Research and Trends in Education

- Motivating the Desire to Learn
- Docents in the 21st Century
- Art that Offends: Does it Belong in Museums?
- Art Teachers in Museums
- Museums and Schools Developing Intelligences Together
- Virtual Un-reality ... A Cautionary Tale
Motivating the Desire to Learn

What Makes Visitors Want to Learn? was the intriguing title of the feature article appearing in the May/June 1995 issue of Museum News. The article, authored by Mihály Csikszentmihályi and Kim Hermanson of the University of Chicago, examines visitors’ intrinsic desire to learn from museum exhibitions.

Though clearly written for exhibit planners and designers, the article has important implications for staff and volunteer educators. These unsung (at least within the context of the aforementioned article) stalwarts of the museum profession grapple with issues of motivation and learning all the time, and on the most immediate levels. For, they must motivate and engage today’s arriving visitor regardless of (and sometimes in spite of) their institution’s exhibit design or installation.

Csikszentmihályi and Hermanson begin by drawing distinctions between learning that is externally motivated and that which is motivated internally. Extrinsic actions are motivated by the anticipation of external rewards, such as grades in school or a paycheck at work. Intrinsic actions are motivated by the anticipation of internal rewards, such as satisfying one’s personal curiosities and interests.

“Schools,” Csikszentmihályi and Hermanson state, “can afford to ignore intrinsic rewards to a certain extent because they have strong external incentives to enforce learning — grades, truant officers, etc. But museums, without external means to compel a visitor’s attention, must rely almost exclusively on intrinsic rewards.

“Museum visitors may at first attend to an exhibit because of curiosity and interest. But,” the authors warn, “unless the interaction with the exhibit becomes intrinsically rewarding, the visitors’ attention will not focus on it long enough for positive intellectual or emotional changes to occur.”

The authors inform readers that studies in a variety of settings reveal “that a common experiential state characterizes situations in which people are willing to invest psychic energy in tasks for which extrinsic rewards are absent.” This state of intrinsic motivation, which the authors term “flow,” has several general attributes. They include:

✓ opportunities for thorough involvement and for making personal discoveries;
✓ an open process that is accommodating of various viewpoints;
✓ an experience where challenges are tailored to the learner’s level of ability and experience;
✓ an atmosphere that is positive and reinforcing; and
✓ where individually meaningful experiences can connect with the experience of others.

Let’s investigate these five attributes that characterize flow experiences, and consider how we might incorporate them into our museum teaching.

Involvement and Personal Discoveries

Intrinsic motivation at its most intense and rewarding, Csikszentmihályi and Hermanson tell us, “involves the person’s entire being and full capacity … . [Such] activities provide a sense of discovery — we discover things about ourselves as well as the environment.”

In the vast majority of circumstances, listening to gallery talks or lectures is basically passive and non-participatory. Similarly, listening rarely involves a person’s “entire being and full capacity.” The one exception to this may be listening to stories. Storytelling has the potential to fully engage and activate listeners. Effective storytellers compel
their audiences to consider, envision, and emote, engaging their sensory and emotional faculties, along with intellectual ones.

In addition, listening rarely leads to discovering things about one’s self. Rather, listening usually entails hearing about the discoveries made by people other than ourselves. We discover things about ourselves by being challenged and then uncovering resources from within that arise to meet that challenge.

Engagement, full participation, and self-discovery — these are characteristic of situations where “doing” takes place. “Doing,” or “active learning,” can be provoked using carefully constructed questions or statements that challenge and provoke visitors to seek, acquire, and integrate information, and to form solutions. When actively learning, visitors involve themselves with museum resources; they extend themselves; and they discover their own capability to retrieve information and formulate ideas that, previously, may have seemed removed to them.

**Openness and Accommodation**

Csikszentmihalyi and Hermanson inform us that “information that is presented as true without alternative perspectives discourages the motivation to explore and learn more … .

Intrinsically motivated learning is an open process involving uncertainty and the discovery of new possibilities.”

Those who teach toward active learning should ask questions that embrace a variety of responses. They should use open-ended questions that do not have pre-determined answers. These questions enfranchise a full range of responses that can be supported by each person’s individual perspective and point-of-view.

The purpose of questioning is to enfranchise and involve visitors. It is not to test or to judge the visitor’s knowledge base. One does not ask visitors, therefore, “Do you know what the skull in this painting represents?” Asking questions that have right or wrong answers is neither open, nor is it particularly accommodating. If the skull represents something specific and important to the process of learning and discovery, then it should be told to visitors.
Questions are asked so that information is understood to have value and purpose. “The skull in this painting is a metaphor for death. How does the skull’s placement among gold, jewels, and other treasures affect the painting’s meaning for you?” In this way, the question reveals the application of the information and can demonstrate its usefulness.

**Tailored to the Learner’s Ability and Experience.**

Csikszentmihályi and Hermanson tell readers that positive learning experiences tend to occur when skills and challenges are in balance because too great a challenge to one’s skills creates tension, too little causes boredom. This cautionary note speaks directly to another concern about lecturing.

Lectures are usually tailored to the audience, not to the individual. A lecture to high school juniors, for instance, presumes a uniform level of experience, background, and exposure which may not actually exist. Open-ended questions, on the other hand, allow each member of the audience to actively consider and respond based on their own variables.

Teaching should make accommodations for differences in how people acquire, process, and make determinations about information, as dictated by differences in learning styles. Questioning accommodates differences in learning styles if the questions are truly open-ended and the docent remains flexible and receptive.

**An Atmosphere that is Positive and Reinforcing**

It is essential that teaching strip away layers of mystification separating learners from understanding. Education should make things more accessible, not less. To this end, educators should refrain from using their tours as opportunities to demonstrate their own knowledge. Such demonstrations intimidate students and convolute teaching. Language should facilitate communication, not obscure it.

Every aspect of the learning environment that can be controlled should serve to empower learners, not strip them of confidence. Museums, by their very design and presentation, often inspire awe or reverence — emotions that do little to reinforce self-confidence.

Docents must think flexibly, finding ways to understand visitors’ responses to questions, and to congratulate them on making attempts. Working to validate visitors’ thoughts and ideas addresses the concern expressed by the authors, that “people are open to learning more when they feel supported, when they are in a place where they can express themselves and explore their interests without fear of embarrassment or criticism, and when there are no predefined expectations constraining their behavior.”

Docents should ask questions that build confidence by demonstrating what learners are capable of glean ing and understanding. They should not use questions to test visitors, or to reveal their lack of awareness. “Supportive environments,” Csikszentmihályi and Hermanson remind readers, “provide people with choices and acknowledge their perspectives or feelings.”

**Individually Meaningful Experiences Connect with the Experience of Others**

Among the lesser discussed benefits of touring groups of visitors is the dynamic that happens between them — opportunities for “cross-pollinating” ideas and sharing of individual perceptions. When teaching to active learning, visitors can interact, learn from each other, and gain new perspectives. Questioning gives them the format to share their ideas with others — to present their own vantage point in an environment that is expansive, accommodating, and supportive.

Though many museums are eager to place computers in their galleries, as computers and video games are very popular and appealing to contemporary audiences, they run the risk of leaving learners isolated. They may be removing one of the most important ways visitors connect meaningfully with each other.

When describing the most successful exhibits, Csikszentmihályi and Hermanson state that they “...tend to be those that ask visitors to commit themselves to make guesses, to evaluate, to respond…. ”

To improve and grow, docents should be aware of a broad array of research and trends, whether focused on classroom teachers or museum curators. Though these authors never mention public programming, tours, lessons, docents, or even the act of teaching in the galleries, nonetheless, their research offers sound advice to every museum educator working to motivate learning in an institution, regardless of the successes or shortcomings of existing exhibits.

---

*Alan Gartenhaus*

*Publishing Editor*
Art Teachers in Museums
by Ellen J. Henry

“What makes teachers want to work through all the obstacles and bring their students to art museums? Of course, seeing original art is the main reason, but teachers have a wide variety of other rationales for coming.”

Art teachers and art museums – this seems like a marriage made in heaven. But the majority of art museum educators in the State of Virginia report that most of their school tours are not led by art teachers, and that art teachers make little use of other museum services such as studio classes, in-services, and professional development seminars. Because this seems to be the case in other states as well, the Peninsula Fine Arts Center conducted informal interviews and a written survey of art teachers from every school system in Virginia to find out what brings art teachers and their classes to museums and what keeps them away.

Typically, art teachers in lower grades have students an incredibly brief time each week. Some teachers see their students only 35 minutes weekly. In the 6-8th grades students have visual art instruction only a portion of the year, and some only have art in 6th grade. By the time students reach high school, they are pursuing educational goals that often do not leave room for art classes in their schedules. Students who do take art may still be in classes that are less than an hour in length, and teachers hardly have time to meet curriculum goals within the allowed time.

Other time constraints contribute to the challenges faced by art teachers. Many teachers have 7 or 8 classes per day and these may be spread among several schools, making it impossible to schedule field trips, buses, chaperones, and so forth. If a museum is far away and a teacher has only an hour to travel there, take a tour, and return to school, the logistics become prohibitive.

Money is the second biggest hurdle facing art teachers who would like to make use of museums. Art programs simply do not command the dollars that go to science classes, math, or other “hard” subjects. Money for buses, tour fees, and substitute teachers may be available for only one field trip per year, and some art programs have no funds allocated for this purpose at all.

Another discouraging factor may be a lack of cooperation by school administrators who still see art as a “nicety” rather than a core subject.

Teachers report that their art supervisors are generally supportive, but that principals may often refuse permission for trips to the art museum or gallery. It is essential that museums target principals and assistant principals for advocacy efforts. Peninsula Fine Arts Center hosts an annual “Meet Your Principal Night” reception for public school administrators and art faculty. Each year, more administrators attend and enthusiasm is growing as teachers, docents, and museum staff tell principals about the value of art across the curriculum.

What makes teachers want to work through all the obstacles and bring their students to art museums? Of course, seeing original art is the main reason, but teachers have a wide variety of other rationales for coming. Many want to fulfill the goal of teaching aesthetic appreciation and to teach their students how to use and to feel comfortable within museums. Teachers want students to see and respect what others have created. Teachers want to reinforce concepts presented in class and are looking for examples of different styles and art mediums. Other reasons for visiting are: to expose students to the arts of other cultures; to expand the art curriculum; to view the history of art; and to reward good students. Only one teacher in the survey reported that her primary goal in visiting was to have students work on a
specific assignment, but several mentioned requiring students to do sketching in the galleries.

Our survey indicates that teachers' goals for museum visits are often vague and not clearly articulated beyond "having students see the products of other cultures" and the like. Teachers seem willing to leave the quality of the visit up to the insights and skills of docents, and only a few respondents report making pre-visits to help plan out a strategy for their tour. Nearly all the teachers report getting helpful information about exhibitions prior to their visits, but few seemed to make use of this information. Few took the time to contact docents prior to the tour, and equally few reported that docents had contacted them. Teachers arrive expecting docents to provide meaningful gallery activities, and docents are disappointed when the teachers have not adequately prepared their classes for the tour.

The single biggest teacher complaint about museum tours is that tours are not related to the curriculum. Given the reported lack of communication between docents and teachers, this is not surprising. Teachers also complain that tours were often not age-appropriate. The younger students were being given too many facts and information beyond their capacity, while high school students were being treated like children. Only two respondents state that docents appeared biased as to race, gender, or ethnicity, and teachers were unanimous in praising docents for being well-prepared and informative.

Given the impetus of docent training today, it was somewhat surprising to learn that only 50% of the art teachers said docents sometimes used the inquiry method of instruction! Many teachers report that inquiry based tours that have some hands-on component were the best thing about visiting a particular institution. The value of the inquiry method is unquestioned by art teachers.

About 3/4 of our sample state that they prefer to have a docent-led tour. Those who prefer to lead tours themselves state that docents simply cannot relate the art to the curriculum like a teacher could. Some teachers have very definite ideas about tour content and visit only museums that allow teachers to lead their own tours. Some museums mentioned in the survey provide special training sessions for teachers and then allow teacher-led groups to tour at no charge. For the majority of teachers, however, docents are regarded as colleagues and experts.
When asked how they might change museum tours, teachers all emphasized their problems with time and money. They need help finding the funds to make a tour possible. They need to be able to bring large groups, since combining classes can give them more time away from school and can justify the use of a bus. Many teachers are requesting longer tours, and one hour seems to be the most popular length. Teachers want docents to make tours more age-appropriate and connected to what is going on in the classroom. Docents and teachers need to communicate before a tour, and most teachers request that docents call them. Interactive and inquiry based tours are most in demand. Also, teachers want docents to use art terms correctly and to help give students an art vocabulary.

About 1/4 of the teachers complain that docents are too formal, too stiff in manner, or too strict. Most teachers reported being happy with the pace of the tours, but a significant number remarked that tours were too slow and docents spent too much time “mining” a single object.

When asked what teachers want from their museum visit, many replied that they wanted someone to do all the planning for them, create gallery assignments, and offer options for classroom follow-up lessons. Many more reported wanting more control over their tours. The great majority requested inquiry based tours and imagination-engaging activities. Expansion of their own and students’ awareness was high on their list, and the opportunity to see arts of other cultures was also very important.

Teachers were asked what types of exhibitions are most helpful to them. Multicultural themes top the list. Contemporary art is also important, as are exhibitions that show a wide range of methods and materials. Curriculum-related themes most requested were American art, 20th Century art, African art, and Latin American art.

What keeps teachers out of museums besides time and money constraints? Guards and docents who discourage exploration, bad experiences with docents, unfriendly encounters with receptionists or tour coordinators, and the inability to find chaperones. About 1/4 of the art teachers were concerned with student behavior, citing a lack of self control. Since art teachers have students for shorter times than most regular classroom teachers, they do not have the same opportunities to establish control with groups.

When asked what they would most like museums to offer in the way of other services, nearly all the teachers requested outreach programs that would bring original art into the classroom. Peninsula Fine Arts Center, the Virginia Beach Center for the Arts, and Young Audiences of Virginia are currently collaborating to make two small traveling exhibitions of original art available for loan to schools. A docent can accompany the exhibition and an educational packet outlining how to conduct a whole-language tour of the objects is included. Teachers also want help with the studio portion of the curriculum, both in terms of having museums send out an artist-in-residence to the schools and for studio classes that teachers can take. Several teachers wished that museums would reach out directly to principals and school board members on a regular basis.

Art teachers report feeling overwhelmed by the demands of teaching studio skills, art history, aesthetics, and criticism. They do not have time to plan museum tours, and they seem unaware that museums can be perfect partners in teaching, especially in those areas of aesthetics and criticism. Art teachers may require more effort than it takes to reach teachers in other disciplines.

Better communication between museums and teachers might begin by using established channels such as the National Art Education Association and its state branches. At the most basic level, docents and teachers need to talk and plan tours together. Having teacher advisory panels can help create curriculum related tours and ensure age-appropriate gallery experiences. Bringing art teachers and their students to art museums may take a special and perhaps unanticipated amount of energy, but enhancing this partnership is a powerful way to influence the future of art in our culture.

Ellen J. Henry is a museum education consultant. Formerly, the Education Director for The Peninsula Fine Arts Center in Newport News, Virginia, and the museum’s representative to the State of Virginia Fine Arts Leadership Coalition, Ms. Henry authored the article, “Skeptical Visitors in the Art Museum,” which appeared in the Summer 1993 issue of The Docent Educator.
Docents in the 21st Century

The depiction of a docent as purely a lecturer responsible for educating visitors on museum objects and artifacts may someday become part of museum history. Today, the docent role in many institutions has been expanded to encompass a vast range of functions and services that are an integral part of the museum's efforts to foster lifelong learning and respond to diverse audiences. The docent organization, if utilized well, can be a vital marketing tool within the museum network to help increase membership, expand the visitation base, and make the museum experience more welcoming and interesting to all of its visitors.

Recruiting the Next Generation of Docents

The Jewish Museum in New York City created a new model organization over the last two years that exemplifies the changing docent role. The process began in 1992, in conjunction with the complete renovation and re-casting of the existing facility and its permanent exhibition. A Docent Advisory Committee was formed with the goal of soliciting dedicated docents willing to train extensively for all exhibits, be sensitive to all constituencies, and take a leadership role in developing new programs that responded to the diverse audiences of the Museum.

After a rigorous training and assessment process, including individual screening, presentations by applicants in an area of interest, extensive question and answer periods and evaluation, thirty docents were chosen from 120 applicants. The candidates varied in background, age, and areas of expertise. Many were bilingual, some trilingual, and had experience in special education and management. They brought enthusiasm and professionalism to the docent position.

An intensive two-year training program was developed to assist new docents in the mastery of facts and concepts related to the permanent exhibition. Lectures by curators and experienced docents, and tours to relevant institutions beyond the Museum, were part of the training process. Additional emphasis was placed on presentation skills. The training process gave our docents the expertise to move new programming concepts from the drawing board into reality.

Expanding the Traditional Role

As the role of the museum changes from the care and custody of objects to the disseminator of life-long learning, it is the docent's challenge to create innovative ways to convey ideas and to make the museum experience one that embraces all. As our group evolved, we recognized that there were a host of needs we could potentially respond to, and we were fortunate enough to have the resources and talent to do so. The Docent Advisory Committee, chaired by the Docent Coordinator, focused upon implementing programs in five designated areas:

- The Visitor with Special Needs
- The International Visitor
- Gallery Talks
- Community Outreach
- University Without Walls - Homebound Education

Reaching Out to a Population with Special Needs

As an integral part of the initiative, the committee explored state-of-the-art applications for people who are blind, visually impaired, deaf, or hearing impaired that could be applied to enhance the quality of their learning experiences at the Jewish Museum.

Currently, selected text panels from the Museum's permanent exhibition, Culture and Continuity, have been converted into large print and Braille. "Touch Tours," an experience by touch of selected ceremonial objects, are provided Mondays through Thursdays. And a relatively new process for us, Tactile Image Enhancer, is now in use. Quite simply, it translates the visual complexity of a painting by placing areas of the picture into different themes and offering the tactile translation of each theme to the viewer to build the process of "seeing."

Day and evening tours of exhibitions by certified language translators are conducted once a week. In addition, the "Wireless Tour Guide," a wireless headset and transmitter, is now available to help hearing impaired and deaf tour participants overcome poor auditory conditions in the museum setting.

To further aid these visitors in their interpretation of museum exhibitions, written transcriptions of exhibition video presentations are now available.

Welcoming the International Visitor

To expand the reach of the museum to encompass the international visitor, docents are in the process of translating all permanent exhibition text panels and video presentations into French, Spanish, Russian, Japanese, Hebrew, and Yiddish. As different language needs become identified, new translations will become available to serve specific visitors.

Currently, tours can be scheduled for the culturally diverse visitor on specific days at designated times.
Discovering New Ideas Through Gallery Talks

Among the most stimulating of enterprises for docents has been their ability to create new interpretations and focuses of discovery for the permanent exhibition. It is a way of infusing the exhibition with new life and providing the visitor with a reason to return and revisit the Museum’s magnificent collection.

During the 1995-96 exhibition season visitors can experience aspects of the permanent exhibition, Culture and Continuity: The Jewish Journey, through four newly created gallery talks, each with its own focus: Jewish Folk Art (extraordinary objects made by ordinary people); Faces in History (a survey of portraits from the 16th to 20th centuries); Treasures of the Jewish Museum (important objects and their collectors); and The Italian Jewish Journey (insights into a specific national and their faith).

Beyond the Museum Visitor - Outreach Efforts

An ongoing dilemma for all public institutions is how to reach beyond the “pre-disposed” audience and cultivate new audiences. For the docents at the Jewish Museum, a program created to deal with this issue is that of community outreach. On-site lectures, enhanced by slide presentations, have been developed for organizations in the tri-state area (New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut). Direct mail letters are sent to hundreds of synagogues, Jewish Community Groups, libraries, and men’s and women’s organizations. As a result of the mailing, approximately fifty to sixty groups respond each year.

Bringing the Museum to the Homebound: the University Without Walls

An extraordinary venture developed by the non-profit organization Dorot, the “University Without Walls” offers homebound individuals the opportunity to take courses with other students through teleconferencing. Docents serve as the master teachers. Students receive curriculum and resource materials and participate in each course for 50 minutes per week for eight to ten weeks. The course culminates with a visit to the Museum for those who can manage. For many, the program is a life-line to communication and the world beyond their homes.

Maximizing Results

Programs such as these are of no consequence if their availability is not promoted. To that end, we have alerted appropriate organizations serving different constituencies (such as visually and hearing impaired people) in the tri-state area of our services. Through letters, press releases to targeted media, and direct solicitation by phone, we have sought to expand our reach. The process has become the modus operandi for each of our program areas.

The Future

Through the process of developing and implementing new programs that engage the visitors and make them comfortable within the museum environment, the traditional role of the docent has changed. Today’s docent has become an advocate for the diverse populations visiting the museum. What has become clear in this changing world is that imagination, flexibility, and innovation are key to responding to our audience’s varying and diverse needs.

It is our hope that this article will open a dialogue, prompting others to share ways docents will be meeting the needs of their museums in the twenty-first century.

Lorraine Beitler, Ed.D., is the Coordinator of Docent Programs at The Jewish Museum in New York City. A professor emeritus, Dr. Beitler is the Past President of the International Reading Association, a consultant, and a contributor to various professional publications.
Art that Offends!

Does it Belong in our Museums?

On Wednesday, December 8, 1993, docents from five museums came together to examine the question, “Art that offends: does it belong in our museums?” Docents representing the Corcoran Gallery, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, National Gallery of Art, National Museum of American Art, and the Phillips Collection looked to a panel of experts to help them grapple with the implications of this concern.

The panel convened for this program was composed of distinguished professionals who had worked in art museums, written about art museums, and gone on record concerning topics such as this. The panel consisted of: Claudine Brown, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Smithsonian Institution; Eric Gibson, Art Critic, formerly with the Washington Times; Harry Rand, Senior Curator of Painting and Sculpture, National Museum of American Art; and Stephen Weil, Deputy Director, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden.

The idea for this program came about when a number of docents from the Hirshhorn visited the Whitney Biennial in the spring of 1993. These docents observed that art was rapidly changing its focus to include a number of topics, many of which were considered offensive, not only to the art viewing public, but even to docents who were accustomed to the newer, more confrontational art forms.

The following is an excerpt from this program. It is not intended to represent the full panel discussion, nor can it present all the questions asked; however, it should give readers a sense of the overall context of this fascinating, relevant, and thought-provoking event.

Question: “If art offends many, that is, it is pornographic, violent, emotionally unreachable, or intellectually incomprehensible, et cetera, why is it a museum’s sworn mission to place it on view? Sensationalism? Deliberate controversy so that the museum can appear to be on the cutting edge?”

Stephen Weil: I guess I would start by challenging the assumption that museums feel it is their sworn mission to place such art on view. Let me answer by reversing the title for the program, which asks if art that offends belongs in our museums. I would prefer to approach it, I guess, by asking if art that offends ought to be automatically excluded from our museums. Because I think the real question is what happens when art is selected not because it is incomprehensible, or sensational, or for these other reasons, but for, let’s say aesthetic, artistic reasons that seem appropriate to a curator. But some number of members of the public will find it sensational, offensive, or one of these other things. And I think that is our
real situation: not art that is picked deliberately to be provocative, but art that is picked otherwise, which in fact turns out to be provocative when it comes into contact with the public.

Eric Gibson: Well, I just want to disagree with Steve here and say that I think that museums do see it as their sworn mission to put, uh, I wouldn’t say any of these adjectives here — pornographic, or violent — but there is a strong commitment by museums to contemporary art. Partly, yes, to appear cutting edge, partly because they think it is the only way to attract the public and interest them in older art. I had this told to me by a museum director only last week.

Claudine Brown: I think one of the issues that is very clear to me is that different communities have different standards. And, as a person who has worked in the arts community for more than fifteen years, I recognize that that which is often tolerable by [sic] those of us who work in this community may not necessarily be tolerable [sic] or commonplace to persons outside of our community. I believe that museums have a responsibility to show work that is provocative, that forces us to think, that encourages us to engage in discourse, and that does not leave us untouched. I think that sometimes in attempting to do that, issues are raised that the general public might not normally seek to have raised and that may cause them some discomfort. But there are some objects that may cause discomfort in Eugene, Oregon, that may not cause discomfort in Houston, Texas. And I think that we have to be mindful that we are not a monolithic nation, and that issues that are shocking and issues that appear to be dangerous are not dangerous in all places.

Question: What barriers to a complete contextual explanation of difficult artworks do curators face? Why the reluctance to consider the needs of the average viewer when writing about the work?

Harry Rand: Far from being reluctant to consider the needs of the average viewer, there is an enormous amount of energy expended in trying to figure out how to communicate with people who may be casual viewers to the museum going on inside the art community ....

Stephen Weil: I think, though, there is a real problem that underlies this question and one that we’ve tried to be sensitive to over the past years. You can see it particularly in the case of younger, incoming curators who have spent virtually their entire training in graduate school writing for people who knew more about the subject than they did. And the attempt was to try and be impressive to those people who know more. And to turn 180 degrees and to begin to write for people who know less about the subject than you do is not something that happens automatically. It is something that I think needs training and a highly self-conscious effort ....

Eric Gibson: ... I think the situation is the opposite. I think museums do take into account the average viewer. The trouble is that more often than not they do it the wrong way. I remember several years ago ... a series of taped guides to the [Metropolitan Museum of Art’s] permanent collection.

by Teresia Bush
Docent Nancy Barum interviews visitors about their responses to the Bruce Nauman exhibition and educational offering at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C.

One that stands out in my mind, although they were all pretty terrible, was narrated by Walter Cronkite called "History in Art." It went through the nineteenth-century collection, starting with Jacques Louis David and moving onwards. You learned nothing about art in this discourse — you learned all about the narrative content of the paintings. There wasn't any mention of the word neoclassicism, you didn’t find out who David was, you didn’t learn about French Academic art. It turned all these paintings into sort of movie stills, into TV ....

Claudine Brown: In a manner of speaking, I disagree with Eric. As a person who has trained docents and who has also taught the general public in galleries, I find people come to look at art for many different reasons. Sometimes they come because of the historical context of the work; sometimes because they really do like art and understand something about it. And, as museum educators, one of our strategies has been to try and get people to come back to see the same work, but to look at it in different ways and to view it from different vantage points and perspectives. I think that one of the real issues is helping people trust themselves to enjoy works of art and empowering them with questions, not necessarily always answers, that enable them to gain some sort of level of visual literacy.

Question: Can you recommend ways a docent can comfort ( diffuse) a viewer who is offended ( hurt and feeling stupid) by opaque expression?

Eric Gibson: Well, I think one thing that you people and your colleagues need to bear in mind is: I spend as much time as I can watching docents in action, and I have for a long time because I’m very interested in this problem of explaining works of art to the public. And what I see more often than not, especially with abstract art and difficult contemporary art — difficult for whatever reason — is that the docents often feel awkward and somehow personally responsible for the object. I think this is a mistake. Your responsibility is to clearly and thoughtfully and responsibly explicate the work to your audience. But you shouldn’t feel as though it is yours and you are somehow responsible for what is going on in it, and therefore your audience’s perplexity. That only leads to trouble.

Claudine Brown: ... I think that the best thing you can do for them is to have them begin to talk about why they dislike a work of art. I don’t think they have to like everything. I don’t think that the visiting public has to give the same value to a work of art that a curator does. I am more concerned that they understand their feelings about the work than that they have good or bad feelings about it.
I want them to talk about it; I want them to be moved by it; I want them to be stirred by it. I am really most concerned when a member of the public is passive, and walks away and doesn’t understand or think about anything that he or she sees.

**Question:** If a piece is exhibited at a reputable museum, should it always be considered a valuable and lasting contribution?

**Harry Rand:** ... Tastes change; museum collections are to some degree malleable, subject to history and policy. There is a certain pedestal, if you will, metaphorically, that the exhibition in a museum entails and implies, that also changes with time.

**Stephen Weil:** I think we can’t know what constitutes a valuable and lasting contribution until a good deal of time has gone by. And it is in the nature of a contemporary art museum that much of what is shown today as being of great interest may turn out to be of diminishing interest as time goes by. ... The very nature of a contemporary museum is to make many provisional judgments. And I think it’s one of the things important to make clear to the public that the mere presence of something in the Hirshhorn as part of the collection does not necessarily have the same meaning as the presence of something in the National Gallery as part of its Renaissance collection. The fact that they are both museums can be misleading.

**Question:** Given the fact that we do not choose the art in our museum, can you give us some guidelines as to how docents could present works such as Andres Serrano’s *Piss Christ* to the public?

**Eric Gibson:** Assuming you have the misfortune to have to do this I would simply reiterate what I said before, which is don’t feel that you have to take responsibility for this thing. I mean your responsibility is intellectual; it’s to do your best to provide an intellectual context for the work explicated ... If you have to explain something like that and it troubles you, I think that you should be quite up front about it. I don’t think they can fire you, but if they do, I don’t think it’s much of a loss because you don’t get paid, do you? So, just be quite straightforward about it.

**Stephen Weil:** I think one way certainly might be by suggesting a range of possible ways in which somebody might respond to an object. All the way from the most formal kind of response, in which you are going to look at the object as a composition, to the most content-based kind of response, in which you are going to look at it as a communication of some sort. You must recognize that the viewer may be coming out somewhere differently on that spectrum of possibilities than whoever in the museum chose to hang the work. I think you can really use it as an opportunity to make clear that there is no single appropriate response, that there’s a wide range of possible responses, and suggest at least what might have been the impulse that led somebody in the museum to put it there in the first place.

**Harry Rand:** ... I think the responsibility here is for the docent or the docent group to approach the curator or director or whoever is responsible and get as cogent and as coherent a response as possible as to what this work represents at that time and why it is on the walls, and at the very least, try to repeat to the visitor what you heard.

---

Teresia Bush is the Docent Coordinator and an Education Specialist for the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington, D.C., which is the Smithsonian Institution’s museum of modern and contemporary art. Prior to this, Ms. Bush was a fellow in 20th Century Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and an educator with the Corcoran Gallery of Art. In addition to her responsibilities with the Hirshhorn Museum, Ms. Bush lectures in African-American art history at Georgetown University and teaches at Howard University.
The Favorite Books of Several Well-Known Educators

The intent of this issue of *The Docent Educator* is to examine the field of education and to reflect upon its relevance to teaching within museums, historic sites, zoos, parks, and gardens. A recent survey reported in *Teacher Magazine* lists the all-time favorite texts of some very distinguished educators. Perhaps their preferences offer additional resources for improving and expanding our vision, as well as our educational programming and tours.

Among those listed were the following:

- **Adam Urbanski** (President of the Rochester, NY Teachers Association). *Lateral Thinking*, by Edward de Bono.
  
  “About 10 years ago, upon the recommendation of Grant Wiggins, I read Edward de Bono’s book. It was an important experience for me, reaffirming what I have suspected all along: that there is more than one way to think.

  “The author lays out the differences between what he calls ‘vertical thinking’ and ‘lateral thinking.’ Vertical thinking, he argues, is logical thinking, asking ‘How can we improve upon something?’ Lateral thinking instead poses the question, ‘What else could we have done other than this?’ Vertical thinking is incremental and safe. Lateral thinking is more akin to creativity, insight, and humor. It is more risky, but the payoff can be much greater.”

- **William Ayers** (Author and Associate Professor of Education at the University of Illinois at Chicago). *A Lesson Before Dying*, by Ernest Gaines.
  
  “I was captivated this year by Ernest Gaines’ riveting portrait of a teacher locked in solidarity and struggle with a resistant student. The teacher, an ambitious young man in the segregated South, has been tapped by his elderly aunt’s best friend to teach her godson, a convicted murderer, ‘to be a man before he dies.’

  “While the novel’s circumstances are extreme, the interaction is familiar, recognizable. Every teacher know the irony of teaching what we ourselves neither fully know nor understand. We can remember moments of intense self-reflection, consciousness shifts, and personal growth brought on by our attempts to teach.”

- **Steven Drummond** (Associate Editor of *Education Week* and a former teacher). *Death at an Early Age*, by Jonathan Kozol.
  
  “With force and with passion, this book reminds teachers that they must constantly question both themselves and the way teaching work. It challenges every teacher to defy things that are done because they’ve always been done that way — not because they are best for children.”


  “Csikszentmihalyi writes about experiences that you have had yourself, such as skiing — where you think of nothing else but skiing. All of your attention is on that next mogul as you fly down the mountain, right at the edge of your ability. I see teaching as being like this. When you’re in a class and it’s going well, nothing else matters besides that class: You’re stretching as a teacher, and your students are stretching. That for me is a flow experience.”

  “This book offers a new way of looking at work and at hard things that we do. It’s a way of looking at life so that hard tasks become wonderful challenges.”

**Bibliography**

*Lateral Thinking*, by Edward de Bono.

(Harper & Row, 1970.) Available in paperback, $13; to order, call: (800) 242-7737.

*A Lesson Before Dying*, by Ernest Gaines.

(Knopf, 1993.) Available in paperback, $11; to order, call: (800) 733-3000.

*Death at an Early Age*, by J. Kozol.

(Dutton, 1985.) Available in paperback, $10.95; to order call: (212) 366-2000.


(Harper & Row, 1990.) Available in paperback, $18.50; to order, call: (800) 242-7737.
Some New Museums Open Their Doors

Several new museums have opened this fall. They include:

♦ Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum. An impressive building by I. M. Pei holds interactive exhibits and an array of music memorabilia. The museum is located in Cleveland, Ohio, where “rock and roll” was given its name.

♦ Bailey-Matthews Shell Museum. A display of more than a million shells from around the world can be seen at this new museum on Florida’s shell-rich Sanibel Island, which is located near Fort Myers on Florida’s Gulf Coast. For information call (941) 395-2233

♦ White Pine Camp. The Adirondack retreat and summer White House for President Calvin Coolidge has been restored and opened to the public. Built in 1907 and 1908, the camp is located in Paul Smiths, NY, on Saranac Lake. For information call (518) 327-3030.

To Order Back Issues of The Docent Educator

To order a previous issue of The Docent Educator simply tell us the title, volume, and number of the issue you desire, as well as the address to mail it to, and send along a check or money order for $9.00 ($11.00 outside the United States). Please note that we do not accept purchase orders, nor do we bill or invoice. Payment must be enclosed with your request.

For a complete list of our previous issues, including their titles and contents, please see the index that appeared in our Autumn 1995 issue on pages 12-13, or write to us at:

The Docent Educator
2011 Eleventh Avenue East
Seattle, WA 98102-4109

It works for me ...

Sharing successful techniques and ideas.

Just as newborns innocently enter this world with the capacity for being totally immersed in sensory experiences, so too, do our museum, zoo, and park visitors. Each of them has the potential for sensory involvement waiting to be engaged and fulfilled. After all, how does a newborn learn about his world? How does he connect his pure, unbounded status to his environment? Furthermore, what are the avenues and pathways that result in a smile or the contagious laughter of a delighted child?

The answer to all these questions is surprisingly simple and extremely useful as a principle for effective interpretation. Sensory involvement is the primary connector. Even before an infant can focus his eyes, his parents can be recognized. Tactile contact has been proven to be an essential requirement for a newborn’s survival. Sound recognition begins in utero. Sweetness is the earliest quality of taste to develop.

It is through these sensory pathways that children connect themselves to their world. When experience is repeated, recognized, and is associated with a positive feeling, delight results. The joy of learning is kindled and, eventually, a masterful understanding of the world is obtained. Children can taste sweet just by the mention of the word “cookie,” burst into song on seeing a cartoon character, and draw flowers of various colors just by receiving crayons.

Is it not our goal as educators, docents, and fellow learners to develop and broaden our emotional base, and to rekindle the joy of learning by becoming more fully connected to our world? To accomplish this, what is needed is to trace back to the pathways that connect young visitors to the world.

What has worked for me is to:

♦ Pass around ideas that fit in a pocket, pouch, or purse. Let children have the opportunity to feel what institutions cannot let them touch.

♦ Try viewing a painting using a flashlight (with a protective filter attached), to highlight or spotlight areas and to direct vision.

♦ Give students the tubes from toilet paper rolls and have them select locations and distances from which to view art or nature.

♦ Provide children with fragrances, herbs, flowers, oils, or smoke. Smells are a powerful avenue to memory and emotions.

♦ Have visitors listen to the sounds of animals, or of leaves underfoot. Try playing pre-recorded sound effects that set moods, or that focus attention.

♦ Blindfold youngsters and let them explore pine cones, shells, bones, cloth, sculpture, or animals through their sense of touch.

Dennis D. Slotnick
Science Teacher
Clay High School
Oregon, Ohio.
Museums and Schools

Developing Intelligences Together

Dr. Howard Gardner has defined possibilities for new relationships between schools and museums which, if taken seriously, could change the nature of both types of institutions and the definition of education as well. His work has important implications for anyone involved as a docent or staff educator.

In his text, *Multiple Intelligences, the Theory in Practice*, Dr. Gardner sketches a possible ideal school:

In the morning, students study the traditional subject areas but in untraditional ways. Almost all the work in mathematics, social studies, reading and writing, and science takes the form of student projects. Students explore particular aspects of material in depth, addressing problems that confront professionals in the discipline ...

... Students work through these projects, keeping their drafts, revisions, final products, and observations in a portfolio .... This documentation of the student’s ... growth serves as a catalyst for her own reflections on herself as learner .... The student’s work is assessed by examining the final product, her thinking in forming it, and her plans for subsequent projects.

The second half of our school day is a natural extension of the first. During this time, students and teachers venture out into the community for further contextual exploring and learning. The younger children and their teachers often travel to a ... children’s museum or participatory demonstration at the local theater, symphony, or art museum. The excursions differ from typical field trips because classes return to the same spots many times over the course of the year. Students can continue projects begun in previous visits ... or hone their skills in favorite activities ....

Whether at the museum or our enriched school environment, children are allowed to explore freely and encouraged to ask questions. Teachers, aides, and other adults (including those who staff the field trip sites) jot down notes ... about the children they are watching. Which students show interest or skill in particular activities or exhibits? What sorts of questions do students ask? What tasks do they have difficulty with?

In our school, older students carry on this intellectual exploration in a more structured way. While continuing to spend mornings carrying out the projects of the basic core curriculum, they devote their afternoons to ... apprenticeships .... They study intensively with ... members of the community who possess expertise in a particular area .... (Howard Gardner, *Multiple Intelligences, The Theory in Practice*, p. 75-77, Basic Books, 1993.)

If this becomes the way schools are organized, docents will have extended contact with the same individuals and classes over time. Visits to museums, parks, zoos, gardens, and historic sites will be much more participatory than they often are now. Docents will do more listening and observing than talking, and they will have a collaborative role with teachers in evaluating, planning, and shaping the work of individual students. When working with older children, docents may fulfill the role of masters for apprenticeships that would have the children working for extended periods under individual guidance on real projects of importance in the museum and community.

So, who is Howard Gardner? Where do these ideas come from? Are they as radical and far-fetched as they seem?

Dr. Gardner is a developmental and experimental psychologist. For many years, he has been associated with Project Zero at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. His developmental work with young children and his experimental work with brain-damaged adults convinced him that there is no such thing as a single quality called “intelligence” as measured by IQ tests.

Instead, he recognized that there are many different abilities and that each person has a unique profile of relative strengths. By comparing the development of different kinds of skills in children with what is known about the way specific abilities break down as a result of specific kinds of brain damage, Dr. Gardner began to isolate distinct “intelligences.”

In his book, *Frames of Mind* (1983), Gardner identified seven ways of knowing that he felt deserved the label “intelligences.” Besides linguistic and logical-mathematical, the two types commonly measured by IQ tests, he identified:

- spatial - an ability to form and operate a mental model of a spatial world.
  (Exhibited by architects, engineers, surgeons, and sculptors, among others.)
- musical - an ability to transform thoughts and ideas into sounds.
- bodily-kinesthetic - an ability to solve problems using one’s whole body.
  (Exhibited by dancers, athletes, craftpeople, and others.)
- interpersonal - an ability to understand other people and what motivates them.
  (Exhibited by salespeople, politicians, teachers, and other kinds of “leaders.”)
- intrapersonal - an ability to understand oneself accurately and to apply those insights in effective living.

Gardner emphasizes that all people have all these intelligences to varying degrees and that different skills and activities require different combinations of intelligence. This new view of intelligence has an obvious implication for schools. If they are to educate all children, schools must broaden the types
of learning activities offered and must measure progress in ways that reflect all the abilities of a person.

In his next work, Gardner looked at the outcomes of education as schools exist today with their overwhelming emphasis on reading and math skills. His research found that many top students with "high IQ's" and advanced educations at Harvard and MIT still reverted to "commonsense" but incorrect ideas to explain why we experience different seasons of the year or what an eclipse is. Their explanations used more sophisticated language but were not very different from the ideas five-year-olds express.

In The Unschooled Mind (1991), Gardner suggests some changes in the way children are educated that might help create real understanding. He turned to two models to supplement what schools do. One is museums, especially children's museums. The other is the ancient institution of apprenticeships, where students learn through extended practical experience with masters of a craft or trade.

Both offer hands-on experience with real objects and materials. Both are repeatable or ongoing over time. Both are available in the variety of real-world areas of interest. Both can be individualized and include elements of choice and selection by the learner. Both involve joint participation of school and community.

There are places where versions of Gardner's vision — interrelated schools and museums — are being tried. As part of this research, Gardner's Project Zero conducted a preschool program at the Boston Children's Museum. The Exploratorium in San Francisco has a program for student "Explainers" where junior docents work in an apprentice-like situation. It also has a "School in the Exploratorium" for teachers to acquire concrete experience with a variety of scientific and artistic concepts.

The Capitol Children's Museum in Washington, D.C., has created the National Learning Center, a school-within-a-museum.

In other places the idea has been turned inside out, and schools are establishing museum/laboratories within their walls. The public preschools of Reggio Emilia, Italy, are world-famous for their "ateliers" (art-room laboratories) and their museum-like use of display and documentation of projects. Howard Gardner has written the introduction to The Hundred Languages of Children by Lela Gandini, which describes this approach.

Seven conferences on Reggio Emilia and/or Gardner's work were held in the U.S. between April and July of 1994. The ideas are reaching a wide audience. For instance, an elementary school in the small town of Hotchkiss, Colorado, has been remodeled around a central area that will combine the resources of library, media center, computer center, art room, laboratory, and hands-on museum with exhibits reflecting a school wide common theme of study. Such projects are spreading around the country.

To foster the growth of all the intelligences of all our children, and to make sure that real learning, grounded in concrete experience, undergirds understanding are worthy goals for any community. Creating a museum within a school or a school within a museum is a structural approach to ensure such an educational program. It offers exceptional possibilities where financial and administrative support are available.

New possibilities for education of all intelligences can exist in any community. If schools and existing museums establish more active partnerships they can enrich the core education of all students and develop the special gifts of each.

The roles of docents in such community partnerships will be broader and more important than ever. Skills of listening, observing, questioning, and documenting will be added to those of providing information and stimulating interest. Docents will become more active partners with teachers as community educators.

by Cleta Booth

Cleta Booth is past President of Wyoming Children's Museum and Nature Center in Laramie, WY, where she also serves as a docent. Formerly the Vice President for Programming at the Children's Museum of Richmond, VA, Ms. Booth has been an early childhood educator for over 20 years. Her article, "Peek and Do! Making Museum Visits Meaningful for the Youngest," appeared in the Winter 1993 issue of The Docent Educator.
Virtual Un-reality ...
A Cautionary Tale

Last summer was so “unreal” it caused me to look at one of the fastest growing trends in public and private education with new eyes. First, my husband and I spent a week at Disney World where unreality has been raised to a science. As if having breakfast with a huge mouse isn’t enough, we were able to subject our bodies to stomach-churning, heart-stopping trips through the human vascular system and a meteor shower while trying to convince our brains that we really weren’t moving outside the flight simulator ride. Mr. Toad-wild roller coaster rides without the roller coaster!

Later in the summer, Tom Hanks took us with him to orbit the moon and return safely in Apollo 13. He wasn’t really there, of course, but it was hard to tell where documentary film stopped and acting and film special effects started. Maybe my father was right after all — Neil Armstrong really walked on the moon in a secret laboratory in Arizona.

Perhaps it’s time those of us in the business of guiding children through life’s experiences need to look closely at some technological trends that seem destined to replace reality.

Don’t get me wrong — I think computers are wonderful! As a person who started teaching when we still used paper and pencil to compute grades, paid $85 for my first calculator, and now can give each of my students an up-to-the-minute computer print-out showing how important those homework grades are to the overall picture, I’m a firm believer in technology. I have one computer at home, two in my classroom at school, and I’m writing this on my laptop as I fly over Kansas. But, there have been a few incidents lately that have made me a little uncomfortable.

First was the salesman who wanted to give me my first quarter, $85, for a $245 piece of software that would enable my computer students to simulate an electrical circuit. If they did it right, a little light bulb drawing lit up. Of course, they were doing the same directed to the exhibit and told to enjoy ourselves. Surely this was a fluke!

The final straw was a speaker at one of our in-service workshops on the 21st Century Classroom — all individual computers, CD-Roms, and state-of-the-art electronics. He remarked that because today’s young people spend so much time in virtual reality situations with electronic games and interactive television filling their free time, it was incumbent on today’s educators to use virtual reality in order to reach and teach Little Johnny.

Am I the only one who finds that premise highly illogical?

And, finally, I come to my point. Museums, zoos, nature centers, and other such institutions may well be the last outposts of the “real stuff.” It is possible to select your own level of reality. Consider a grizzly bear — would you like a computer-generated CD-Rom encounter, a stuffed giant towering above you in a museum, a real bear in the newly-natural setting of a zoo, or the actual “Griz” approaching you in a wildlife park?

The National Science Resources Center (NSRC) and the Smithsonian run a twice yearly conference called the Elementary Science Leadership Institute to help educational leaders learn how to improve science education by making it a hands-on experience. Scott Stowell, a member of the NSRC, was recently quoted in Smithsonian magazine:

One of the United States’ eight national education goals is being first in the world in science and math. The only way is to have a strong kindergarten
Computers are just one tool. To understand the ideas of science in a meaningful way you need to do experiments.

The key, of course, is to see computers and other technology as tools, not as ends unto themselves. A computer data-base is a most efficient way to provide curious museum visitors with information beyond the limits of exhibit label copy or even the best-informed docent. Computer simulation games make possible experiences that cannot be “real” because of time, space, or budget limitations. Computer animation provides ways to apply new knowledge. But, just because someone’s hands are on the keyboard, doesn’t make computers “hands-on” learning!

Another trend I noticed last summer as I visited a number of science museums across the country is what I call the “mall-ing” of America. Just as I can go into a shopping mall in Minneapolis, Boston, Dallas, Seattle, or Chattanooga and find the same stores and nearly identical merchandise, I can expect to find many of the same “technological toys” in science museums from Portland, Oregon, to Portland, Maine. When those computers, Foucault pendulums, bicycle-powered generators, potential-to-kinetic energy ramps, and bubble machines are part of a solid educational program, they are powerful tools. However, when they are merely objects for the entertainment of an audience, I believe they lose their claim to “hands-on” learning.

Leon Lederman, winner of the 1988 Nobel Prize for physics and founder of the Teacher Academy for Mathematics and Science, said in an interview with Science Year:

I love going into an elementary classroom and seeing that the teacher is comfortable and having a good time with the lesson, and the kids are laughing and enjoying themselves. That’s what school should be like. If you could get that atmosphere in every classroom, or 90 percent of them, what a change that would be!

Back in the 60’s, when technology was just beginning to take hold of the imaginations of educational planners, there was talk of replacing teachers with “learning machines.” Kids could “do” their lessons at home, sending them by wire to a central machine for correcting/grading. Computer games and educational software still work on the Pavlov’s dog idea of conditioned response — kill the villain and the computer plays you a song and pats you on the psyche. But, it wasn’t only teachers’ unions that recognized that learning machines were never going to take the place of teachers. Only a very narrow kind of learning takes place without human interaction.

The best museums, too, realize that learning must involve interaction with objects and with other people. It’s tempting, volunteers being harder and harder to find, to replace a good docent program with a lot of hardware. But, good educational programming still includes docents to facilitate learning — to direct and focus hands-on experiences, to ask the right questions, to guide learners to create their own reality within the context of their unique experiences. Museums, zoos, nature centers, and historical sites are still places where the answer to “Is this real?” is a resounding “Yes!”

Jackie Littleton
Associate Editor

The Docent Educator
One year (4 quarterly issues) -- $25

For subscribers outside the U.S.
Canada, Mexico, or the Caribbean -- add $5 (USD) for additional postage surcharge
Elsewhere -- add $9 (USD) for additional postage surcharge

Name _____________________________
Address ___________________________
City/State/Zip _______________________
Institution/Affiliation _________________

Mail with your check to:
The Docent Educator
2011 Eleventh Avenue East
Seattle, WA 98102-4109

After September 1, 1996, all subscription requests, renewals, and correspondence should be sent to our new address:
The Docent Educator P.O. Box 2080 Kamuela, HI 96743-2080
Submit an Article!

Please consider sending us articles and ideas for future publication. *The Docent Educator* offers you a forum to share your experiences, methods and techniques with educators teaching in facilities throughout the world. Though you are encouraged to submit an article on any topic germaine to your personal or institutional experiences, you may want to address or incorporate one of the themes of our upcoming issues:

*Tumultuous, Terrible, Terrific Teenagers*
Working with young people in their middle and high school years
Summer 1996  Submission deadline - March 1, 1996

*Outreach: Taking the Educational Show on the Road*
Programs that bring collections and/or expertise out into the community
Autumn 1996  Submission deadline - June 1, 1996

*Creativity and Programming*
Educational offerings that have a new or different approach
Winter 1996  Submission deadline - September 1, 1996

*More Tough Topics*
More of those problems that can make teaching tricky, delicate, or highly controversial
Spring 1997  Submission deadline - December 1, 1996

All articles are edited for publication.

Should you wish to receive a copy of our writer’s guidelines, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to:

*The Docent Educator*  2011 Eleventh Avenue East  Seattle, WA  98102-4109

Next issue: “Communication -- Verbal and Non-Verbal”

*minds in motion*
*The Docent Educator*
2011 Eleventh Avenue East
Seattle, WA 98102-4109
Digitization of *The Docent Educator* was generously sponsored by museum educators from around the globe through their support of Museum-Ed’s 2014 Kickstarter campaign:

**Full Series Supporters:**
- J. Marshall Adams
- Marianna Adams
- Christina Alderman
- Anonymous
- Autry National Center Education Department
- Bayou Bend Docent Organization
- Birmingham Museum of Art
- Mary Ann Bloom
- Brooklyn Museum
- Berclee Cameron
- Carnegie Museum of Art
- Jennifer Chowning
- Susan Chun
- Edith Copenhaver
- The Corning Museum of Glass, Rakow Research Library
- Karen L. Daly
- Herminia Din
- Robin Dowden
- Julia Forbes
- Robin Gabriel
- Courtney Gerber
- Golden History Museums, Golden, CO
- Kimberly Hanson
- Phyllis Hecht
- Anne Henderson
- Victoria Hughes
- Kathleen F. G. Hutton
- Indianapolis Museum of Art Docents
- Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum
- Johns Hopkins University Museum Studies
- Carole Kru cof
- Judith Landau
- Jean Linsner
- Beth Maloney
- Laura Mann
- Melinda Mayer
- Museum Education Roundtable
- Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago
- Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland
- Museum Partners Consulting, LLC
- Diana Musslewhite
- Elisabeth Nevins, seed/ed consulting
- Ayumu Ota
- Lauren Patton
- Sandbox Studios
- Roger Sayre
- Susie Severson
- SFMOMA Research Library
- Arthur Smith
- Ellen Soares, Peabody Essex Museum
- The Sof talk Apple Project and
- FactMiners.org Developers Community
- Marcos Stafne
- Nicole Stutzman Forbes
- University of Michigan Library
- Katherine Yount

**Volume Five Supporters:**
- Frick Art & Historical Center
- Dorie Goldman

**Volume Five, No. 2 Supporter:**
- Amanda Kodeck