

VISITORS' EVALUATIONS OF THE HISTORIC CONTENT AT *STORYEUM*:
AN EDUTAINMENT HERITAGE TOURIST ATTRACTION

by

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ABSTRACT

Edutainment heritage tourist attractions are a hybrid form of attraction that seeks to maximize both the educational value and entertainment value of their heritage contents through the use of multi-media and entertainment technologies. The edutainment nature of this new form of tourist attraction makes it increasingly difficult to distinguish it from other forms of tourist attractions, such as museums of history and culture, theme parks and cultural performances, which may also work with the dual mandate of maximizing both educational and entertaining values. This thesis investigates how visitors understand and evaluate this new form of attraction. Interviews with visitors to Storyeum- an edutainment heritage tourist attraction that presents a theatrical musical history of the province of British Columbia- reveal that such attractions have the potential to generate within their visitors powerful feelings of pride in local identity, as well as other emotional responses. Visitors' evaluations of Storyeum's unique type of historical representations show a high degree of active and critical engagement with the attractions content. Visitors' positive overall evaluations of Storyeum, their feelings of pride in local identity and their level of critical engagement with Storyeum's historical representations are each discussed in detail in order to identify some general and potentially transferable characteristics of edutainment heritage tourist attractions.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	ii
Table of Contents.....	iii
List of Tables.....	iv
Acknowledgements.....	v
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Edutainment Heritage Tourism.....	1
Chapter 2: Background	3
Trends in Museums and Other Tourist Attractions	3
Heritage Tourism Research	4
Heritage Representations.....	9
Research Objectives and Research Questions	11
Research Context: Storyeum	11
Chapter 3: Methods	18
Methodology	18
The Visitor Study.....	19
Data Analysis	20
The Participant.....	21
Chapter 4: Outcomes	22
Complimentary Evaluations	22
Critical Evaluations	24
Dynamics between Education and Entertainment	25
Feelings of Pride in British Columbian Identity	28
Emotional Responses and Feelings of Inclusion and Cohesion	31
Criticisms of Multicultural Representations	33
Influence of Prior Knowledge, Personal Philosophies and Socio-Cultural Identity.....	38
Chapter 5: Conclusion	43
How do visitors to Storyeum evaluate the attraction and its historical content?	43
How does the historical content contribute to their understanding of the history of BC?.....	43
How does Storyeum contribute to their personal perspectives of the province of BC?.....	44
What are the perspectives of visitors to Storyeum that can contribute to a broader understanding of EHTAs?	44
References	46
Appendix A Visitor Interview Questionnaire	48
Appendix B Behavioural Ethics Approval Form	49

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Participants: Age and Sex	21
Table 2: Participants: Residency Location	21
Table 3: Type of Visits	21
Table 4: What stands out most in your memory from your visit to Storyeum?.....	23
Table 5: What adjective would you use to describe Storyeum?.....	23
Table 6: What were your favourite aspects of the performance at Storyeum?.....	24
Table 7: What were your least favourite aspects of the performance at Storyeum?.....	24
Table 8: How does the performance at Storyeum make you think about BC as a province?.....	29
Table 9: Was there any information or were there any perspectives that you felt were missing or lacking?.....	33
Table 10: What is the purpose of learning about history at museums and tourist attractions?.....	39
Table 11: Cultural Self-Identifications	41

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Chapter 1: Introduction

This thesis explores the perspectives of a group of visitors to Storyeum, an edutainment heritage tourist attraction (EHTA) in Vancouver, British Columbia. This tourist attraction, established in 2004 in Vancouver's urban tourist district will be used as an Instrumental Case Study (Stake 1995) to explore the broader phenomenon of edutainment heritage tourism. This research focuses on the ways that visitors are receiving and understanding historic information, which is being presented in new innovative formats that intentionally combine entertainment technologies with educational content and objectives. This case study offers a contribution to our understanding of EHTAs. In order to understand the recent emergence of edutainment heritage tourism as a wide spread phenomenon, it must be contextualized both within broader contemporary trends occurring in tourism and museums, as well as within the history of some antecedent forms of edutainment attractions.

Edutainment Heritage Tourism

The multi-billion dollar international tourism industry acts as a primary motivator for innovative developments and trends in museums, tourist attractions, and entertainment and arts facilities (Prentice 2005). Edutainment tourism is an example of one such innovative development. Edutainment, a neologism, has been defined as "the joining together of educational and cultural activities with the commerce and technology of the entertainment world" (Hannigan 1998:98). This genre is not limited to the tourism industry; it is also being used in education, in the media, and in the entertainment industry. As a result of its widespread use, formerly distinguishable tourism, leisure and cultural venues are becoming increasingly similar because of their edutainment aspects. An example of this is the increasing resemblance between public-sector museums and private sector heritage tourist attractions.

Public museums are increasingly promoting entertainment value in order to be economically viable and competitive in the tourism economy (van Aalst and Boogaarts 2002: 197; Bouquet 2001:4; MacDonald 1996:2; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998: 7), while private-sector tourist attractions are increasingly advertising their educational value in order to appeal to a more diverse audience and to reinvent their identity as educational places and not just places of leisure and entertainment (Ritchie et al 2003: 4). Tourism is now characterised by a heterogeneity of new, innovative and alternative venues each of which is marketed on the basis of its uniqueness, individuality or novelty (Prentice 2005: 251; Dicks 2003). EHTAs intentionally combine entertainment technologies and historic contents in formats which are characterised as maximizing simultaneously the educational and entertainment values of those contents, and creating interesting, memorable and unique visitor experiences.

Heritage tourism is a rapidly expanding sector of the international tourism industry (Prentice 2005:252) and is experiencing growth alongside other forms of tourism such as eco-tourism and cultural tourism (Fennell 1999; Smith 2003). A growing number of venues and facilities market specific 'heritages' as they are defined within particular contexts and locations. Heritage tourist attractions share the most similarities, in terms of exhibition content, with public-sector museums, because of the representational focus on heritage, history and culture. Many of these heritage tourist attractions have embraced edutainment because the heritage contents they market are considered to be inherently educational (Prentice 2005:252). The working assumption within many heritage tourist attractions is that this content needs only

to be “brought to life” with an entertaining treatment in order to be transformed into ideal edutainment tourist products (van Aalst and Boogaarts 2002:197). This hybridization of entertainment and education within heritage tourist attractions is challenging traditional definitions of what constitutes a proper educational experience (Twitchell 1992; Wallace 1989) and is creating new ways heritage representations are consumed. However, very little is known about this process of hybridization or about the types of experiences that visitors are having at these venues.

Public-sector museums have been the subject of extensive research, including analyses of the production of exhibits (Karp and Levine 1991; Frese 1960), the use of entertainment technologies (Hooper Greenhill 1995; MacDonald 1996), the dissemination of historical and cultural information and visitors’ receptions of that information (Bicknell and Farmelo 1993; Krmpotich and Anderson 2005). Heritage tourist attractions, however, have rarely been the subject of such critical investigation (Prentice 2005) and, therefore, the processes of exhibition production, communication of information, and visitors’ receptions of information at heritage tourist attractions is not clearly understood. This deficiency is not an accident; the lack of serious academic analysis of tourist attractions is directly related to the long-standing characterisation of tourist attractions as frivolous amusements. There has been an assumption that tourist attractions are not significant sites where cultural and historic information is produced, disseminated and consumed (Twitchell 1992; Shaw and Williams 2004). This value-laden characterisation and assumption can be juxtaposed with the long standing characterization and assumption made about public museums. They have been considered serious institutions where important historical, cultural and social information is communicated. The association of tourist attractions with superficial entertainment, on the one hand, and museums with more serious pursuits, such as the pursuit of knowledge (Jordanova 1989:21), on the other, as well as an assumed incompatibility of these two pursuits (Greenhalgh 1989) has resulted in a lack of scholarly research into tourist attractions, their heritage representations, and visitors’ experiences, impressions, and perspectives based on those heritage representations. However, the differences between public sector museums and private-sector tourism attractions are not as pronounced as these characterisations suggest. After all, public museums are one of the most common and popular types of tourist attraction internationally and are influenced by tourism issues. Private sector EHTAs present historical information or heritage themes similar to those found in public museums and are therefore influenced by the issues facing the broader heritage industry, of which museums are a major component.

Why, therefore, have private-sector tourist attractions been dismissed for so long? Are they really only frivolous amusement? Do EHTAs, which intentionally blend the educational and entertainment values of their heritage contents, also deserve this reputation? What are the issues facing this type of institution? And what do visitors think about EHTAs? What kind of experiences are they having? Do they consider EHTAs frivolous amusements? By investigating visitors’ experiences and evaluations of Storyeum, an EHTA in Vancouver, this thesis will contribute to our broader understanding of how EHTAs are being received by the visiting public and how their unique forms of edutainment heritage representations contribute to visitors’ identities and historical perspectives.

Chapter 2: Background

Trends in Museums and other Tourist Attractions

The dichotomous characterisation of public museums as serious and educational institutions on the one hand, and private sector tourist attractions as frivolous and entertaining institutions on the other is an inaccurate representation of the complex ways that all forms of tourist attractions, public and private, combine educational and entertaining elements to create interesting experiences for visitors. The pursuit of entertainment, for example, has long been recognized by museum professionals as one of many possible visitor motivations, along with educational pursuits, aesthetic appreciation, and the satisfaction of curiosity about historical, cultural, scientific and other ideas and phenomena (Jodanova 1989:22-24). Furthermore, museums constantly seek innovative ways to make their collections and exhibitions interesting and entertaining (MacDonald and Alsford 1991; McKercher et al. 2003; Hudson 1975). Some recent developments intended to increase entertainment value in museums include the use of interactive elements (such as demonstration stations, hands-on collections, visitor-navigated computer systems or information interfaces, museum passports and maps), the inclusion of multi-media and entertainment technologies (such as film, video, soundscape, digital devices, and computers), innovations in public programs, and the expansion of museum gift shops (van Aaslt and Boorgaarts 2002; MacDonald and Alsford 1991; MacDonald 1996; Hooper-Greenhill 1995). These entertainment trends are occurring as museums are becoming increasingly visitor, rather than research oriented (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998: 138; Handler and Gable 1997:13; MacDonald 1996) further blurring the distinction between public sector museums and private sector heritage tourist attractions.

Interestingly, these entertainment trends are occurring at the same time as a separate and distinct process is occurring in museums. Many museums, in particular history museums and museums of anthropology, are changing in accordance with ethical and legal guidelines, such as the North American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) in the United States, the Canadian Task Force on Museums and First Peoples (Assembly of First Nations and Canadian Museums Association 1992), and the International Council of Museums' Code of Ethics for Museums¹. These laws and guidelines require museums to be more accountable to originating communities and to share power with these groups by engaging in repatriation negotiations, developing culturally appropriate protocols, and working collaboratively on research and exhibitions (Ames 1999; Peers and Brown 2003; Hubert and Fforde 2005; Phillips 2003). In addition, the Canadian Task Force Report on Museums and First Peoples emphasizes the need for and right of First Peoples to be directly engaged in the production of the representations of their culture (1992: 7-8). This emphasis provides an important recognition that cultural groups, in this case the First Peoples of Canada, are in an ideal position to be the authors and editors of the representations of their own culture. There is an implicit awareness that cultural representations made exclusively by outsiders have often been problematic in some way, either by being inaccurate, culturally insensitive, or failing to reflect how members of that culture would want to be represented. The processes of change largely initiated by these ethical and legal guidelines are not only changing museum practice, but are also changing

¹ International Council of Museums Official Website, <http://icom.museum/ethics.html#intro>, Retrieved June 10th, 2006.

the way knowledge is produced and disseminated in museum exhibits as a result of the increasing level of self-representation (Peers and Brown 2003; Krmpotich 2004).

The current emphasis on ethical practice and accountability in museums is a distinct and separate process from the growing tendency to use entertainment as a means of enhancing visitors' educational and overall experiences in museums and tourist attractions. Is there any evidence, however, to suggest that EHTAs are becoming conscious of the political sensitivity of representations? Are EHTAs beginning to share power, work collaboratively, or be more accountable to the cultural groups they represent? As private-sector tourist attractions EHTAs do not have the imperative to adhere to the ethical and legal guidelines² governing public museums. Despite this ethical and legal difference between public museums and private sector tourist attractions, some of the representational politics being negotiated in museum contexts (for example, the increasing prevalence of self-representation and greater inclusion of multiple, local, and context-specific histories) are also taking place within cultural and heritage tourist attractions. The fact that these representational politics are being played out at EHTAs, as well as public sector museums, further complicates our understanding of this new type of attractions. What kinds of historical narratives are being produced, disseminated and consumed by visitors at these EHTAs, which are not only innovating with the use of the edutainment genre, but also, by including self-representations, and representations of multiple culturally-specific histories?

In summary, EHTAs and public sector museums are making innovations in format and public programming to create similar educational and entertaining experiences for their visitors (MacDonald and Alsford 1991; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998). At the same time, museums (and to a lesser extent heritage tourist attractions) are facilitating greater participation by and collaboration with originating communities and increasingly including voices of multiple minorities. Public sector museums, their innovations and changing practices have been the subject of considerably amounts of research (Frese 1960; Hudson 1975; Stocking 1985; Karp and Levine 1991). However, the emergence of EHTAs, the unique forms of historical information that are being created as a result of their edutainment mandate, and any collaborative practices or representational politics they are involved in have largely been overlooked by researchers.

Heritage Tourism Research

Despite the lack of social science investigation into hybrid tourist venues, especially in terms of visitors' perceptions, and perspectives (Urry 1996; Prentice 2005), there are some examples of innovative research about the cross-fertilization of tourist attractions, museums, and heritage. Three important studies, Handler and Gable (1997), Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1998), and Greenhalgh (1989) are used to summarize the most significant observations made about heritage tourist attractions, their characteristics and the types of experiences they provide for visitors.

² Only United States institutions receiving federal government funds are required to adhere to the North American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA).

Handler and Gable's ethnography of Colonial Williamsburg, a living history museum³ comprised of and set within a complex of 18th century colonial buildings, provides a rich description of the challenges involved in creating meaningful and critical content in a tourist-oriented setting (1997). Their ethnography describes the internal dynamics that occur as a group of progressive social historians attempt to inject Colonial Williamsburg with alternative historical perspectives in order to enrich the institution and make the history presented a more representative picture of the colonial period. Handler and Gable identify several complex relationships that aggravate the process of inserting new historical perspectives into the institution: 1) the relationship between the corporate side of the museum that governs issues of management, expansion and image marketing and the museum foundation side that governs the content and character of Colonial Williamsburg ; 2) the relationship between the producers and the consumers of knowledge; 3) the relationships between varying degrees of front stage and back stage personnel; and 4) the relationship between the form and the content of the museum. Handler and Gable show how the different players at Colonial Williamsburg (reified as the producers and consumers of knowledge) are not separate and discrete entities but rather involved in complex relationships that account for their continuous mutual constitution. They advocate an approach capable of studying the dynamics of exchange between all levels of museum personnel and the public. Only by analyzing these dynamics are they able to evaluate and understand the efficacy of the changes to the historical content that were made by the social historians.

Central to Handler and Gable's analysis is the often schizophrenic personality of a "hybrid organization . . . operating on the border between mass entertainment and mass education" (1997: 5). This border zone creates challenges for an ethnographer or museologist who may be familiar with the observations and critiques of socially constructed knowledge and hegemonic agendas in museum exhibits but less familiar with touristic elements and business aspects of such institutions and their effects on exhibit content and visitors' perspectives. Handler and Gable's research builds on the existing ideological critique of museums, which asks questions such as, "Who establishes museums and who chooses their contents? Whose interests are served by the particular visions of cultural difference the museum displays authorize?" (Handler and Gable 1997:8). Their research, however also goes beyond this critique in order to contribute to the "burgeoning new scholarship focussing on museums as arenas for the significant convergence of political and cultural forces," (Handler and Gable 1997: 8). That is, Handler and Gable transform museum scholarship from an analysis, primarily, of finished texts to an analysis of the on-going social interactions and institutional dynamics that are responsible for the production and reproduction of historical messages. The hybrid nature of their field site, Colonial Williamsburg, is a significant contributing factor to their ethnographic approach. Implicit in their research is the recognition that traditional museums studies research cannot serve as a model for understanding hybrid tourist venues such as EHTAs. Instead new and exploratory research, such as this Instrumental Case Study, is needed to identify what are the most

³ Living history museums are heritage destinations that employ actors to dramatize and represent the past while interacting with visitors. However, the distinctions between types of museums and tourist venues are often artificial or inaccurate. Multiple designations often apply to a single venue. For example, Colonial Williamsburg has both a non-profit side, the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation and a for-profit side in charge of marketing, ticketing, and merchandizing. It is, at once, a living history museum, a tourist attractions and a historical society. Categorization becomes inaccurate and irrelevant when so many multiple designations exist within the same institution. It is, therefore, more useful to think about hybridity, and to describe the specific combinations of phenomena found within each institution.

important factors, institutional or otherwise, influencing content creation, product design, and the types of visitors' experiences that are being marketed at these hybrid attractions.

The hybridization of tourism and museums is also the focus of Kirshenblatt-Gimblett's *Destination Culture: Tourism, Museums and Heritage* (1998). Kirshenblatt-Gimblett observes that "ethnographic objects are made, not found" (1998: 3) and that heritage is a recent and not always politically neutral construction (1998:5). She shows how the notion of heritage is cultivated by museums and the tourism industry for the purpose of creating marketable 'second lives' for historic sites and ethnographic objects. Using Plimoth Plantation, a living history museum similar to Colonial Williamsburg, as a case study, Kirshenblatt-Gimblett argues that such hybrid destinations should be viewed within the context of a "history of exhibiting copies," which brings together many seemingly disparate exhibitionary complexes such as the exhibits at World's Fairs, contemporary cultural performances and public art installations. These hybrid destinations, she argues, should not be solely denigrated as "Disney World history" (1998: 195). To do so is an effacement of their importance culturally and their pervasiveness. She argues that such denigration ultimately undervalues the very real and important contribution that these sites make to peoples' personal and historical perspectives. Hybridity is a recent term used to describe new and unique amalgamations of phenomena. It is both a post-modern concept, and a reality which has arisen out of contemporary cultural configurations labeled post-modern and influenced by the process of globalization. Hybridity is often used as a description for new social forms that are not yet fully incorporated or understood within the societies in which they arise (Shelton 2001: 235). Furthermore, the concept of hybridity, like the concept of a tourist attraction itself, has come to be negatively valued "associated with contamination, transgression, failure, [and] regression" (Shelton 2001: 235). These negative associations add to the denigration of hybrid tourist attractions and contribute to the continued avoidance of such tourist attractions as site of academic study.

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett identifies the dynamics between format and content and the dynamics between public perceptions of history and performative methods of display as the main factors which make Plimoth Plantation an important and interesting example of a hybrid heritage tourist attraction. She asks, "What are the implications of Plimoth Plantation for the historical consciousness of actors and visitors alike?" (1998:196). To answer this question she posits three separate temporal clocks operating in relationship to one another at Plimoth Plantation: the stopped clock of the historical moment chosen for display: the year 1627; the heritage clock which must be perpetually reset to account for developments in creating historical accuracy and abiding by the principle of 'no historical anachronisms' (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998: 197); and the visitor's clock, the life time of the visitor which interacts with these other clocks. According to Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, heritage tourist attractions always embody the conflicting experience of "then and now" because of the way the times of these three clocks comes into contact with each other. The schism between "then and now" is further accentuated by the juxtaposition of the virtual experience of the past, created by actors and historically accurate sets, with elements of tourist production, for example gift shops, themed restaurants and other tourist amenities. In common with Colonial Williamsburg there are internal tensions between the different versions of history being negotiated by curators, historians and frontline staff at Plimoth Plantation. Furthermore, as with Colonial Williamsburg, after its historical revisions, Plimoth Plantation is marketed as presenting "Everyman's History"

(Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998: 200). That is, it is intended to be inclusive and representative of the histories of marginalized groups in society, such as ethnic minorities, women, indigenous people and the poor.

The case studies by Handler and Gable and Kirshenblatt-Gimblett demonstrate how the construction of publicly relevant and appropriate versions of history involves complex negotiations between different people (for example, staff, historians, interpreters and visitors) and interest groups (for example, members, donors, historical societies, boards of tourism, and share-holders). In both cases, the problem of how to create critical content is complicated by each institution's difficult task of being historically specific, accurate, and engaging while also being accessible and entertaining to a heterogeneous audience. The creation of a production which is both educational and entertaining, meets visitors expectations, yet also provides them with an experience that they are impressed with for some specific reason (i.e. because of its uniqueness, novelty, realism, personal relevance, etc) is the primary focus of EHTAs. Tourist attractions and theme parks that do not rely on their educational value as their primary and defining characteristic- places such as Disneyland, or the West Edmonton Mall for example- do not have the responsibility of attending to both education and entertainment. EHTAs, however, by definition seek to be both educational and entertaining and this dual mandate poses a series of challenges in terms of content creation. The unique concerns of EHTAs, which are negotiating the process of trying to satisfy many different roles for many different interest groups and cater to a heterogeneous audience of tourists and leisure-seekers are still not well understood.

The question of how to combine entertainment and education appropriately in exhibitions and amusements is not a new question. This question has been passionately debated since the early history of museums, especially during the period of the Great International Exhibitions in Europe and America (Greenhalgh 1989). Greenhalgh's analysis of 19th century World's Fairs is instructive for this case study as the exhibition planners of World's Fairs negotiated the combination of academically researched yet popularly appealing displays, installations and amusements and the combinations they created received both criticism and praise (1989). Central to these negotiations was the recognition that education and entertainment could exist in a synergistic relationship in which each aspect served to strengthen the other. At first, during the World's Fairs in England between 1851 and 1871 this synergy existed at the exhibition level, wherein the exhibits themselves were seen as amusements because of their entertaining and exotic contents. However, as exhibition practice became professionalized within the context of museums and other institutions of high culture the purpose of exhibitions became rigidly defined. Exhibitions were to be vehicles of public education and social betterment (particularly for the lower classes). The entertaining aspects of exhibits were seen as antithetical to these goals. According to Greenhalgh, the dichotomy between education and entertainment that emerged from the institutionalized definition of exhibitions corresponded to an underlying ideological and value-laden dichotomy between work and leisure; high culture and popular culture. He argues that the association of education with high culture, work and seriousness and the association of entertainment with popular culture, leisure and frivolousness, is an expression of another fundamental aspect of Victorian morality. "Cultural activity signified knowledge, knowledge signified education, education signified work. In effect, work was the basis of everything worthwhile: it was the route to God," (Greenhalgh 1989: 87).

In British exhibitions after 1871, the mutually beneficial relationship between entertainment and education was no longer found at the exhibitions, but rather throughout the fair as a whole. Every fair had to have enough amusements and entertainments to attract crowds and enough exhibitions, and forms of high culture to rationalize the fair in the minds of the producers, donors of art, and patrons of the middle and upper classes who held the social responsibility to familiarize themselves with high arts and culture (Greenhalgh 1989). The French exhibitions during the same time period placed more emphasis on spectacle, surrealism and entertainment value and thus were deemed by many British "who could not quite dissociate pleasure from sin or learning from culture," to be exuberant and hedonistic (Greenhalgh 1989: 93). Despite national or cultural differences in taste, both Britain and France used the international exhibitions to engage in the propagation and dissemination of overt political messages. Contemporary international exhibitions, like the World's Fairs of the 19th century are "a principle means whereby governments and private bodies present their vision of the world to the masses" (Greenhalgh 1988:27).

The international exhibitions, therefore were not only educational and entertaining amusements, they were also sites of mass political and ideological communication (Greenhalgh 1989; 1988). Visitors were perpetually bombarded, and propagandized by the messages of the fairs, typically celebrations of empire and capitalism (1989:94). These often "repulsively arrogant, aggressive, greed ridden and racist," messages, according to Greenhalgh, generated lively debate and were ultimately what made the fairs effective and meaningful events for visitors (1989: 94). International expositions have continued into the present and retain their essential edutainment character. While it may be argued that modern Expos have less overt political propaganda than the Expos of the 19th century, they continue to promote notions of nationalism and internationalism (Wallis 1994). Expo 67 in Montreal and Expo 86 in Vancouver are examples of modern expositions with definite edutainment characteristics, both of which explicitly promoted ideas of Canadian Nationalism. Modern expositions continue to be an important source of information about visitors' experiences, their reception of information, and their long-term memory of these large-scale events (see Anderson 2003).

The studies by Handler and Gable, Kirshenblatt-Gimblett and Greenhalgh, provide an essential starting place from which to understand hybrid tourist attractions. Handler and Gable show that the production of meaningful and critical historical content is a complex process involving several dynamics, including the dynamics between different groups of people, as well as the dynamic between educational value and entertainment value. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett argues forcefully that hybrid tourist attractions should not be dismissed on the basis of superficiality, or lack of scholarly value, but instead should be analyzed in order to understand how the various components work together to create interesting and meaningful experiences for visitors. These experiences, she argues, are a major contributing factor to the ways that visitors understand and imagine the histories and cultures they are consuming through representations at such hybrid tourist attractions. Furthermore, Kirshenblatt-Gimblett recognizes there are multiple ways the concept of heritage is used and amplified for the purposes of creating something new and significant within the present. Greenhalgh's analysis of the ideologically coercive messages of World's Fairs which celebrated nationalism and imperialism through various edutainment exhibits resonates with Kirshenblatt-Gimblett's observations about the contemporary political uses of heritage. Greenhalgh's discussion of the negotiation of educational value and entertainment value within 19th century World's Fairs reveals that the

question of how to create synergistic combinations of education and entertainment for heterogeneous publics has a long and complicated history, and involves making trade-offs or in some cases creating innovative combinations of media and performance. By making claims about the importance of understanding visitors' experiences at hybrid destinations, these three studies demonstrate a need for visitors' studies research. However, these studies primarily provide descriptions and analyses of the format, content and production processes of each institution rather than descriptions and analyses of visitors' evaluations of, experiences at, or perspectives based on these productions. This research will describe and analyze visitors' perspectives at an EHTA thereby providing the type of visitor study research these scholars demonstrate is needed in order to broaden our understanding of EHTAs.

Heritage Representations

Heritage tourism, a large and profitable sector of the international tourism industry (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1989; Dicks 2003) is characterized by a heterogeneity of attractions marketed based on concepts of uniqueness, authenticity, and novelty (Dicks 2003; Prentice 2005: 246, 251). There is now a proliferation of heritage attractions (Sorensen 1989: 62; Prentice 2005; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1989) and since the 1980s the number of tourists who have visited heritage sites and attractions has increased significantly (Prentice 2005). This proliferation has been theorized as an important aspect of the production of visitability in which locations are transformed into destinations with cultural uniqueness that can be consumed through virtual interfaces or representations rather than interpersonal cross-cultural encounters (Dicks 2003).

Heritage tourism is part of a broader cultural fascination with preserving, protecting, collecting, representing, and consuming the past. These most recent processes of transforming the past into memorable and consumable items for the present are termed the *heritage industry* (Lowenthal 1985; Hewison 1987; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998). The heritage industry has been characterized as a cult of worshippers, revisionists and marketers who produce and consume even the most mundane or negative images and objects of the past (Prentice 2005: 250) in order to experience temporary escape and redemption from the present (Lowenthal 1985). In this scenario the past becomes highly valued relative to the present (Urry 1996), which may be perceived as a source of alienation (MacCannel 1992) or even horror (Lowenthal 1985). Heritage representations are frequently used to facilitate nostalgia for by-gone eras (Sorensen 1989: 62; Huyssen 2001). In such representations, the past is often imagined and romanticized in an excessively positive light (Shelton 2001:45) in order to create an escape from the negatively perceived conditions of the present (Lowenthal 1985). However, the past can also be portrayed as a difficult, backwards or developmentally less-advanced time relative to the present (Frese 1960). Each of these contrasting portrayals of the past has different implications for how the present and the past are conceptualized and valued in relation to each other and how the future is imagined (Bouquet 2001).

The current fascination with heritage and the proliferation of heritage sites and attractions is also the result of an increasing number of groups articulating their interests and their stakes in heritage representations (Prentice 2005; Macdonald 2005). Marginalized and formerly marginalized groups in society are now actively pursuing their own representation within the heritage landscape, both by demanding their histories be included in pre-existing heritage settings and by creating new heritage attractions dedicated to specific community histories. The ethical changes occurring in museums which

have led to major changes in the ways museums practice are, in part, a response to this demand for increased representation of multiple minority groups. This demand, often in the form of self-representation, is also a response to the longstanding euro-centricity of heritage sites in North America. Multicultural countries, such as Canada, have increasing numbers of representations of local, and culturally-specific historical experiences because multiple ethno-cultural communities co-exist and vie for representational space within the nation state (Lowenthal 1985). The recent changes in museum practice described above, such as the inclusion of multiple perspectives as well as the increasing participation of originating communities, is an example of this broader post-modern shift towards the self-representation of specific groups.

The identification, assertion, representation and celebration of heritage, however, is not only about remembering the past, it is also about the creation and maintenance of individual and group identity in the present (Lowenthal 1985:302; Bouquet 2001:14). Identification with the past, ancestors, and other heritage features is a nearly universal cultural phenomenon allowing groups to assert their permanency and legitimacy via narratives and records of historical depth (Lowenthal 1985: 302). However, heritage representations can also create strained relationships between groups who have separate cultural heritage identities depending on the degree to which the historical narrative is consonant with, or tolerant of, the historical narratives of others. Heritage representations, therefore, have social and political agency within the present (Wallis 1994), especially in terms of promoting group identity, autonomy and status (Lowenthal 1985: 302). Moreover the notion of heritage is argued by some to be largely a creation of the present rather than a reality derived from an objective past (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998; Hobsbawm and Ranger 1992).

Once it is recognized that heritage representations can play important roles in the social and political landscape of the present, such as legitimating the identity and status of one group over and above others, or effacing historical realities of discrimination and injustice, what aspects of the past are represented and remembered and how they are represented and remembered become the important questions (Wallis 1994; Jordanova 1989:32). From whose perspective is a particular historical representation? Whose contemporary identity is being strengthened or undermined? How are events, encounters, and people of the past being characterized and what is their relationship to the people, places and politics of the present?

As previously shown, these important questions have been asked by Handler and Gable, Kirshenblatt-Gimblett and Greenhalgh, and form the basis of the ideological critique of museums, which is a major component of museum studies scholarship. However, if the types of historical representations produced in hybrid tourist attractions are believed to be an important contribution to visitors' personal and historical perspective, as these scholars argue, then an analysis of the historical representations disseminated at these sites alone is not enough. We also must undertake an analysis of the ways visitors are evaluating and interpreting these historical representations in order to understand, not only the efficacy of such representations to communicate particular visions of history, but also the impact of EHTAs on visitors' perspectives in a broader sense. To do this we need to unpack the types of experiences that these kinds of attractions can facilitate for visitors.

Some scholars who study heritage and historical consciousness have identified the need for better understanding of visitors' impressions and experiences at new and emergent types of private-sector

museums and tourist attractions (Orvell 1993; Prentice 2005), however, this type of research has been slow to develop. It is now being recognized that hybrid tourist facilities, such as Storyeum, produce new combinations of format and content. These combinations contain new mediums of communication and new messages to be disseminated based on the new relationship between medium and message (McLuhan and Fiore 1967). Thorough understanding of the dynamics between the production and consumption of these new messages and mediums is essential. As hybrid institutions that have new and unique configurations of elements emerge it becomes increasingly difficult and inaccurate to transfer the general knowledge gained through museum visitors' studies into these contexts.

Research Objectives and Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to explore the perspectives of a group of visitors to Storyeum in order to contribute to the broader understanding of how EHTAs are being received and understood by the visiting public. I used an Instrumental Case Study Approach (Stake 1995) (discussed in the following chapter) to study a group of visitors to Storyeum in order to determine how they understand and evaluate the attraction's historical content, how this content contributes to their understanding of the history of British Columbia and how their evaluations and perspectives can help us to understand the burgeoning genre of EHTAs. This research was conducted in order to answer the following four questions:

- 1) How do visitors to Storyeum evaluate the attraction and its historical content?
- 2) How does the historical content contribute to their understanding of the history of BC?
- 3) How does Storyeum contribute to their personal perspectives of the province of BC?
- 4) What are the perspectives of visitors to Storyeum that can contribute to a broader understanding of EHTAs?

The Research Context: Storyeum

Storyeum is a private-sector EHTA located in Vancouver's Gastown, an area of downtown, with a high density of designated heritage buildings, marketed and oriented primarily for tourism. Storyeum is the creation of Historical Xperiences Inc., a company that produces heritage attractions and related commercial opportunities⁴. Storyeum is this company's second heritage attraction. The first attraction, the Tunnels of Moose Jaw⁵, has received both provincial and national awards⁶ and was used as a model for Storyeum⁷. Storyeum has been chosen for this research because it has a unique combination of 1) elements customarily associated with museums, such as a large display of historical photographs, labels and authoritative histories, and 2) elements characteristic of tourist attractions, such as pageantry, spectacle, entertainment value, shopping and national image promotion (MacCannell 1992; Wallace 1989). In addition to the qualities that make Storyeum a hybrid institution, is the fact that it explicitly markets itself as an edutainment venue. The following description is published on Storyeum's official website:

Storyeum is Vancouver's newest classroom!

⁴ For more information about this corporation go to <http://www.hxp.ca/>

⁵ For more information go to <http://www.tunnelsofmoosejaw.com/default.asp>.

⁶ Tunnels of Moose Jaw official website, <http://www.tunnelsofmoosejaw.com/traveltrade.asp>, retrieved May 6th, 2006.

⁷ Personal communication with Storyeum representative.

Meaningful learning starts with meaningful experiences. Storyeum combines **education⁸ and entertainment** in a showcase of the culture, people and legends from British Columbia's past. Students, teachers and parents alike will enjoy a lesson in history watching the past come to life around them.⁹ (Emphasis in original)

The following Marshall McLuhan quotation, painted in large block letters on the lobby wall at Storyeum and used as the introduction page for the Historical Xperiences Inc. website, gives a sense of Storyeum's theoretical positioning in terms of education and entertainment,

"It's misleading to suppose there's any basic difference between education and entertainment."
Herbert Marshall McLuhan

Media theorist, McLuhan was among the first 20th Century scholars to articulate what he believed to be the inevitable collision of entertainment and education, especially as they interact with multi-media communication mediums. McLuhan routinely problematized the distinction between these two categories as well as the distinction between the message and the mode of communication. His major contribution to media studies was the forceful and still relevant observation that the way information is delivered will, to a large extent, influence the information, and how the message being communicated is received. Rather than seeing the world sectioned off into hermetically sealed educational and entertaining experiences, McLuhan recognized that the communication technologies and interfaces we interact with create more commonalities in experiences than they create differences (McLuhan and Fiore 1967). By using this provocative quotation, Storyeum is intentionally situating itself in the context of a post-modern media analysis, as well as capitalizing on the notoriety and cachet of the now legendary Marshal McLuhan.

Storyeum's hybrid character, its explicit collision of entertainment and education, and its thematic focus on BC history, make it an ideal example of an EHTA and an ideal site for a visitors' study about historical perspectives derived from such sites.

BC Live Underground, the main permanent attraction¹⁰ at Storyeum, is a theatrical, musical walking tour. It presents episodes of British Columbia's history through a series of dramatizations which take place in a large underground performance area¹¹.

BC LIVE. Underground. Brings BC's history to life with an intriguing cast of characters, amazing sets and an unforgettable experience. Grand stories wrap around you and make you part of a theatrical adventure as you travel deep below the streets of historic Gastown. Begin your adventure by descending below the streets in one of the world's largest passenger lifts. Finish your journey with a 46-foot high, 360° visual experience of modern day, multicultural BC! **Come for the history! Come for the fun of it!** (Emphasis in original)

Visitors begin their tour in a spacious ground floor lobby accessible directly from Gastown's main street. The lobby contains the admission desk, the gift shop and a large display of historic photographs of BC. These photos include portraits of prominent people and political figures of 19th century, as well as historic photos of common people, places and life around the province of BC.

⁸ Storyeum has made links with the BC educational curriculum for a wide range of grades and subjects, as well as produced educational materials for teachers to use prior to, during and after field trips visits.

⁹ <http://www.storyeum.com/modules/icontent/index.php?page=27>, Retrieved May 5th, 2006.

¹⁰ In addition to BC Live Underground, Storyeum has gallery space available for large travelling exhibits.

¹¹ The performance area is an underground parking lot, the size of a football field which has been converted architecturally into a series of stages and sets (<http://www.storyeum.com>).

After a waiting period ranging from 5-30 minutes, visitors are led into a large circular elevator by a tour guide. Dressed in a hard hat, flashlight, khaki pants and shirt the guide's costume is meant to evoke a miner. It helps to identify the tour guide in relation to the visitors as well as the actors encountered throughout the tour.

As visitors file into the elevator, three small television screens play a series called "BC Legends". Terry Fox, "The Chinese Communities of BC", and Rick Hansen are profiled as "BC Legends" through images, video clips, music and a newscaster voice over. Once in the elevator an introductory video explains the descent into the underground performance space. Occurring at a nearly imperceptible speed, it is meant to represent time travel from the present, down into the past. The theme of excavation is also used as a metaphor for going back in time. It is introduced in the characterization of the tour guide as a miner and is reinforced by both the elevator descent and the dark, narrow mining shaft visitors must walk through after they exit the elevator. Immediately prior to exiting the elevator a second presentation theme is introduced. The voice of a man, whose accent, cadence and speech style characterizes him as First Nations, speaks to the audience. He tells them how his grandfather used to tell a story about how people are all different but must stand and grow together like trees in a forest. This theme is picked up throughout the performance, and in the final scene the image of people being like trees in a forest is used explicitly as a metaphor for multiculturalism.

The mining tunnel opens up into a large forest setting. This is the first of six large rooms that have been transformed into elaborate, immersive environments in which the theatrical vignettes chosen to represent chapters of BC history are enacted. The forest clearing is the location of Storyeum's first chapter: a Tsleil-Waututh creation myth. A narrator tells the story of how the first man, Takaya, originated from a wolf. The wolf is characterised as a principled being, with integrity and family and community values. The first woman, Slonite was created from a collection of sediment taken by the first man from the bottom of the ocean and transformed by the Great Spirit. As the narrator tells the story, the actors pantomime along to a loud, emotionally-charged soundscape. After this brief introduction to the two First Nations characters, visitors are led into a First Nation's long house.

In the long house the story continues with a truncated life-history of the marriage, life and death of Takaya and Slonite. Projected on a large screen at the back of the performance area are early black and white photographs of Native people. The images interact with the actors in an associative way, blurring the distinction between mythology and history, fictional and non-fictional characters. The smell of the cedar beams and planks of the long house, as well as the sight and smell of smoke from a central fire pit make this set particularly realistic. In the finale of this scene Takaya, lying on his death bed, miraculously vanishes during a flash of smoke. This vanishing act adds to the spectacle and wonder of the performance.

After the death of Takaya, the audience moves into the third performance area. Here they sit, as though on a dock looking out over the water at a ship. Images are projected onto a large floor to ceiling scrim and a pool of water separates the audience from a boat carrying fur traders and explorers. Several history episodes are presented, including the early fur trading era, the decimation of the Native population by small pox, a biographical characterisation and presentation of James Douglas, the first Governor of the British colonies in BC, and the struggle between British monarch Queen Victoria and American President James Polk over the control of and boundaries of BC. This scene also includes two songs. The first is a

comic, upbeat song sung by a group of early Fur Traders as they drink pints of beer and dance around their ship. The second is a slow and sad duet between an early settler in BC and his distant wife back home in England.

The audience walks from the ship through a small enclosed corridor into an architecturally-accurate streetscape of Barkerville. Barkerville, a town in the interior of British Columbia, was established with the discovery of gold in 1862, marking the beginning of the Cariboo Gold Rush. It became a provincial heritage site in 1958 and is now a popular heritage tourist attraction in its own right. The history of the gold rush, the rapid settlement of British Columbia by colonists and immigrants, as well as specific historical events that took place at Barkerville, such as the fire of 1868, are presented in this scene, and culminate in a comical musical number.

From Barkerville, the audience walks into the next performance area designed to look like a stretch of railway in the interior of the province. Confederation and the role of the trans-Canada railway in unifying Canada are the subjects of this scene. The importance of Chinese immigrants' labour during the building of the railway is addressed, as are the sub-par wages and working conditions these men were forced to endure. The Chinese head tax and the 1923-1947 Canadian Immigration Act which discriminated against Chinese people are also mentioned. Women, another group discriminated against by society at that time, are represented by their political struggle to attain suffrage, as well as their social activist role in Canada's brief prohibition movement. The suffragettes sing a comic song about gender equality and encourage women in the audience to wave signs and yell "sisters unite" throughout the song.

The final set is a representation of Vancouver's first railway station. A replica of Vancouver's first train engine, the #375, pulls in and out of the set on a raised railway platform. On the platform, a woman awaits her husband's return from the Second World War in Europe, while a man of mixed First Nations and Chinese ancestry waits to depart for the war. The scene ends with an upbeat song about the train and the convenience it adds to the process of expanding and developing the province of BC. The audience is encouraged to sing along. Then the lights fade and the voice of the First Nations narrator returns with these words:

If we love and appreciate who we each are as individuals, then we can look at others and love and appreciate who they are. And one day we'll be standing there like that, like a forest. And when people look at us they'll say, "Look, don't they all look beautiful, standing there together?"

The audience then enters a second large passenger lift to return to the ground floor. The elevator has 28 foot ceilings and 360 degree video projection screens. The five minute ascent consists of a musical and visual finale to the performance. It begins by summarizing the major historic milestones represented in the performance through a montage of historical photographs and film clips. These black and white images are quickly combined with more contemporary colour images of local heroes such as Terry Fox and Rick Hansen. These in turn are replaced by images of people from multiple ethnic backgrounds. Some are well known, such as Chief Dan George of the Tsleil-Waututh Nation, and others are not. These images are combined with sound bites of people talking about how much they love and feel proud of British Columbia. Images of nature, sports, industry, architecture, and urban development are added into the multicultural montage as the soundscape changes from primarily the voices of individuals to the Storyeum theme song.

As the montage comes to an end, the images and video clips change faster and the volume gets louder as the chorus of the song repeats several times:

There's a land.
A land before tomorrow.
Undiscovered.
Waiting to be claimed.
To the strong of us who dare to ask the question:
Where's the land beyond today?

The finale serves several functions in the context of the entire attraction. It summarizes the historical developments represented in the performance. It creates an emotionally charged and multi-sensory climax, ensuring visitors leave feeling uplifted about contemporary British Columbia. It provides a conclusion for two of the primary motifs used throughout the attraction: the idea of connection between past, present and future, and the metaphor of the forest and the many different trees used to imagine the multiculturalism of the province. The "passages through time" motif is further articulated by connecting the past, the present, and the future in a single visual story. The forest metaphor is restated using the same First Nations narrating voice. This metaphor is now accompanied with a visual celebration and glorification of multiculturalism.

Storyeum is a hybrid tourist attraction because it combines characteristics traditionally found in public sector museums with characteristics traditionally found in private sector tourist attractions. For example, Storyeum's large display of historic photographs is comparable to the photographic displays at the Royal BC Museum, the Vancouver Museum and numerous other regional and civic museums throughout the province. Storyeum's focus on major milestones of BC history also parallels the content of other museums in BC and Storyeum symbolically references the idea of a museum in its name. Finally, Storyeum explicitly markets its historical presentation as an educational experience that is synonymous with the implicit assumption of the educational value of the contents and experiences provided by public sector museums. Museum characteristics add value to Storyeum, as an institution, and function to legitimize Storyeum's historical narrative by borrowing from the authority usually afforded to public institutions, which are held accountable for rigorously researched and sensitively constructed representations. The measurable amount of authority and prestige afforded to many public museums has been well documented (Shelton 2001; Bouquet 2001; MacDonald 1996; Jordanova 1989). By using a portmanteau of the words "story" and "museum", Storyeum is symbolically associating itself with public museums, thereby capitalizing on their prestige and authority. However, it is Storyeum's relative emphasis on entertainment value (for which many of the technical features of the presentation function) that sets it apart from the relative educationally-oriented exhibitions in public museums. Storyeum's format- the dynamic musical theatrical performance described above- is primarily designed to maximize entertainment value. The special effects, as well as the lighting, sound design, sets, physical space, and the elevators all enhance the overall entertainment value. Another defining characteristic of Storyeum is that it is a private-sector for-profit institution which is, first and foremost, accountable to its shareholders and not publicly funded. The difference between being publicly and privately funded has implications for the way an

institution is designed, organized and maintained. This is one important way to distinguish tourist venues that otherwise share several common aspects.

The distinction between educational and entertaining experiences, however, must be problematized when evaluating Storyeum. Storyeum explicitly problematizes the distinction between these two components of experience, as evidenced by the Marshal McLuhan quotation that they prominently feature. Furthermore, it is well recognized that educational and entertaining experiences are frequently combined in various proportions and in numerous different contexts. As a hybrid institution, Storyeum must negotiate many of the concerns struggled with by the exhibition planners of the 19th century Worlds' Fairs including finding the right balance between educational content and entertainment value to suit the tastes and expectations of large heterogeneous audiences (Greenhalgh 1989). Storyeum occupies an interesting position in the increasingly vague border zone between traditional museums that focus on heritage, history and culture, and other heritage tourism productions, such as attractions, theme parks, and culture shows that also focus on heritage, history and culture (MacDonald 1996; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998). Storyeum's hybridity is, therefore, the result of its unique combination and conflation of educational and entertaining aspects, as well as its pastiche of media and its evident recognition of the need to include historical accounts of the experiences of multiple minority groups.

Within its historical narrative, Storyeum also combines modern and post-modern characteristics. On the one hand, Storyeum gives an authoritative presentation of a linear historical narrative, overtly employing the themes of progress, development and expansion characteristic of modernist and positivist readings of history and society. On the other hand, Storyeum intentionally includes historical information about minority groups (First Nations, Chinese Canadians, Suffragettes, etc.) characteristic of the post-modern emphasis on relativist and social histories (Handler and Gable 1997: 4; Richter 2005). Post-modern theory has influenced historiography in several important ways. The categories of truth, fact, and even history have been routinely questioned in light of the post-modern recognition that there are multiple subject positions that generate alternative readings of the same historical events and time periods (Huysen 2002:22). This has led to the need to talk about history in the plural (history becomes histories) and to be transparent about the subject position from which any particular historical account is being made. Furthermore, the observation that "truths embodied in historical stories are not absolute or universal, but relative to the cultural context in which they are made," (Handler and Gable 1997:4) has led to an increased awareness about the politics of historical representations. Producers of such representations are increasingly aware of these politics.

Storyeum has taken some important steps to ensure that its production is sensitive to these politics of representation. For example, its production is tailored to be compatible with the curriculum requirements of multiple primary and secondary grades, as has been done by many other institutions in BC¹². There are teachers' activity guides and the performance and content are consonant with a portion of the mission statement of the BC social studies curriculum,

¹² For example, The Museum of Anthropology, The Vancouver Museums, The Royal British Columbia Museum, and Fort Langley, have all made curriculum links with the provincial education system.

To examine the present, make connections with the past, and consider the future. . . .Students are encouraged to understand and prepare to exercise their roles, rights, and responsibilities within the family, the community, Canada, and the world, develop an appreciation of democracy and what it means to be Canadian, demonstrate respect for human equality and cultural diversity and think critically, evaluate information, and practice effective communication¹³

As a heritage attraction Storyeum has also aligned its historical message with some of the main stream messages of the Department of Canadian Heritage. The resounding multicultural message at Storyeum strongly resembles the Department of Canadian Heritage's definition of multiculturalism,

Canadian multiculturalism is fundamental to our belief that all citizens are equal. Multiculturalism ensures that all citizens can keep their identities, can take pride in their ancestry and have a sense of belonging. Acceptance gives Canadians a feeling of security and self-confidence, making them more open to, and accepting of, diverse cultures. The Canadian experience has shown that multiculturalism encourages racial and ethnic harmony and cross-cultural understanding, and discourages ghettoization, hatred, discrimination and violence.¹⁴

The proliferation of multiple specific histories of local groups is related to this official multicultural policy promoted by all sectors of the Department of Canadian Heritage. Furthermore, Storyeum's representation of First Nations people as a foundational component of BC's cultural diversity corresponds to the following statement from the Aboriginal Affairs branch of the Department of Canadian Heritage:

Aboriginal people, their cultures and their contributions lie at the heart of Canadian identity. The Aboriginal Affairs Branch works with Aboriginal people, primarily off-reserve, to celebrate and strengthen their cultural distinctiveness as an integral part of Canadian diversity.¹⁵

Storyeum, not only includes a significant representation of First Nations culture and history, but also initiated a working relationship with the Tsleil-Waututh Nation so that they could be more actively engaged in the production of representations of their culture¹⁶. The existence of such collaboration suggests that tourist attractions, like museums, are recognizing the need to share power with and facilitate the self-representation of source communities, despite the fact that they are not mandated to do so by any ethical guidelines overseeing tourist attraction practice.

This description of Storyeum demonstrates that it is an EHTA. Its heritage contents are presented using an edutainment genre and it is marketed as a heritage tourism destination. The conflation of education and entertainment into a single experience at Storyeum was discussed, as was Storyeum's use of multi-media and multiple formats. Its collaboration with members of a local First Nation, its inclusion of multiple minority perspectives as well its resonances with the perspectives of both the BC Educational Curriculum and the Department of Canadian Heritage demonstrate some of the ways Storyeum is involved in complex relationships with different interest groups. This suggests that EHTAs are making changes to their practice in order to promote self-representation and ethical accountability, as are many museums. However, we still do not know what visitors think about Storyeum. How are they understanding and evaluating Storyeum's unique combination of elements? What kinds of experiences are they having?

¹³ Passage from the BC curriculum, quoted in Storyeum's Educational Activity Guide, www.storyeum.com, retrieved June 18th, 2006.

¹⁴ Department of Canadian Heritage Website, http://www.pch.gc.ca/index_e.cfm, retrieved May 5th, 2006.

¹⁵ Department of Canadian Heritage Website, http://www.pch.gc.ca/index_e.cfm, retrieved May 5th, 2006.

¹⁶ Presentation for the Themed Attractions Association, October, 2004.

Methodology

Selecting a methodology involves making trade offs as different methods have inherent strengths and weaknesses in relation to the research goals (Walle 1998:53). This research project was designed to explore visitors' perspectives of Storyeum and its historical representations by generating descriptive qualitative data. Studying the meanings, associations, and perspectives that exhibition experiences produce within visitors is more difficult than measuring physical, fact-based or demographic information (Hudson 1975:105) because it involves gathering enough information to uncover the affective aspects of visitors' experiences (Hooper-Greenhill 1994:83). Anthropologists and other social scientists have embraced qualitative research because of its ability to explore these aspects of experience in a rigorous manner. Robert E. Stake makes a forceful argument that the role of any qualitative researcher should be to capture, through their own interpretive skills, the "multiple realities" of "how the actors, the people being studied, see things," (Stake 1995: 12). This is precisely what I have sought to do in this qualitative study.

Qualitative research, however, has its own set of methodological challenges, for example, deciding the extent to which the perspectives of individuals can be used to represent groups of people and addressing how the subjectivity of the researcher influences the collection, analysis and presentation of data. Stake argues that qualitative researchers are in an ideal position to do interpretive work as long as they consistently apply a rigorous methodology (Stake 1995). Numerous other social scientists have attested to the importance of using rigorous methodologies to reduce or offset, rather than compensate for or eliminate, the inevitable influence that the bias and subjectivity of the researcher will have on their object of investigation (See for example Metcalf 2002; Marcus 1998). Despite the inherent challenges of qualitative methodologies, they are increasingly being used to conduct tourism research because the complexity of the research problems (Walle 1998:53).

The Instrumental Case Study approach is designed to use focused research from a single case study as a way of learning about a broader phenomenon or trend (Stake 1995). This approach has been named and advocated by Robert E. Stake (1995) and its strengths include the ability to transform rigorous interpretive information from a single case into a set of more widely relevant and transferable observations about broader phenomenon. Multiple Instrumental Case Studies may be conducted in several different contexts in order to learn more about a given subject, or phenomenon, or a single Instrumental Case Study can be used to generate the same type of evidence-based generalizations about the broader subject or phenomenon (Stake 1995). Instrumental Case Study research can also be conducted on a small scale, over a short period of time, or for the purpose of exploring the range of issues that exist in the broader subject or phenomenon under investigation before further studies are initiated. Such applications of the approach by no means lessen the rigorousness of the qualitative interpretation; on the contrary it is often the limited scale of the Instrumental Case Study which leads to the generation of rigorous interpretive material (Stake 1995). An Instrumental Case Study Approach (Stake 1995) is an appropriate methodology given the research questions and research objective of simultaneously gathering specific information about Storyeum and generating general information about EHTAs.

The Visitors' Study

Over a three month period (July-September 2005) I interviewed forty visitors to Storyeum using a semi-structured interview style. These individuals volunteered to participate by leaving their names and phone numbers in an information box located in Storyeum's lobby with the manager's permission. A short paragraph with background information outlining my research was placed next to this box. There were also copies of this information for visitors to take home including an invitation to participate as well as contact information. Interested visitors left their names and phone numbers in the box, and I later contacted them, asked if they were still interested in participating, and scheduled interviews.

Thirteen of the forty participants were interviewed using email because they either lived out of town or were unavailable for an in-person interview. These individuals were considered a valuable component of this study because of their unique perspectives based on their status as either non-Canadian citizens or non-British Columbian residents. The ability to communicate rapidly, at a low cost and across great geographic distance with these individuals was considered a major strength of the email questionnaire format. However, this format also had some disadvantages. For example, it restricted the spontaneous, reciprocal and conversational potential that constitutes the strength of in-person interviewing. Furthermore, the physical task of answering descriptive questions in writing restricted the length of people's answers. In general, the perspectives and opinions recorded in the email questionnaires are shorter in length. They are also less elaborated upon than the perspectives and opinions generated by the in-person interviews, in which I was able to break from the interview questions in order to investigate more thoroughly topics that emerged in the conversation. However, the content, tone and nature of the responses in the email questionnaires do not differ significantly from the in-person interviews.

Three major themes, which emerged from my initial literature review, were used to generate a 27-item questionnaire (see Appendix A Visitor Interview Questionnaire). These themes, which will henceforth be referred to as the predictive themes of this study, were chosen by triangulating relevant literature with my research objective, my research questions, and the case study context. The predictive themes were: 1) historical perspectives in heritage tourism settings; 2) dynamics between format and content, entertainment and education at such settings and 3) peoples' categorizations and comparisons of types of tourist attractions. The 27 item questionnaire, generated on the basis of these themes, was also designed to allow visitors to give a general overall evaluation of Storyeum and to self-direct the interview to a large extent. This was accomplished by including a wide range of questions that dealt with both the format and the content of the attraction as well as people's subjective experiences, opinions and perspectives. Furthermore, questions were asked that were meant to "get people talking" in order to create conversation topics relevant to each participant above and beyond those anticipated and to generate rich descriptive data for analysis and interpretation. Questions such as "Can you briefly describe your experience at Storyeum from beginning to end?", "What stands out most in your memory from your visit to Storyeum?", "What were your favourite elements of the performance (scenes, songs, characters, sets, stories, etc.)?", "What were your least favourite elements of the performance?" and "How would you describe Storyeum to someone who has never been there?" all seek to address both the predictive themes of this study and the participant-directed, and qualitative-data collecting goals of the interview process.

The first two predictive themes, (historical perspectives in heritage tourism settings and dynamics between format and content, entertainment and education at such settings) are the focus of this thesis as they proved to be the most important and reoccurring themes within the participant interviews. While information about visitors' categorizations of Storyeum and visitors' comparisons of Storyeum with other tourist attractions and museums were collected, this information did not shed enough direct light on visitors' perceptions of Storyeum's historical representations or visitors' perspectives of the history of BC based on these historical representations. The information about visitors' categorizations and comparisons would make an interesting and important study in and of itself, but in light of the research questions of this study, it falls outside the scope of this paper.

The 27 item interview questionnaire was used as a foundation upon which to improvise further questions within each interview as needed. The 27 core items gave thematic organization to the interview and provided a framework for comparison across all interview data. In addition, demographic information (age, sex, nationality, occupation, city residence) was informally collected at the start of each interview. Due to the semi-structured style of the interviews not all questions were directly asked to each interviewee, instead I gauged whether or not specific themes had been sufficiently addressed within our conversation before moving on to the next question or theme. This process was an anticipated aspect of the participant-directed and conversation style of the semi-structured interview format.

Data Analysis

The interviews were approximately thirty minutes to one hour in length and were tape recorded and then transcribed. Once all the interviews were transcribed I read and reread the interview in order to generate a list of emergent themes. These themes were further subdivided into sub-themes, until I arrived at a final list of themes and sub-themes. Each interview was then read several times and the emergent themes and sub-themes were identified by a code such as "1a", where "1" stands for the theme and "a" stands for the sub-theme. For example, the theme "1" was "Personal Expressions", and the sub-theme "a" was "Expression of Pride in British Columbian Identity". Using Microsoft Excel, I created a spread sheet with participant numbers on the y-axis and themes and sub-themes on the x-axis. Within each cell I recorded the time at which a participant articulated a given sub-theme. If a participant touched upon a sub-theme multiple times, each consequent time was also recorded within the same cell, so that the frequency of the expression of the sub-theme was also represented. Furthermore, I inserted the letter "Q", meaning quote, beside specific data points that were deemed to be good examples of a particular theme. This provided an efficient way to return to the data and locate appropriate quotations.

This method of data analysis was chosen as an effective way to identify recurring themes within a large data set. The themes which emerged and reoccurred in the interview material were then used to summarize visitors' evaluations and historical perspectives, particularly in terms of the commonalities and diversity within the study sample. In order to preserve and represent the range and diversity of the participants' perspectives, a feature of good Instrumental Case Study research (Stake 1995), I have organized participants' viewpoints into broad themes within which the nuances of their opinions and idea are also explored. These broad themes are: 1) feelings of pride in British Columbian identity; 2) emotional

responses and feelings of inclusion and cohesion; 3) criticisms of multicultural representations, and 4) influence of socio-cultural identity, prior knowledge and personal philosophies.

The Participants

Of the forty visitors interviewed 80% were female¹⁷, 73% lived in Greater Vancouver and 50% were either out of town guests or were entertaining out of town guests at the time of their visit. Furthermore, of those who lived in Greater Vancouver 62% did not live in the city, but rather lived in one of the many suburban areas. Many of these people visited Storyeum as a special weekend day-trip into the city centre (77%) and were either mothers with their children or whole families. 13 participants took children with them to Storyeum and of these 13, 11 were women between the ages of 35 and 76. These women were mothers, aunts or grandmothers and represent 34% of the women interviewed in this study. 75% of the participants were 40 years of age or older, and the bulk of these people fall into a sub-senior age grouping being between 40-60 years of age. However, a small group of participants in their 20s and 30s are also represented in this study. The following tables provide age, sex, and geographical breakdown of the participants in this study as well as a list of the three primary types of visits made to Storyeum.

Table 1: Participants: Age and Sex

Age	Female	Male	Total	%
20s	4		4	10
30s	4	2	6	15
40s	13	3	16	40
50s	5	3	8	20
60s	4		4	10
70s	2		2	5
Total	32	8	40	
%	80	20	100	

Table 2: Participants: Residency Location

Residency		No.	%
Canada	Vancouver	11	73
	Greater Vancouver	18	
	Rest of BC	1	2.5
	Other Provinces	2	5
USA		4	10
Britain		4	10
Total		40	100

Table 3: Types of Visits to Storyeum

Types of Visits	No.
Entertaining out of town guests	20
Day-trip into the city center	15
Parents or relatives with children	13

¹⁷ The fact that the majority of participants in this study are women is interesting and deserves more attention than this thesis will provide. However, some potential reasons why significantly more women volunteered to participate in this study include the possibility that 1) more women than men visit Storyeum overall, and 2) that women more readily volunteer in certain kinds of research than men, in general.

Chapter 4: Outcomes

This chapter presents participants' perspectives and evaluations of Storyeum. These evaluations will be presented in terms of both complimentary and critical aspects as well as a section focusing on participants' views about the dynamics between entertainment and education at Storyeum. These positive and negative aspects of visitors' evaluations are based on a series of questions that required participants to make value judgements about the format and content of Storyeum. For example, participants were asked to identify favourite and least favourite elements of the performance and rate their overall experience in terms of educational, entertainment, and other values. These complimentary and critical evaluations are a way of capturing those value judgements and answering the first part of research question 1): How are visitors to Storyeum evaluating the attraction? This understanding of visitors' general evaluations provides a framework within which to contextualize the specific characteristics of visitors' evaluations of Storyeum's historical representations, which comprises the second part of this question.

This introductory discussion will be followed by presentation and analysis of the four primary emergent themes of this visitor's study: 1) feelings of pride in British Columbian identity; 2) emotional responses and feelings of inclusion and cohesion; 3) criticisms of multicultural representations, and 4) influence of socio-cultural identity, prior knowledge and personal philosophies. Collectively these emergent themes as well as the general nature of visitors' evaluations allow an exploration of the dynamics between visitor evaluations of Storyeum's historical content and their perspectives of BC in terms of both its history and its present. I will return to my research questions throughout this section in order to connect them to specific visitors' perspectives. These outcomes will then be used to make generalizations about the type of experiences and the kinds of historical perspectives promoted by EHTAs.

Complimentary Evaluations

Storyeum received a positive overall evaluation by the majority of participants (85%). When asked to rate Storyeum's entertainment value 87% of participants gave it a high rating¹⁸. 60% gave it a high rating in terms of informative value, and 55% gave it a high rating in terms of educational value. Furthermore, 67% rated Storyeum high for inspirational value, and 72% gave a high rating for thought-provoking value. Individuals frequently identified Storyeum's unique format (dramatized historical vignettes with movement and interactive elements), innovative use of multi-media technologies and special effects, as well as the novel passenger lift, and expansive underground theatre, as positive and memorable aspects of the attraction. Visitors' most memorable aspects of Storyeum are summarized in Table 4.

So you go into the room and you think it's a room, but really it's an elevator, and I thought that was a very unique touch. It reminded me of the kind of thing that they did at Expo. (57 year old Canadian female from White Rock, BC¹⁴)

People used adjectives such as entertaining, informative, fun, exciting and inspirational to describe Storyeum and felt strongly that they would recommend it to other people, if they had not already done so. Table 5 provides a frequency breakdown of the adjectives used to describe Storyeum. Only 6 negative

¹⁸ A high rating is equivalent to the top 80% percentile of a 10 point Likert scale. Therefore ratings of 8 and above have been summarized to arrive at a total for a "high rating".

¹⁴ Age, sex, nationality, and residence location are used to contextualize all participant comments. Names are not used in order to ensure participants' confidentiality.

adjectives were used by 8 participants. This is striking when compared with the 60 plus positive adjectives used by all participants.

Table 4: What stands out most in your memory from your visit to Storyeum?

Memorable Aspects¹⁹	Frequency
The performance overall/ the uniqueness and novelty of its format	12
Vignette 1 and 2: First Nations	9
Vignette 3: Boat scene/ Queen Victoria's segment	9
Vignette 4: Barkerville	5
Vignette 5: Suffragettes/ Chinese railway workers segment	6
Vignette 6: Train scene	6
Finale during the elevator ascent	6
Theatricality/actors	6
Music	5
Elevator	5
Terry Fox	3
Photographs	2
Other things (sound problems, technical problems, disliked aspects)	4

Table 5: What adjectives would you use to describe Storyeum?

Adjectives²⁰	Frequency
Entertaining	17
Informative	10
Fun	9
Exciting	7
Inspirational	5
Educational	4
Interesting	4
Moving/Emotional	4
Thought-Provoking	3
Memorable	3
Funny	3

Several people identified Storyeum as an ideal place to entertain out of town guests. In addition to their overall complimentary evaluation of Storyeum, participants identified specific characters, scenes, songs, actors, or historical information as highlights of the experience,

I really liked the song and dance of the Hudson's Bay Company trade ship. I also was very moved at the end of the production by the native story about the forest and trees. (34 year old Canadian male from Mission, BC)

The train pulling in [was my favourite part]. (44 year old Canadian female from Coquitlam)

Participants often commented that it was the combined strength of the total production quality and the attention to detail that contributed to their complimentary appraisal of Storyeum.

I must say that what stands out is the novelty of the presentation. By that I mean the entering of an elevator cleverly disguised as a mining trip to move the audience below ground where the play takes place and the fact that the audience continues to move. The large area that is used, size of six football fields, stands out. Also, the quality of the performance, singing, staging, costumes, stands out. (48 year old American female from New Jersey)

¹⁹ These items are based on visitors' responses to the following question: Can you describe what stands out in your memory the most from your visit to Storyeum?

²⁰ The negative adjectives used were incomplete, misleading, depressing, cheesy, disappointing, sad, surreal, and over-priced.

Table 6: What were your favourite aspects of the performance at Storyeum?

Aspects Identified as Favourites	Frequency
First Nations scenes	15
Boat scene/ Queen Victoria segment/letter writing segment	15
Music/singing	8
Elevator ascent	6
Train scene	5
Barkerville	5
Suffragettes	4
Actors	4
Movement from scene to scene	4
Humour	4
Interactivity	4
Costumes and sets	3
Photographs	2
Over-all production quality	1

Table 6 provides a frequency breakdown of participants' favourite aspects of the performance at Storyeum. Enjoyment of the novelty of the venue, especially in terms of its format, was a recurring theme that contributed positively to visitors' experiences. Visitors perceived the attraction as new and innovative, and expressed having feelings of excitement and anticipation about what they would experience²¹. It is also evident from participants' positive evaluations that the theme of time travel and the analogy of being trees in a forest resonated for visitors personally.

Critical Evaluations

A collection of more negative and highly critical evaluations were also generated in this study. Some participants (15%) were explicit about their overall negative evaluation of Storyeum, but more frequently participants made specific criticisms of Storyeum within their general, positive evaluations. Table 7 summarizes visitors' least favourite aspects of the performance at Storyeum.

Table 7: What were your least favourite aspects of the performance at Storyeum?

Aspects Identified as Least Favourite	Frequency
Sound quality was poor	10
The First Nations scenes were problematic	5
The elevator ascent	4
It was too cold	3
Performance was too short	3
Presupposed English language fluency	2
It was not educational enough	2
It was not culturally diverse enough	2
The fact that it was a musical	2
It was too crowded/claustrophobic	2
Information delivery was too fast	2
Having to walk across the alley to exit	2
Other	7

Criticisms fall roughly into the following categories: 1) criticisms about the format and physical or technical features of the attraction; 2) criticisms about the dynamics of format and content, usually in terms

²¹ These impressions of Storyeum are consistent with the way the venue is marketed as "Vancouver's Newest Attraction" (www.storyeum.com) and how it's portrayed in its initial advertising campaign (2004).

of the perceived educational merits as combined with entertainment value; and 3) criticisms about the content of the attraction, in terms of historical information or representations.

Criticisms about physical format and technical features of the attraction all had to do with peoples' individual experiences and preferences. For example, feelings of claustrophobia in the elevator, and in the mining tunnel, as well as feelings of too much space, for example in the front lobby and in the underground performance area. Sound levels were also routinely criticized for being much too loud, and poorly mixed. People complained about the temperature and the amount of seating, and having to stand for a long time in the lobby and in the elevators. While this visitor study was not concerned specifically with peoples' criticisms of physical features and format of the attraction, the degree to which levels of frustration influenced peoples' receptions of the historical content, as well as their overall evaluation of Storyeum is of interest and is relevant.

Criticisms of Storyeum's historical content include disapproval or questioning of the selection of historical events, time periods and groups of people chosen to represent the history of BC; disappointment with the amount of historical information, the depth of information and the length of the performance (both in terms of not enough information and too much information, etc.) and disagreement with the treatment, characterization or delivery of specific historic representations. By looking at all these criticisms both as a group and as comments made in the context of individual interviews we can begin to answer the question: How do visitors to Storyeum evaluate its historic content? While visitors' express general satisfaction with the stories chosen to represent the history of BC, they are also aware of the limits of those historical representations. Visitors' identification of historical information, events or perspectives that are not included in Storyeum's selection of historical vignettes is evidence of this awareness of the limits of the historical representations. Expressions of disagreement, disapproval, or disappointment with specific representations or lack thereof are regularly given in the context of an otherwise positive evaluation of Storyeum, and for visitors, did not have an opinion-altering influence on their complimentary evaluation of the attraction.

Interestingly, criticisms of historical representations had little relationship to visitors' feelings about BC as a province or their identity as British Columbians. For example, representations which were criticised for not being dealt with in enough detail, such as the small pox epidemic, or representations which were noted as absent from the performance, such as the Japanese internment, did not appear to provoke people to think critically about British Columbia as a province today, or to reflect on their British Columbian identity. These historical representations were being critiqued on the basis of there being representations, not necessarily on the basis of the historical events or social and political issues they raise. Visitors to Storyeum expressed being uplifted by a feeling of pride in their British Columbian identity, regardless of the historical events and episodes they consider embarrassing or the representations they found problematic in some way.

Dynamics between Education and Entertainment

Visitors' opinions about the combination of education and entertainment at Storyeum help to understand how visitors are evaluating Storyeum. These opinions and perspectives, however, are also useful in terms of thinking about what visitor perspectives are relevant to our broader understanding of

EHTAs, the focus of the fourth research question. The combination of educational value and entertainment value was cited as one of the strengths of the attraction. Reviewing the interview data, it is apparent that participants believe the “right combination” of entertainment and education can have a mutually reinforcing and strengthening effect. Many participants, although certainly not all, reported having experienced the “right combination” of entertainment and education,

I think definitely that presenting it in an entertaining way made it much more enriching of an experience. A living text book almost. (39 year old Canadian male from Burnaby, BC)

However, while reflecting upon, and talking about their experiences at Storyeum, it became apparent that many participants did not conceptually separate notions of entertainment and education. For some these categories were irrelevant given the hybrid nature, and explicit edutainment character of the attraction. When probed further, however, a pattern emerged within participants’ concepts of education and entertainment. They frequently articulated the view that entertainment value is capable of making, otherwise boring or dull subject matter, interesting and enjoyable. An entertaining format, according to these visitors, has the potential to make learning, an often difficult and serious process, fun and easy,

Great experience. Easy way to learn about history of BC. (67 year old American female from Buffalo, New York)

[Storyeum] is potentially a way for students who are used to their Nintendos and don’t want to sit and watch a video [to learn], so I think if they run that way with it, they could do some really interesting stuff with getting some historical interpreters actually interacting with the kids. (41 year old Canadian female from Burnaby, BC)

To appeal to a wide range of people, so that even young people can go and say, “gee that was a great act,” and not, “Oh my parents dragged me to another museum.” (57 year old Canadian female from White Rock, BC)

It’s a more compact version of history . . . for people who are not really interested in history this is a way to absorb the history. (43 year old American female)

These comments reveal that visitors think entertaining and educational elements, when produced in what they individually considered to be the right combination, can have a synergistic effect. This also suggests that there is reasonable efficacy in the heritage tourist industry notion that historical content need only be brought to life with an entertaining format to be transformed into an enjoyable and readily marketable tourist product (Prentice 2005).

Visitors frequently compared their educational experience at Storyeum with reading history books and visiting museums, in order to express how effective they felt Storyeum is in terms of informative, educational and entertainment value.

We did not know what to expect. I thought it would be just another dull museum, I was blown away by the presentation and loved moving from performance to performance. (71 year old Canadian female from Ottawa, Ontario)

. . . seeing it portrayed that way, just really, really, brought you closer to it. It was just more real than reading it in a history book. (40 year old Canadian female from Surrey, BC, #1)

Just because the way they've done it, the theatrical. You're more apt to learn with that than facts and figures. Just the way they did it and the atmosphere was just so up. It may not have been totally up during certain sections, like the native village, or the Chinese stuff, but it was just how they did it, it just hit people and kept you interested. (38 year old Canadian female from Vancouver, BC)

Participants routinely attested to Storyeum's historically informative value. However, a disjuncture exists between their reports and perceptions of Storyeum's educational value, and what they can actually recall from their visit. When asked to describe from memory the contents and order of the whole performance people often had difficulty. Many participants either had large gaps in their memory²², mixed up the order of the scenes (and therefore the sequence of historical events and developments), confused the identity of characters, or simply relayed information incorrectly,

At the time I did, I really, in a way . . . I can't really tell you what they were at this time, now, I've forgotten them, but I remember it being informative and so I did enjoy that, yes. (52 year old Canadian male from Ladner, BC)

And then the next and last room is a train station and I can't even remember what the story was about, the train station, oh someone coming back from the war- the great war- I think and that's it. (40 year old Canadian female, Vancouver, BC)

However, more frequently participants remembered in clear and accurate detail only the scenes that they were most interested in, found most engaging, and most enjoyed. Visitors paid most attention to these scenes, which often related to their personal interests or family connections to the historical content. This pattern can begin to answer to the question, "How does Storyeum's historical content contribute to visitors understanding of the history of BC?" While visitors frequently attested to Storyeum's educational value, and said that the performance confirmed what they already knew, their ability to identify specific scenes or historical information that they found educational was limited. Instead, visitors most often pointed out their favourite parts of the performance which were not necessarily the most educational for them, but certainly the most enjoyable and personally meaningful.

Half the participants had criticisms about the balance between education and entertainment at Storyeum. All but one of these criticisms was that Storyeum was deficient in terms of educational value but sufficient in terms of entertainment value. Specifically, visitors identified the way certain historical events were treated as a factor which detracted from the overall educational value of the performance.

I don't think they were light-hearted issues but they were sort of treated like light-hearted issues, like fun and games. Even the gold thing, the war, prohibition, bringing over the women so they can marry the men whether they want to or not. (68 year old Canadian female from Vancouver, BC)

Those who identified an imbalance between educational value and entertainment value also felt less enthusiastic about Storyeum overall. This is also the case for the single participant who believed that the performance was educational enough, but not entertaining enough.

A lot of things I think they were missing. If you want it in a word I think that the drama was missing, let's put it that way. I don't know what percentage of our tourists come from the States,

²² In some instances interviews took place two or three months after visitors' went to Storyeum which is considered a factor influencing how much they can recall.

but it's probably pretty high I imagine and you know when you put a show like this . . . I mean Americans like it big, they like it something like Las Vegas style, spectacular, Disneyland, Disney World. . . . I found it weak (47 year old Canadian male from Vancouver, BC)

Notwithstanding the observation made above—that visitors often found it irrelevant to think about education and entertainment as separate categories in this context—several participants wanted the performance to be more “something”, for example, more informative, more historically specific, more detailed, funnier, more dramatic, longer, etc. This suggests that visitors are thinking about the experience they are having at Storyeum and evaluating it on many levels, including evaluating the details, like the formatting, the techniques being use, the sound and script, etc. Participants often articulated their evaluations of these details as well as Storyeum's overall combination of educational and entertaining aspects as recommendations for how Storyeum could improve.

Feelings of Pride in British Columbian Identity

How does Storyeum contribute to visitors' personal perspective of the province of BC? One major contribution Storyeum makes is to visitors' sense of pride in their BC identity. Feelings of pride emerged as a major theme. 63% of all participants and 78% of all Canadian participants made explicit statements of pride about their BC or Canadian identity. In response to the question “How does the performance at Storyeum make you think about BC as a province?” many visitors quickly and almost automatically produced statements similar to this:

It made me proud, actually, when I was there. I remember the very last section when you're coming up and they are showing all more events and stuff, like Terry Fox, it made me really feel proud to be Canadian. (38 year old Canadian female from Vancouver, BC)

Statements of pride in one's identity were so common in fact that they seemed to be shared, in an empathetic way by non-British Columbian and even non-Canadian visitors as evidenced by the statements quoted below,

Deeper respect for Canadians-the love and respect they have for their country, their ability to assimilate foreign cultures into their society, apparent lack of (or glossing over?) of greed, corruption, nationalistic egotism often exhibited in US. (67 year old American female from Buffalo, New York)

As a Californian, I feel much more connected to British Columbia. We are all residents of the west coast. Our history parallels the history of B.C. (41 year old American female from California)

The latter part of the show as we were preparing to leave felt like a recruitment drive for inviting potential immigrants to come and live in BC. It made the place seem the most wonderful, multicultural and cool place to live in the world! Perhaps it is! (41 year old British female)

We very much admire what Canadians stand for in the face of your southern neighbour, and felt this programme really showed why you're special. (53 year old British female)

These expressions of pride contributed positively to peoples' overall experience at Storyeum. Participants strongly associated feelings of pride with feeling happy, especially towards the end of the performance. The positioning of the photo montage during the elevator ascent at the end of the performance—the part

which many people said inspired their sense of pride— left visitors feeling uplifted, and in the interview context they easily recalled that feeling. Table 8 summarizes these visitor perspectives.

Table 8: How does the performance at Storyeum make you think about BC as a province?

Observations/Feelings/Thoughts about BC as a Province	Frequency
I feel proud to be living here	9
I feel fantastic/uplifted	8
I think BC is very special	6
I feel more strongly about BC and its role in Canadian history	3
I am ashamed at the treatment of the Natives and the Chinese	3
All provinces are guilty of abusing the original inhabitants	2
There has been progress at the expense of others	2
There are more layers of history than I expected	2
BC has gone through many growing pains and continues to learn from past mistakes	1
That there is a strong Chinese influence	1
Greater respect for west coast and Native culture	1

Participants also articulated important tensions that exist within their sense of pride in BC identity. These perspectives reveal that visitors' identity, and feelings of pride in their identity can be influenced by knowledge of historical events and time periods. These perspectives, therefore, also begin to answer the question: How does Storyeum's historical content contribute to visitors' understandings of the history of BC? These statements of tension within one's feelings of pride were often framed as limitations on the extent to which British Columbians can or should feel pride given the reality of historical injustices,

I felt, if you don't take any of the Native aspects into it, I am proud to be a British Columbian, but the fact is that white man came in and took everything and oppressed the Natives and continues to do so to this day. So we are still all invaders here. So we just conveniently forget the past so we don't have to remember that. We complain about everyone else coming into our place and it is not even our place to begin with. (39 year old Canadian male from Burnaby, BC)

It made me proud to be living here now, but also a little ashamed of the treatment Natives and the Chinese received. (76 year old Canadian female from Richmond, BC)

It's just amazing to know some of the stuff that the people actually went through, like the Chinese stuff, and never knowing that it could be that . . . almost prejudice in Canada. You know you hear about that stuff in the States, but not Canada. You felt really terrible, here you're Canadian, and here is what has happened to these people. (38 year old Canadian female from Vancouver, BC)

Although these critical statements about feelings of pride were made less frequently than non-critical statements about pride²³, they are important because they demonstrate that some visitors are reflecting upon historical events and connecting these events to the present day reality in British Columbia. Others anticipated that they would be able to make some conceptual links between the past and the present, but felt that the performance at Storyeum ultimately did not facilitate making such historical connections,

It doesn't make me think about current BC as a Province, because there is no connection there, historically . . . I think it had a little bit of the sort of brave new frontier feel to it, you know aboriginals on the boat and then to Barkerville . . . but it didn't give me a sense that there was any kind of process involved . . . and it didn't feel like there was a continuity there. (41 year old Canadian female from Burnaby, BC)

²³ Only 17% of the responses to question #13 had a critical or reflexive dimension.

It's sort of generic I think. I think the story could have worked anywhere in the, I don't know, the States, other parts of Canada possibly, sort of a general story about opening up America to Europeans. (40 year old Canadian female from Vancouver, BC)

Within many of the critical statements about pride, the past is seen to contain embarrassing or shameful events, whereas the present and the future are seen as times that are worthy of pride,

Like does it make me feel "Rah, Rah I'm from BC, it's great?" I think coming up the elevator at the very end did that, because that showed the view today, whereas the theatre was more focussing on the past. (28 year old Canadian female from Vancouver, BC)

The shaking of hands. I really thought that kind of defines BC or Canada. Before there was a bunch of racism between the native and the Europeans and then the Chinese and the Europeans, and the Japanese and the Europeans and there, at that point it was saying we are all together, we are all the same. I thought that was a really nice point. (41 year old Canadian female from Surrey, BC)

While participants perceive the past and the present existing in a relationship together, usually a linear or causal relationship, they also strategically separate or distance the past from the present conceptually. This propensity for visitors to distance the past from the present or interpret the present positively in relation to the past has been observed elsewhere (Handler and Gable 1997:109). In addition to this, Storyeum has several design and formatting features that either promote an understanding of continuity and inter-relationship of the past and the present, or promote an understanding of the separateness of the past and the present. An example of this is a statement written in large block letters on the wall of the lobby directly above a photo display which contains portraits of notable people from the 19th century. The passage reads: "They walked the world you walk now. Built it with their vision, their faith and their courage. Their sacrifices created our opportunities." This text encourages visitors to imagine a connection between these people of the 19th century and themselves, as present day British Columbians.

It [learning about history] gives a connection to the past and to what people who lived before us did to enable us to have the lives we do now. (50 year old Canadian male from Burnaby)

However, the format of the performance, that is, the movement from the ground floor (the present) to the underground (the past) and back to the surface (present/future), as well as the movement from room (set) to room (set) to experience a different historical moment also has implications for the way the past is perceived in relation to the present. Effectively, this format, compartmentalizing time into segments that can be conceptually placed in the past and, therefore, removed from the present. This is especially true of the first two scenes in which Native life and myth are depicted. Once the First Nations component is finished, the scene changes, and their portion of the story is over.

There is also the story of the people who became colonised and who were killed through disease. Their point-of-view, which opened the show, is brushed aside in favour of the history of those who colonised it. (41 year old British female)

While the quotation on the lobby wall encourages visitors to feel a connection with the people who lived in BC in the past, neither the format or the content of the performance, nor the photography display addresses

the connections that exist between the past and the present especially in political terms. The types of connections that Storyeum facilitates appear to be nostalgic connections rather than political connections. According to some participants feelings of pride in one's identity can be built by feeling a connection with historical events and people. This will be discussed later in relation to visitors' personal philosophies about historical learning at EHTA's and other heritage settings.

Emotional Responses and Feelings of Inclusion and Cohesion

Participants also reported having other personal and emotional responses to Storyeum in addition to their feelings of pride in BC identity. Their personal and emotional experiences add to our understanding of the factors that contribute to their overall positive evaluation of Storyeum and to our broader understanding of how EHTAs are being received by the visiting public. Participants expressed feeling sad at certain points during the performance, elated at others. They also expressed feeling an increasing sense of connection with other members of the audience as the performance progressed. Some participants were surprised by the range of emotional experiences the performances elicited,

We were greeted by Ray (?) who seemed to be of Japanese/ Chinese extraction, who made us welcome and explained what we would experience. He did say we should feel free to laugh or cry, which at the time I found odd, but was certainly to come true. . . . [Storyeum was] incredibly uplifting and moving, I was in tears at the time because of the strong emotions which were aroused-I still feel quite choked now when I talk to people about it. (53 year old British female from Derbyshire, England)

I really was moved by the final montage of music and photos presented. It made me teary. (48 year old American female)

It is evident from these comments that Storyeum surpassed some visitors' expectations for the emotive depth of the performance.

There is also a collective dimension to visitors' emotional experiences. This is articulated as the shared experience of the visitors being involved, as an audience group, in the same engaging and interactive performance.

As we progressed through the various stages, there was a sense of wonder at the theatrical virtuosity of what we were seeing, but a growing bond with the others in the group, as we saw people drawn in to react (e.g. the Votes section) and particularly the trip back up in the lift to the 'real world'. I did feel I was looking at people in a different way. (53 year old British female from Derbyshire, England)

The performance is meant to inspire empathy and identification with historical characters and time periods and indeed many participants expressed having such identifications with historical time periods and people. Visitors' empathic responses to the historical representations within the performance are also extended to the other visitors who are perceived to have shared the same experience, be it uplifting, sad, thought provoking, etc. The collective energy of the audience, as well as the sense of having a connection with other visitors because of the shared experience, heighten and reinforce individual emotional responses to the performance.

Storyeum's format is, in many ways, designed to create a connected and cohesive audience, which in turn, can generate collective energy and a collective response to the performance. From the onset visitors are considered part of a tour with a designated tour guide. Visitors are ushered into a circular passenger lift where they stand both in view of other visitors and with a view of other visitors as well as with a view of the multiple television screens. They are addressed as a group, led from room to room as a group, closely share the space within the elevators and within the seating areas, and are asked to be involved in the performance as a group. The shaping of visitors into a cohesive audience is a gradual process, but by the last two scenes visitors are asked to hold placards, shout slogans and sing along with actors. This process of creating a collective experience, one part of which is facilitating a sense of group cohesion, culminates at the end of the performances during the elevator ascent. The elevator ascent, as previously mentioned, consists of images and film footage of historical periods and people represented in the performance as well as people and places of the present. This finale emphasizes the continuity between the past and the present by telling a story through chronological images of the province. Visitors can easily transfer the empathy they have built for the historical characters throughout the performance onto themselves and their fellow audience members, because the video montage segues quickly from the past to the present, showing multiple images and voices of British Columbian residents, both known and unknown, with an emphasis on multiple minority ethnicities.

In addition to feeling a part of a cohesive audience, participants expressed feeling inclusion in a larger social grouping, above and beyond the sense of pride in BC identity. This other sense of inclusion has to do with personal and family connections with history that translate for many people into more meaningful connections to this society.

And then we went in, they brought us into the elevator, got in the elevator, doors close, first thing we saw was Terry Fox. They started showing the image of Terry Fox running, which impacted me because I remember seeing that as a kid, I remember watching him run. That was an excellent, I thought, excellent way to open it up was having him because it was something from Vancouver. (41 year old Canadian male from Langley, BC)

What I liked about the waiting area was that there were pictures of British Columbia's history right from the beginning right through. And that they had matching photographs on the wall tell you about the pictures, because I had seen, I mean I grew up, I was 10 in 1958 when centennial thing happened so I knew all about Century Sam or Centennial Sam and Barkerville and we had the gold nugget thing come through our school and you know, like, I've seen a lot of those pictures and I have the book, so a lot of those pictures are in that centennial book that British Columbia had. (57 year old Canadian female from White Rock, BC)

This sense of inclusion in a larger social grouping is also related to the way that the performance gave expression to societal ideals, such as multiculturalism, which were identified as being personally meaningful to many participants.

And Barkerville that was good. And then at the very end when they were singing their song about us all being equal, that was very, it's just how we are, you know it doesn't matter what our race is, or our religion we are all equals and we have to treat each other as equals, so that's what stuck out in my mind. (40 year old Canadian female from Surrey, BC, #1)

Multiculturalism, a recurring theme throughout the performance, was recognized by many participants to be an important characteristic of both past and present British Columbia, and participants readily identified with being members of the multicultural “mosaic” of British Columbia.

[My favourite element was] the photographs of people’s faces in the videos on the screens, throughout the whole thing. They really emphasize that BC was multicultural. (28 year old Canadian female from Vancouver, BC)

Criticisms of Multicultural Representations

The study group enjoyed and identified with being included within a multicultural group. Despite this identification, however, 83% of participants believed the representations of multiculturalism at Storyeum to be lacking in some way. This finding partially answers the question, “How do visitors’ to Storyeum evaluate the attractions’ historical content?” Criticisms of Storyeum’s representation of multiculturalism can be divided in two: the groups of people participants identified as having been ignored and the groups whose characterizations were criticized. Many of these critiques surfaced when answering the question “Was there any information, or were there any perspectives that you felt were missing or lacking?” The answers to this question are summarized in Table 9.

Table 9: Was there any information or were there any perspectives that you felt were missing or lacking?

Information Missing or Lacking	Frequency
Lacked information about immigrant groups	23
Lacked information about recent historical milestones and accomplishments	4
Lacked cultural diversity	4
Not enough specific information about Native history	4
Lacked information about the Spanish and other early explorers in BC	4
Lacked information about other parts of BC (i.e. Dewdney Trunk Trail)	4
Lacked information about Vancouver, and Gastown	2
Wanted more information about gold-panning and Billy Barker	2
Other (information about World War II, Canada’s independence, the timber industry, contemporary Asian culture, dates, time frames and statistics)	5

The following is a list of the ethno-cultural or national groups that visitors identified as absent from the historical representations at Storyeum: Japanese, Scottish, Italian, Russian, Spanish, Eastern European, Doukabour, German, Indian and Filipino. Japanese Canadians and their history of internment in the interior of the province during WWII was the most frequently noted being identified by 20% of the participants.

There’s the Japanese Internment, which a lot of people don’t have a clue about, especially the younger generation. They could do something on that. That was part of our history. (40 year old Canadian female from Surrey, BC, #1)

But throughout the things there was really no mention of the Japanese internment. None whatsoever. Which I felt, hey, hey, you are talking about the history of BC! (68 year old Canadian female from Vancouver, BC)

The perceived deficiencies of Storyeum’s multicultural representations were also negatively contributed to participants’ perceived imbalance between entertainment value and educational value. These

participants felt those representations in particular lacked depth and breadth in terms of historical information.

I felt that at times there was too much time spent on singing and not enough information about how BC developed and the different nationalities that were part of that. (41 year old British female)

I think it is a brilliant opportunity for people who are not from here to get a flavour of the history, which is why it would be nice if they could actually diversify it a bit culturally and they've got the spectacle aspect of it down pat and now they actually have to work up the history piece. . . I think if they work it a bit it could be a really good school attraction, but I would like to see them work it a bit before it's touted as a history lesson. (41 year old Canadian female from Burnaby, BC)

These individuals felt strongly that more details about these peoples' struggles would make a positive educational contribution to the whole performance.

[I wanted] more about the problems that the Chinese had. To tell you the truth I really didn't know too much about that until this summer, through programs on TV, and Storyeum you learnt more about the problems they had to deal with. I think they could have had a little bit more on that. It seemed a little bit short to me. A little longer would have helped. (47 year old Canadian female from North Vancouver, BC)

Furthermore, many considered the lack of representations of certain groups to be an unfortunate oversight, a regrettable absence, or an offensive omission,

I think it was pretty Caucasian. (41 year old Canadian female from Burnaby, BC)

Being Scottish and seeing so many Scottish place names in Vancouver, in particular, but BC in general, I felt slighted that no mention was made of the contribution the Scots made to BC. I was also surprised that the timber industry, which I am sure helped build BC in more ways than one, seemed to be ignored. (41 year old British female)

Multiculturalism isn't limited to the Chinese. You've got your Italians. You've got your Japanese. You've got East Indians. I mean Indians now are becoming now almost on par with the Chinese. So in that perspective it is a bit offensive. (28 year old Canadian female from Vancouver, BC)

A 68 year old east Vancouver resident, interpreted the lack of information about the histories, struggles and contributions of several ethno-cultural and national communities in BC, to be nothing less than an effacement of the historic reality of multiculturalism.

What I remember most was that they did not really bring out the fact that there were other nationalities that were exploited. The Indians first, yes, and that was done in the name of progress, then when they did with the Chinese labour, again that was done in the name of progress, they were expendable. . . . And you are also talking about Slavic groups, came into BC, went to Grand Forks, the Doukabours, in particular, who were promised land, help, etc. and did not get it. It came from the prairies, it came from Russia. I am from Russian heritage so that is clear to me, because I am aware that there are other nationalities that built up BC. It was sort of glossed over. It wasn't even mentioned (68 year old Canadian female from Vancouver, BC)

According to this woman the contribution of these people to the development of the province is an essential part of the history of BC and its absence is offensive and leads to an inaccurate representation of how the province was developed.

She also interprets the multicultural montage that takes place during the elevator ascent as an advertisement for the 2010 Olympics to be held in Vancouver rather than as an accurate and inclusive representation of ethnic diversity within the province.

You saw pictures of them, towards the end. To me what it became was the glorification for the Olympics. That's when you saw more different, collage effect of different nationalities. The message is that BC is a multicultural place, but in the past they did not mention it. They did not mention their [other nationalities] contribution to BC's history. They were pushing the Olympics, where its one big happy family you know, but when you actually look at the Olympics and people who are in the Olympics it's very much Caucasian. 99% Caucasian. They're pushing it, government, big business are pushing this Olympic idea, that was the sense I got, but also with the historical aspects of it, they forgot a whole lot of people. (68 year old Canadian female from Vancouver, BC)

The montage is being criticised for inaccurately representing the race of the Canadian athletes who will participate in the upcoming Olympics. Furthermore, this visitor does not feel the montage compensates for the lack of representation of immigrant nationalities' struggles and contributions to the development of BC. She believes it is designed explicitly to market BC as a beautiful, natural, multicultural and harmonious place, which is a further effacement of the social realities of many people, such as lower income people, urban aboriginals and immigrant communities in Vancouver. This sentiment is echoed by another participant, a 28-year old Japanese woman, who does not think the video montage is fully representative of multiculturalism in a historical perspective or representative of the multicultural distribution within the province.

But after watching the plays, like after watching a movie, you believe half and half. Okay, so you come up and then there a screen, whole screen, you can see all different faces of people right. Like Indian people, Asian people. But you don't see the whole story, you know, in the history. First Nations, English people, the war, and then now its 20th century. It's a really quick view, but I don't know, because it's . . . Vancouver is really unique; there are lots of different cultures, but it could be different in, ah, like, Salmon Arm. [When] I'm [visiting] Salmon Arm, they look at me and they say oh where are you from and I am from Japan and they have never seen Japanese people. So it's a different culture. (28 year old Japanese female from Vancouver, BC)

Other participants also echoed this sentiment by criticising Storyeum for emphasizing the historical developments and multicultural composition of Vancouver and the lower mainland and not those of the rest of the province.

Criticisms of multicultural representations were also frequently made in reference to the first two scenes depicting pre-contact Native life. While they were cited frequently as favourite parts of the performance (see Table 6, page 25) many visitors also had suggestions about how these representations could have been more appropriate, more relevant, more interesting, more understandable, or more widely representative of the diversity of First Nations of BC. Visitors' readings of Storyeum's representation of First Nations people suggest that visitors are consciously evaluating representations they are consuming in terms of political correctness and cultural sensitivity. This is also the case with the aforementioned criticisms of multicultural representations. However, a heightened awareness of the need for appropriate representations of First Nations people is evident within visitors' evaluations of the first two scenes at Storyeum.

Some participants believed the first two scenes were little more than stereotypical Noble Savage characterisations of First Nations people.

The aboriginal piece at the beginning, they were speaking in English, but in short clipped phrases, sort of "me Tarzan and Jane" and again to me that is just clear stereotyping. To not have them speaking in clear sentences. Even if they are not going to speak in the languages that were spoken at that time, let them speak in full sentences . . . It had some good information in it, but they tried to do this in three minute snippets, so it's difficult to avoid the stereotyping. It was sort of that whole Noble Savage motif, was the sense I got from it. (41 year old Canadian female from Burnaby, BC)

Other people wanted more information and historical specificity, as well as a longer overall presentation of the First Nations components of the story.

It would have been nice for them to, establish the names of special chiefs, and stuff, who were here because I thought they flew through the Indian stuff pretty fast and then went onto more, it was about the railroad and building and I understand that that was a big beginning but they came, the Indians got sick, they died, move on! I thought they skipped through that pretty fast. It would have been nice to have a little bit more of that. (40 year old Canadian female from Surrey, BC, #2)

I think that the way that the Natives were presented I guess was probably not as graphic as it could have been. The general impression that I got was that the white man came and one guy had small pox or whatever and that wiped out everyone, and well I guess that is the case, but I think there is a lot more to it than that. (39 year old Canadian male from Burnaby, BC)

Still others wanted the First Nations components to be more representative of a broader Native perspective. In some cases this meant visitors wanted more familiar representations of First Nations culture.

I thought the native influence in the beginning was a little bit, this is just my opinion, it was a little bit too stilted towards one version, instead of a broader native perspective. I wasn't too big on the story of the wolf being and that. It was a little bit strange to me because I've never heard that one before. Not strange in a bad way, just different and not quite as captivating as other ones I'd heard. (41 year old Canadian male from Langley, BC)

I think that the very beginning. . . I couldn't quite get what the story about the natives was all about. I think that it is important that we have that. Definitely important that we have the presence of the natives to show that they were here first, but, I would have hoped to see more finer artwork. You know like better examples of carver like with totem poles and house post another big houses so that people would learn . . . and I also noticed that it's not clear how were those people living. (45 year old Canadian male from Vancouver, BC)

Participants' criticisms of multicultural representations, including representations of First Nations people, reveal a general perception that Storyeum could have gone into greater depth and detail about the specific histories of non-British groups with an emphasis on their struggle to overcome adversity. People attributed Storyeum's failure to deal with these issues adequately to the following three things: 1) a lack of adequate time dedicated to the issues; 2) a lack of information given about the issues; and 3) a lack of seriousness used in the portrayal of the issues. Here is an explicit articulation of the third problem:

They should have lent a little more gravity to the displacement of the Natives and them being wiped out by small pox and then literally being lifted right off of their lands and thrown into other areas and put in quarantines. (41 year old Canadian male from Langley, BC)

In order to interpret the problems they identify with Storyeum's historical representations participants in this study presented two opinions. The first is a "they can't do it all" type of attitude. This allows visitors to explain the gaps and problems that exist in the historical coverage as an unfortunate, but **inevitable** consequence of reducing the history of British Columbia into a 65 minute presentation.

But then you can't put everyone's story in at the same time. (40 year old Canadian female from Vancouver, BC)

Well we have such a huge history here in BC, No, I mean in six months they could do a whole other show, there's so much history. (40 year old Canadian female from Surrey, BC, #1)

I guess it was the best that they could do. I don't think it was sugar coated or anything like they just obviously can't tell everything. And I think they did a good job. I had never heard of the small pox epidemic being identified with one person before. (39 year old Canadian male from Burnaby, BC)

The second is a "they weren't entirely successful" attitude. This explains problems and omissions in the historical coverage as unfortunate, but **avoidable** consequences of directorial or editorial choices. In this view the perceived compromises that have been made to condense BC history into a 65 minute presentation are subject to visitors' value judgements about the success of the compromise, rather than excused on the basis of the need for compromise.

The whole mention of the small pox plague amused me. Some guy got off the boat in San Francisco and then everybody got small pox, and we're not sure how that happened! (Laughs). No mention that it wiped out half the aboriginal population on the coast with some malevolence involved. Quite probably there was the issue of one person arriving here with it, but then you've got the issue of blankets being given out on reserves, and I think the provincial museum in Victoria does a fairly credible job of telling that story appropriately. So I thought it was interesting that it was put in there but not addressed. I almost think that it would have been better to not mention it. (41 year old Canadian female from Burnaby, BC)

These two views are not mutually exclusive; participants used each interchangeably and in combination in order to explain different parts of the performance. One distinct pattern emerged: participants who had a high number of criticisms about Storyeum's historical representations were more likely to articulate their perspective with the second view - that is attributing representational problems to poor directorial or editorial choices. Visitors with only a couple of criticism were more likely to voice the opinion that "they can't do it all" and that any deficiencies in the representations are the unfortunate result of a necessary compromise. These findings suggest that there may be a threshold at which visitors change their interpretation of exhibition contents from a "benefit of the doubt" attitude towards a more critical or judgemental evaluation.

In addition to these two views, visitors' perceptions and evaluations of Storyeum are influenced by the following three factors: self-identified level of prior knowledge, personal philosophies about the purpose of learning about history and socio-cultural identity.

Influence of Prior Knowledge, Personal Philosophies and Socio-Cultural Identity

When asked to identify information or perspectives that were missing from the performance at Storyeum visitors frequently responded in four ways (see Table 9, Page 35). Some said that they did not know enough about the history of BC to be able to identify what was missing. There were those who readily identified information and perspectives that were missing because they felt they had a broad and deep knowledge of the history of BC. There were visitors who did not think any information was missing or lacking from the performance because they felt they had a broad and deep understanding of the history of BC. Finally one group did not feel there was anything missing, but also did not think they have a broad or deep knowledge of the history of BC. These findings adhere to a simple two by two matrix in which self identified prior knowledge is cross-referenced with frequency and amount of missing information visitors' identify.

Visitors' self- identified level of prior knowledge of the history of BC is related to visitors' critical engagement with the historical representations at Storyeum. Only one group of people- those who felt they had a fairly broad prior knowledge of the history of BC- routinely identified missing information and perspectives, despite the fact that some well-informed participants did not identify missing information. Self-identified level of prior knowledge thus influences visitors' ability to contextualize the historical representations at Storyeum within broader historical canon. However, there are other ways that prior knowledge influences visitors' experiences.

Visitors who have more prior knowledge about specific issues, events or people, were more likely to find the representations of those things at Storyeum either satisfying or frustrating, depending on whether or not they agreed with the representation. For example, a participant who had been to Barkerville, BC many times was impressed with the architectural and historical accuracy of Storyeum's reproduced main street. This made a positive contribution to his experience by giving him a satisfying sense of familiarity and reinforced his prior knowledge.

What stands out? I would say Barkerville, because I've been to Barkerville at least a dozen times. I lived up in that area, spent a lot of time in Barkerville and also Fort Steele National Park too. Barkerville was exactly the same. I started laughing when I walked in because I pointed to my girlfriend and her kids and said look you know that's the 'Wake-Up Jake' I've eaten in the "Wake-Up Jake. I've gone to mass at that church and it's exactly the same and I told her that's the original church, that's the only thing left in Barkerville from when the fire was on. And I was able to pick out everything and it made me laugh actually. (41 year old Canadian male from Langley, BC)

There are also instances when visitors' prior knowledge leads to frustration with a historical representation at Storyeum. Many of these examples have already been stated, such as the visitor who believed that the Royal BC Museum has a better, more historically accurate description of the small pox epidemic as well as the visitor who criticised the multicultural video montage for not being representative enough and not being an accurate representation of the lived realities of multi-ethnic groups in BC.

Information about visitors' expectations was not collected rigorously enough in this study²⁴ and therefore an analysis of the specific ways that visitors' expectations were both satisfied and frustrated given

²⁴ Question number 5 in the visitor interview questionnaire (see appendix A), "What were your expectations of what Storyeum would be like and what it would be about?" was introduced after 15 % of participants had already been interviewed.

their expectations is beyond the scope of this paper. However, visitors' personal philosophies about the value and purpose of learning about history in museums and tourism attractions deserves some discussion to show how satisfaction and frustration of personal philosophies can influence visitors' evaluations of historical content and overall experiences at heritage tourist attractions. When participants were asked "What do you believe the purpose or the point of learning about history at museums and tourist attractions is?" several common themes emerged. See Table 10 below for a list and frequency breakdown of the responses to this question.

Table 10: What is the purpose of learning about history at museums and tourist attractions?

Visitors Opinions	Frequency
Education in general	10
Avoid repeating mistakes made in the past ²⁵	7
Understand where you come from	7
Experience a sense of connection and continuity with the past	6
Gain a better understanding of the context of the present	6
Navigate the future with a perspective of the past	5
Understand others/understand diversity	5
Know who you are	4
Make a connection between people	4
Entertainment	3
Learn from the past	3
Provide a shorter and easier way to absorb history	3
Appreciate what we have now	3
Appreciate past peoples struggles and victories	3
Appreciate things, people and places from the past that were less touched by humans	2
Fulfil an inherent human need to grow and improve	2
Gain new perspective of a place	2
Gain a sense of belonging	2
Make a better society	1
Understand what you are politically standing up for	1

The majority of participants (95%) thought that learning about history was important and beneficial in some way. There were those who believed that it is important to understand the past in order to the understand the present and the future,

To strengthen knowledge of one's community and the changes it has gone through. (44 year old Canadian female from Coquitlam, BC)

I think if you're not connected to your history, there's a part missing. There's what's behind, there's what's happening now and there's the future and I think they're all important. (57 year old Canadian female from White Rock, BC)

I feel that to know where we come from and what has happened in our past gives us a perspective for the future. (49 year old Canadian female from Courtney, BC)

There are those that think knowledge about the past is necessary in order to avoid repeating mistakes that were made in the past.

Enlarge our knowledge, maybe just try to do better in the future... difficult question...some entertainment I suppose. (59 year old Canadian female from Halifax, Nova Scotia)

²⁵ 43% of the visitors who gave this opinion explicitly questioned the efficacy of this idea. That is, 3 out of the 7 individuals who felt that the purpose of learning about history at attractions is to avoid repeating mistakes made in the past, did not believe that this type of learning actually worked, that is actually prevented mistakes from repeating. However, they believed that this was one of the intentions of such historical learning.

To know more about what happened in the past. Everyone tells me it is good. As they say, if you don't know history you are bound to repeat it, that type of thing is my agreement, if you don't know where you come from and what happened in the past, than you can't learn from it, what to do and what not to do again. Also I just think it is our responsibility to know where we come from. (43 year old Canadian female from Vancouver)

Some believe knowledge of the past gives a sense of identity.

People's lives take place in a context of what came before. You cannot have meaning in life without knowing your history or the history of others. It is part of having identity. (48 year old American female from New Jersey)

Some believe knowledge of the past gives a sense of connection to places and people.

Learning about history strengthens our connections to people. (41 year old American female from California)

There is a distinct relationship between what participants believe is the purpose or point of learning about history in museums and tourist attractions and the other emergent themes of this study, especially feelings of pride in BC identity. The theme of continuity and the relationship between the past, the present and the future, which is employed by Storyeum, is also clearly articulated in participants' philosophies about the purpose of historical learning at tourist attractions. Participants made a connection between history and historical representations produced at museums and tourist attractions and identity creation and maintenance processes. Participants also identified the ability of historical knowledge to help create connections between people as an important benefit of this type of learning. Participants' ideas about the role and value of learning about history at tourist attractions exerts a significant influence on their motivations and experiences, especially their degrees of satisfaction and frustration when analyzed in relation to the format and content of the attraction. The fact that 95% of participants felt that learning about history in museums and other tourist attractions is beneficial in some way also provides important information for our broader understanding of EHTAs and their public reception.

Visitors' perceptions are, to a large extent, a function of who they are (i.e. their socio-cultural identity) (Anderson 2003). These identity factors are recognized as framing and constraining visitors' perceptions and evaluations of exhibition experiences (Anderson 2003; Krmpotich 2004). There are several examples of how the influence of these factors contributed to participants' perceptions and evaluations of Storyeum within this study.

Women with children²⁶ tended to report about the experiences of their children, especially their favourite parts of the performance. They also frequently made specific assessments of the educational, entertainment and monetary values of Storyeum because they were searching for an ideal combination of these three things for themselves, but especially for their children.

Sub- senior aged visitors²⁷ were particularly critical and had specific issues they wanted to address within their interview. Visitors within this age range were not shy to point out perceived deficiencies in the historical representations and often relied heavily on their experiences in other tourism locations as points of comparison.

²⁶ 34% of the women in this study.

²⁷ 40-60 years constituting 60% of the participants.

Seniors ²⁸ were generally less critical, and more frequently expressed enjoyment with the nostalgic aspects and the edutainment aspects of the performance. Seniors also complained about specific formatting issues such as the sound being too loud, or of poor quality, having to walk around too much, and having to stand in the elevator for a long time.

Visitors who defined themselves by identity markers such as family background, ethnicity, or nationality ²⁹ paid close attention to the representations of the groups to which they belonged. The single Japanese woman interviewed, for example, was among the 8 people who noticed that the history of the Japanese community in BC and the history of the Japanese internment were not represented at Storyeum. There were several incidents in this study when visitors' cultural identity directly influenced how they interpreted Storyeum's choice and characterisation of historical events and people of BC. Participants who explicitly self-identified themselves culturally were often knowledgeable about and interested in the stories, struggles, and contributions of the people with whom they identified. An Argentinean man was curious about the Spanish influence in the early days of exploration of the Northwest coast. In fact, cultural identities comprised a wide range of influences and identifications including but not limited to notions of family background, ethnicity, nationality, as well as political orientation were found to be one of the most significant factors informing visitors' perspectives. 53% of participants in this study self-identified themselves culturally in one of these ways. See Table 11 below.

Table 11: Cultural Self-Identifications

Types of Cultural Identifications	Frequency
No specific identification made	19
Identification with emigration places and cultures ³⁰	10
National Identifications	3
Feminist	3
From a small native town in BC	2
From out of province	2
Family heritage connection in BC	1

Coming from the Russian culture, the Doukabour culture I very much felt for the natives, because our children were also taken away. (68 year old Canadian female from Vancouver, BC)

The actors were fantastic and as a feminist, I loved the segment about women obtaining the vote. I even got to hold a sign and shout! (71 year old Canadian female from Ontario)

Aspects of the performance at Storyeum which were personally relevant to visitors because of their cultural identity were also more likely to become personally meaningful to them.

Visitors who were entertaining out of town guests or making an advance trip in anticipation of entertaining out of town guests³¹ viewed and evaluated Storyeum according to the anticipated preferences of their guests. For example, these visitors asked questions like, "Will Storyeum be accessible to someone with little prior knowledge of BC? Or, "Is Storyeum's specific historical presentation of BC what I would

²⁸ 15% of the participants.

²⁹ 78% of the participants were Canadian. However, in the context of the interviews one or more people further identified themselves as Russian, Greek, Scottish, Chinese, Japanese, East Indian, Haida, British, Argentinean, Australian, and American.

³⁰ This is not limited to visitors who were immigrants themselves, but rather includes any visitors who identified themselves based on where their family originated, in terms of place and/or culture.

³¹ Constitute 50% of the participants in this study.

want to expose my guest to?" They are concerned with whether Storyeum is entertaining enough, educational enough, and is of good value. While many participants consider Storyeum to be an ideal place to entertain out of town guest, 13% of participants said that they would not want to take their guests there. These people believed there were better places in Vancouver to expose guests to the history and uniqueness of BC. Furthermore, 2 participants who had recommended Storyeum to visitors before going there said they regretted making the recommendation after their own visit.

Foreign tourists visiting Vancouver³² had a slightly different set of objectives. These people often evaluated their trip to Storyeum on the basis of what they learned about BC, and how the information they acquired or the experience in general fit in with the rest of their trip. For some foreign tourists Storyeum provided meaningful cultural translations and an inspirational message, in addition to its educational and entertainment value.

Three sections really stand out: the first mythological section drew me into a different world from brightly lit tourist Vancouver- I was still not sure what to expect, and being British, was vaguely afraid I would be expected to shout or clap or be very extroverted. Instead, there was a feeling of calm and mystery which had me intrigued. As we were invited into the second section, I started to feel a real connection to the history and spirituality of the First Nations- there was a sense of intimacy and privilege. The next sections were interesting theatrically, or amusing, but I felt the final section of the returning war hero, with the quotation from the Chinese/ Native ancestry soldier was stunning: the concept of us being like a forest, all different but dependent on each other for growth and survival, gave an incredibly strong message. (53 year old British female from Derbyshire, England)

Finally, there are day-trippers³³ who made a special trip from the suburbs into the city centre to visit Storyeum. These visitors are often in groups, often come on the weekends, and usually included children. Like other visitors, day-trippers evaluated Storyeum on the basis of entertainment, education, and monetary value, as well as the extent to which it is personally relevant to them. However, they also evaluated whether the experience they have at Storyeum was worth their trip and worth repeating. This group of people had the most overall positive evaluations of Storyeum, and often said that they planned to return in subsequent years. They were satisfied with the performance, but hoped that Storyeum would diversify and change its performance from year to year in order to make their return trip more worthwhile.

Many factors influence visitor experiences, including motivations, expectations, preferences, levels of prior knowledge, personal philosophies and socio-cultural identity. Every visitor has a unique combination of these factors. Visitors' experiences are recognized to be extremely varied and largely dependant on these subjective aspects. However, commonalities within visitors' experiences and evaluations can also be found. This study has found that Storyeum receives a positive evaluation by visitors' overall. Its historical content is deemed educational and entertaining, but also limited and problematic. The majority of visitors' gained an uplifting sense of pride in their BC identity by visiting Storyeum, despite the fact that they frequently engaged critically with the historical representations they were consuming. These findings contribute to our understanding of how Storyeum is received and understood and allow us to make generalizations about EHTAs.

³² Constitute 22% of the participants in this study.

³³ Constitute 38% of the participants in this study.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

The purpose of this research has been to learn more about EHTAs by carrying out an Instrumental Case Study at Storyeum. The research focused on visitors' evaluations of the historical representations and historical content of Storyeum and the influence that Storyeum's unique edutainment format and content exerted upon visitors' perspectives of the province of BC and its history. Specifically, this research sought to answer four research questions and the results are summarized below.

How do visitors to Storyeum evaluate the attraction and its historical content?

The visitors I interviewed held a wide range of opinions about Storyeum, ranging from entirely positive and non-critical evaluations to nearly entirely negative and highly critical evaluations. These polar opposite views, however, were the exception rather than the rule. The average visitor evaluation included a combination of positive and negative comments about Storyeum as well as specific criticisms. Overall, Storyeum was positively evaluated. Visitors were entertained, and felt they had learned something about BC's history. Storyeum was frequently praised for its educational value, and compared with other modes of learning, such as classroom learning, book learning and museum-learning.

The predominantly positive overall evaluations made by participants in this study, were frequently punctuated by articulations and identifications of the perceived gaps within and problems with Storyeum's historical representations. This pattern demonstrates that visitors to Storyeum are actively engaging with and thinking critically about the content of the attraction. Visitors' critical engagement with the content of the attraction was expressed through questioning the choices of historical representations included at Storyeum, assessing the depth and accuracy of the historical information provided, and observing and appraising Storyeum's characterisations of particular individuals and groups. The level of critical engagement with historical representations demonstrated by participants in this study constitutes another important finding which can be used to broaden our understanding of visitors' experiences at tourist attractions in general and EHTAs specifically.

In many respects the level of critical engagement with the historical content of the performance at Storyeum contradicts the frequent yet disputed characterisation of visitors' behaviour at tourist attractions as passive and uncritical. Visitors were critical of the historical representations and conscious of the need for culturally diverse and sensitive representations. However, some very clear patterns and limits to visitors' critiques of historical content also exist. For example, while visitors frequently identified missing or limited historical information and perspectives, they rarely engaged in political critiques of the power structures that existed in the past, and rarely related political power structures of the past to the present political landscape in BC or Canada.

How does the historical content contribute to their understanding of the history of BC?

Visitors felt that Storyeum was educational and informative and that the entertaining format often helped to enhance their reception of the historical information. Visitors reported having learned things and having confirmed things about BC history they had learnt elsewhere. This study, however, found a discrepancy between visitors' reports of educational value, and memorability and what they could actually recall from their visit. When asked to relate a synopsis of the performance visitors frequently had difficulty

remembering the content and order of the scenes. Despite the general difficulty that this task presented for visitors many were able to identify specific information that was new to them and made them think differently about BC history. Overall, however, the performance seemed as much if not more likely to make visitor think about contemporary BC than the history of BC.

How does Storyeum contribute to their personal perspectives of the province of BC?

Storyeum inspired within visitors a strong and uplifting sense of pride in BC as a province, and their identity as British Columbians, and this contributed significantly to their positive evaluations of the attraction. Furthermore, there is evidence that the feelings of pride about BC promoted by Storyeum are not only experienced by local residents, but are also adopted by out of province and international visitors who are temporarily moved to feel empathic pride towards BC. Storyeum's ability to inspire feelings of pride in BC constitutes an important finding of this study and will be useful when thinking more broadly about the characteristics of EHTAs. This finding is also an example of how visitors' experiences are the result of complex dynamics between the institution and the visitors (Handler and Gable 1997). Storyeum's historical narrative and edutainment format relates to visitors' identity, prior knowledge of BC history, and exhibitionary preferences in ways that can mutually reinforce the sentiment of having pride in BC heritage, which is both held by many visitors and promoted by Storyeum.

Visitors had other types of experiences at Storyeum, such as personally meaningful, memorable and emotional experiences that contributed to both their positive and critical evaluations of Storyeum, as well as their overall feeling of pride in BC. However, these types of experiences and responses are carefully crafted by Storyeum's highly emotionally-charged soundscape and dramatic use of music, theatre, visual and special effects. Similarly, the feeling of being connected to other visitors in the audience, as well as the feeling of pride, and the feeling of inclusion within a multicultural group are encouraged and facilitated by Storyeum. The way in which the audience is treated as a cohesive group, the theme of continuity between the past and present and the way the analogy of the forest as well as the multicultural video montage promote the ideal of multiculturalism have already been discussed in terms of the strong role they play in shaping visitors' experiences.

What are the perspectives of visitors to Storyeum that can contribute to a broader understanding of EHTAs?

Some generalizations about EHTAs can be derived from evidence presented in this Instrumental Case Study. They are a contribution to our broader, yet still limited, understanding of EHTAs and the experiences they are creating for visitors.

1) EHTAs should not be dismissed as inconsequential or merely incidental sources of historical information.

Evidence from visitors to Storyeum suggests that such attractions can be perceived as important and legitimate sources of information, different from, yet on a par with the educational and informational experiences provided by museums and traditional educational environments.

2) EHTAs should not be characterized along with other hybrid tourist venues, as frivolous or trivial amusement. The range of visitors' experiences at Storyeum, including serious, emotional, educational

and thought-provoking experiences suggest that EHTAs can operate on several levels, and provide more complex and varied visitor experiences than previously theorized.

- 3) Audiences to EHTAs are not always passive or homogenous. The character of the EHTA, the kind of experience it provides, as well as the demographics and character of visitors are factors that influence degrees of audience passivity and homogeneity. The participants in this study comprise a heterogeneous audience and show a high degree of intellectual engagement with the material they confront and consume at Storyeum, suggesting that audiences to EHTA are not definitively passive or homogenous.
- 4) Tourist audiences should not be characterized as non-critical groups. The range of opinions and perspectives about the historical representations at Storyeum demonstrate that visitors are actively engaged in critical readings of the historical content they consume at EHTAs. This includes routine appraisal of historical representations to ensure that they are accurate, diversified, culturally-sensitive and promote respect and human dignity.
- 5) EHTAs have the potential to be involved in identity-promoting activities. This research has provided an analysis of the format and content of Storyeum as well as a selection of visitors' perspectives that support the notion that identity reinforcement and pride can be central features of the experience at EHTAs.
- 6) Identity reinforcement through heritage representations can be associated with positive or uplifting experiences. Pride and feeling uplifted were the dominant emotions associated with British Columbian identity amongst participants in this study. This study as well as previous research (see Handler and Gable 1997) suggests that visitors to EHTAs may strategically minimize identity-destabilizing historical evidence in order to preserve positive feelings associated with being proud of one's identity.

As the international tourism industry expands and develops it continues to motivate the creation of new forms of tourism and tourist attractions. The desire for innovative, unique, novel, alternative, multi-media and/or multi-dimensional experiences and attractions has led to processes of hybridization in which new amalgamations of phenomena come into being. EHTAs, such as Storyeum, are an example of one of these hybrid forms, and like other hybrid forms they are at risk of being viewed with suspicion. As tourist attractions they are at risk of being dismissed, and judged as trivial, frivolous, or even vulgar. Museums have not been subject to these negative value-judgements. On the contrary, museums have been viewed as serious and important places of higher learning. This thesis has argued that as hybridization occurs, tourism venues in fact become less differentiated. They increasingly share similar physical and technological features, as well as approaches, such as the edutainment genre.

As EHTAs continue to blur the distinctions between types of attractions and types of educational and entertaining experiences it is essential to understand them better, especially in terms of the kinds of experiences they provide for visitors. Do they function as important sites of identity construction and maintenance? Do they teach people about places and cultures? Are they memorable and meaningful to visitors and how? This research has shown that visitors are having much more dynamic experiences at EHTAs than previously theorized. It has also shown that visitors are actively and critically engaging with the heritage representations they encounter. More research is needed in the future to decipher how the experiences and evaluations of visitors to EHTAs are, in turn, influencing the development of these destinations and the choices they make about format and content, education and entertainment.

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Appendix A Visitor Interview Questionnaire

Name:

Age:

Gender:

Nationality:

Occupation:

-
- a. Are you a Vancouver resident? Y N If no, where do you reside?
 - b. Were you a temporary visitor to Vancouver? Y N If yes, how long did you stay in Vancouver?
 - c. Were you visiting family or friends? Y N
-

1. When did you go to Storyeum?
2. How did you hear about Storyeum?
3. How would you describe Storyeum to a friend?
4. What was the motivation(s) of your visit to Storyeum? (Why did you go to Storyeum?)
5. What were your expectations of what it would be like and what it would be about? Were those expectations met? Please elaborate.
6. Can you describe what stands out in your memory the most from your visit to Storyeum?
7. Can you briefly describe your tour at Storyeum?
8. What were your favourite elements of the performance?
9. What were your least favourite elements?
10. What new things do you think you learned about the history of British Columbia?
11. Was there any information or were there any perspectives that you felt were missing from the tour?
12. How did the tour, overall, contribute to your understanding, and your prior knowledge about British Columbia's history?
13. How does the performance make you think about British Columbia as a province?
14. In your opinion, how does Storyeum characterize the history of British Columbia? (For example, is it a history of struggle, is it a heroic history, . . . etc.)
15. What are some adjectives that you would use to describe your experience at Storyeum?
16. Please evaluate your experience at Storyeum with the following adjectives using a scale from 1 to 10 where 1 is equivalent to zero and ten is equivalent to the maximum.
entertaining _____ informative _____ educational _____ inspirational _____
overwhelming _____ underwhelming _____ thought provoking _____ boring _____
engaging _____ Other _____
17. Have you been exposed to a similar type of performance elsewhere in BC, Canada, or abroad? If so please explain.
18. Have you been exposed to different or alternative versions of history elsewhere in BC? If so, please explain.
19. How much time did you spend in the lobby of Storyeum?
20. Did you look at the display of historical photographs?
21. Did you read the captions and the accompanying text?
22. What impressions or associations did the photography display give you as you were waiting for the show?
23. How do the photography displays in the front and back lobbies relate to the main performance at Storyeum?
24. Have you thought much about the performance or about the history of BC represented at Storyeum since going? If so please explain.
25. Have you recommended Storyeum to other people? Who and for what reasons?
26. In your opinion, what is the point or benefit of learning about history at museums and tourist attractions?
27. Do you have any other comments, questions or impressions you wish to share?