chapter identifies the methods and structure of my research. By clarifying my particular approach to case study research, I am able to provide information relating to the strategies that ultimately anchor my final analysis and conclusions. Providing this information contributes to, as Yin describes, “the quality and thoroughness of [my] methods” (2018, p. 232). In the proceeding sections I describe my theoretical framework, research design, and conclude with a description of my research methods.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In order to determine what framework best suited my research, I first identified my own positionality and beliefs in order to find theories that closely aligned with my own values. This is an important step to creating a framework to inform your research (Yin, 2018). My research approach is anchored in social justice theory and critical disability theory. These theories provided an ethical strategy of conducting research that inspects social justice issues and physical accessibility within a museum space. Identifying the theoretical lens by which I based my inquiry was a pivotal step in my thesis research because as supported by Strunk & Locke: “Considering one’s positionality is the first step toward conducting research that contributes to more equity in society, instead of reproducing inequity or diminishing it” (2019, p. 16). Because I intend for this research to be a source of assistance for museums, museum educators, and art educators alike, I want to promote DEAI not be a hindrance to it. My dedication to standing by this commitment prompted my usage of both social justice theory and critical disability theory.

Strunk & Locke (2019) emphasize the importance of identifying your position as a researcher, “thinking about and identifying one’s position in the research process is the

first step toward understanding the impact of personal bias, because one's position limits them from seeing things from the perspective of someone in a different position" (p. 17). Though objectivity is often the goal of researchers, inherent bias is almost impossible to avoid (Eisner, 1992). As such, it is important for me to not only identify my positionality as a researcher, but also to point out my subjectivity.

As a researcher I hold "a privileged status within the research process" (Strunk & Locke, 2019, p. 16), holding the power to curate my research in the way that I desire. Additionally, as a white able-bodied woman I must hold an awareness of my privilege as I examine issues relating to diversity, equity, access, and inclusion. Analyzing my data through a social justice framework with particular attention to critical disability theory is imperative to the validity of my research because it acknowledges the societal underpinnings of issues such as race, class, physical abilities, and gender politics and their effect on my perspective as a researcher. Social justice theory framed my research around the "broad concept supporting equal rights through various types of initiatives for citizens" (Walters, 2020). Social justice theory promotes a "process built on respect, care, recognition, and empathy" (Theoharis, 2007). Ultimately these sentiments informed my critical analysis of the DMA's programs, institutional initiatives, and DEAI work.

Critical disability theory was a vital component to my research as well. Critical disability theory is rooted in how society has unjustly stigmatized and pathologized individuals with varying abilities (Hall, 2019). This informed my focus on access and was crucial to examining how the DMA has attempted to go beyond basic ADA compliance. Critical disability theory "refers to lived experiences and attempts to transform the circumstances under which oppressed subjects live through critical, intersectional analysis" (Hall, 2019). Furthermore, critical disability theory points out inherent societal bias towards those considered 'able', "[a]bleism systematically interacts with other power

structures that stigmatize to produce race, gender, sex, and disability. Ableism shapes our world and produces disability” (Hall, 2019). Because of this inherent bias present in society, and more specifically in public buildings, it was imperative to apply this theory to my case study of the DMA.

The DMA, as a public tax-exempt institution, has a duty to combat the systemic bias of ableism, sexism, classism, heteronormativity, and racism. As such, implementing theoretical frameworks that support the notion of not only acknowledging such biases but breaking them down is important to the validity of my research. Critical disability theory, and social justice theory acted as a through-line to my inquiry and examination of the DMA as a modern museum attempting to embrace and promote DEAI.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Guided by inquiry and intended to provide a “logical sequence that connects the empirical data to a study’s initial research question and, ultimately, to its conclusions” (Yin, 2018, p. 26) research design acts as a blueprint to case study research. Case study research utilizes five organizational components of research design: “a case study’s questions, its propositions, its case[s], the logic linking the data to the propositions and the criteria for interpreting the findings” (Yin, 2018, p. 27). My research follows this outline provided by Robert Yin, excluding propositional formulation.

To begin, I crafted my research question: ‘How has the Dallas Museum of Art applied principles of diversity, equity, access, and inclusion to their programming, resources, and institutional initiatives?’. This led me to select the appropriate research methodology to most accurately answer my question. Because my research question asks ‘how’ the DMA applies DEAI, case study research methodology best suits my research initiative. Yin clarifies that “[c]ase study research is most likely to be appropriate for ‘how’

and ‘why’ questions” (2018, p. 27). Once I identified my research question, and methodology, I then moved on to identifying the purpose.

Because my research is exploratory in nature, I “state [the] purpose, as well as the criteria by which [my] exploration will be judged successful (or not)” (Yin, 2018, p. 28). The purpose of my research being to identify the extent to which the DMA as a modern museum has attempted to cultivate DEAI at their museum.

Identification of the particular case that I research was the next step in formulating my research design. The case itself is the DMA’s DEAI work. The scope of my research included an examination of the DMA’s programs, practices, and initiatives that intentionally seek to promote DEAI at the museum.

My research design concludes with the criteria that I used to interpret my findings. The criteria by which I deemed the DMA’s efforts successful or not came from the juxtaposition of their practices with that of other modern museums in the United States, the extent to which they aligned with the ethical code of the AAM, as well as the framework provided by Dowell and Jackson (2020) concerning EDI efforts. I triangulated my data gathered from interviews, onsite observations, and document review. In the following sections I present a detailed account of the research methods used in this case study.

RESEARCH METHOD

Case study research was an obvious choice for my methodology because: my central research question asks ‘how’, I had no control over the behavioral events being examined, and my focus was on a contemporary phenomenon (Yin, 2018). However, case study research presents the researcher with the challenge of design. Because case study research lacks prescribed research formulas (Yin, 2018), one must clearly define and present research methods in order to best communicate the procedural aspects of the study.

Guided by my central research question and anchored in exploring ‘how’ the DMA handles issues relating to DEAI, I examined a single case through employing several data collection techniques. I collected data through field notes from direct site observation, conducted interviews with current DMA staff, and reviewed relevant online content provided by the museum. In the following sections I will list and explain in detail the various procedures employed during my data collection.

DATA COLLECTION

Site Observation

To further familiarize myself with the DMA, I engaged in direct observation of the museum by visiting the physical and virtual space. It is important to note that my physical field work was limited because of restrictions placed on the museum as well as personal restrictions due to COVID-19. I was unable to experience participant observation of the programming offered by the DMA and was additionally limited to the facilities that the museum was allowing at the time of observation. My field work was confined to a single site visitation to the DMA on February 7th, 2021. Due to my own concerns and reservations about being inside a closed space that contained many visitors, I chose to only observe the DMA in person once to limit my potential exposure to the virus. Including contextual information about my ability to collect data during such an unprecedented time is vital to understanding the scope and reach of my study.

Data collection for my field work began with detailed notes in real time during my visit to the DMA. The informal notes taken at the site of observation have been converted into more formal field notes in order to create an informed and organized base for my later data coding and analysis (Yin, 2018).

Before visiting the museum, I familiarized myself with the procedural methods commonly used within the field to collect case study data while conducting site observation. I used questions adapted from Miles & Huberman (1994) to provide structure to my inquiry as well as aided in my later organization of observations. The questions were as follows:

1. What were the main issues or themes that struck you in your observations at this setting?
2. What questions could be asked concerning the place you observed?
3. What questions could be asked concerning the actors you observed?
4. What questions could be asked concerning the activities you observed?
5. For each of the elements of the social situation (i.e., place, actors, activities) you observed, identify the main information that you got (or failed to get) for the questions above.
6. Was there anything else that struck you as salient, interesting, illuminating, or important?
7. If you were to undertake another observation in this setting, what new questions would you consider? (Miles, & Huberman, 1994)

I used these steering questions as a way to look closely for details pertaining to my research. While applying these questions to my experience of the space, I paid particular attention to the physical accessibility of the gallery spaces. Influenced by my theoretical framework of social justice theory and specific attention to critical disability theory, the architecture and accessibility of the museum was of great importance to my observations of the DMA.

Informed by case study procedures, and my theoretical framework my observation of the DMA includes details that critically look at how the museum's physical space affects the visitor. Grounded in the research that suggests architecture and physical space informs

the experience of the visitor in a museum (Lindsay, 2020), I was able to gather data that provided further insight into how the DMA as an institution has reacted to the need for DEAI in museums today.

Interviews

Alongside field work, interviews are one of the primary sources for data collection in case studies (Yin, 2018). Providing multiple sources of data collection is crucial for a well-rounded case study (Yin, 2018). Yin additionally postulates that interviews “are an essential source of case study evidence because most case studies are about human affairs or actions. Well-informed interviewees can provide important insights into such affairs or actions. The interviewees also can provide shortcuts to the history of such situations, helping you identify other relevant sources of evidence” (2018, p. 121). This case study investigated the DMA’s actions in relation to cultivating DEAI at their museum, thus interviews with employees provided me with insight into the inner workings of the museum as well as information about the DMA’s history and company culture.

In addition to field notes about my experience visiting the DMA, I carried out three interviews with current employees of the museum. Based on criterion sampling strategy, the criteria included the following: current employment at the DMA, willingness to be interviewed, and professional involvement with DEAI. My selection of interviewees was rooted in gaining diverse and informed perspectives of the DMA’s DEAI work. Each of the employees I interviewed works with different constituents and at different levels of the museum’s internal hierarchy. The first works directly with community members and organizations as part of the museum’s outreach program. The second curates a gallery space with an eye toward accessibility of content for visitors of all capabilities. The third represents the museum’s decision-making structure, helping to define the direction of

educational programming. Each represents a different link in the chain connecting the institution's upper management with its constituency, the people of Dallas.

Providing background information about these individuals will contextualize their work experience and speak to their areas of expertise relating to museum education and DEAI. In order to protect their identities and make them more comfortable sharing their experiences, I have changed each of their names and slightly altered their job titles. In addition, I made sure to conduct member checks with each individual after transcribing their interviews to ensure everyone felt their words were accurately represented.

Interviewees

- Bryan Vellor: Manager of School Programs in the Education Department. Works primarily with the DMA's Go van Gogh® program. Spearheads DMA's outreach programming creation and implementation, alongside training Go van Gogh® volunteers and educators. Assists in content creation aimed at cultivating diverse participants, specifically Spanish speaking audiences.
- Kendall Black: Works in the Education Department as the DMA's Curator for the Center for Creative Connection (C3). Creates and implements programming that takes place inside the C3 gallery, as well as assists with onsite tours and educational activities. Participates in onsite programming at the DMA by leading tours and or activities in the C3 gallery.
- Megan Monnet: Chief of Community Engagement in the Education Department at the DMA. Handles accessibility programming, community partnerships that aim to promote access at the DMA and assists with creating and implementing community events at the museum.

The interviews that I conducted took place over zoom and were semi-structured. This provided me with guidance and organization during the process which in turn helped me stay focused on my central research question. Semi-structured interviews additionally allowed for flexibility of interview questions and content (Yin, 2018). Because of this I was able to have more organic conversations, asking follow-up questions that were not pre-written in order to follow themes I identified in the moment and felt were relevant to the research.

Review of Online Content

Due to the restrictions that COVID-19 placed on my research, this study drew extensively from the DMA's online content. COVID-19 limitations included suspension of all in-person and outreach programming offered by the museum, and elimination of all tactile gallery activities. Since I was unable to experience and/or participate in the educational programming at the DMA, I gathered information surrounding them online. I looked to the museum's programming descriptions, mission statement, EDI policy, and accessibility page to gather the data needed to best familiarize myself with what the DMA offers to its visitors.

- DMA's programming: <https://dma.org/programs>
- Mission Statement: <https://dma.org/about/mission-statement>
- EDI Policy: <https://dma.org/about/equity-diversity-and-inclusion-policy>
- Accessibility page: <https://dma.org/visit/accessibility>

DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis for case studies is particularly difficult because as Yin points out, “[u]nlike statistical analysis, there are few fixed formulas or cookbook recipes to use as

guides. Instead, much depends on a researcher's own style of rigorous empirical thinking, along with sufficient presentation of evidence and careful consideration of alternative interpretations" (2018, p. 165). Thus, it was imperative that I create an organized framework for my analysis. To formulate my data analysis method, I first adapted a general analytic strategy. The importance of an analytic strategy as Yin discusses is to "link your case study data to important concepts of interest, and then have the concepts give you a sense of direction in analyzing the data" (2018, p. 174). The analytic strategy that I employed began by working with my data from the ground up (Yin, 2018). This entails pouring over one's raw data in order to identify patterns, general observations and or concepts.

Once I read through my raw data several preliminary times to become familiar with the information that I would be analyzing, I began to employ the next step in my analysis. I first coded the data from my interviews, field notes, and review of online content by highlighting any information that I felt was relevant to answering my central research question. I utilized pattern matching as a means to organize and identify common themes across my sources. I then went on to organize and label the highlighted sections by several sub-themes. I organized the sub-themes into two broad categories that seemed to most significantly address my central research question. These two themes were visitor needs, and institutional initiatives. I finalized my data organization by triangulating my data in order to embark on explanation building.

Internal validity of this research came from four strategies: data triangulation, member checks, peer examination, and identifying researcher bias (Merriam, 1998). As supported by Merriam (1998) implementing these strategies aids in supporting case study internal validity and reliability.

Data triangulation is a strategic approach to data analysis that is anchored in the principle of basic geometry contending that “multiple viewpoints allow for greater accuracy” (Jick, 1979, p. 602). Thus, including multiple data sources “can improve [study] accuracy... by collecting different kinds of data bearing the same phenomenon” (Jick, 1979, p. 602). Data triangulation uses multiple methods of data collection to evaluate the same research question so as to strengthen internal validity of a study (Jick, 1979).

An additional element conducted to support validity were interview member checks. Member checks were performed for each interview participant. Once interviews were transcribed and edited for clarity, they were sent to each corresponding interviewee via email. Participants then had the opportunity to ensure that they were accurately represented.

Peer evaluation provided review of content, concepts, and conclusions discussed throughout my research. Committee members included a thesis advisor, and reader. Both assisted in content evaluation, and accuracy through suppling insight and critic to this study’s findings and validity.

A concluding factor that built out the internal validity of this study was identifying researcher bias. As previously discussed, (see Theoretical Framework), determining my positionality in relation to the concepts being examined in this case study was vital to conducting ethical research supported in foundation principles of DEAI. As a white able-bodied woman, it was crucial that I familiarize myself with social justice theory and critical disability theory in order to best examine the DMA’s DEAI work.

The data collection methods used in this case study are as follows: field notes taken from direct sight observation, interviews, and online content from the DMA. The next chapter presents the various themes identified across these sources.

Ch. 5 Study Findings

PREFACE

Interviews with museum educators from the Dallas Museum of Art (DMA), coupled with on-site observations and close analysis of the DMA's mission statement, Equity Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy, and Accessibility Page provided me with a large amount of data. As discussed in my previous chapter, this data was compiled from interviews, field notes, and review of online content from the DMA's website. This chapter presents a final analysis and interpretation of the data collected, guided by my central research question: How has the DMA integrated the statements of diversity, equity, access and inclusion (DEAI) found in their mission statement, EDI policy, and Accessibility resources, into their programming and institutional initiatives? This question provided a through line and helped refocus my inquiry in light of the large amount of information yielded by the data. My findings consist of two key themes, - visitor needs and institutional initiatives - each segmented into several subthemes.

First, drawing on discourse from leading scholars in the museum field sourced from my review of pertinent literature, I identified commitment to visitor and community needs as an essential aspect of the ideal modern museum. Separate from my initial discussion of a museum's purpose to serve the public (see Chapter 2 - Literature Review), visitor needs are expanded upon here as an integral part of the way museums, including the DMA, create and evaluate onsite and outreach programming. This theme was built out inductively through analysis of the DMA's efforts, as described in interviews, site observation and review of online content, in relation to each of the following subcategories: constituent diversity, physical accessibility, community outreach, and linguistic efforts.

Secondly, I examined the institutional initiatives present at the DMA that aim to promote diversity, equity, access, and inclusion. The initiatives I looked at were the DMA’s mission statement and EDI policy, both provided online at <https://dma.org/about/equity-diversity-and-inclusion-policy> and <https://dma.org/about/mission-statement>. These two components, as well as related information from my interviews, comprise the data that led to my findings within the theme of institutional initiatives.

Closely investigating the DMA’s ambitious statements regarding DEAI was a guiding factor in my collection and interpretation of data. The DMA’s mission statement reads as follows: “[We] [p]lace art and our diverse communities at the center around which all activities radiate [, p]ursue excellence in collecting and programming, present works of art across cultures and time, and be a driving force in contemporary art [to] [s]trengthen our position as a prominent, innovative institution, expanding the meaning and possibilities of learning and creativity” (DMA, 2021). This mission statement begins with the bold claim of placing diverse communities at the center of the museum's activities; while it is an important first step to acknowledge dedication to diversity, it is not enough.

The DMA additionally includes an EDI policy, accompanied by definitions of each word: “The Dallas Museum of Art fosters equity, celebrates diversity, and supports inclusion. We acknowledge that diverse backgrounds and voices of visitors, volunteers, trustees, staff, and communities represented in the collection make us stronger and better equipped to make positive impacts locally, nationally, and internationally” (DMA, 2021). The well-crafted statement clearly signals their dedication to EDI. As discussed in my previous chapters and expanded upon in later sections in this chapter, however, statements of solidarity from institutions need to be accompanied by informed action. This action must be communicated clearly with employees as well as the public, and continuously evaluated and updated as needed (Dowell, & Jackson, 2020).

The accessibility page at <https://dma.org/visit/accessibility> was an additional component of my evaluation of the DMA's commitment to promoting inclusivity and access. My inquiry into the state of physical access for differently abled individuals was guided by critical disability theory. Critical disability theory also framed my analysis of the DMA's treatment of individuals with varying cognitive abilities. Analysis of programming, resources, and pedagogical methods specific to promoting access completed my investigation of institutional initiatives.

In the following sections I will expand on these findings, first by delving into visitor needs and the supporting topics of constituent diversity, barriers to physical access, community outreach, and linguistic efforts, and then with an overview and analysis of the DMA's institutional initiatives including discussion of institutional disconnect, the lack of transparency the DMA has with the public, and accessibility concerns.

VISITOR NEEDS

A common concern I found across my data sources was visitor needs. Delving deeper into this theme, I identified several related sub-themes that served as the foundation for this topic. According to findings from my data, four important aspects of visitor needs include diversity of constituents, barriers to physical access, community outreach, and linguistic efforts.

Diversity of constituents entails acknowledgment of all the ways each visitor to the museum space differs in terms of age, race, class, creed, physical and cognitive abilities, and cultural backgrounds. What this means for modern museums is that all of these facets comprise visitor identity which in turn informs visitor experience (Sandell, 2012). To produce effective visitor experiences, museums must not only acknowledge visitor

identities but respect them and consider them when planning programming, pedagogy, and institutional resources.

Physical accessibility includes the navigability of the museums' architectural space, as well as assistive infrastructure such as hearing aids, detailed navigational maps, wheelchairs, etc. As supported by the American Alliance of Museums' (AAM) 2018 working group report *Facing Change*, "accessibility is giving equitable access to everyone along the continuum of human ability and experience. Accessibility encompasses the broader meanings of compliance and refers to how organizations make space for the characteristics that each person brings" (p. 8). The distinction made here between compliance and accessibility is a foundational element of my critique of the DMA's accessibility resource page and physical space. Additional guiding sources utilized in the analysis of on-site observations are Salmen's diagnostic manual *Everyone's Welcome* (1990), and suggestions made by Adrian Cave in *Access by Design* (2006) for museums to become more accessible for the differently abled.

Community outreach, as described in this study, provides insight into how the DMA has formed and sustained its community partnerships and outreach programs. DMA museum educators mentioned serving the diverse Dallas community as central to the institution's mission and vitally important to promoting visitor engagement. Museum educators described tending to community partners and community feedback as crucial in creating effective programming and sustaining reciprocal relationships with community organizations.

Linguistic efforts encompass the DMA's recent initiatives to become a bilingual museum. These efforts include providing Spanish wall text, program descriptions, and hiring Spanish speaking museum employees and volunteers. The DMA identified language barriers as a deficit to their museum's programming and outreach efforts. Because

of the large percentage of Spanish-speaking visitors, the DMA began to embark on integrating the Spanish language into the museum. They include Spanish text in their gallery spaces and are intentionally seeking out Spanish-speaking volunteers and employees in order to better serve their Spanish-speaking demographic.

The following sections elaborate on each of these sub-themes under the broader category of visitor needs. Visitor needs in the context of a museum include an awareness of visitor identity (diversity of constituents, language barriers, physical ability) and efforts made by the museum to connect with the community it resides in (community outreach and primary languages spoken).

Diversity of Constituents:

When ‘Dallas Museum of Art’ is typed into an online search engine, the first phrase that accompanies the link to the DMA’s website is: “The Dallas Museum of Art- Everyone is Welcome” (DMA, 2021). In addition to this statement alluding to inclusivity, the DMA’s mission statement directly references diversity (DMA, 2021). The website continuously expresses a desire to cater to the greater Dallas Community. More specifically, the DMA mentions visitors and the diverse community in their Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) policy (DMA, 2021). Such statements of solidarity in relation to the diverse Dallas community is something that I found interesting and explored further in my interviews with DMA employees from the education department.

Acknowledgement of visitor demographics in order to best serve the constituency present at the DMA was of great importance and relevance to several of the museum educators that I interviewed. Interviewees mentioned age, physical ability, and racial identity as three important components to be mindful of when creating visitor programming

and attempting to promote both access and inclusion in the museum space as well as in outreach programs.

Multigenerational Accessibility

An initial distinction made by one of the DMA's museum educators was how age can affect both a visitor's experience and ability to participate in programming or activities. Kendall Black, one of the DMA's Center for Creative Connections (C3) Gallery Curators, labeled this concept as multigenerational accessibility. Multigenerational accessibility is accessibility for individuals across all ages. She expressed how working in the C3 gallery space, a space which is often one of the first areas that visitors see when they enter the DMA, informed how she now views accessibility and inclusion in museums. She connects diversity of visitors' needs with the importance of accessibility in the space, as well as activity content:

We see such a wide variety of visitors- all ages all backgrounds. And we do programming from babies up to seniors, [and] people with special needs. So, when we're kind of thinking and developing things we try to make everything kind of [as] accessible as possible thinking about all of our demographics in mind and what might be useful to people and what, kind of, would be difficult for some people to learn. (Personal Communication, 2021)

Black further discussed the connection of visitor diversity to accessibility and inclusion, in reference to her personal growth and experience in learning about what access can look like and what form it can take inside a gallery space such as C3. She said:

[A] kind of a pivotal experience for me in thinking about accessibility [was] multi-generational accessibility. We have a lot of family groups that come in with kids who have a variety of needs and ages... So, I think accessibility can mean a lot of things... (Personal Communication, February 16, 2021)

Here she defines multigenerational accessibility as it relates to creating content for the C3 gallery. Through her own experience working in C3, Black seems to have expanded her definition of accessibility, including age as a differentiating factor in regard to what visitors might need to successfully engage with programming and activities provided by the museum.

Promoting Accessibility for Visitors of Differing Physical and/or Cognitive Abilities

In addition to speaking about multigenerational accessibility, Black emphasized the importance of working collaboratively with the access manager of the museum in order to create appropriate and accessible activities and pedagogy suited for the diverse abilities of visitors. Access managers typically oversee all programming at museums and offer solutions for how to make activities, events, and gallery spaces fully accessible and inclusive. Black also mentioned multimodal teaching methods as a means to engage visitors in a more tactile and hands-on manner. Black described multisensory methods of engagement: “tactile things...are easy for people to just like touch and feel and experience rather than having to like fully immerse themselves in something that's really heavily reading... [t]hey might not have that ability. So [imagining] how a painting or sculpture might feel and having those kinds of things available as well” (Personal Communication, 2021). Weaving in these types of inclusive teaching methods into the programming and activities of the museum is important to promoting access for visitors of all abilities that come into the DMA’s C3 gallery space (Simon, 2010).

Black went on to explain that they would like to see this type of inclusive and accessible programming further integrated into other aspects of the museum. She said:

We've tried I think more recently to branch those kinds of ideas into C3 so there's conversations about applying that to other areas of the collection, which is really exciting and something I've wanted to see for a long time. So, I'm hopeful that

accessibility kind of branches out from C3 as a hub elsewhere. (Personal Communication, February 16, 2021)

The hopeful intention that Black possesses in relation to accessibility programming emphasizes the DMA's continued growth in this area while also suggesting as a museum there is still a considerable way to go in terms of fully integrating DEAI into the museum as a whole.

This type of exhibit accessibility, inspired by the DMA's C3 gallery, suggests an intention by the museum to expand its functionality to more inclusive practices that go beyond what traditional archival art museums offer, in part by embracing multimodal teaching and spaces that allow for flexibility of visitor engagement. Expanding this kind of programming into the rest of the museum has the potential to be an extremely helpful way for the DMA to move closer to what modern museum theory deems an inclusive museum (Simon, 2010).

Similarly, Bryan Vellor, Manager of School Programs at the DMA, mentioned incremental change in programming and content evaluation in relation to how the museum has begun to change its EDI and accessibility outlook. He addressed the change he has been able to see in his time at the museum, describing ways in which he felt the museum has begun to improve its EDI and access programs, providing this example of special education programs:

[W]e also have a program that was... before my time at the museum, but had recently been introduced... a lesson plan that was specifically designed for special education classrooms. And we've continued and kind of also refreshed a little bit because it was kind of the same lesson plan that we were using year to year. (Personal Communication, February 16, 2021)

This was an important finding in my research, because he specifically addresses the common pitfall of museum access programs (programs gear specifically toward visitors

with special needs) being recycled yearly with no intent to update or diversify. Committing to recreating and reforming programming, as indicated by Vellor's quote, is an important step to moving away from basic ADA compliance and 'box-checking' programs and toward informed and relevant pedagogy and programming.

Acknowledgement of Racial and Ethnic Visitor Identities into Programs and Pedagogy

Another aspect of visitor demographics discussed was race and ethnicity. Because of the diversity of the Dallas community, museum educators at the DMA mentioned a strong need to be mindful, respectful, and aware of the racial and ethnic identities of the individuals for whom they create programming. Bryan discussed these sensitive/difficult issues at length. In his view there are many aspects to diversity, not just the content hanging on the walls - museum employees must think critically about how to best serve their diverse audiences.

Vellor highlighted the importance of being mindful of one's own perspective when teaching and interacting with students, as well as when implementing outreach programs. He said:

diversity also comes into play in terms of, like, the classrooms, and so working with volunteers... it's always important not to assume what our students are going to look like or, you know, what ideas and knowledge [they] will [or] won't have. So, I think it's... important on both ends. (Personal Communication, March 16, 2021)

Here emphasis is placed on how vital it is to authentically implement diversity programming in an unbiased manner - though this is not always an easy task to take on. Vellor pointed out how this process can be extremely difficult and can sometimes come off as exploitative if not implemented correctly. He explained, "I think, also where like equity comes in, because I think otherwise, it can be very exploiting-exploitative. To include kind of diverse artists, without being critical about how you are, you know, using those artworks

and, and sharing their stories and perspectives” (Personal Communication, March 16, 2021). He cautioned that museums must tread lightly and be as authentic and respectful as possible in order to cultivate programs that honor authentic diversity, as opposed to capitalizing on it.

DMA’s Recognition of Diversity & Incremental Change

A common factor present across my interviews was the recent acknowledgement by the DMA of the importance of diversity in its many incarnations. All interviewees mentioned diversity of visitor abilities, racial identities, ethnic identities, and age as vital to on-site and outreach program creation and implementation. In addition to their advocacy, there was a general consensus of noticeable of incremental change at the institution. Vellor made a statement regarding this shift: “I also think definitely in the past year, there has been more openness to engage explicitly with different social issues, whereas I feel when I started... it kind of felt [like] there was some discomfort around like addressing that specifically in programming” (Personal Communication, March 16, 2021). Creating programming that deals with racial and social inequities is difficult to say the least, and here Vellor highlights the DMA’s recent evolution in relation to these issues. Addressing DEAI concepts head-on in both programming and outreach activities was something cited by other museum educators as well. Vellor, for example, adds to this sentiment by calling for the museum to make DEAI an integral part of the DMA’s programming and events. He said:

I think increased comfort with being more explicit around these issues and making them a priority in our programs [is important]. I also feel like more people recognize now that these have to be central to our programming [as opposed to] peripheral or one-off type programs or events that are responding, you know- reactive to something that happened. (Personal Communication, March 16, 2021)

Vellor echoes Dowell and Jackson (2020) in their EDI evaluation of corporate America, when he discusses the tendency for institutions to create reactive programming and/or statements when an event occurs in the zeitgeist that causes civil unrest. He urges that museums move past knee-jerk reactions and toward organized and thoughtful responses to the needs of their communities. He asks that museums “... realize that these are all systemic issues, and therefore we should be addressing them ongoing” (Personal Communication, March 16, 2021). Vellor further accentuates the importance of moving EDI programming closer to the core of the museum, rather than treating it as an after-thought. A dedication and commitment to serving the public is something that museums in the United States have a duty to uphold (AAM Code of Ethics, 2021). Serving one's constituency is a foundational element of what makes an effective and welcoming museum (Lambson, 2020). Informed action can only be taken if an institution is aware, knowledgeable, and respectful of its visitors' identities, backgrounds, and needs (McGinnis, 2007).

Physical Barriers to Access

Prior to conducting field research of the DMA's physical architectural space, I compiled a list of what, specifically, I wanted to analyze in the museum space. Because of time and content limitations, I narrowed my focus to two items: navigation of the space; and available assistive infrastructure.

“Navigation of the space” is defined in this study as a consideration of the level of comfort with which I was able to move through the museum's architecture plan, having never been to the DMA before. As a young, able-bodied woman, my navigational experience of most public buildings in the United States is a privileged one, since most buildings are built to accommodate visitors similar to me (Null, 1998). Accordingly, I employed Critical Disability Theory to guide my critique of the spaces navigated. This

theory acted as a lens by which I analyzed the built form of the DMA. The theory is anchored in the belief that society has constructed oppressive identities for the individual with a disability. Because of this, public architectural forms (such as museums) often rely on additive infrastructure to accommodate individuals with special needs (Null, 1998) rather than fully integrate assistive infrastructure into the architectural form in a more seamless manner. In addition, I drew upon insight from scholars (Baumann, 2018; Cave, 2006; Hoth & Levitt, 1973; Vaz, Freitas, & Coelho, 2020) who focus on the experiential aspects of disabled visitors in public buildings, and more specifically museums. These scholars emphasize the stress that comes with navigating new spaces and urge that public spaces such as museums provide assistance through both detailed navigational maps and assistive infrastructure.

Assistive infrastructure, as defined in my definition of terms, encompasses the underlying framework provided by public buildings intended to assist individuals with special needs. This includes ADA-compliant entryways, bathrooms, elevators, and parking as well as available wheelchairs and seating. This was an important aspect of my critical analysis of the DMA's efforts both to adhere to basic ADA regulations, as well as go beyond simple liability coverage and promote a welcoming space for individuals of all abilities.

Navigability of the DMA's Architecture

When I walked into the DMA, I noticed that the museum is divided into multiple floors and wings, each containing different exhibitions and thematic content. Navigating the museum was difficult even for me as a young and able-bodied individual. I had to climb multiple flights of stairs and had a hard time locating the wheelchair ramps. On multiple occasions I had to ask gallery attendants to show me where they were located. That being

said, the gallery attendants were extremely helpful and knowledgeable. The ramps were often behind closed doors that lacked clear signage. I could imagine that navigating the museum as someone who needed to use a ramp would be a difficult and cumbersome experience. Because of the complicated architecture, I feel the DMA would benefit from providing a navigational map geared toward accessibility on their website. This map could potentially include information about the number of stairs in the galleries, the texture of the floors, and a warning that at the museum entrance there is an incline with a slick floor leading into the gallery spaces. While the architecture is not something that a museum can change drastically or quickly, I think that providing assistive information about how to navigate the architectural environment of the museum would prove to be an extremely helpful solution for the DMA and other modern museums struggling with these issues (Vaz, Freitas, & Coelho, 2020).

For example, as supported and argued for by Vaz, Freitas, & Coelho (2020), visiting a public space such as a museum for the first time can cause a lot of anxiety and stress for visitors that are differently abled. Navigation of the physical space is cited across multiple sources as a concern for visitors with special needs (Baumann, 2018; Cave, 2006; Hoth & Levitt, 1973; Vaz, Freitas, & Coelho, 2020). To feel comfortable in a new space, individuals with physical disabilities need detailed information about the space, including architectural layout, floor textures, location of ramps and elevators, and available assistive infrastructure. These factors all contribute to the physical navigation of the museum.

While the DMA lacks these specific resources, they do have content available for visitors to use as guidelines for their museum visit. On the access page there is a link entitled “Social Story” (https://dma.org/sites/default/files/file_attachments/DMAGeneralSocialStory.pdf). The link takes visitors to an infographic, provided as a pdf, that illustrates visually and textually

how to behave inside the museum. Aimed at first-time visitors, younger audiences, and individuals with developmental disabilities, it communicates the DMA's rules and policies in a positive and accessible manner.

Additionally, the DMA provides family guides in both English and Spanish on its "Family Programs" page under the "Free Family Fun" (<https://dma.org/programs/family-programs/free-family-fun>). The guides describe activities available in the museum, as well as maps, strategies for navigating the museum with small children, and images of the art works with prompts. The empathy and attention to detail evidenced by these guides is something I believe the museum does extremely well and could apply to other areas, such as access and inclusion.

Creating Sustainable Community Partnerships

Cultivating partnerships with community organizations is another important aspect of DEAI programming that all three museum employees mentioned. They outlined several key elements for creating and maintaining effective and sustainable community programming and pointed out where the museum could be doing more. Interviewees discussed partnerships with community organizations and community feedback as being central to both implementing said programming and executing accurate program evaluation.

Community Partners as Program Creators and Evaluators

Partnerships with community organizations in the greater Dallas area came up several times and were emphasized as foundational to the DMA's community outreach programs. All participants described the museum's organizational partners as critical to both the creation and maintenance of effective and appropriate programming. Megan

Monnet, Chief of Community Engagement in the Education Department at the DMA, pointed out that when the DMA builds a connection with a community group, they try to maintain that partnership rather than just work on one project and then move on. Monnet explained, "... any community groups that we partner with [we try] to extend those over the course of the year and not have them designated to a certain time period...but really kind of reaching out to those communities that don't have access to museums directly or may have never been to a museum before" (Personal Communication, February 19, 2021). By extending programs throughout the year, the DMA is attempting to move beyond concentrated, once-a-year programming that 'checks the box' of a specific marginalized group. Avoiding this type of 'one-off' programming for community groups is an important step toward integrating DEAI into the museum's internal processes. Community partnerships are relationships that need to be cared for and tended throughout the year in order to be maintained (Born, 2006). Monnet elaborated on this concept by mentioning what community partners bring to the table when creating programming at the DMA. She said,

[A]cknowledging what strengths we bring to the table, but also our limitations. And... bringing in partners who have complementary skill sets. So they have advised on the design of, of those programs. We also have hired past, program participants to be consultants. So, they give feedback on programming or on the space. These are individuals with autism who have museum experiences with us and really kind of bringing that into the planning process as well. (Personal Communication, February 19, 2021)

This quote is in reference to a program for individuals with Autism and their families. The DMA provides hands-on art camps and sensory days for individuals with Autism. This programming is listed and described on the DMA's website (<https://dma.org/programs/autism-awareness>) it was enlightening to learn that including

participants is an integral part of program creation for the DMA's accessibility events. As outlined by Critical Disability Theory (Hall, 2019), inclusion of individuals with disabilities is an important part of their reintegration into society. Personal agency comes not only from inclusion, but from participation in the mechanisms of inclusion. This is one example of how the DMA includes special populations in the planning and implementation of events and programs at the museum.

Community Engagement Through Feedback and Evaluation

Community feedback was relevant in the discussion of how the DMA selects exhibition topics. Black expanded on this concept by explaining how the current exhibition for the C3 gallery space was chosen. She said:

I think about two years ago we did this community survey feedback wall in the space where we had Post-it notes out and like ask[ed] the general public and visitors what they would enjoy seeing as talked about in the space or what works of art around a certain theme and we kind of gathered all the posts into different categories... (Personal Communication, February 16, 2021)

Community involvement and feedback were described by museum educators at the DMA as vital to fostering effective dialogue with museum partners, as well as promoting an ongoing mutually beneficial relationship with the museum. Monnet emphasized how important this is to create successful and long-term partnerships:

really thinking about these events being for and with the community and, you know, kind of the way that we designed them as well you know, it was really taking into account thinking about how can the museum be as comfortable and as welcoming an environment as possible. (Personal Communication, February 19, 2021)

Monnet went on, advocating for the benefit of working with community organizations rather than for them:

do they feel like this is a mutually beneficial partnership that they have with the DMA one that's really rooted in, in dialogue, that we are not making decisions for them, but it's really something that we are working on together? And is it something- is our work that we're doing together, something that advances both of our, both of our goals. (Personal Communication, February 19, 2021)

The intention by the DMA to cultivate mutually beneficial partnerships was an important finding in my research. Monnet's above statement suggests an intention to involve outside organizations in the internal processes of the museum, including the creation of accessibility programming.

Increasing Access for Linguistically Diverse Audiences

Institutional linguistic actions taken by the DMA were cited by each of the museum educators I interviewed. All participants discussed intentions to broaden access, promote inclusivity, and cater to the needs of their constituents as part of the DMA's linguistic efforts. Inspired by the reoccurring need for Spanish speaking volunteers and museum employees, the DMA enacted museum-wide efforts to cater to the Latinx community. These efforts included hiring initiatives and community recruitment.

Hiring Initiatives; Becoming a Bilingual Museum

Hiring more Spanish-speaking employees at the DMA was a common theme across all interviews, and singled-out specifically by Vellor. He mentioned that he was hired in part because of the necessity of bringing more Spanish-speaking individuals to the DMA to better serve their Latinx visitors. He said:

that was kind of like an institutional charge, that was I was hired in a position that we're finding more Spanish skills are required, because the museum wanted to create you know, bilingual programming and wanted to become a bilingual institution, so that was kind of something that I came into the museum with that expectation that I would bring. (Personal Communication, March 16, 2021)

Likewise, Black also discussed this initiative by the DMA to create a more welcoming environment for visitors that speak Spanish, highlighting the museum's intention to seek out bilingual employees to add to their current staff. She spoke of how important bilingual staff is to their ability to connect with and assist visitors:

... especially people who come in who might not speak English... I don't speak any other languages and hiring [bilingual employees] is a really key aspect and [they bring] a lot of really important changes to C3 and [they are] able to engage with our Spanish-speaking community [so] they feel comfortable and more welcome if they have questions or concerns. (Personal Communication, February 16, 2021)

Each museum educator I spoke with honed in on the importance of being able to communicate clearly with visitors, and part of being able to do that is to speak in the primary language of one of the largest demographics that make up the Dallas community (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019).

Community Recruitment Efforts

This focus on bringing in Spanish-speaking employees to the museum was extended to the museum volunteers. Monnet described a recruitment effort made by the museum to reach out to the Latinx community. The effort was spearheaded by a bilingual Museum volunteer that wanted to spread the word about volunteer opportunities at the museum and share programming that the DMA provided. Monnet went on to explain this effort:

[O]ne of our big recruitment efforts was... we didn't have too many... Spanish speaking volunteers and [one of our volunteers] was part of a network of Latina women here in DF [Dallas-Fort Worth]... she asked if I'd be interested in and coming to chat with them. (Personal Communication, February 19, 2021)

Monnet explained that the volunteer spoke Spanish and English and wanted to communicate to others in her community that didn't speak English about the volunteer opportunities and programming that the DMA had to offer. She asked Megan to accompany her and explain the DMA's programs while she translated the information into Spanish.

Megan went on to describe the event, emphasizing this particular event is not typical protocol of the museum. She said, “That was kind of a non-traditional recruitment that we did, but it really allowed us to [build] our volunteer base, which is now about half and half bilingual Spanish speaking” (Personal Communication, February 19, 2021). Monnet stressed how this nontraditional method of recruitment was able to reach potential Spanish-speaking volunteers. This specific example illuminates the effectiveness of initiatives that are created by and/or with museum volunteers, and acts as a segue to the second thematic element of my research.

Integrating Departments at the DMA: Fostering Museum Wide Inclusion

Museum volunteers and gallery attendants are often untapped resources. They are usually the individuals who spend the most time with the art, in the physical space, and with the museum’s visitors. Black explained that they would like to see such individuals utilized more by the DMA:

I would like to see more cross collaboration... involving gallery attendants as representatives from those groups in the development of larger programs and kind of having their input on things... Not just gallery attendants, I think it could be really beneficial for curators, they're not in the space all the time but other people [museum volunteers, museum educators, and gallery attendants] are and what they're seeing, what they're noticing...can be really valuable. (Personal Communication, February 16, 2021)

Cross-collaboration between departments seems to have some roots at the DMA, as indicated by the recruitment effort and participant input. As Black and others in the education department state, however, there is still more they would like to see the DMA do. In the following sections I dive deeper into the concept of institutional and departmental segregation and disconnect.

INSTITUTIONAL INITIATIVES

The second overarching theme that emerged across my data sources was institutional initiatives. This encompasses procedures, dedication to action, and policies made by the DMA in relation to DEAI. Through review of online content and interviews with DMA employees, I built out this theme with two sub-themes that aided in organizing and scaffolding my findings. These subthemes were institutional disconnect and lack of transparency with the public.

Institutional disconnect covers the gaps in communication my data revealed between departments at the DMA that deal with museum-wide decision making. More specifically, this section discusses the DMA's creation of mission statements as well as its implementation of EDI policy. Transparency with the public delves into the internal processes and events taking place at the DMA that are not communicated to constituents or the surrounding community.

A crucial aspect of my investigation into the DMA's institutional initiatives (Mission Statement, EDI policy & Accessibility Page) was the creation of criteria by which to distinguish between commitment to action from what Dowell and Jackson describe as "Woke-Washing : Appropriating the Language of Social Activism into Marketing Materials" (2020). Erin Dowell and Marlette Jackson are two leading EDI practitioners, consultants, and scholars (2020), who have created a framework for companies who wish to move beyond mere statements of solidarity and toward more radical and informed action. In the sections that follow, I will describe this diagnostic framework applying its suggestions to the DMA in order to best determine the strengths and weaknesses successes of the DMA's DEAI work.

ORGANIZATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK

- **Transparency:** provide details, procedures, and outcomes with employees to build new relationships based in trust and accountability.
- **Justification:** provide clear and informative information on why specific steps are taken to promote equity, diversity, and inclusion. This should include research grounded in the methods the company will be utilizing
- **Compliance:** Once an organization has moved beyond solidarity statements and on to a plan of action, they must monitor and evaluate this plan via oversight committees or task forces
- **Enforcement:** Transparency and commitment to dialogue is key to the realignment of organizational power dynamics between employees and the institution as a whole (Dowell & Jackson, 2020).

Institutional Disconnect

As public institutions, museums should ideally cater to the needs of their constituents. This requires that museums break the silence of historical systemic oppression that has plagued museums as a field for centuries (Dowell & Jackson, 2020; Wajid & Minott, 2020). Many museums in the United States have issued statements of solidarity, reworked their mission statements to include DEAI, and made content-specific policies such as EDI & Accessibility policies and/or resources (Wajid & Minott, 2020). The DMA has followed this well-beaten path, consisting of statements, policies, and general commitments to reformation. Included in their mission statement and described and expanded in their EDI policy, the DMA states a commitment to DEAI. While it is easy to identify the DMA's written commitments, it is much more difficult to identify how they are adhering to these policies.

Monnet, Chief of Community Engagement at the DMA, spoke of the recent movement within the field, discussing the many recent public statements in support of DEAI by museums around the country. More important than statements, she points out, are informed and sustainable actions. She emphasized how crucial it is that these conversations are ongoing in order to really commit to change:

I think, especially in this past year, a lot of museums have made statements about their commitment to these things. And I think recognizing that this is not something that's short term, this is something that has to be part of your practice on an ongoing basis. It's not something you get to kind of check off the list and then move on to the next thing. It's really about thinking critically about your museum's mission, how resources are used, the content you create and the work environment that you are fostering. (Personal Communication, February 19, 2021)

Recognizing that DEAI work is a journey not a destination is referenced here by Monnet. It is important that museums recognize continued growth and change as part of the solution, instead of solely relying on statements of solidarity (AAM, 2018).

Challenge of Putting Statements into Action

Though ambitiously accounted for on their website, the DMA seems to struggle with integrating the very concepts it cites as integral to their museum. This issue became apparent in my interviews and suggested interdepartmental disconnect within the DMA in relation to their mission statement and EDI policy.

When I asked museum employees about the creation of the DMA's mission statement, they were unable to provide me with a clear answer. I was told that they had no hand in its creation and were unsure of when exactly it changed and who was involved. One museum educator, Kendall Black, stated their belief that it might have come from the director: "the museum as a whole *wasn't* involved in that mission statement change. I think it was mostly our director and the kind of sub-clusters directly under him" (Personal

Communication, February 16, 2021, emphasis added). She went on to describe the internal confusion about the change and how they were not alone in being unaware of its origins:

I'm not sure how long that has been implemented into our mission though, if that was a more recent change or if that's always been there. I'm not sure it was so deeply buried. We had this conversation recently where I didn't even know that was on the website and I wasn't alone in that sentiment. (Personal Communication, February 16, 2021)

I found this disconcerting. The museum advocates for EDI in its mission statement, discussing the placement of “our diverse communities at the center around which all activities radiate” (DMA, 2021), and includes an EDI policy on their website. But how can they enforce such changes if their employees are not represented in process of statement and policy creation? The subtle implication made by interview participants suggested a disconnect between departments that work directly with visitors (including the education department, the gallery attendants, teachers, and volunteers) and those that work higher up in the institution. Another museum employee, Megan Monnet, stated that there was most likely a consultant that aided in the creation of the mission statement:

there's often like an outside consultant and then there's, you know, lots of conversations, um, with internal and external stakeholders. Um, I know that it was something that our director cares a lot about. So, I think that was something, you know, that he was, you know, an, uh, a focus that he was bringing with him when he joined the museum. Um, but I'm not sure how the mission statement exactly came to be. (Personal Communication, February 19, 2021)

Though more informed than the other two employees on this subject, the above statement still implies internal disconnect between departments. Recruiting an outside consultant presumably provides the DMA with a specialist who may be extremely knowledgeable on EDI, but it goes against what Dowell and Jackson state as vital to cultivating trust and accountability between employer and employee.

By leaving employees in the dark, the DMA does not offer transparency or justification for its actions surrounding EDI initiatives. Thus, there is no way to measure progress or maintain institutional accountability (Dowell & Jackson, 2020). Monnet expands on this concept of action over words:

We can talk about the importance of equity, diversity, inclusion and access, and our commitment to them. But that also has to come with an acknowledgement of where we've fallen short and reckoning with those shortcomings. I think that that latter piece is something that I haven't seen a lot of, like across the field, um, you know, and really kind of coming to terms with like, um, the histories of our institutions, our ways of practicing our ways of working, um, and you know, really thinking about how you can do better and that's uncomfortable, like looking in the mirror in that way and being really honest. I think that's, that's uncomfortable for a lot of folks, but you really have to lean into that discomfort in order to really make any kind of lasting change. (Personal Communication, February 19, 2021)

Indeed, these types of institutional issues are uncomfortable, but they are more than necessary.

In some cases, leaning into discomfort in order to mend injustices is as simple as practicing what you preach. Museum employees Black and Vellor mentioned the need for diversity of staff at the DMA as part of the ongoing solution to moving toward DEAI. Black called attention to the issue of racial inequities as it pertains to employment at the DMA. She said:

I think kind of going back to diversity of Staff especially and kind of the division you see between a lot of Staff who are people of color working primarily as Gallery attendants or lower-level positions and then it kind of going up from there to my mostly white positions as curators. Not to say that there aren't people of color in those positions, but I think we could all benefit from having especially more black people on our team as representations of our education department, especially that's something we're really lacking in across all areas. So I think that would be kind of key to more diversity amongst all staff and more willingness to kind of interconnect between departments. (Personal Communication, February 16, 2021)

As illustrated by this quote, there are still a lot of ways the DMA could do more to showcase their dedication to DEAI. Vellor commented on the lack of diversity of staff as well, mentioning the DMA mission statement's specific focus on diverse communities. He calls for more action in terms of follow-through from the museum. He said:

I also think there needs to be more diversity in our staff, I mean I think anyone can be trained around these topics, but at the end of the day, like, I also think our staff should be reflective of our community, especially if the DMA, you know, in our mission statement says that we place art and our diverse communities around at the center around which all of our activities radiate, and so I think that requires us to model those communities that we're centering so I would love to see more diversity in our staff, and I also think like allocation of resources, like what departments what staff are doing this work and how can that be supported or extended. (Personal Communication, March 16, 2021)

Embodying the change that the museum wants to see in their work community as well as in their museum visitors is vital to authentically implementing reform.

The DMA has the potential to improve its commitment to DEAI by extending their mission statement and EDI policies to other departments, hiring more diverse staff, and allowing for interdepartmental transparency. To move beyond solidarity statements, the DMA must create a plan of action and rigorously enforce it. Enforcement can only come through transparency of action and ongoing dialogue with employees and the Dallas community in order to promote realignment of the power dynamics within the organization between employees and the institution as a whole (Dowell & Jackson, 2020). Monnet further added to this sentiment stating: "I think there needs to be some clarity about institutional...alignment on institutional priorities" (Personal Communication, February 19, 2021). The DMA's institutional priorities would benefit from a recalibration, shifting away from statements and toward a commitment to action and change.

Lack of Transparency with the Public

Presently, museums are fighting an uphill battle against their historical role as elitist exclusionary institutions (Wajid & Minott, 2020). Part of combating this previous role in society is opening up institutional decision-making processes to the public, especially when dealing with issues of DEAI. Because DEAI is something that is aimed at improving overall museum experiences for visitors, providing details, procedures, and outcomes is critical to cultivating trust and accountability (Dowell & Jackson, 2020).

The DMA could benefit from becoming more transparent and allowing for an open dialogue with constituents, creating a forum to discuss ideas surrounding how DEAI could be increased in the museum space. Through my research I was able to learn about the DMA's internal policies and how they function as an institution. The information I was able to uncover on my own, however, was sparse. Only when I interviewed museum educators was I able to gain insight into the DMA's inner workings.

For example, something mentioned by all three of the museum employees I interviewed were the museum-wide discussions on racial inequities. Sparked by the killing of George Floyd, Black stated that the DMA held a town hall meeting to address the shocking events of the summer of 2020. She recalled:

We've been having more Museum-wide [discussions] lately after the George Floyd protests of you know, what diversity actually means and how our departments can really reflect diversity and where we're kind of lacking right now. So, I think there's been a greater push to kind of communicate those issues, [to] talk about how we interact with different groups and programs and kind of things we've experienced that we were maybe shy to talk about trying to get a greater sense of how we might communicate better to communicate better to a larger audience. (Personal Communication, February 16, 2021)

This type of action, taken by the museum to acknowledge current events and address violence against black citizens, is something I feel the public would benefit from hearing

about and even taking part in. She discussed how this meeting changed the way the DMA thought about and handled issues of race. She said:

I think it's really changed especially over the last few years and I think I've become more aware. Especially we had this big kind of town hall meeting over the summer after the George Floyd protest kind of broke out... it was almost like a reckoning and...I think we kind of realized where... our museum could be better about recognizing where things aren't equitable. (Personal Communication, February 16, 2021)

Recognizing the importance of addressing the killing of George Floyd and holding a meeting about it for museum employees suggest alignment with the criteria that Dowell and Jackson (2020) prescribe to organizations wanting to embrace EDI. While this was an important step, I feel that it would have been more profound had the DMA communicated these important discussions held at the town hall meeting to the public, allowing for the Dallas community to benefit from the event. Black went on to say that the town hall made museum employees reflect on who makes decisions at the DMA. She said:

it really challenged us to consider like who's making these decisions about how we're communicating about these issues, especially when it came down to the George Floyd protest. Everybody was kind of throwing up their support [but] who's making these decisions? Is this reflective of? our entire institution? Or is this reflective of people who are higher up?... So it's hard to say how that might change but I'm hopeful. (Personal Communication, 2021)

Clearly, A disconnect between the employees, the community, and the 'higher-ups' still remains at the DMA.

Though the DMA showcased its progress as an institution by acknowledging and discussing events surrounding racial inequities, they failed to communicate this clearly to the public. Additionally, as Black's quote demonstrates, there still seems to be ineffective interdepartmental dialogue and a lack of transparency when it comes to the creation and implementation of policies related to DEAI.

SUMMARY

Data collected for this research came from site observation, interviews, and a review of online content provided by the Dallas Museum of Art (DMA). In the previous sections, I presented my findings thematically in order to make sense of the information I extrapolated from my raw data. I then went on to discuss and flesh out the findings that I was able to identify. I supported these findings with quotes, details, and information sourced from my raw data. I will now present concluding thoughts on how this information answers my central research question: How has the Dallas Museum of Art applied principles of diversity, equity, access, and inclusion (DEAI) to their programming, resources, and institutional initiatives?

The DMA seems to integrate DEAI best through their robust educational and outreach programming. Here visitor needs are prioritized and connected to visitor identities by museum employees at the DMA. Information from both the DMA's list of programming available on the museum's website and what was described by museum educators at the DMA suggests not only support for DEAI, but intent to improve and increase dedication to such issues. This was supported through informed and on-going action. Important findings included the DMA's acknowledgement of visitor demographics when creating and evaluating programming, working collaboratively with accessibility managers, and noticeable incremental change surrounding diversity, equity, access, and inclusion.

A potential area of improvement that the data suggested was expansion of accessibility programming beyond the education department. This would assist the DMA in fully integrating statements of DEAI found on their website into the museum as a whole, inspiring movement away from reactive programming, and statements of solidarity and toward informed action and implementation.

Physical accessibility was an additional area in need of more attention from the museum. While the DMA provides accessibility programming through their education department, the museum as a whole simply adheres to basic ADA regulations in relation to physical access to their gallery spaces. Due to the nature of the DMA's architectural layout, they would greatly benefit from providing a detailed navigational map/guide on their website for visitors with special needs. Additionally, the DMA could refresh the assistive infrastructure provided for individuals with limited physical mobility.

Dowell and Jackson's framework (2020) as well as their overall push away from solidarity statements were two key components to how I explored the DMA's institutional initiatives surrounding issues of DEAI. With so many museums in the United States issuing statements addressing the racial injustice present in the zeitgeist it became difficult to distinguish between real commitment to action, and liability statements out of self-preservation. These statements from large companies, organizations, and institutions became so commonplace the public was beginning to suffer from "statement fatigue" a term that Dowell and Jackson utilized (2020). They go on to explain this phrase as "a growing level of disinterest, ambivalence, and outright outrage towards companies calling out racial injustice without showing any signs of taking action" (Dowell & Jackson, 2020). This concept inspired my review of the DMA's mission statement, EDI policy, and accessibility page. Using this, and the organizational accountability framework drawn from Dowell and Jackson (2020) as criteria to closely analyze these institutional policies and statements, lead me to several key insights. While the DMA has stated dedication to DEAI on their museum's website extensively, more must be done in terms of follow through and commitment to action. Additionally, insight from the three DMA employees interviewed suggested institutional disconnect brought on by insufficient dialog between departments at the DMA, as well as minimal communication in relation to internal decision making to

the public. These findings, as confined to the scope of my research, stood out as ways the museum is in need of growth.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Suggestions for Further Research

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

This exploratory case study investigated The Dallas Museum of Art's (DMA) programming, practices, resources, and institutional initiatives that attempt to foster diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion (DEAI). This research provides specific focus to the DMA's mission statement, Equity Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy, and accessibility page. This study looked at the DMA's stated commitment to DEAI present on their website and juxtaposes it with efforts made by the museum to put these statements into action. Through direct observation, review of online content, and semi-structured interviews with DMA employees, I acquired insight into how this modern museum has handled issues of DEAI.

Two key themes emerged from my raw data: Visitor Needs, and Institutional Initiatives. From these themes came a significant finding: Like many art museums in the United States, the DMA remains distanced from the public. More concerningly, it remains internally segregated. While data drawn from the institution's website indicated that the DMA provides robust programming for a plethora of visitors of different ages, physical and cognitive abilities, and cultural identities, there is still room for growth.

This study explored the internal processes of on-site and outreach program creation and implementation at the DMA, the architectural space of the museum, and the internal decisions made in relation to cultivating DEAI. All of these factors make up the scope of my research.

The data revealed the DMA's intention to begin its DEAI journey, while additionally shedding light on areas in need of growth. Like many institutions in the United

States, the primary challenge that the DMA faces today is how to follow through on their ambitious statements of diversity, equity, access, and inclusion.

RESEARCH PROBLEM

This study aimed at addressing how the DMA put its institutional initiatives (specifically: mission statement, EDI policy, accessibility page, and DEAI programming) into practice. With so many companies, organizations, and institutions cranking out statements of solidarity (Dowell & Jackson, 2020) it has become extremely difficult to distinguish between performative statements and statements made in earnest backed by informed action.

I embarked on this exploratory case study to gain an understanding of how the DMA is committing to the ambitious statements of DEAI found on the museum's website. Through using existing criteria by which to analyze the DMA's mission statement and EDI policy, I was then able to present what my data suggested as potential deficits in the DMA's DEAI implementation. The framework that I used to critique the DMA's DEAI efforts drew extensively from Dowell & Jackson's (2020) suggestions for dedicated and effective action rooted in evaluation, transparency, and research. Through investigating these issues, I was able to uncover information and insights that ultimately answered my central research question.

CENTRAL RESEARCH QUESTION

The research question that guided my inquiry was: How has the Dallas Museum of Art applied principles of diversity, equity, access, and inclusion to their programming, resources, and institutional initiatives? This question established the scope of my study,

while also grounding it in a central idea I could return to throughout the process. I continuously referred back to the question to ensure my findings remained relevant.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is qualitative in nature and employed case study research methodology. Case study research methodology is anchored in uncovering ‘how’ or ‘why’ a contemporary phenomenon occurs (Yin, 2018). This matched my central research question of ‘how’ the DMA has followed through with DEAI initiatives.

My inquiry was informed and guided by two theoretical perspectives: social justice theory, and critical disability theory. I chose these theories to make up my theoretical framework because they aligned with my own beliefs and areas of interest. These theories informed how I reviewed and synthesized my data.

Critical disability theory was a vital component to my research because of its roots in equity and inclusivity. The theory focuses on the ways in which society has unjustly pathologized individuals with varying abilities (Hall, 2019). It informed my analysis of the DMA’s accessibility page, and my specific attention to access in this study, and was vital to my examination of the efforts made by the DMA to go beyond basic ADA compliance. Social justice theory provided me with an ethical strategy for researching issues of racial inequity, and historic oppression by primarily white institutions such as art museums in the United States. This theory promotes empathy, respect, care, and recognition of historic injustices. Both of these theoretical perspectives were integral to my critical analysis of the DMA’s programs, resources, and DEAI work.

Data analysis came from working with my raw data from the ground up. My data was sourced from semi-structured interviews, online content, and field notes from direct sight observation. I poured over my raw data multiple times in order to inductively identify

themes and commonalities. Analysis for each data set began first by coding the information provided by each source through highlighting relevant information. After identifying the information that most closely related to my central research question, I embarked on content organization across my sources. Once I was able to code my data, I began the process of triangulation. Data triangulation is a method of analysis rooted in the understanding that multiple sources of data provide stronger internal validation of a study (Jick,1979).

I was able to identify two key themes present across my data sources: visitor needs, and institutional initiatives. These themes are built out inductively by several sub-themes that further explain and expand upon each finding. Quotes from interviews with DMA employees, excerpts from the DMA's mission statement and EDI policy, and details regarding the museum's architecture were used to support my findings.

KEY FINDINGS

This case study research generated a large quantity of information in relation to the DMA's internal processes and decision making. Two primary elements emerged from the data: visitor needs, and institutional initiatives.

Visitor needs (as expanded upon in the previous chapter) were described with nuance and appreciation by the museum employees that I interviewed. Visitor identities were cited often throughout my interviews as crucial to effective program creation and implementation. In addition to expressing support and awareness of visitor identities, the DMA has integrated this concept into their practices. This is exemplified by the DMA's programming for individuals with Autism. As Megan Monnet, Chief of Community Engagement, shared with me, the programming for visitors with Autism was created together with participants. This specific example showcased how the DMA values visitors'

needs by allowing participants to take part in program creation. This seems especially important when creating activities, and/or events for marginalized individuals. While this example is significant, increased participant involvement in program creation from various Dallas communities would be highly beneficial.

An additional component that highlighted attention to visitor needs was the DMA's dynamic gallery space, the Center for Creative Connections (C3). As described on the museum's website, this space is a gallery that uses works of art from the DMA's collection to support diversity through dynamic experiences with art (DMA, 2021). It promotes DEAI through its flexible gallery space that invites visitors of all ages and identities to participate in artmaking and art-centered activities. Through my interview with C3's gallery curator, I gleaned that activities and exhibitions in this space are often influenced through community feedback and input. Again, the DMA supports the dedication stated in their mission statement to serving their community by including visitor feedback as part of program and activity creation. However, though visitor input was mentioned in relation to specific exhibitions and programs by Black in her interview, it was unclear how typical integrating visitor feedback is to the DMA's program creation process.

Though these two specific instances, participant involvement for visitors with Autism and the C3 gallery space, were excellent findings and presented well when coupled with the extensive list of programming the DMA has on their website, the data was missing something. It lacked further integration into other areas of the museum. Drawing from the perspectives of the three museum employees interviewed for this study, including visitor and community input seemed to start and end in the education department. When I attempted to find out more about the DMA's internal functions and decision processes, I reached a dead end. This brought me to my second thematic element in my findings: institutional initiatives.

After extensively reading almost all of the written content on the DMA's website, I found that diversity, equity, access, and inclusion were mentioned quite often. These key words are present in not only the mission statement of the museum and its EDI policy, but are sprinkled throughout program descriptions, C3's welcome page, and listed in the DMA's Core Values (DMA, 2021). While it is helpful that the DMA is using relevant verbiage, as mentioned and supported throughout my study, mere statements of support are not nearly enough. The presence of DEAI on the DMA's website acted as a catalyst for my research into how and when these sentiments and statements came to be.

There is no public timeline on the DMA's website that provides information about the museum's EDI policy or its mission statement. I was also unable to find any related information through online research. I contacted the DMA's archivist to no avail. My last resort came down to asking the museum educators I interviewed if they knew who created the EDI policy, and the newly altered mission statement. I was met with either vague information about EDI consultants, or told that the museum as a whole was not involved in the creation of either. I found this interesting and was left with many questions and ponderings about what this means for the DMA as a museum, and more specifically what it means for their DEAI work.

Ultimately, the conclusion I came to was that the DMA is on the spectrum of DEAI work. This spectrum begins with institutional silence or refusal to acknowledge DEAI and ends with informed and radical action to fundamentally change and move toward DEAI. While the DMA has not been silent, they have also not adhered to the framework that Dowell and Jackson (2020) suggest that companies use to authentically implement change. Areas lacking include transparency with the public, justification of actions taken in relation to DEAI, compliance with statements of solidarity via close and continued evaluation, and

enforcement through transparency and commitment to dialogue between the DMA's board members, museum employees and individuals in positions of power.

POTENTIAL BENEFIT OF OPENING UP INTERNAL PROCESSES AT THE DMA

Transparency of internal decision making in areas such as exhibition selection and curation and community outreach methodology are not common at most art museums in the United States (Smart, 2020), but could potentially break down some metaphorical walls to access. As William Smart (2020) mentions in his article, "The Open and Integrated Museum", much distance between the museum as an institution and its visitors still remains. Smart believes the gap could be lessened if transparency of museum functions was increased to the public. He mentions installation and exhibition curation as two examples of fascinating processes that could draw new constituents if shown to the public. This concept could be expanded to include the ways in which museums create and select their in-house and outreach programming. I think this could be especially effective if applied to EDI and access programming. Since EDI and access programs are typically aimed at very specific and often marginalized demographics, involvement or awareness of the creation and selection process would greatly benefit both the success of the program and the comfortability of the participants. If individuals have a hand in program creation, they may feel more connected to the events and activities that go with it. Though inclusion of participants is something that was mentioned by museum educators at the DMA, transparency of internal processes was something I noticed as a deficit across my data.

While the DMA has certainly done its part to create and implement a variety of programming at their museum, the data suggests that there is still room for growth in terms of opening the museum and integrating its constituents. When looking at community outreach at the DMA, one can see partnerships and events aimed at integrating the

constituent demographics of the greater Dallas area, but the DMA, like many business, schools, and institutions in the United States today, is still closed off in terms of its internal processes and decision making.

The DMA could potentially recreate these guidelines for individuals with disabilities, providing information I identified as missing from its accessibility page, including but not limited to a detailed navigational map and information about assistive infrastructure provided at the museum and how to access it.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This case study has the potential to inspire a plethora of related research. DEAI is a broad concept and a relatively new one being integrated into museums. My research is confined to specific aspects of the DMA's DEAI work, more could certainly be done to expand upon what I have included in this case study.

This research focused primarily on the DMA's mission statement, EDI policy, and accessibility page. I investigated how these museum wide statements, policies and resources were carried out and to what degree the DMA adhered to its commitment to DEAI. More extensive research involving direct observation of museum programming, events and tours would greatly benefit and extend this evaluation of the DMA's DEAI journey. Once COVID-19 restrictions are lifted more involved field work would improve this study's findings.

Additionally, one could implement comparative analysis of the DMA's DEAI work with that of another art museum in the United States that equally states dedication to DEAI. Or one could compare the work done at the DMA to that of a museum outside of the United States, comparing cultural differences.

Ultimately DEAI is an ongoing journey and this study has only lightly scratched the surface of one museum's attempt to move beyond basic ADA compliance and toward DEAI.

Appendix A: IRB Exempt Determination



Office of Research Support & Compliance
 Institutional Review Board
 P.O. Box 7426, Campus Code A3200
 Austin, Texas 78713
 T: 512-232-1543 F: 512-471-8873
 Email: irb@austin.utexas.edu
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EXEMPT DETERMINATION

February 11, 2021

FWA # 00002030

Christina Bain
 2301 SAN JACINTO BLVD
 AUSTIN, TX 78712

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Dear Christina Bain:

On 2/11/2021, the IRB reviewed the following submission:

Type of Review:	Initial Study
Special Determinations:	None
Title:	Moving Beyond Compliance and Towards Diversity Equity Access and Inclusion: A Case study of the pedagogical practices and programming at the Dallas Museum of Art that embrace DEAI
Investigator:	Christina Bain
IRB ID:	STUDY00000632
Funding:	None
Grant ID:	None
IND, IDE, or HDE:	None
Approval Date:	2/11/2021
Documents Reviewed:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HRP-UT902-Template_IRB_Proposal_Exempt_Submission (3).docx, Category: IRB Protocol; • Interview Questions for DMA.docx, Category: Other; • Recruitment Email for Interviews, Category: Recruitment Materials;



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The IRB determined that this protocol meets the criteria for exemption from IRB review under 45 CFR 46.104 (2)(ii) Tests, surveys, interviews, or observation (low risk).

In conducting this protocol you are required to follow the requirements listed in HRP-103 - INVESTIGATOR MANUAL.

Ongoing IRB review and approval by this organization is not required. This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. Modifications that involve a change in PI, increase risk, or otherwise affect the exempt category or the criteria for exempt determination must be submitted as a modification. Investigators are strongly encouraged to contact the IRB staff to describe any changes prior to submitting an amendment.

If you have any questions, contact the RSC by phone at 512 -232-1543 or via e-mail at irb@austin.utexas.edu.

Sincerely,

Institutional Review Board

University of Texas at Austin

cc:

Christina Bain (PI), Karen Marco (Primary Contact)

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