

SOCIAL ACTION SIMULATIONS

Developing Social Conscience Through Role-Play and Choice-Making



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MFA THESIS 2011

Museum Studies Department, The University of the Arts

A thesis submitted to The University of the Arts in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Museum Exhibition Planning and Design.



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Many individuals deserve acknowledgment and thanks for their support during my thesis investigation....

... the refugees who have graciously and proudly shared their stories with me.

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PERSONAL STATEMENT

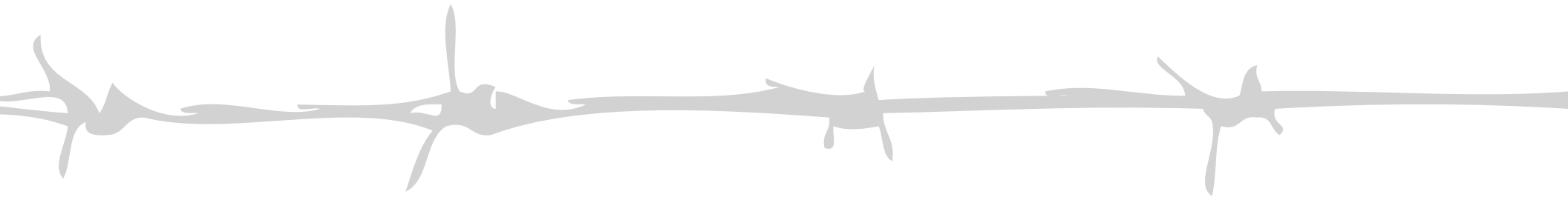
The process of writing this thesis has had a lot of personal significance for me. I grew up in Hong Kong as a “third culture kid,” someone whose formative years were spent in a country other than their own. There I had the opportunity to travel and participate in community service throughout Asia, which made me passionate about exploring social issues and experiential learning. I pursued an education in a range of creative fields, including art history, visual and theatre arts. My training and experience in theatrical set design gave me a vocational drive to interpret stories for audiences. I was particularly inspired by such theatrical productions as Les Freres Corbusier’s *Hell House*, EgoPo’s *Company*, and Woodshed Collective’s *The Confidence Man*. These performances demand an immediate response from their audiences who are not merely observers, but actively moving through a space or having their bodies manipulated by actors. Prior to graduate school I returned to the international high school I attended in Hong Kong to teach drama and stagecraft. This job not only refined my skill sets in theatre but opened my eyes to the incredible capacity of teenagers to dedicate themselves to social services. When I became involved with Crossroads Foundation’s Global Village and their simulations on social need, I discovered a strong sense of purpose and identity. Social action simulations merge my passion for theatre, education, and exhibitions and do so with the important mission of fostering social conscience and inspiring social change.

These experiences positioned me to bear witness to social issues firsthand, providing a level of empathy for the content of this thesis. Moving houses so often has also made the plight of refugees resonate with me as I understand, in a small way, the struggles of losing one’s home. However, while I have been exposed to refugees I am not a representative of their stories and have relied on the intimate knowledge of people living and working amongst them to ensure authenticity. Additionally, I worked in several museums and galleries but have never held a position where I interacted with museum visitors on a regular basis. I am grateful to the many museum professionals working in teen education and theatre who have graciously shared their experiences and advice with me. As most of my work in theatre is in design, I have also sought out the skills of experienced actors and directors in developing audience role-play.

Everyone who has been involved in the creation of this thesis has shared on some level my excitement for the possibilities of social action simulations. It is my dream to see social action simulations become more widely used in museum programming in the U.S. I hope that this thesis is just the beginning.

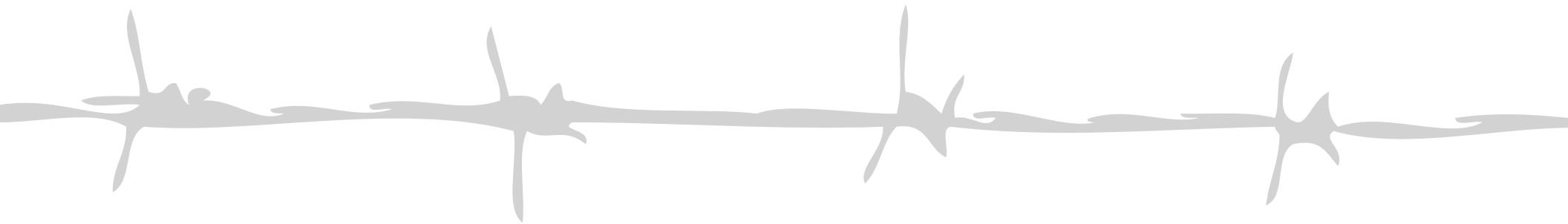
THESIS ABSTRACT

Social Action Simulations: Developing Social Conscience Through Role-Play and Choice-Making explores the use of social action simulations in museums. Live-action simulations allow participants to experience a situation in a firsthand way. They often involve such theatrical elements as actors and immersive sets. When these programs depict difficult social subjects, like war or poverty, they can encourage participants to empathize with people affected by these issues and take responsible action. These experiences are therefore referred to as “social action simulations.” This thesis explores how to deepen participants’ personal connection to the simulated stories through increased role-play and choice-making. Emotional-engagement is an important step in developing empathy and social conscience. In order to promote ownership of global social issues early in life, the target audience for this thesis is teenagers. To best address the change in perspective strived for in social conscience education, the application of the thesis investigation is a teacher’s guide to a museum social action simulation program. The guide includes pre- and post-simulation activities and summarizes what to expect during the simulation itself. While social action simulations can be applied to a number of topics, the example subject for this thesis is genocide, specifically the current ethnic cleansing conflicting Burma.



DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to anyone who has lost their home, has moved homes, or is still searching for what home means to them.



*I hear and I forget. I see and I understand.
I do and I remember.*

Chinese Proverb



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1. Bonnell, Jennifer and Roger I. Simon. "Difficult' exhibitions and intimate encounters." *Museums & Society*. July 2007: 66. Print.
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3. Abt, Clark C. *Serious Games*. New York: The Viking Press, 1970: 6. Print.
4. Stanton, Gregory H. "What Is Genocide?" *Genocide Watch*. 2002. Web. 13 Nov. 2010 < <http://www.genocidewatch.org/aboutgenocide/whatisit.html> >.
5. Schmidt, Martin Edward. "Teaching for Social Conscience in Hong Kong Secondary Schools." Diss. University of Western Australia, 2009: 124. Print.

SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AAM: American Association of Museums
AFODC: Air Force One Discovery Center
CYOA: Choose Your Own Adventure
DiD: Dialogue in the Dark
FTNS: Follow the North Star
ICC: International Criminal Court
IMTAL: International Museum Theatre Alliance
KNU: Karen National Union
MOT: Museum of Tolerance
NCC: National Constitution Center
NLD: National League for Democracy
NGO: Nongovernmental Organization
Op Spy: Operation Spy
POW: The Power of Children
SPDC: State Peace and Development Council
TLN: The Living News
TO: Theatre of the Oppressed
UNHCR: United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees
UNMDG: United Nations Millennium Development Goals
USHMM: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
(Note: Those in italics indicate program titles)

NOMENCLATURE

AFFECT: Many psychology, museum, and theatre theorists use the term “affect” as a noun to describe emotions and the word is often quoted as such in this thesis.

CHOICE-MAKING: Opportunities for audiences to make decisions within a simulation context that can alter the course of a narrative and have obvious impacts from which they learn and draw personal connections.

CONTROVERSIAL: The emotionally-charged nature of social action simulations can be misunderstood as being controversial. To keep museums a safe and respectful venue for discussing difficult subjects, this thesis will adhere to the advice of Jennifer Bonnell and Roger I. Simon who state, “Difficult only becomes controversial when one oppression or suffering is unjustly privileged over another,”¹ by representing multiple points of view.

DIFFICULT SUBJECT MATTER: Bonnell and Simon’s description of difficult subject matter aptly defines the emotional response anticipated from social action simulations, “Any experience that makes the audience feel heightened anxiety, guilt over their own life comforts, negative emotions, negation rather than affirmation of life, re-traumatization of past violence and when the audience’s personal expectations conflict with ambiguous, open-ended stories.”²

EMPATHY: A deep understanding of others stemming from an emotional connection. This investigation functions under the idea that social conscience is a result of the long-term process of developing empathy, and that the initial emotional-engagement can be initiated through social action simulations.

EVALUATION: The success of the program as determined by its impact on audiences, seeking to measure empathy transformation and responsible action in students.

FIRST PERSON NARRATIVE: Educational theatre scholar Anthony Jackson defines first person interpretation as a story told in the first person by an actor, but in this thesis, it infers audience members experiencing content from the point of view of the protagonist within the story.

GAMING: Clark C. Abt defines gaming as, “... an *activity* among two or more independent *decision-makers* seeking to achieve their *objectives* in some *limiting* context. ... the players cooperate to achieve a common goal against an obstructing force or natural situation that is itself not really a player since it does not have objectives.”³ Incorporating the choice-making and objectives of games into social action simulations may help provide motives and access points for participants to engage with the content. The example content, or “natural situation,” in this thesis is genocide.

GENOCIDE: “... intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group, as such: Killing members of the group; Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part ...”⁴

LIVE-ACTION SIMULATION: A representation of a real situation using immersive theatrical techniques, as opposed to computer systems, which include actors, lifelike sets/ costumes and a first person narrative, in which the audience plays an active role in the story.

“THE OTHER”: Tendency to define individuals by ethnicity, culture, class, belief, etc. and to consider oneself separate from people with different characteristics. One of the goals of social action simulations is to make audiences more tolerant towards differences and question what they can do to minimize their distance to “others.”

OWNERSHIP: When museum or theatre audiences relate and embody content on a personal level, taking responsibility for their choices and beliefs regarding the content.

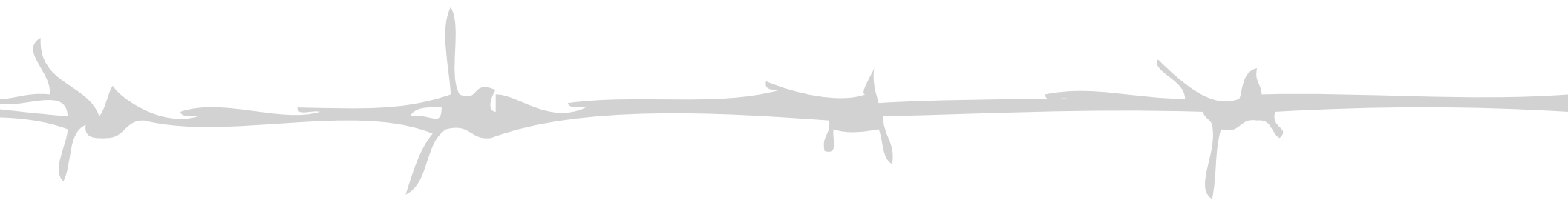
RESPONSIBLE ACTION: Constructive and positive behavior that stems from motivations to create social change, such as non-violent advocacy and tolerance.

ROLE-PLAY: Active participation in which audiences perform actions from the first person point of view of a character in a story, often involving costumes and props, interacting with other participants and with actors, and choice-making.

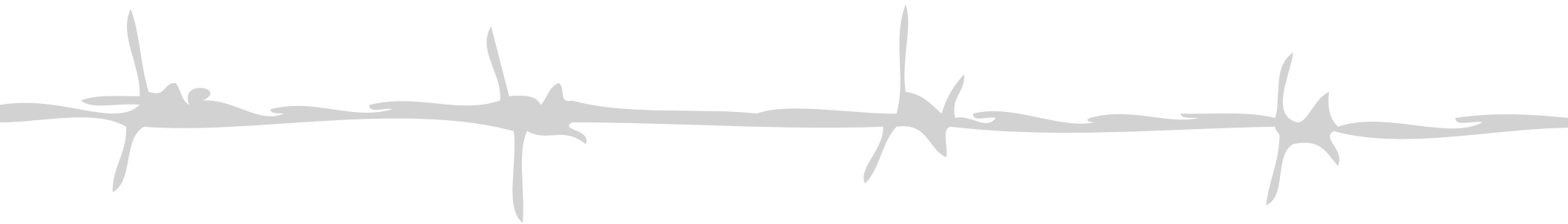
SAFETY: Both the psychological and physical protection of museum audiences, in which they feel free to explore, move, and dialogue in a respectful and accepting space.

SOCIAL ACTION SIMULATION: A representation of a social issues subject (such as poverty, war, human rights, etc.), in the form of a live-action simulation, with the intentions of developing empathy and encouraging responsible action. It can take the form of an exhibition or special program in a museum.

SOCIAL CONSCIENCE: An 18-step process defined by educator Martin E. Schmidt, and a long-term audience goal for this thesis, in which students develop, “... a personal consideration of one’s role and responsibility in society in the context of an emotionally-engaged understanding of the world.”⁵



PART 1: **THE THEORY**



*Poverty is like heat; you cannot see it; you can only feel
it; so to know poverty you have to go through it.*

Man from Ghana



CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION



Statement of Problem

To develop social conscience in young audiences through an understanding of the impact of individual choice-making in simulated role-play.

Research Question

Can increased role-play and choice-making in museum social action simulations result in increased empathy and responsible action in daily life?

The thesis is divided into two parts: the theory and the application. Part I, the theory, includes research gathered that addresses the overarching question: **Can increased role-play and choice-making in museum social action simulations result in increased empathy and responsible action in daily life?**

Conclusions drawn from the theory will then be applied to an example social action simulation program in Part II. Chapter One outlines the conceptual foundation of the entire thesis and its intended goals and impacts. The contents of this chapter can and should be referred to throughout each section of the thesis.

INTRODUCTION TO THESIS

This thesis explores the use of social action simulations in museums by building on the methodologies of theatre, museum programming, and simulation. A subject like genocide is difficult to relate to if one has never experienced it before. Having an intimate, firsthand understanding of the subject creates a means through which to make connections to people of “otherness.” Combining the emotionally engaged immersion of live-action simulations with the strategic choice-making of gaming, this investigation strives to deepen the audiences’ experience both emotionally and cognitively. In creating a program that develops empathy for difficult social subjects, simulations can help foster a greater social conscience.

Social action simulations look to theatrical theory to develop empathy and role-play. Throughout history, theatre has been utilized to address difficult social subjects and the audiences’ relationship to these subjects. In ancient Greece, the audience empathized with tragic heroes despite their controversial flaws, feeling a sense of catharsis, at the end of the action. Antonin Artaud and his Theatre of Cruelty treated the experience of theatre itself as a catharsis. He forced audiences to face truths they would not otherwise be willing to see, in the hope of using catharsis for social change. Bertolt Brecht saw theatre as a forum for political ideals. Avoiding the passivity that can follow catharsis, his Epic Theatre encouraged spectators to be informed and develop critical consciousness of the faults in society in order that they might take action. Brecht’s plays are based in reason rather than emotion and demand decisions rather than arouse feelings.

Today in the United States, more audiences are reached through museum exhibitions and programs than traditional commercial theatre. Museums are viewed as one of the most trusted sources of information by the public and education is considered their core service.¹ Museums are not strangers to exploring difficult subjects through performance, including such institutions from National Constitution Center to Science Museum of Minnesota. The ability of theatre to suspend disbelief is a powerful tool in engaging audiences and encouraging them to empathize with the character being presented. These performance techniques can include actors, scenery, lights, and sound. Successful design of museum space offers challenging, new experiences while maintaining a safe barrier between the sometimes emotional stories told and the everyday realities of audiences.

Many museums are exploring and expanding on new theatrical forms. Live-action simulations take the audience experience a step further than Artaud and Brecht by placing them in the shoes of someone in the story. Audiences are not passive viewers but play active roles. When these simulations depict difficult social subjects they are being referred to in this thesis as “social action simulations.” These simulations have traditionally been used for training in humanitarian aid and in recent years have been adapted as educational tools. Social action simulations push participants out of their comfort zone, forcing them to consider what they might do or how it might feel to live under different conditions. The term “action” is significant in that the program includes active participation but is also a vehicle for encouraging responsible actions that can be taken beyond the experience to address social need.

Simulations are framed with important orientation and debriefing discussions to enable audiences to prepare for and reflect after their experience, as well as clarify important content matter. To further define difficult subjects in the following research, the content that seemingly best address the development of social conscience are the current issues targeted by the U.N. Millennium Development Goals (UNMDG). The UNMDG focus on eight areas of social need to eliminate by 2015 and are therefore topical:

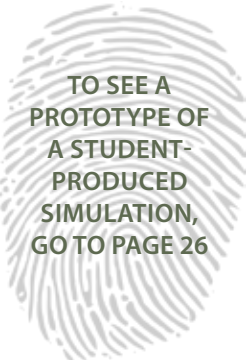
- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger by half
- Achieve universal primary education
- Promote gender equality, empower women
- Reduce child mortality, improve maternal health
- Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- Ensure environmental sustainability
- Develop a global partnership for development²

Genocide is a major cause of these problem areas; the thesis project uses the example of the ethnic cleansing in Burma to explore many of them, but can be applied to other related topics. Thousands of Burmese refugees immigrate to the U.S. annually but their story is relatively underrepresented in the media. The success of the UNMDG is reliant on the future leaders of the world and so this thesis is targeted at teenagers. Simulations may be one of the most direct ways for American teens to understand genocide. The thesis application is a teacher’s guide that further develops audience learning and role-play beyond their museum visit. Empathy is a long-term process but once achieved, teens can more easily be moved to take ownership of and responsibility for social need. Experiencing another reality through performance can be shocking, but the impact intimate and long-lasting.

IMPACT ON MUSEUM FIELD

This thesis is connected to the field of Museum Exhibition Planning and Design in that it focuses on deepening the audience experience, learning through empathy, and exploring the use of programming in promoting social change. Social action simulations can be adapted to fit the mission and space requirements of a variety of museums. The goal is that if visitors feel safe to converse and interact in a simulation about difficult subjects, they will engage in dialogue and actions about social issues in their everyday lives and will continue to see museums as a trustworthy forum and resource for social change. This thesis may inspire new possibilities for utilizing first person narratives and role-play to promote interaction, collaboration, and reflection.

This thesis may also jump-start development of social action simulations for different age groups as well as other programming and curriculum possibilities, including multi-staged simulation programs. For example, after middle and high school students experience a simulation and complete a reflection, they could become the actors and produce their own version for younger students. The first simulation bonds the group together through a common experience, through which they gain expertise and build ownership. Subsequent work would allow them to produce the experience for others. Thus, they take action in becoming leaders within their school and spokespeople for advocacy.



TO SEE A
PROTOTYPE OF
A STUDENT-
PRODUCED
SIMULATION,
GO TO PAGE 26

THESIS IMPACT STATEMENT

Increased choice-making in simulation role-play can influence early teenagers to make meaningful connections with people who have experienced extreme hardships and may encourage them to make responsible choices when faced with discrimination in their daily lives. Having a firsthand experience through which to relate, participants will begin to develop empathy for refugees and ultimately a greater social conscience for “the others” in their own community and around the world.

THESIS MISSION STATEMENT

To use role-play and choice-making in social action simulations to create powerful firsthand experiences of difficult realities as a way to:

- Foster empathy, and ultimately, a greater social conscience
- Raise awareness of “otherness” locally and globally
- Question the factors that cause, and maintain, discrimination
- Promote global citizenship by considering possible actions to address the problems

Overall, the responses from the museum peers ... suggest that the designation of much that is unexhibitable lies within us - our exhibition skills, our administrations, and our boards - before it lies within the perceptions of our public.
Gretchen Jennings and Maureen McMcConnell

GOALS OF THESIS

To promote empathy in museum programming through powerful firsthand experiences.

The Center for the Future of Museums, an initiative of American Association of Museums (AAM), published an article entitled “Museums & Society 2034: Trends and Potential Futures” which predicts first person narrative exhibitions will create deeper experiences.³ This thesis explores the use of first person narratives on difficult social subjects, such as those outlined by the UNMDG, in fostering empathy and ownership of important shared problems afflicting the world. First person role-play within social action simulations may be an affective and memorable way to do so. By combining gaming with theatrical storytelling and modern trends in exhibition design, social action simulations attempt to get participants as close to understanding social need in as firsthand a way as possible - physically, cognitively, and emotionally.

To create a safe forum for young audiences in which to explore difficult realities.

Social action simulations can be unsettling, often intentionally so. A safe environment needs to be created to learn about, participate in, and reflect on difficult subjects. To be physically and psychologically safe, trained facilitators must maintain control of the movement and promote open, respectful dialogue. Resources and support must be provided after the experience to give participants a means through which to make meaning from their emotional reactions and tools for taking further responsible action. This thesis investigates ways to push audiences outside of their comfort zone, while upholding ethical considerations of their mental and physical safety within the museum and classroom. In targeting students in seventh to ninth grades, maintaining a close working relationship with teachers is crucial to the program’s success beyond the simulation.

To further research on social action simulations in museums.

This thesis will provide the museum field with important research and applications of social action simulations. The research is catered to institutions hosting audiences in developed or first world societies, like the U.S., in order to raise awareness of and find relevancy to global social need. Live-action simulations, used for educational purposes, are relatively uncommon in public institutions in the U.S. and other countries and minimal research has been conducted to quantify their effectiveness. The findings of this investigation will provide the field with a summary of what has been done and recommendations for best practices, which include how best to set social action simulations in museums and reach young audiences. The research coincides timely with the “Best Practices of Theatre Programming” currently being developed by six members of International Museum Theatre Alliance (IMTAL), which will be submitted for AAM accreditation in the near future.⁴

TARGET AUDIENCE

Who

This investigation is targeted at audiences between 12 and 15 years of age. The thesis is written with the belief that individuals this age are typically defining their identity within the bigger context of society, including their moral, religious, political, and cultural beliefs. Early teens may be beginning to understand the weight of choices that can determine their future and are starting to become responsible for their actions. This age bracket generally has a middle to high school level education; a level whose curriculum reflects an expectation to comprehend complicated ethical problems. Because of their programmatic nature, social action simulations would be connected to social studies, history, and humanities curricula. In order to reach school groups, the project will be addressed and marketed to teachers.

As individuals this age are coming into maturity and adulthood, simulations could greatly impact their developing worldview and consequently influence how they behave as they enter the greater society. As the future generation of this planet, it is important to develop empathy and social conscience with children early in life, so they can grow up treating others with gratitude and equality. It is likely that this age group is beginning to form and value personal relationships with other people and may respond positively to the socially interactive nature of simulations.

Why

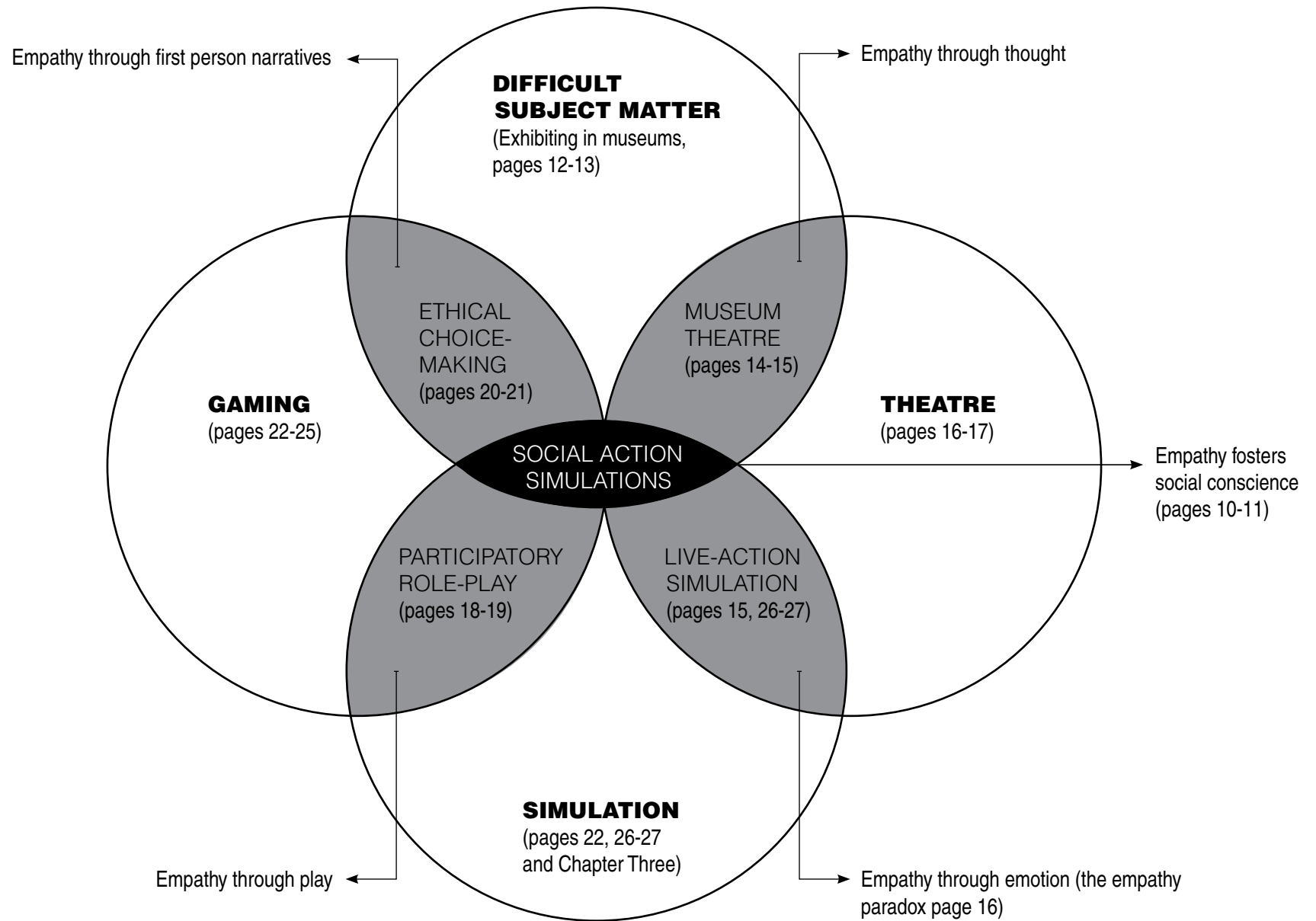
Some may worry that the nature of social action simulations is too disturbing and that certain global subjects are too culturally distant from American youth. However, this thesis implies that intentional unsettlement, if conducted safely and backed up with proper reflection, may be the best way to reach this demographic. One could argue that with a generation so familiar with technology, the uniquely participatory construct of live-action simulations could be an alternative way to combat the apathy so common in teenagers. Passionate youth have been known to take leadership or advocacy roles within their community and be a voice for those whose voice was repressed. It is likely teens have some exposure to violence and hardships, whether through games, film or in real-life, so more authentic realities can be simulated. Simulations catered to this age group can take risks in creating shocking experiences in hopes that breaking out of one's comfort zone will resonate. Incorporating a greater amount of choice-making into role-play intends to empower teens to make responsible choices in their real lives as well.

The example topic of the Burmese genocide was chosen because of its under-representation. Besides the media coverage of democratic leader Aung San Suu Kyi, little news of Burma gets out of the country due to harsh political censorships. Additionally, Burmese culture and history infrequently appear in U.S. school curricula. Because the audience is in general less familiar with Burma, they will approach the subject from a common base of knowledge and experience. This thesis functions under the assumption that the audiences' distance from the subject, when compared to more controversial wars in the Middle East, will allow them to begin the experience from a more neutral point of view. They may have some misconceptions about the subject but pre-simulation lesson plans will minimize any naive notions. This context depends on where the simulation is set and would vary among audiences if it were to travel (such as, in the case of this thesis, to cities having large Asian populations). This investigation has taken advantage of local Philadelphia resources and is catered to students from this demographic based on results of front-end surveys with the target audience (see pages 64-69).

It is important to teach young people from an early age to empathize with human suffering. They need to know that they have the power and responsibility to act upon their empathy in ways that will reduce and even eliminate this suffering. Creating a generation of responsible citizens is possible, and it is also necessary for us to thrive.

Dr. Jonathan White

RESEARCH TOPICS This diagram (Fig. 1) illustrates the relationships of the topics investigated in the literature review, expanded upon in Chapter Two.



Notes

1. *Museums Working in the Public Interest*. American Association of Museums, 2003. Web. 26 Feb. 2011. < http://www.aamus.org/getinvolved/advocate/upload/AAM_Museums_Working_in_the_Public_Interest.pdf >.
2. "United Nations 2015 Millennium Development Goals." *United Nations*, n.d. Web. 14 Nov. 2010. < <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/#> >.
3. Center for the Future of Museums. "Museums and Society 2034: Trends and Potential Futures." American Association of Museums. 1.0 (Dec. 2008): 18. Print.
4. This new initiative and its blog was shared with the author by IMTAL contributor Nora Berger-Green, acting chair of this thesis.

Images, Tables, and Figures

Pg. 6 Designed by the author. (Fig. 1)

Quotes

- Pg. xii Kunfaa, Ernest Y. "'Consolidations with the Poor' Ghana: Country Synthesis Report." *World Bank Report*. Kumasi: CEDEP, July 1999: 12. Print.
- Pg. 3 Jennings, Gretchen and Maureen McConnell, "The Unexhibitable: A Conversation." *Exhibitionist*. Vol. 27, no. 2 Fall 2008: 14. Print.
- Pg. 5 Kielburger, Craig and Marc Kielburger. *Me to We*. New York: FireSide, 2004: 168. Print.

*That which we witness, we are forever changed by,
and once witnessed we can never go back.*

Angeles Arrien



CHAPTER 2: INVESTIGATION



This chapter compiles comprehensive research, from literature, interviews, and personal experience. The sources were selected because of their relevance to understanding the use of social action simulations in museums, targeting them to early teenage audiences, and to the applied example project topic, refugees of genocide. The nature of social action simulations is multi-disciplinary. The investigation looks at current trends in social conscience education, museum exhibitions of difficult subject matter, museum theatre, empathy, role-play, ethical choice-making, simulations, social games, and social action simulations on refugees. In Chapter Four, conclusions will be drawn from the research to formulate best practices and answer the question: **Can increased role-play and choice-making in museum social action simulations result in increased empathy and responsible action in daily life?**

Table 1: Model of the Journey of Social Conscience (summarized) by Martin E. Schmidt, Ed.D

Schmidt developed an 18-step progression of social conscience learning divided into three phases. It is targeted at affluent teenagers with little understanding of or care for those of “otherness.”

Social action simulations tackle steps 1-6 and are an opportunity to jump-start emotional engagement.

Phase I: Awakening in the Bubble of Ignorance and Disconnectedness

1. Vague understanding that another world exists in which others suffer and have much less.
2. Experience with those who suffer causes a questioning of many basic assumptions about life.
3. A realization emerges of being trapped in a bubble of ignorance and selfishness.

Phase II: Connecting through Awareness and Emotional Engagement

4. Consideration of the suffering of others, which can cause disorienting and overwhelming feelings.
5. A feeling of guilt develops that the affluent have so much and so many others have so little.
6. Some resist this knowledge, while others feel energized to make a difference in the world.
7. Studying the world's problems is reconsidered as happiness from helping the needs of others emerges.
8. Making sense of the world occurs as material, physical, emotional, and spiritual connections.
9. Formation of opinions, values, and beliefs about human nature, human behavior, and social issues.
10. A feeling develops of an expanded world and a sense of the “big picture.”
11. An important part of this personal journey is the social dimension: dialogue with friends, deeper friendships, and experiences of the growth process together with peers.
12. A feeling develops of personal growth with a realization that transformation is far from complete.
13. Upon reflection, there is a realization that the path out of the bubble has involved realigning the understanding of a person's relationship with the world.

Phase III: Acting on Social Conscience

14. Action motivated by social conscience may first occur in talking to family and friends about ideas, concerns, and questions, which sometimes causes tension, especially with parents.
15. Social conscience is frequently exercised through consideration of daily lifestyle choices.
16. Awareness that at some point a decision to act needs to be made or a stand needs to be taken.
17. Actions that bring a realization of making a difference in the lives of others, especially when these involve the exercise of leadership in this endeavor, facilitate the belief in personal knowledge and ability to effect positive change in the world.
18. A commitment is made to continue the journey of social conscience through further self-exploration for the purpose of benefiting society.

DEVELOPING SOCIAL CONSCIENCE

Social conscience is the awareness of one's self in relationship to a larger community; in particular to this thesis, the communities who are combating the problems the UNMDG address. Educator Martin E. Schmidt Ed.D, developed a 9th grade curriculum called “Humanities I In Action” that awakens social conscience through experiential learning and community service. He states that the development of social conscience requires awareness, emotional engagement, action, and relatedness (Fig. 2). Role-play in simulations provide a means through which to relate. He writes, “Holistic, interpersonal, empathetic and imaginative ways of knowing, help students to find a home in the world they inhabit. This sense of relatedness to the community is an essential step leading to active citizenship.”¹

Simulations seek to narrow the gap between people by having them act in another's shoes. Craig Kielburger, founder of the non-profit children's charity Free The Children, and his brother Marc, created a manifesto for becoming more socially conscious called “Me to We” that is founded in experiential learning. They have traveled to areas in the world that are suffering and in trying to change the problems, their team experienced a personal change as well. They discovered the “Spheres of Compassion,” the closer one is to others, the more likely they are to reach out to help.² They describe how social conscience leads to social change with these steps:

- Know the situation.
- Make a personal connection (put a face on it).
- Imagine how it feels to be in that person's shoes.

- Imagine walking in your own shoes but using your resources to help others.
- Finding the confidence to act.³

In other words, the UNMDG will only be achieved if more individuals take effective action, and in order to do so, they must first become socially conscious.

Educational Theory

Simulations are a clear application of experiential learning. Theorists including David Kolb, Paulo Freire, Ash and Clayton, and Janet Eyler have described the benefits of “learning by doing,” as contrasted with learning through traditional classroom and testing practices. They all suggest that experiential education promotes reflection, social cooperation, increased worldview, and lifelong learning. The process is also conducive to learners taking responsible action based on their experiences. Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* stresses the importance of authentic experiences, which social action simulations seek to represent for difficult subjects, in order to understand one’s context in society and develop praxis. Praxis (power and know-how to take action) involves a cycle of theory, application, evaluation, and reflection.⁴

Social action simulations offer an opportunity to have a unsettling experience within a safe and educational environment. Jack Mezirow’s “transformative learning” theory was inspired by Freire and influenced Schmidt’s model of social conscience (Table 1). Mezirow’s theory states that to achieve transformation in learning, adults must go through a “disorientating dilemma” - experiences that are shocking. Consequential emotions (fear, guilt, etc.) are a catalyst for a learner’s inward reflection on one’s values in relationship to the

rest of the world. The learner then shifts into critical assessment and discovers his or her feelings are shared by others. From that point, one explores new actions, makes a plan, tries out the plan, and in so doing, builds confidence in new roles. Finally, new perspectives are integrated into the learner’s worldview and transformation is achieved, which Mezirow stresses can only take place once the learner takes action.⁵

Daloz, Keen, Keen and Parks build upon Mezirow’s theory by proposing the initial disorientation can occur when teens come face to face with “the other,” those of different class, race, beliefs, etc. This study, as well as Schmidt’s dissertation, propose key theories for this thesis in transforming younger hearts and minds than Mezirow’s targeted audience. Both studies, however, believe that the learner must relate “the other” to their own lives and emotions in order to achieve social conscience and take action. This connection to the audiences’ everyday lives can be addressed in a post-simulation reflection.

The theatrical and narrative aspects of social action simulations can stimulate emotions in their audiences. “Affective learning” theories are founded on the idea that people learn by drawing from their own experiences and therefore emotions are always

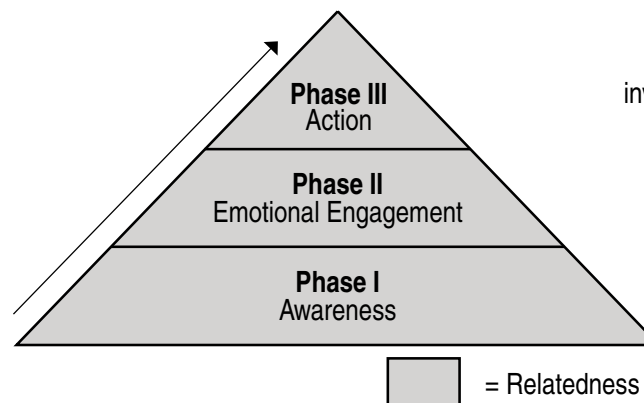


Fig. 2: Schmidt’s four areas of social conscience.

involved. Building upon Mezirow’s work, Tricia Tooman says there is neuro-biological proof emotive stimuli aid in learning. To foster emotions and learning, the environment must be “safe, empathetic, authentic”⁶ and activities must be

centered on the learner so that they might connect personally. By reflecting individually, and sharing socially, one creates lasting meaning. Edward W. Taylor reviews recent empirical research in the field of transformative learning and acknowledges that while it is well-known that emotions aid in learning, not much is known about how to “effectively engage emotions in practice.”⁷ Simulations, in a controlled environment, may be one solution to do so. Taylor also stresses the importance of peer relationships in transformative learning including trust, non-evaluative feedback, and voluntary participation.

Interviews are the most common tool to evaluate transformative learning and Taylor also recommends scales, surveys, student portfolios, e-mail, and open-ended questionnaires as ways to record any changes in perspective. When assessing one’s recall sometime after learning has taken place, he suggests using photographs and videos to trigger memories. This technique helps prevent memory loss common with interviews and assists those who struggle to express themselves in describing their feelings and values.

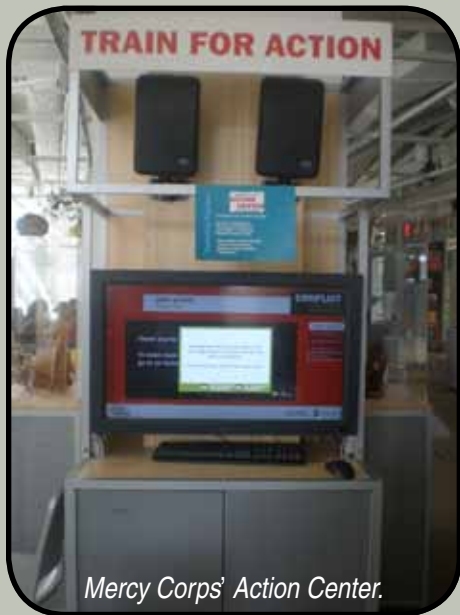
Current immersive genocide exhibitions for young audiences include *Daniel's Story*, a tactile experience at USHMM told from a child's point of view, and the Holocaust exhibition at the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles in which visitors take a child's "fate" card through a directed march. Multimedia lights, video, and narrations lead visitors through small vignettes and environments. The museum is also home to a range of exhibits on current issues of tolerance, using interactives to encourage visitors to form their own opinions and explore ways they can take action. One example relevant to choice-making is the *Point of View Diner* where visitors watch a video of a conflict, vote on who they believe should take responsibility, then listen to the characters' points of view and vote again, thereby taking ownership for their choices. Staff is present to facilitate dialogue.

Scenery in Daniel's Story at USHMM.



EXPLORING DIFFICULT SUBJECTS IN MUSEUM VENUES

Currently, most social action simulations are developed and hosted by NGOs, in other words, organizations with a mission for advocacy. However, museums are no strangers to exhibiting difficult subjects and many hold similar non-profit statuses. Museums have proved ideal venues to explore difficult social topics for many of the same reasons theatre has: safe environment, personal connections (through objects and stories), and representation of multiple points of view. As previously stated, museums host large audiences and given their experience with theatrical performance, it seems natural that museums take the social action simulation baton.



The NGO Mercy Corps opened a New York City "Action Center" in 2008 which offers interpretation and interactions about world hunger. Their *Train for Action* kiosk teaches users about the actions Mercy Corps takes to combat poverty, set to a real-world example: get briefed, assess the situation, explore actions and take action. At the end, visitors can e-mail their findings to themselves and are offered resources for actions they can take that involve one minute, one hour, or one year of dedication. The emphasis on action places the Center in Phase III of Schmidt's journey to social conscience. The impersonal design and inconveniently located space is not conducive for the first important steps towards social conscience, emotional engagement. A post-simulation visit would be an appropriate use of the center in giving participants a constructive outlet for the emotions developed during the simulation experience.

Additionally, many museums have been founded with a mission to promote social conscience. In his essay from the 2008 Sixth International Conference of Museums of Peace publication *Museums for Peace: Past, Present and Future*, Thomas Vincent Flores discusses the niche of these so-called peace museums as, "[entities] whose aim is to inform the public about peace, using illustrations from the lives of individuals, the work of organizations, and historical events."⁸ Genocide has been exhibited in several categories of peace museums, including:

- Remembrance of War/Injustice Toward a Country/ Group/Memorial Museums
- One Person or Philosophy Museums
- Museums of Issues of Humanitarian Action
- Named Peace Museums
- War Memorial Museums

- Anti-War & Conscientious Objector Museums
- Peace Education Centers

Institutions such as U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM), Museum of Tolerance, U.N. Museum and Civil Rights Museum are included in his description.

According to Flores, the current strengths of peace museum exhibitions and programs are: exhibiting a range of topics, representing many perspectives, making local and global connections, and integrating the arts. Among the challenges involved are: sensitivities around discussing government policies, being perceived as subversive, presentation, ethics of war and violence, portrayal of anti-war activists, affiliations (such as corporate connections and donors), and functioning as a sanctuary of memory and honor. Future trends include an emphasis on research centers, stronger identification with local cities or institutions, exploring prevention (without advocacy agendas) and, of particular interest to this thesis, a focus on developing one's character, education, and increased visitor participation.⁹

In order to best integrate social action simulation programming into museums, one must first consider what stories museums feel responsible for, or comfortable, telling. The *Exhibitionist's* fall 2008 edition "Unexhibitable" gives insight from within the museum field about presenting difficult subjects. Consultants Gretchen Jennings and Maureen McConnell gathered responses for what museum professionals believe is too controversial to display in their article "The Unexhibitable: A Conversation." Some contributors believe such political or social subjects as the Rape of Nanking or Columbine tackle recent memory that

The more citizens are exposed to these values, resonate with them, or even reflectively question or challenge them, the greater will be the opportunities for transformations of consciousness.

Thomas Vincent Flores

is still too painful, while others feel it is the museums' role to encourage dialogue about these subjects. Aaron Goldblatt states that if an identified audience is respected and listened to early in the development process, then any content could be exhibited.¹⁰ Jennings and McConnell conclude that it requires a combination of the right time and place to exhibit certain topics and that museums are responsible for creating the right context for their audiences.

Designing For Difficult Subjects

Jennifer Bonnell and Roger I. Simon analyze methods behind catering exhibitions of difficult subjects to audiences in their article "Difficult' exhibitions and intimate encounters." The degree of difficulty audiences experience with content varies depending on their social, political, ethnic, and personal backgrounds. Bonnell and Simon state that difficult exhibitions, "... must be confronted in ways that support a hopeful future while simultaneously teaching humility in the face of the unpredictability of life."¹¹ Given that most visitors will have very different life experiences from the stories presented in a simulation, according to Bonnell and Simon, their role is to pay testimony rather than be a spectator. They argue that being present in an exhibition negates the "burdensome gift" of inheritance

of the subject; audiences generate reactions which they can't give back, even if their response to a topic is to ignore. Increased choice-making in simulated role-play can give participants an active and constructive means with which to accept this "gift."

Jeffrey Karl Ochsner reviews USHMM's Holocaust exhibition and says one of the biggest challenges is that visitors are separated from the event in time and place. This separation supports the tendency to think of the victims as "others" (it should be noted that Americans are only separated from the Burmese genocide in place, since it is still occurring). To bridge this gap, Ochsner describes the (often unconscious) notion of identification, saying, "It is this recognition of the possibility of the other in the self and the self in the other that allows us to share our common human existence."¹² In order that this connection become more conscious, USHMM implements victim identity cards which visitors are meant to consider as they pass through the exhibition. Ochsner doubts their success and criticizes the museum's overly dramatized display of objects and lacking representation of all perspectives involved. This highlights the challenge pointed out by Flores of honoring the deceased while presenting multiple (and perhaps controversial) points of view. Ochsner suggests that while the Holocaust was horrific, "the real horror will be felt if visitors can identify with each of those involved"¹³ implying that the potential of one human being to treat another in such a way is far scarier than solely imagining having those actions done to you. Simulated role-play supports identification. It can be argued that to uphold the "prevention" trend outlined by Flores, one cannot just blame the perpetrators but try to identify with them too.

MUSEUM THEATRE

Integrating social action simulations into museums requires a look at current museum theatre trends. Theatrical interpretation provides a way for museums to expand on the content in their exhibitions but takes a very different form from commercial theatre. Tessa Bridal describes some of these differences in her book *Exploring Museum Theatre*. In general, museum theatre is related to the mission of a museum or exhibition, takes place in exhibition spaces, is free of charge (or included in admission), includes minimal seating, and lasts a short duration of time. Museum theatre, like simulations, is often participatory and interactive. The main difference between commercial and museum theatre is the audience; museum

audiences typically are not regular theatergoers and do not plan on attending a play when visiting a museum. Plays are often happened-upon by visitors, so museum theatre needs to be created to target a less theatre-savvy and more diverse audience. Catherine Hughes, the author of *Museum Theatre: Communication with Visitors*, describes successful museum theatre as having both paradigmatic qualities (based on empirical truths) and narratives (appearance and believability of truth), and states that museums must understand how visitors make sense of experiences.¹⁴

Anthony Jackson, Professor of Educational Theatre at Manchester University, and research associate Jenny Kidd, conducted extensive long-term study to evaluate learning in museum settings in a report called

Performance, Learning & Heritage. They define four functions of museum theatre: illustrative, explanatory, revelatory, and provocative. The latter encompasses social action simulations in that it provides alternative points of view and generates debate. They also connect audiences' engagement in museum theatre (Fig. 3) to the four stages in Kolb's experiential learning theory: to experience, to observe (both of which refer to the performance), to experiment actively

(the reflection) and to conceptualize (inspiration, recall, and understanding). Their assessment of the impact of museum theatre indicates long-term value, positive memories, increased emotional response, greater understanding and appreciation for issues, and desire to return. Jackson and Kidd feel increased participation, reflecting as a group, connecting to everyday life, and skilled actors, all things addressed in social action simulations, will continue to improve the impact of museum theatre on audiences.¹⁵

Museum Theatre and Difficult Subject Matter

Bridal has three guidelines for theatre and difficult subjects: information be well-documented and researched, confrontation occur between characters not between the actors and audience, and the audience feel allowed to explore an issue from different perspectives.¹⁶ Hughes insists performers be transparent about the use of fourth wall to avoid tricking audiences, and obtain agreement from visitors.

Similar to the “disorientating dilemma” of social action simulations, Jackson and Kidd describe the notion of surprise and unsettlement in museum theatre, “... that of having expectations overturned, assumptions about the subject-matter challenged, of finding they were personally being confronted with strong emotion or were expected to participate verbally or even physically.”¹⁷ On one hand, unsettlement can stimulate, surprise, provoke thought from dissonance, and change preconceived beliefs but it can also lead to feeling trapped or irritated, confused, physically challenged, misguided or asked to give more than one is capable. Social action simulations intentionally evoke some of the negative forms of unsettlement and

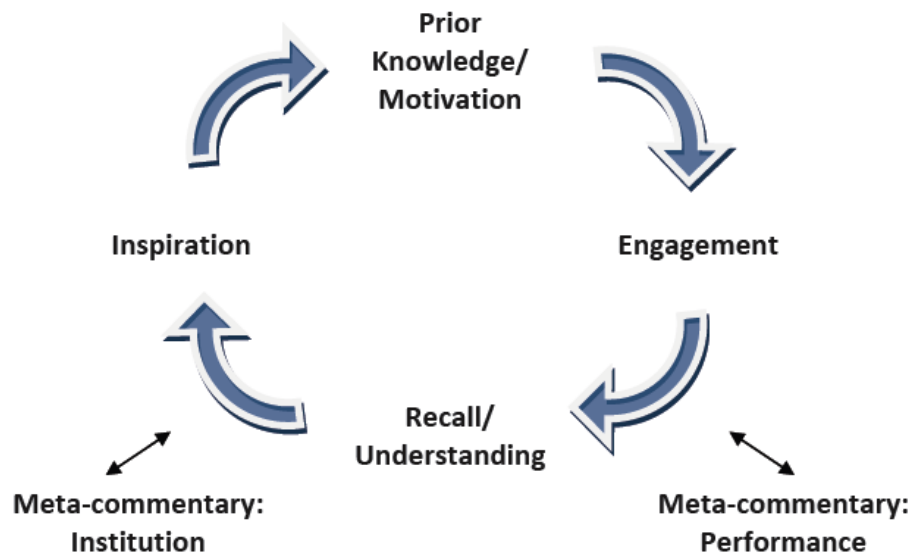


Fig. 3: Jackson and Kidd's categories of audience engagement reflect the audience learning and framing that takes place during a museum theatre performance.

Jackson feels it can be thoughtfully done with balance of skill, sensitivity, and proper introduction (Table 2).

Evaluating Museum Theatre

While the need for museum theatre evaluation is important, Hughes acknowledges the difficulty of measuring visitor learning. She claims quantitative data are limited and suggests using narratives (e.g. written feedback) to evaluate narratives. She also references Beverly Serrell's theory on time reflecting learning in saying museum theatre holds visitors' attention for long periods and so may indicate deeper learning.¹⁸ Jackson and Kidd have similar thinking in saying that even though they take longer to conduct and analyze, interviews shed important insight to emotional responses. Having an interviewer from the represented audience demographic can help individuals feel comfortable responding and do so in their own words.

Challenges of Live-action Simulations in Museums

George Macklin, current Director of Operations at International Spy Museum, explores how far museum theatre can go before it compromises educational value in his masters thesis, "When Does Entertainment Stop and Education Begin?" On one hand, theatre mimics reality because it utilizes multiple senses, grabs and keeps people's attention in a media-driven world where museums are in competition for leisure time, and because it can make content personal and come to life. On the other hand, it is challenging to define what is authentic in a performance and difficult to quantify how entertainment affects learning. Visitors may wrongly assume they learned a lot because they enjoyed a performance. However, Disney has changed people's expectations of and desires for their leisure

Theatre thrives on conflict and inquiry and is invaluable in inspiring people, challenging them, and making them less fearful of encountering ideas, especially those foreign or new to them.

Tessa Bridal

time and Macklin quotes John H. Falk in saying that education and entertainment are no longer mutually exclusive.¹⁹

Another significant challenge is cost. In her blog Museum 2.0, Nina Simon discussed the logistics behind producing live-action games in the context of International Spy Museum's *Operation Spy (Op Spy)*, 5W!ts Productions' *Tomb*, and *Adventure* at the Center of Science and Industry Columbus (the former two being for-profit institutions, the latter non-profit). The biggest costs include immersive scenery fabrication,

complex interactives and multimedia, and staffing or hired actors. Not surprisingly, the for-profit institutions have had more success because of their driven business plans. Simon offers museums four tips for producing live-action simulations: brand and sell the experience separately, cater to maximum throughput, keep staffing minimal, and spend money selectively, such as having detailed scenery only where visitors will be spending long periods of time.²⁰ Simon sees potential in live-action experiences in museums as long as they are developed differently from regular programming with their unique demands in mind.

Table 2: Museum Theatre Planning Check-List (summarized) by Anthony Jackson and Jenny Kidd

Jackson and Kidd raise important questions to consider in planning performances that will impact the visitor experience and their learning.

Site: Where is it? How does it align with the institutional goals and language? Actor interpretation policy? Physical presence? Promotion and evaluation? How are the performers supported?

Performance: How is it framed? Who is facilitating? What is the shape of the plot? Are there moments of surprise? Is empathy used and if so, how can it enlarge instead of narrow understandings?

Content: What is its style? How is complexity of content explored? Are there opportunities to debrief? Is there deliberate unsettling? How is it pitched? When are they challenged emotionally, physically, or intellectually? How will the content be followed-up?

Audience: Who is targeted? How are they inducted? Is there interaction and participation? Do they have choice? What transition is given? Are they comfortable? Has proper care responsibility been taken? Can they exercise agency in engaging their own, sometimes unpredictable, ways of making meaning?

THE EMPATHY QUESTION

Among many access points, empathy can be achieved in social action simulations through thought, play, first person stories, and emotion. Theatre in particular, can take artistic liberties to make audiences feel a particular emotion. Empathy is a frequently stated goal of museum exhibitions and programs but with performance, the word can be problematic. Jackson and Kidd discuss “the empathy paradox” in which empathy is one of the best ways of gaining insight into “others,” motivating people to learn and participate, and connecting more closely to a topic.²¹ But it can also result in narrowing one’s perspective. The risk is there, especially with younger audiences, that they will be so moved by a performance, that they will believe “that is how it is” and think of a subject only through the lens of the depicted characters. Even though exhibition content and material culture are perceived as having more authenticity, in Jackson’s study, audiences felt that the performance was the more “real” experience.

William Over, building on Bertolt Brecht’s Epic Theatre in the introduction of *Social Justice in World Cinema and Theatre*, is cautious of the empathy born in audiences because, like Bonnell and Simon, he points out that every audience is a product of their own social, political, and cultural context. If a tragic play has hope in it, a “partisan and opportunistic” Western audience might rest assured the issue will solve itself in real life.²² He feels true socially-conscious theatre (and film) is rarely found on Broadway or in Hollywood because there will always be incentives to please the American audiences with happy endings. Bonnell and Simon discuss empathy being achieved through

intimacy, which they define as opening up one’s self to exploring another. They insist that while empathy is formed, the audience’s own individual “psycho-social history” should be maintained.²³ In other words, the environment should promote trustworthy and respectful dialogue so that visitors can reach out to another without compromising their own individual being.

In her article, “Crafting Emotional Comfort: Interpreting the Painful Past at Living History Museums in the New Economy,” Amy Tyson offers an explanation for why audiences choose to partake in a challenging experience about difficult subjects. She suggests people in today’s society seek out sadomasochistic experiences in order to, like catharsis, escape unwanted feelings, refine their symbolic sense of self-awareness, and create shared experiences with others.²⁴ Tyson feels one gains understanding of their hidden discriminatory tendencies by escaping one’s self and assuming the identity of another self; an opportunity that can be explored in simulated role-play.

Over suggests that art created by the people living in third-world conditions be brought to greater attention in order that their messages (i.e. UNMDG) become known. One solution developed by and for third-world people is Theatre of the Oppressed (TO). TO was created by Augusto Boal in Brazil in 1971, based on theories from Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Boal created several theatrical sequences that give people the power to become aware of their oppressions, practice freedom of expression, and find solutions to creating a happier life. TO can exist in any venue, from streets to schools to prisons, and the line between actor and audience is eliminated (like Freire

When we develop our ability to empathize with others and apply it as broadly as possible, this becomes one of the most profound ways to connect us to our common humanity.
Craig and Marc Kielburger

with teachers and students). TO functions under a set of principles and objectives which include: nonviolence, no association to any ideology or politics, theatre as a tool for changing circumstances and developing human rights, and enabling people to act in the fiction of theatre.²⁵

Boal, like Brecht and Over, was concerned with the power of empathy over an audience; well-written plays can get people to break society's "rules" by empathizing with villains. They believe plays that encourage catharsis make an audience passive. To combat this in TO, the characters do not think or act for the audience, but the audience takes action themselves. The scene is treated as a "rehearsal for reality"²⁶ and because social action simulations reflect the reality of oppressive situations, the application of the thesis builds in TO into its design. Image Theatre and Forum Theatre are two such exercises, the former founded on the idea that words have different meanings to everyone. In Forum Theatre, individuals reenact a scene of oppression and audience members, or "spec-actors," are encouraged to stop the action and improvise as the protagonist. A neutral mediator called "The Joker" provides reality checks, breaking the fourth wall to question whether the action is realistic with phrases like "How did you feel?" and "Did it work?" The

scene is not meant to model ideal human behavior, but explore alternative actions for a situation.

Participation in a workshop with Alex Santiago-Jirau and S. Leigh Thompson, experienced TO facilitators, made obvious the parallels between museum audiences and TO participants. TO facilitators encourage mutual learning between the participants and Jokers. Santiago-Jirau and Thompson warn against imposing one way of thinking and say facilitators must have some knowledge and sensitivity of a community before working with them. Unlike social action simulations that strive to raise awareness, TO participants must be experiencing the depicted oppressions themselves for it to be effective. One way Santiago-Jirau and Thompson deal with this is offering their audience options of several different Forum Theatre narratives and letting them choose which to act out based on what issue is most relevant to them.²⁷

Jackson raises the question, "... are there ways in which empathy can be generated in museum performance and at the same time placed within a dramatic framework that allows the 'larger picture' to be appreciated, for alternative voices to be heard ..., and for a more 'distanced', critically questioning response from the audience?"²⁸ This concern can be addressed in reflective talk-backs and post-simulation classroom lessons. His conclusions show that a well-performed narrative is unmatched in developing empathy for and giving voice to "the other," and is effective in generating dialogue about difficult and complex subject matter. For students, he suggests empathy allows a level of thinking that may not have otherwise been possible. Over's solution to the paradox is coupling empathy

caused by a shocking event with critical perspective, which he believes leads to action (like Mezirow's transformational learning theory). He believes that once the message comes across, to get an audience to take action, it is important to be explicit in saying what to do and how to do it. Santiago-Jirau and Thompson advise facilitators to practice transparency, honesty, and humility, and to avoid opening people up without connecting their experiences to their everyday lives. Jackson addresses this by saying museums should provide opportunities to follow-up after a difficult exhibition in order to continue the dialogue.



Theatre of the Oppressed Image Theatre

PARTICIPATORY ROLE-PLAY

In drama education that strives to change attitudes, develop social conscience, and provoke curiosity, participatory theatre has often been used and has been referred to by many names. In another of his publications, *Theatre, education and the making of meanings*, Jackson outlines different types of participatory theatre. Dialogic theatre is most relevant to social action simulations in that it encourages conversation about different worldviews without one fixed stance or message and demands active participation from its audience.

One such form of participation is role-play. To discuss role-play, one needs to consider the roles the audience plays at various stages of their experience. Jackson describes the concept of theatrical framing in the context of student audiences. Framing is the boundaries in which a play is performed (both physical site lines and the angle of the story depicted) and the role of the audience in relationship to the content of the production. Within one performance event, numerous

frames will be represented, including:

- Cultural Frame: Introduction to a performance in which students prepare and develop expectations, which vary based on their cultural/social context.
- Outer Theatrical Frame: Transition to performance and the conventions of the piece where students become participants.
- Inner Frame: Students' participation varies dependant on whether the performance has a narrative, investigative, representational or involvement frame.
- Closing Frame: End of event in which students transition back to their lives and follow up with reflections in a talk-back and at school.

The "involvement frame" is most representative of live-action simulations in that participants play a role, either a central figure or a peripheral communal role, that may alter the course of the narrative.²⁹

Participation changes the nature of theatre and it no longer functions as just performance or a lesson. There may still be a plot structure but participation allows the audience to contribute to it. By breaking the fourth

Playing a game is psychologically different in degree but not in kind from dramatic acting. The ability to create a situation imaginatively and to play a role in it is a tremendous experience, a sort of vacation from one's everyday self and the routine of everyday living. We observe that this psychological freedom creates a condition in which strain and conflict are dissolved and potentialities are released in the spontaneous effort to meet the demands of the situation.

Neva L. Boyd

*The role-playing that students
undertake in games that simulate
life is excellent preparation for
the real roles they will play in
society in later life.*
Clark C. Abt

wall, as in simulations, performances can no longer be consistently reproduced. As a result, many educational performances will intentionally separate the audience into multiple, partial points of view in order to encourage discussion and debate. School groups can then have more “ammunition” when deconstructing the event in class. Most sources agree that in an educational venue, the actors must maintain control of a performance. This implies that visitors will rarely get the chance to interact freely within a performance or change the direction of the narrative. However, Jackson states that many of his surveyed audience members felt they had a genuine “two-way interaction” with the actors.³⁰ Having flexible, responsive actors and providing the illusion of choice may be just as effective for audiences as actually having free reign within a social action simulation performance.

Jackson found individuals of all ages experience enjoyment in participating from the “inside” of a performance and this, along with social interaction, increases their memory recall of the experience. When participation is forced, however, there is a risk of making people uncomfortable and avoid that type of experience all together. Boal believed that theatre is a medium through which every human can communicate. TO is therefore catered to theatrically untrained audiences like many of those visiting museums.

Role-Playing with Teens

Sally Ashton-Hay, an Australian ESL and drama educator, writes about how participatory role-play is relevant to each of Howard Gardner’s multiple intelligences and is both active

and reflective. She says, “As students step into the shoes of another character’s role, they gain a greater understanding and empathy with that character. They are able to compare the responses of the characters with their own possible response, and are required to recognize and manage emotions in themselves and in others.”³¹ Jackson found role-play increased the ability of six-form students (16 to 18 year-olds) to stand up for and defend their ideas, develop new skills, and feel more confident.

With teenagers, Jackson claims their participation may be more detached (in that they maintain their own identities) but they engage by confronting characters. In so doing, they realize motivations behind actions and reflect on their own attitudes, opinions, and even alternative actions or solutions. The self-centered tendencies of teens actually push them to take ownership of the problems they witness, suspending any embarrassment along with their disbelief. Jackson recalls a Forum Theatre where teen boys were motivated to step into a female character’s role to try and solve the problems she faced in an oppressive marriage. When the distance between participant and character is lessened, teens can demonstrate emotional and intense interactions. This is sometimes

intentional, as in the case of social action simulations, and Jackson says that when done correctly, with the opportunity to debrief and reflect in a calm, safe environment, teens may change their perspectives and understanding of a difficult topic.

Empathy and Role-play

In a study comparing learning between two schools groups, one who experienced a participatory theatre performance and another who did not, Jackson found that the children who participated in theatre demonstrated more empathy, especially with negative aspects to the topic. He feels the empathy felt in role-play is greater than when simply watching a play, because the audience’s first person view of the narrative limits them in seeing the bigger picture of the story and there is less distance between them and the other characters. The big picture must therefore be addressed in post-performance discussion. George Buss, former president of IMTAL, is wary about the extreme suspension of disbelief in immersive live-action simulations. Without the distance between audience and story, it becomes harder to understand what is not real, resulting in emotional and subconscious responses that are forced or without the audience’s consent. However, contrary to the empathy paradox previously discussed, Jackson quotes drama educator Joe Winston in suggesting that the purging of emotions in catharsis can result in illumination and cognitive processing of emotions.³² It appears that opportunities need to be given for audiences to deconstruct and critically analyze their experience (both after the event and in the long run) to avoid what Buss aptly referred to as, “psychological rape.”³²

ETHICAL CHOICE-MAKING

Audiences can be encouraged to discover their own motivations for ethical choice-making when role-playing in social action simulations. Justice theorist John Rawls describes “social learning theory” as providing the moral motives to do what is right or just.³³ If, in order to foster social conscience, audiences are being asked to question what are responsible choices in a role-play context, or beyond an exhibition in everyday life, then we must understand how individuals make social judgments and what role museums play.

Editors Leonard L. Martin and Abraham Tesser have compiled a series of essays in *The Construction of Social Judgments*, by psychologists who have studied the way emotions influence our judgments (Fig. 4); these shed light on the internal processes that are likely taking place during social action simulations. Gerard Clore states that having strong expectations an event may occur simulates many of the same characteristics of the event itself.³⁴ Feelings can be affective (happy, angry, etc.), nonaffective (surprised, confused, etc.) or cognitive (understanding or knowing). All three may be present in a simulation.

How one evaluates their experience in a simulation will be influenced by how the events played out in respect to their expectations and feelings. For example, if the action in a simulation is surprising, participants may more likely describe a change of perspective from their prior understandings.

People tend to trust their emotions, but they can also confuse the true source of what they feel. Oftentimes, emotions trigger memories which will also affect how new material is interpreted. Donal E. Carlston even states that affective information is stored longer than other types, “While visceral

experience diminishes quickly, the information is stored in a more cognitive form. Affect can be regenerated when remembered.”³⁵ Therefore while participants may experience many negative emotions in a social action simulation or “disorienting dilemma,” it is important to end on a hopeful note to avoid discouragement. Robert C. Sinclair and Melvin M. Mark found positive moods give people a sense of macrojustice, viewing people as alike and having a greater liking for people.³⁶

Rawls discusses how good role models of justice elicit the innate desire in humans to mimic those role models. For this, trusted public institutions like museums are well-positioned. AAM’s Code of Ethics states that programming must “respect pluralistic values, traditions, and concerns” as well as “promote the public good.”³⁷ Cheryl Meszaros authored a *Curator* article about modeling ethical thinking in art museums that carries relevancy across other museum disciplines. She states that while constructivist learning is popular among museums today, giving visitors too much freedom in making their own meaning based on their life experiences, can be irresponsible on the museum’s part. She suggests that individuals can form and make sense of “received ideas,” so museums should be transparent about the perspective and style of their interpretation in order that visitors can weigh in and form their own judgmental stance.³⁸

A lot has been written about the importance of inward reflection in helping define one’s moral beliefs, which can begin to take place in programming talk-backs. Rawls assumes everyone has a sense of justice and that when its principles are presented, one is willing to change their present understanding

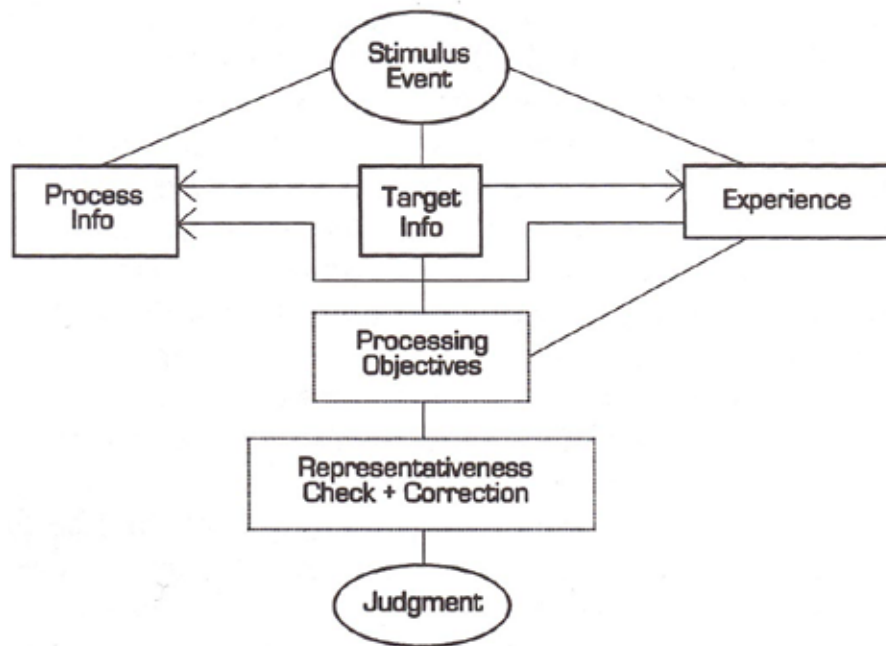


Fig. 4: An illustration of the cognitive process of judgment formation developed by psychologist Fritz Strack. The stimulus event in this case is the simulation, targeted information of which participants process and compare to past life experience. Checks and corrections can take place in a talk-back discussion or classroom.

through introspection. Murray G. Miller and Tesser state that while introspection can clarify, improve decision-making, and align one's attitudes and actions, it can also increase confusion and polarize beliefs.³⁹ Meszaros refers to Hannah Arendt, whose moral philosophies stemmed from the Nuremberg Trials of Nazi leaders. Arendt determined that thinking enables moral judgments, and that the Holocaust genocide was perpetuated partially because the Nazis took orders well but did not think about whether their actions were right or wrong. Thinking stems from an internal conversation, resulting in consciousness from which ethical behavior emerges. In the same article, Meszaros quotes Jean-Luc Nancy who says one can only "come into existence," when faced with others.⁴⁰ This concept can be seen during a social action simulation when participants experience someone else's reality firsthand, as well as in a museum context when visitors share their experience with others.

Group Norms

In rational choice-making, according to Rawls, people attempt to fulfill their goals as much as possible and in the simplest way, preferring a short-term plan and one that has a greater likelihood of success. If given an objective within a simulation context, rational choices may be observed. However, individuals' choices are likely to be influenced by the group they are in. Cass R. Sunstein's *Why Societies Need Dissent* helps

predict group behavioral norms within in a simulation, as well as group norms in the extreme example of compliance, genocide. Sunstein states that two major influences on belief and behavior are observations of what other people say and do and the desire to be thought of highly by others. This can explain why social injustice, or the existence of "otherness," is perpetuated by people's inability to speak out against a crowd about what they believe is right. Sunstein declares that differences between people are rarely cultural and the best way to combat negative conformity is by being informed; much of what we know now is not from firsthand experience but others' thoughts and actions.⁴¹

Social action simulations are an opportunity to gain firsthand knowledge of a difficult issue that can make people question the judgments they make towards "others" in everyday life. Contributors to Martin and

Tesser's book confirm this by saying that firsthand exposure is less complicated than secondhand in determining our judgments on people (Fig. 5). Based on Stanley Milgram's (often ethically questionable) psychology experiments, like his 1971 prison inmate and guard experiment, we can predict that during a simulation, participants will likely make choices that conform with the authority (played by actors) or their peers. Sunstein claims conformity is enhanced when a task is difficult or an individual feels frightened. However, the hope is that in discovering one's capacity to make unethical or difficult decisions in role-playing a simulated story, and through subsequent discussions and reflections, participants will be armed with knowledge to reconsider the negative social norms they may not have known they were following in their everyday lives.

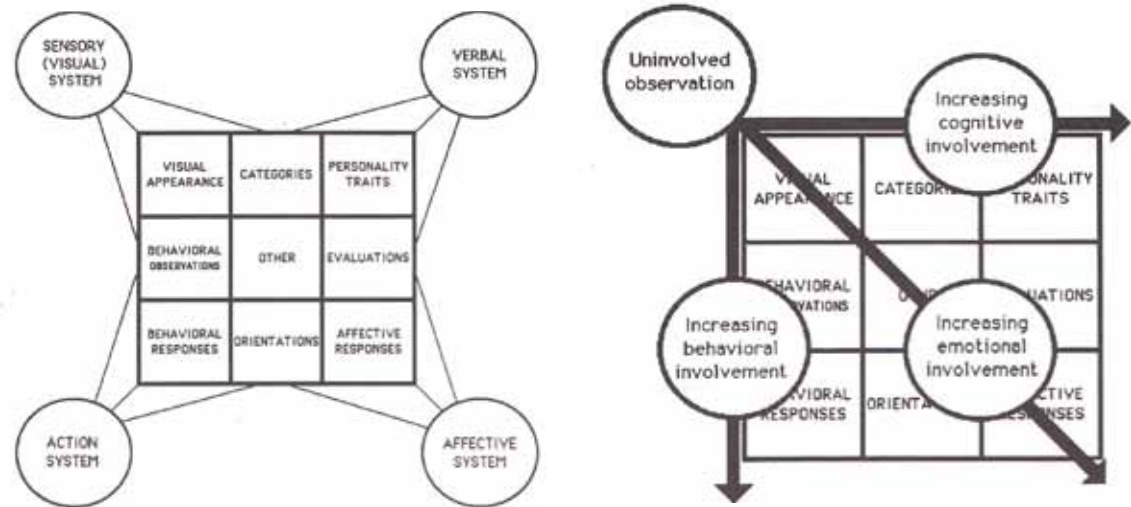


Fig. 5: The figure on the left depicts four systems that Donal E. Carlston proposes affect social judgments (sensory, verbal, action and affective or emotion). The figure on the right shows the judgment qualities that are heightened with increased behavioral (e.g. choice-making), cognitive (e.g. multiple points of view), and emotional involvement (e.g. role-play).

SIMULATIONS

Simulations come in many forms but have common traits. G.I. Gibbs, in his *Handbook of Games and Simulation Exercises*, defines simulation as “dynamic representation which employs substitute elements to replace real or hypothetical components.”⁴² Simulations today are often in the form of computer games, which give users a projection of a given event, such as a flight simulation. Live-action techniques have been used in simulations for years, including military recreation of battles to test personnel as well as with NASA recruitment. Other disciplines, such as sports, public speaking, and crisis relief agencies (like Red Cross), use strategic role-play simulations to train and rehearse prior to a real event. Simulations are also seen in grade school foreign language classes, creating an environment where students are immersed in the language, and social studies as in Model U.N.

Why Use Simulation?

Frederick M. Hess describes the benefits to using simulations in education in *Bringing the Social Sciences to Life* which include social interaction, cooperative learning, creative writing, negotiation/persuasive argument, the opportunity to exercise judgment, and stressing depth over coverage. Additionally, the inclusion of role-play in simulations offers an opportunity to explore personas outside of one’s own, a “mask” for shy participants, and allows people to experience multiple points of view. There are no predetermined answers in

simulations, giving participants a chance to connect on a personal level and test multiple solutions. Not least of all, simulations are fun and different. Hess claims, “When students get enthused about material, they start to care about it,”⁴³ which is crucial in developing social conscience.

The suspense of disbelief provoked by simulations can be a powerful experience, which Thomas Schubert describes in his study of spatial presence, the sense of actually “being there” in virtual, remote, and real environments. Spatial presence is defined subjectively, as a feeling or perception, and has implications on the design of live-action simulations. Like feelings, spatial presence occurs immediately, is always true, and is attributed to a particular source or stimulus. The danger here is that certain elements, such as emotive music, can cause individuals to misattribute their presence (or feelings) and make incorrect judgments on their environment. Spatial presence has informational value too, and Schubert predicts that the more convincing the environment, the less individuals are conscious of it, as there are fewer things contradicting it as reality from which to distract their attention.

According to Schubert, environments created by multimedia and those including live people can both facilitate spatial presence, though presence is enhanced when full-body movements are involved, as is true of role-play in live-action simulation. When spatial presence is lacking, or one does not feel fully present, individuals can feel disorientated or negative.

Questionnaires have received a bad reputation in the evaluation of spatial presence because it was thought that you could not assess something subjective with an objective instrument like a survey. However, Schubert believes that the emotive nature of spatial presence does not make it less scientific nor immaterial, and states that verbal reports remain the most successful assessment tool to date.⁴⁴

Educational Gaming

Along the same lines as simulations, games can help participants comprehend complex scenarios. Gerald Gutenschwager suggests that the social nature of games can promote social change in that, “social change is by and large a problem in communication.”⁴⁵ He says gaming uniquely combines puzzles and theatre, utilizing both mechanical and dramatic behavior (Fig. 6). Participants will strategize in games in order to get the most out of their objectives. Gutenschwager states that if the players know each other very well (such as members of a school class), they may be challenged to see each other in new roles. He suggests it is better to simulate scenarios that are unfamiliar to the players or include strangers into the mix, the former being the likeliest for this thesis.

Clark C. Abt defines a serious game as a program that “unites the seriousness of thought and problems that require with it the experimental and emotional freedom of active play,” and he does not believe that games compromise authenticity.⁴⁶ In fact, Abt maintains that the competitive nature of games reflects real social situations in that many problems stem from the competitive fight for limited resources. His book *Serious Games* provides relevant models for designing social



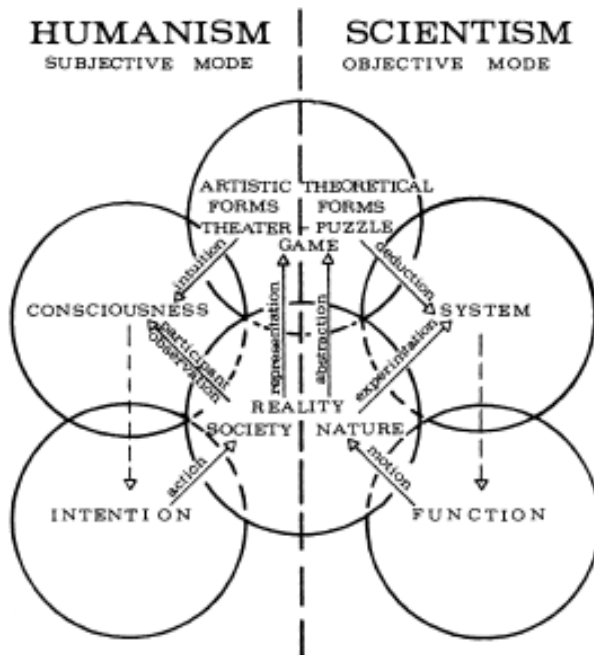


Fig. 6: Gutenschwager's diagram contrasts subjective, or live-action theatre games, to objective, or strategic puzzle games. This thesis project intends to combine the two, in order to create an emotional and thoughtful experience.

action simulations. A design challenge is imitating reality while simplifying it for group size and time, as well as deciding whether to depict reality as it is, or in idealized terms. The latter depends largely on the moral stance of the host institution or participating school. For example, some fear depicting slave trade in history simulations encourages immoral behavior. He insists that teaching morality through games is dependant on the target age, but believes it is far better to avoid idealizing reality. Abt recommends the following steps in designing serious games: determine the context (geography, duration, functions), determine principal adversaries in the story, determine actors' objectives, determine available resources,

determine win criteria, determine sequence of possible interactions, and limit available moves (in order to control complexity).⁴⁷

Nina Simon blogs about the good and bad uses of games in museums. She claims participants' behavior in games is similar to that of navigating museum exhibitions: they encourage discovery, choice, and problem-solving. Simon quotes social game designer Jane McGonigal saying, "[Games] provide clear instructions and rules for how to succeed, better feedback on how well you are doing, better community with which to experience the game, and induce more intense emotions of personal pride and accomplishment."⁴⁸ Simon suggests one of the challenges is museums may be hesitant to incorporate fictional narratives to support their content. The newly released e-book *Museums at Play*, edited by Katey Beale, compiles a series of essays that look at how games (any from computer interactives to augmented reality) are being used in museums.⁴⁹ Many of the contributors acknowledge the same values as traditional gaming scholars, but look at specific applications and benefits for museum audiences.

In one such article, "The One-Two Punch: Synergy between Simulation Games and Other Interactive Approaches in Exhibitions," Alexander Goldowsky and Maureen McConnell advise further grounding simulations in reality with artifacts and stories. If there is no exhibition space, this could just as easily take place in performance talk-backs. In "The Games People Play," Stephanie Lambert assigns games to different learning styles; social action simulations then welcome a variety of learners, as seen in

Gutenschwager's diagram. She states that social learners will benefit from role-play interaction while simulations are better catered to those of intellectual learning styles because of their representation of real-world systems. Lambert, Goldowsky, and McConnell all feel the advantage to games is feedback loops and systems illustrations. Joe Cutting backs this notion up in "Telling stories with games" in saying the described system should relate to a physical situation rather than abstract concept. The system this thesis application exemplifies is genocide as a catalyst to a complicated web of poverty in which one ailment feeds another (such as poor education resulting in lack of HIV prevention, as outlined in the UNMDG).

Cutting believes that games make it easier to understand a physical reality than books or films and offers clear advice for museum game developers. First, he states all games have a protagonist, often played in the first person by the participant (in this case, refugees). He then discusses the importance of choice-making, how choices illustrate a feedback loop of cause and effect that indicates a level of success and helps improve subsequent choice-making. Developers must therefore find pre-existing feedback loops in content. In the case of genocide content, this loop may be how victims quickly learn that the choices that best guarantee survival are running, hiding, offering bribes, or denying one's ethnic or religious origins. Additionally, Cutting advises museums to be clear about content that is background information and that which is the message participants are to take away from the game. Similarly, Goldowsky and McConnell recommend limiting the complexity of the systems in order to fit a manageable time frame.

UNHCR REFUGEE GAMES

Against All Odds and *Passages*, games produced by the United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees (UNHCR), exemplify well-researched refugee narratives. *Games for Change* also offers an online refugee game through Oxfam, but it simplifies the refugee story to that of a basic video game; one character runs, hides, and jumps to dodge mines and grab food. The UNHCR games lack the immersion and emotional engagement actors bring to social action simulations, but are of interest to this thesis because they illustrate clear choices that refugees have to make to survive.

Against All Odds “You are living in great danger and must flee your country. Will you survive? Test Yourself!”

This online game is targeted at ages 7 and up. It breaks a (nonspecific) refugee story into three levels: War and Conflict, Border Country, and A New Life. Among the choices one has to face are how to answer questions in an interrogation room, what to pack when fleeing home, the mode of escape transportation, where to hide, among others. You quickly learn that the more difficult choices to make are the ones that help you survive and keep the game going. Besides receiving a brief explanation, the only repercussions to making a wrong choice is starting the level over.



Fleeing by truck in Against All Odds.



Against All Odds' interrogation level.

Passages

This game can be played for groups of 15-67 people and takes half a day including debriefing. A detailed packet with instructions, background information, and player documents is available online. The game consists of ten smaller exercises: family make-up, escape and separation, emergency supply case, temporary shelter, deciding to leave your country, border crossing, setting up camp, the family spokesman, meeting the local population, and repatriation. Event cards are used to add risk and choice into the game. *Passages* is similar to the Red Cross's *In Exile For A While* targeted at youth in Canada.

SOCIAL GAMES

Many existing social games were developed by charities, NGOs or educators, such as *Play Just Like You*, *Games for Change*, *O.S. Earth Global Simulations* (based on Buckminster Fuller's *World Game*) and Jane Elliott's *Blue Eyes/Brown Eyes*, a classroom simulation about prejudice using the color of students' eyes to determine superiority. TEAR Australia is a Christian organization that works with community and church groups to advocate and provide relief for the poor. They developed simulation games that teach social issues ranging from slum living, clean water to child labor. While they range in intensity, the games are designed to be flexible for different time frames and venues. The kits include instructions, visual aids, life stories, information about TEAR partners, and ways to respond to the needs of the poor.

Ben Thurley, the writer and creator of most of TEAR simulations, says simulation games offer challenges that are emotional, spiritual, and physical, and that the rewards can be great. His games target issues of social need such as slum life, refugees, poverty, etc. The goals are to raise awareness, knowledge, empathy, and action amongst their participants. He claims a benefit of simulations is to get as close to the actual conflict as possible without ever being at risk. At the same time, a simulation is never to be confused with reality. Thurley insists the experience demands self-awareness of its simplification. He believes that a simulation has failed if it does an injustice or is disrespectful to the people it is representing. The tips he gives to simulation developers are to be well-informed about the topic and have respect for the

[Global Survivor simulation is] definitely no substitute for walking alongside and living alongside people in poverty, but it's a tool to give people a chance to step out of their own reality in a limited way and for a short time, in order to gain more empathy and understanding, and to be challenged to respond.

Ben Thurley

people living that reality. Connections for taking social action come naturally out of successful design.⁵⁰

David Begbie is the director of the Global Village Life X-periences at Crossroads Foundation, a Hong Kong charity that has adapted Thurley's simulations for their audiences. He summarizes their impact in saying they are a new area of experiential learning that empowers people and effects change. Their cast is "omni-knowing," responsive to visitor reactions while never breaking character, and careful to push people to the line but not over it. He says non-English speakers have the same experience as native English speakers do, implying that empathy in a simulation transcends linguistic comprehension. One of the challenges with traveling simulation exhibitions, he claims, is making them adaptable and relevant for different audiences.⁵¹ The UNHCR advised him that if their simulations are to be reproduced, their tone must be maintained.

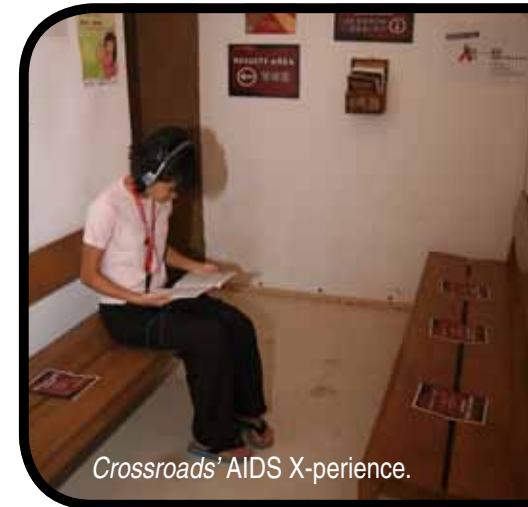
This thesis strives to merge the interactivity and strategy of games with the immersion of live-action simulations. An example social game that illustrates the complicated system of poverty is *Basti Life*, in which

participants fight for their survival in an Indian shanty slum. Placed into "family groups" of 5-7, participants are debriefed on the background of slums in India and the rules of the game. One 2.5m x 2.5m mat is provided per family to simulate the size of an actual slum home. Participants must make paper bags out of newspaper and glue (flour and water) to be sold to vendors.

As the game progresses, participants experience slum life firsthand: bags are bought for varying rates, toilets cost money and are often one's last priority, if a family member breaks from work to go to the clinic, they cannot make enough bags to afford rent. Quickly families resort to begging and stealing or end up with a loan shark, and women provide massages and hugs to vendors for large sums of money. After, the group breaks character and discusses their reactions and possible solutions to the injustices in slum living. *Slum Survivor* takes *Basti Life* to the next level by having participants build their own slum houses out of minimal materials and basic tools, and sleep in them over night (rain or shine). *Ba Fa Ba Fa* is a game that exposes participants to the culture of "others" by making participants aware of how it feels to judge a foreign culture and be misunderstood by another; this depiction of discrimination is appropriate for the topic of genocide.

World Vision's *AIDS Experience*, while not a simulation, provides a powerful model for developing

empathy and reflection about a difficult subject. The exhibition tells four true stories of African children with AIDS (which Crossroads adapted to involve characters from different circumstances and countries). Visitors are given individual headsets to listen to the characters tell their story. They are pulsed through rooms by the narration and are allowed to explore replica environments and props as they listen. The rooms include the characters' homes, work, hospitals, etc. At the end of the story, visitors gather in a clinic and silently wait for the results of their "blood test," receiving their own positive or negative HIV diagnosis.



Crossroads' AIDS X-perience.



Teams rush to make paper bags in Basti Life.



Being led blindfolded to a camp in Oxfam's Refugee Realities.

REFUGEE SIMULATIONS

Crossroads Foundation offers a social action simulation called *Refugee Run* which is targeted at ages 15 and up. Other social action simulations about refugees include

Doctors Without Borders' *Refugees in the Heart of the City*, Oxfam's *Refugee Realities* and *Caminata Nocturna* in Hidalgo, Mexico.

Refugee Realities is a combined indoor and outdoor simulation in Australia targeted at younger audiences. Visitors are first split into families and then led through by a

volunteer. Half the group runs, half hides,

and they are reunited at the refugee camp border, to which they are led blindfolded in a line. Opportunities are provided along the way to break the simulation and reflect. Once inside the camp, visitors have a chance to see and touch objects related to life in a refugee camp, such as amputee prosthetics, and cooking and shelter supplies. At the end, visitors learn about stereotypes and how refugees resettle in Australia. *Caminata Nocturna*, part of Parque EcoAlberto, simulates crossing the U.S. border as an illegal immigrant. The experience is targeted at tourists and its goal is to raise awareness of the hardships immigrants go through. The experience takes place at night and is guided by actors who have crossed the real border several times as immigrants.

Youth Refugee Simulation Prototype

Crossroads has received requests to recreate their *Refugee Run* for primary school students. Part of this



TO FIND OUT
MORE ABOUT
CROSSROADS'
REFUGEE RUN
SIMULATION, GO
TO PAGE 36



Youth Refugee Run prototype camp scene.



Youth Refugee Run prototype jail scene.

*The first [goal of a simulation
is] emotion, icing on top of
the cake is action.*
High School Student

thesis' empirical investigation includes the collaboration with Hong Kong International School in developing a social action simulation by high school students, targeted at second graders. The goal was to apply knowledge of museum exhibition planning and design to prototype *Refugee Run* for younger audiences. The production was developed in the graduate Video, Film, and Technology museum class at University of the Arts.

In order to make *Refugee Run* appropriate for this age group, while keeping the live-action format, several changes were incorporated into the experience. Instead of participants taking a first person point of view, they shadow the life of a refugee character, Asha, played by an actress. The events would happen to Asha not to the participants. The distance between the story and audience was increased to make them feel safe, but having formed a bond with Asha, they would still be emotionally engaged with the story. Another change was that the audience carried with them a "passport" notebook. Reflection periods were inserted into the story line at appropriate places in order to give the kids a break from the drama and a chance to process and make personal connections. For example, after the 'attack' on Asha's village, Asha encouraged the kids to write or draw three items they would take with them if they had to flee their home. When Asha was traveling to her new home, the downtime of the "flight" was used to write down thoughts and feelings. And when the passports were taken away at the border crossing, the students would grasp the importance of identity and citizenship. The story was adapted to connect to the students' everyday lives in Hong Kong and it ended with them writing letters to a judge on behalf of themselves or Asha to get relief

from wrongful imprisonment. Everyone ends up safely resettled in Canada. The hope was that kids would see how by taking action (letter writing) they could make a difference.

With close supervision, the high school students wrote scripts, built sets, designed accompanying visuals and sound effects, and acted in the simulated story. At the beginning of the week, the students listened to a presentation by a refugee aid organization, met real refugees, and experienced two simulations themselves (*Dialogue in the Dark* and *Refugee Run*). Doing so allowed them to feel like "experts" on the topic; they understood what is involved in creating simulations and experienced one from the visitors' point of view. Both the high school and primary school students benefitted from the experience. The second graders knew they were going to go through a simulation but did not have many expectations for what was involved. The participants were separated into groups of different sizes (smallest around five, largest around ten) and led through the simulation. They proved able to successfully suspend their disbelief and participated actively in the story. After the simulation, the students continued learning about refugees in class. Video interviews with the students weeks after the event revealed that they had retained a strong memory of the simulation and could describe a typical refugee experience. Adult observers said that the simulation could have been more intense but a third grade audience might be more appropriate developmentally.

At the end of the workshop, a focus group was held with three high school students and Martin E. Schmidt, a humanities teacher referenced earlier in this

investigation. The group described the pros of simulations having an emotional quality, in that they put people in a situation where they have to react. After experiencing simulations, they felt both guilty and lucky for their own circumstances compared to those of refugees. They felt the impact of simulations resonates months after experiencing it, compared to a few days after watching movies. The students believed the simulation was more successful with smaller groups than larger groups. They observed that in developing simulations, it is important to know who your audience is and be flexible in responding to changes. They saw the designer's role as developing emotions, but felt it was up to the audience's own will to take action after the event. Resources should be provided for those who want to take action; one student remarked, "Without guidance, emotion is put to waste." They discussed the importance of the reflection and commented on how audiences should not be told too much before the experience in order to maintain the suspense and tension. They had mixed opinions about whether simulations should show multiple points of view. Some felt that it was more accurate to depict multiple sides of a story but others felt it complicated things too much, that the main objective should be to represent those in need. Everyone agreed that the talk-back and classroom were good places for exploring the complexity of the issues after the simulation.

FRONT-END SURVEY

MUSEUM FIELD

Methodology

The museum field front-end survey took the form of an open-ended questionnaire to allow participants flexibility in responding appropriately to their areas of expertise. The survey was targeted at museum professionals who have experience or are currently working with teens, exhibiting difficult subjects, and/or museum theatre. The survey was e-mailed to each participant and the option was provided to reply in writing or in a phone interview. The majority of participants opted to discuss over the phone, which allowed for an in-depth conversation and prompted other questions beyond the survey. Because the responses are detailed and varied, they have been summarized in the following pages. A total of 11 individuals participated. The participants, and their respective titles and institutions, are listed below in alphabetical order by first name:

Anna Slafer, International Spy Museum, Director of Education and Programming

Eric Olson, The Children's Museum of Indianapolis, Interpretation Manager

George Buss, Minnetrista, Director of Experience and Education, and former President of IMTAL

Greg Macklin, International Spy Museum, Director of Operations

Joe Nicholson, UJMN Architects + Designers, AIA, IDSA

Marguerite Jagard, Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation and Library, Education Coordinator

Michelle Evans, Adult Experience Specialist, Conner Prairie

Nora Berger-Green, National Constitution Center, Director of Theatre Programs

Nina Simon, Consultant, Former Experience Developer for *Operation Spy* at International Spy Museum

Stephanie Long, Science Museum of Minnesota, Manager of Public Programs and Science Live Theatre

Tessa Bridal, The Children's Museum of Indianapolis, Director of Interpretation

Some of the questions were answered in a general way and others in the context of various exhibitions including: *The Power of Children (POC)* and *Take Me There – Egypt* at The Children's Museum of Indianapolis; *Operation Spy (Op Spy)* at International Spy Museum; *Air Force One Discovery Center (AFODC)* at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation and Library; National Civil War Museum; Rwanda Genocide Museum; a Ball Jar Factory exhibition at Minnetrista; *Race, Race to the Finish Line, Voices* and *The Value of Life, Nanoscale Science – Theatre School Program* at the Science Museum of Minnesota; *The Living News (TLN)* at National Constitution Center; and *Follow the North Star (FTNS)* at Conner Prairie.

Survey Goals

The front-end survey was conducted to gather examples and recommendations for developing exhibitions and programs on difficult subject matter, as well as expert opinion on museum theatre and working with teen audiences. Participants were asked to describe the work they have done, in order to compare the similarities and differences to this thesis, and provide resources for further exploration. The survey intended to provide a foundation analysis of the museum theatre work that has been done with difficult subjects in order to better build simulation and choice-making into the audience experience. The survey questions were designed to ensure that the thesis project is in line with museum goals and audiences, and that it is completing new and original work.

Question 1 and its sub-questions addressed exhibitions with difficult subject matter. The responses included theatre programs but were not limited to them.

1a. Briefly describe your work:

The described projects are listed to the left.

1b: What approaches to exhibiting difficult subjects work well and do not work well?

Among the approaches to exhibiting difficult subjects that work well, professionals discuss physical design of spaces, the importance of reflection, responsible actors, and the benefits of live programming.

Good approaches to physical design of difficult subjects include making spaces easy to navigate, providing an opportunity to build on existing learning,

and providing places to rest and reflect on the stories. Bridal describes the Rwanda Museum of Genocide as an example of an exhibition developed by the affected community that also functions as a memorial. Its location on a hill overlooking the city, its simple architecture, and its proximity to mass graves assist in visitors' reflection of the war. The museum uses a variety of different visual media to reflect the individuals of the genocide; some of the photographs of the deceased donated to the museum were the only one the families had left. The environment of *POC* is designed to look like spaces where the events happened and functions as both a performance space and exhibition that visitors can explore on their own. Bad approaches to designing for difficult subjects include overloading visitors with too much information or text, even when the voice is friendly or in the first person, and romanticizing or cleaning up history. Additionally, Evans advises giving visitors a choice and proper warning before difficult content, although too much choice can be overwhelming. *Op Spy* balances this by providing opportunities for both large group and small group participation, while *AFODC* provides students with background information before their visit.

Olson and Bridal stress the need for visitors to be given an opportunity to reflect, and to assist in this, the environment should be uplifting. They used to have visitors fill out a "Take Action Worksheet," but found that people need time after the performance to process, so they softened their approach. They recommend that staff be available for questions but never obtrusive. Olson also notes visitor expectations; kids expect fun play at a children's museum so they had to consider a proper transition for *POC*. *POC* has the least visitation

numbers but the best feedback and deepest learning.

In general, most institutions do not simply train staff as facilitators but hire actors. Olson believes formal training in acting is necessary for a convincing performance and for leading a discussion. Many individuals stressed that the programs and scripts be thoroughly researched for authenticity.

1c. How do you evaluate/assess your exhibition and your visitors?

With the exception of *AFODC* in which visitors are questioned during the program about the choices they made, much of the evaluation is completed by visitors shortly after the experience. The assessment takes the form of visitor-generated displays (placing a form in a ball jar at Minnetrista), surveys to schools and families, and post-performance interviews (The Children's Museum of Indianapolis). Guest books and online surveys are also popular. However, Bridal suggests that, "anything impactful is long-term." While short-term evaluation can indicate any immediate success, long-term evaluation, while more difficult to conduct, can help make aware the feelings generated in an exhibition. Nicholson emphasized qualitative over quantitative evaluation.

Question 2 and its sub-questions addressed museum theatre.

2a. Briefly describe your work:

Much of that described was the same as question 1a.

2b. In your opinion, how willing are audiences to participate in role-playing?

The responses about how willing audiences are to participate in role-play vary and are dependent on other factors such as topic, age, environment, and the individual's personality or background. Those who have used role-play claim success, and often participants need to ease into it.

If the topic is too personal, such as 9/11, Bridal recommends giving the audience space and not engaging them in role-play or discussion right away. She believes that unless a program is structured very thoughtfully, such as the *Race* exhibition from Science Museum of Minnesota, people need time to process.

In general, those interviewed suggest that teens are the least willing to participate in role-play unless they can lead, are given specific roles and direction, and assigned a particular task. A more open-ended approach suits adults and children. Olson says it helps when school groups have been prepped by their teachers beforehand, such as reading Anne Frank's *Diary of A Young Girl* before visiting *POC*. However, he also claims role-play does not necessarily make kids think they know how an experience is, and is wary of traumatizing young visitors. Nicholson feels children prefer to role-play over adults and teens, while Macklin has experienced adults dominating role-play too much in *Op Spy* because of their level of spy knowledge.

Jagard says their immersive environments encourage active role-play. Buss believes role-play requires a safe, comfortable environment and one's willingness depends also on who they are with. Macklin too feels visitors should not be forced to role-play, but also states that expectations can influence their willingness.

Nicholson states of audiences, “narrative experiences trigger their own experiences,” so believes role-play requires one feeling comfortable sharing their own life stories. Olson has found many people hesitate to role-play because it takes a lot of courage to speak out in public. Bridal’s experience has taught her that visitors are less likely to participate if surrounded by strangers; however, Macklin claims strangers take it more seriously and school groups are challenging to keep focused.

2c. Does your program include talk-backs? If so, how are they structured?

All individuals interviewed utilize group reflection, talk-backs or talking circles, and many stress that the facilitators be flexible, respectful, and accommodating to their audience.

Buss says talk-backs are great as an educational and evaluation tool and for visitors to “unpack” their experience. Slafer wishes they had integrated more discussion into *Op Spy*, but they do offer a debriefing for schools (that is aligned with curriculum) and corporate programs. *AFODC* integrates discussion into the program narrative itself. Bridal sees talk-backs as an opportunity to engage with the presenter, the topic, and other visitors, and says artifacts and props can be used to encourage participation. Additionally, many visitors want to ask questions about the production itself, such as costumes and acting. Evans says while costumed actors can be responsive, they often have staff members in contemporary clothing available to field questions from the audience during their programs.

Bridal feels the structure of a talk-back depends on why it is done in the first place. At The Children’s Museum of Indianapolis, suggestions are provided, such as asking specific questions and relating to additional stories. Olson says they use an open and structured format consistent to the program, but facilitators adjust the discussion depending on the audience. Some visitors need guidance, others can’t wait to participate, and some are not sure what they want. Their facilitators are trained to treat each show as a “factory reset.” They expect the best from each group or else they risk cheating new audiences. Their goal is not to lead them to a conclusion but to make them think about an issue. The audience has the option to leave at all times. The talking circles at the Science Museum of Minnesota have Native American origins; outside consultants were hired to train museum facilitators. They are so popular they have trouble meeting demands.

2d. Have you used museum theatre to explore difficult subjects? If so, what approaches work well and do not work well?

Many treated this question as the same as 1b, so many of the approaches that work well in designing exhibitions with difficult subject matter carry over to museum theatre.

Long recommended open-structure programs, where characters do not resolve the situation. Both Olson and Bridal say it is important that actors break character and address the audience directly. Because museum theatre is often a visitors’ first and only theatre experience, they rarely do “fourth wall” performances and treat the audience as though they were there.

Bridal stresses that the design of the performance space be considered early on so that people can see and hear comfortably, and states that many museums fail their audiences by “slapping on” interpretation after an exhibition is designed. Similarly, Evans recommends providing enough space for guests to absorb and ask questions. Olson’s goal with museum theatre is to bring issues to life, to make personal connections to history, and to provide audiences with new ways to access information. He hopes that after visiting *POC*, visitors will not view people as “the other” next time they are faced with discrimination, and hopes kids leave knowing they can make a difference in the world. In training, both Macklin and Olson tell every actor to bring their own personality and strengths to their performance and are encouraged to alter the script as needed. Macklin adds that their training takes place over two weekend workshops and is 90% directed at worst case scenarios so actors feel prepared.

2e. How do you evaluate/assess your program and your visitors?

Evaluation of museum theatre takes a variety of forms, from surveys to observations to interviews. Buss’ experience is in setting evaluation goals beforehand and then measuring those goals based feedback forums. If the goal of the experience is empathy, Simon suggests asking open-ended questions. The Children’s Museum of Indianapolis tries to record what it can, including audience numbers, direct quotes, summaries of discussions, and questions from the audience. Their staff avoids asking their audience intimidating questions like, “what did you learn?” *Op Spy* utilizes comment cards, which rank the experience out of five.

Question 3 and its sub-questions addressed exhibiting difficult subject matter with early teens.

3a. What approaches work well and do not work well?

Among the approaches to handling difficult subjects with teens that work well, professionals discuss having a social environment, use of interactives, and asking personal questions.

Simon says that teens need to feel like a situation is cool and that they will not be laughed at. Participation is a delicate balance because people like to participate in different ways. Nicholson suggests that teens do not connect to the total experience unless they are interested in a topic, but often are paying more attention than one thinks. Regarding social issues, Olson says that some teens are angry with the state of the world and want to tackle its problems while others do not care. He suggests asking them harder and more personal questions to assist them with grappling more deeply with the subject. Evans recommends getting them as involved as possible by providing choices, letting them ask questions, and through hands-on activities.

3b. How do you create a safe and respectful environment for discussing difficult subjects?

In creating a safe and respectful environment the interviewees discuss physical space, encouraging discussions, and reflection.

Regarding the design of an environment, Nicholson considers lights, sound, personal space, ceiling height, acoustics, and the room's organization, saying that

circular discussions are less intimidating than square tables. Bridal says the exhibition sets the tone for the visitors in style, depth, and "the how." Programs will warn participants of the difficult subject material verbally and graphically before starting. Jagard advises small groups in isolated rooms for intimacy.

Long stresses anonymity and relevancy. Olson and Bridal recommend responding to visitor participation openly, positively, respectfully, and with support and encouragement. No response is ever wrong, and misassumptions can be corrected with the help of other affirmations. Bridal also points out that if the person leading the conversation does not feel safe themselves, they will not convey safety to the audience. This takes practice, trial and error with each presenter. Evans points out that everyone brings different experiences to a program, so they try to be mindful of individuals' comfort and familiarity with the topic. She adds that the way they approach their audiences in difficult subjects, with respect and openness, should be the same as any other subject or program.

3c. In your opinion, what is the capacity of early teens to empathize with the subject?

Everyone interviewed unanimously feels that early teens are capable of empathizing with difficult subjects and feeling a sense of justice. The Children's Museum of Indianapolis even awards teens who have done social work in the community. Nicholson adds they may feel more comfortable when it resonates with the entire group. Evans comments that early teens may demonstrate more empathy when participating in a family group versus a school group. This is perhaps because they are less willing to show vulnerability

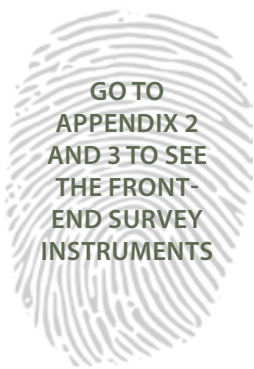
around friends, but that depends on the culture of the school and teacher. Providing material to prepare teen audiences beforehand helps to get them in the right mind set to open themselves up to empathy.

3d. What group size range do you think is appropriate for a simulation with early teens?

The group size recommended by professionals ranges between twelve people to two classrooms depending on the type of program. Twelve is ideal for throughput, dwell time, and comfort level according to Nicholson. Evans finds this group size offers more opportunity for each individual to open up whereas the more outspoken individuals may dominate large group participation. On the contrary, Olson warns against groups that are too small, saying that because there is more individual attention, visitors can feel uncomfortable participating.

4. Additional comments, advice and areas for further research are appreciated.

Additional comments, advice, and areas for further research that were discussed include choice-making, authenticity, nonprofit versus for profit institutions, ethics, and other examples of live-action simulations.



GO TO
APPENDIX 2
AND 3 TO SEE
THE FRONT-
END SURVEY
INSTRUMENTS

Images, Tables, and Figures

- Pg. 10 Schmidt 156. (Table 1)
- Pg. 11 Schmidt 125. (Fig. 2)
- Pg. 12 Property of the author. (top and bottom)
- Pg. 14 Jackson, Anthony and Jenny Kidd. *Performance, Learning & Heritage*. Manchester: Centre for Applied Theatre Research, 2008: 53. Print. (Fig. 3)
- Pg. 15 Jackson and Kidd 138-140. (Table 2)
- Pg. 17 Courtesy of S. Leigh Thompson, The Forum Project.
- Pg. 20 Strack, Fritz. "The Different Routes to Social Judgments: Experiential versus Informational Strategies." *The Construction of Social Judgments*. Ed. Leonard L. Martin and Abraham Tesser. Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1992: 252. Print. (Fig. 4)
- Pg. 21 Carlston, Donal E. "Impression Formation and the Modular Mind: The Associated Systems Theory." *The Construction of Social Judgments*. Ed. Leonard L. Martin and Abraham Tesser. Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1992: 305. Print. (Fig. 5, left)
- Pg. 21 Carlston 315. (Fig. 5, right)
- Pg. 23 Gutenschwager, Gerald. "Gaming, Education and Change." *JAE*. Vol. 33, No. 1, *Gaming*. Sept. 1979: 31. Print. (Fig. 6)
- Pg. 24 UNHCR. *Against All Odds*, 2005. Web. 14 Jan. 2011. < <http://www.playagainstallodds.com> >. (top and bottom, screen shots)
- Pg. 25 Courtesy of Crossroads Foundation. (top)
- Pg. 25 Property of the author. (bottom)
- Pg. 26 Seiler, Daniel. "Refugee Realities in Mildura." *Refugee Realities Resources*. Oxfam Australia, n.d. Web. 20 Nov. 2010. < <http://www.oxfam.org.au/refugee/public/resources> >. (top)
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*... theatre is a fiction to which the audience consents,
and thus it can provide a non-threatening framework
for dealing with complex, crucial social issues ...*

ASTC, A Stage for Science



CHAPTER 3: CASE STUDIES



ANALYSIS CRITERIA

- **Institutional Context:** Mission and goals of host organization and cost to attend program.
- **Location:** Context of simulation in host institution, its venue and geography.
- **Target Audience:** Age, demographic.
- **Group Size:** Maximum and/or average group size.
- **Duration:** How long program lasts and how frequently it runs.
- **Narrative Sequence:** Events and story line.
- **Design:** Use of sets to depict story locale, costumes, multimedia, etc.
- **Audience Role-Play:** Communal or individual roles? In familiar groups or with strangers?
- **Degree of Audience Choice-Making:** How do the audiences' actions alter the narrative?
- **Safety:** Precautions taken to protect audiences physically and psychologically, dependent on target audience.
- **Authenticity:** How and to what degree does the simulation reflect reality?
- **Pre- and Post-Simulation Briefing:** Opportunities to orient to and reflect on the experience.
- **Supplemental Educational Resources:** Additional materials for teachers such as lesson plans.
- **Evaluation:** Assessment methodology and audience feedback.

The following case studies were selected because of their similarities as highly immersive, emotionally-driven, live-action simulations as well as their differences in content, institutional context, and degree of choice-making. The criteria used to analyze the case studies was set in order to objectively evaluate and compare the programs. Qualitatively inspecting the case studies helps determine whether or not the program meets its intended goals and lays a foundation for best practices of social action simulations from which to model the thesis application.

Case Study 1: *Refugee Run*, Crossroads Foundation¹

Case Study 2: *Dialogue in the Dark (DiD)*,
Dialogue Social Enterprise²

Case Study 3: *Follow the North Star (FTNS)*, Conner
Prairie³

Case Study 4: *Operation Spy (Op Spy)*, International
Spy Museum⁴

1: REFUGEE RUN

CROSSROADS FOUNDATION, HONG KONG



The site of Crossroads' Refugee Run.

Institutional Context

Mission: Crossroads Foundation connects people in need with people who can help. Crossroads' Global Village offers a themed, immersive environment where people can experience global need firsthand.

Crossroads is a non-profit organization based in Hong Kong that offers four services in line with their mission. Global Village uses education to serve as a "crossroad" between those in need and those who can help in the form of service and simulation, the latter called Life X-perience. The goal of *Refugee Run* is to step into the shoes of a refugee, and it is free of charge.

Location

Tuen Mun, Hong Kong, a removed, rural district. Also performed annually at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

Target Audience

Recommended 16 and up; targeted at schools, service groups, and corporate teams.

Group Size

Ideal group size is 20 – 80 people.

Duration

Two hours. It is also performed as part of a 24-hour poverty simulation called *Slum Survivor*.

Narrative Sequence

Audience is orientated to the experience, given background information about the war and culture of Afghanistan and the nature of the simulation. They are asked to have a moment of silence to reflect and get in character. The audience is then rushed upstairs to the simulation floor and narrative begins in an Afghan home. There they are warned that they must flee, and almost immediately experience a surprise attack. They are ushered down a path through a minefield and queue up at a border crossing. Armed soldiers permit entry only once they confiscate an item of value, such as jewelry or shoes. The audience must fill out a camp registration form which is difficult to read. The guards are rude and loud and demand speed and respect. The audience is then asked to find members of their family or form a group of around six. Once inside the camp, the family groups hang their tent. Night and day are then regulated. At night, the families huddle inside their tent and try to avoid the soldiers' attention. During the day, the audience can visit a medic, go to school, or retrieve food and water. A few events are acted out by the staff such as the supposed discovery of a weapon on an audience member (who is then thrown into jail), a fight, and a visit from an agency. The end of the simulation is announced and everyone breaks character. The group then gathers to debrief.

Design

Crossroads' site is a former World War II British army barrack. The sets are simple but immersive. The entire simulation takes place indoors, some cement walls have been exploded to allow entry from one area to the next (oriental rugs hide one such entrance for the attack). The environments include an Afghan home,



Refugee Run's camp environment.

straw covered minefield, gated border crossing, refugee camp, clinic, school, and brothel. The camp is painted dirty yellow,

and the ceiling is covered with a net mesh. It includes canvas tents, bricks, a cart for food, and simple props. Actors are costumed in army/refugee gear.

Audience Role-Play

In the initial orientation, every participant is given an ID card with an Afghan name, their age, their assets, and current health status. If someone has an injury, they must wear a bandage on the appropriate body part. In accordance to the culture, women are required to wear a shawl covering their hair and are not allowed to speak to any male outside of their family. The audience is asked to reflect on their roles, but how much they role-play their characters beyond that is up to them. Because of the organized group attendance, the audience is usually familiar with one another.

Degree of Audience Choice-Making

Within the camp, the audience may choose how to spend their money (they cannot receive food unless they purchase a bowl and plate). They may decide to collect money as a family, or hoard it to bribe a guard. They may also experience a school (learn foreign language) or clinic (assessed by a nurse). But choices by the audience do not change the narrative.

Safety

Participants are warned about the intensity of the simulation beforehand. They are told they will get more out of the experience if they continue to play their roles until the end, but if they feel they must leave, they can approach one of the actors. The production is highly staffed, the rooms and paths large for egress, and exterior doors are located in almost every room.

Authenticity

The Crossroads staff (who are also the actors) have done much fieldwork in refugee camps and some are former refugees themselves, including Raphael, who tells his story and relates it to the visitor experience. The simulation was trialed with and tested by Afghan refugees who verify its accuracy. In the orientation, director David Begbie displays an Afghan carpet with a war scene depiction. In the debriefing, he discusses facts and figures about refugee camps, as well as about refugees who have resettled in Hong Kong. Recent adaptations have depicted a more general refugee story without explicitly identifying Afghanistan to minimize political implications.

Pre- and Post-Simulation Briefing

In addition to the events listed above, Begbie encourages the audience to share their thoughts as a large group and in smaller groups. The format is consistent for each audience. He asks questions like "What happens when the war is over?," "Are there refugees in Hong Kong?," "What is the difference between you, me, and a refugee?" The answer to the latter is "circumstance." Finally, a document is handed out that tells participants of ways they can get involved, take action, or find further information about refugees.

... showed me how numb we become to propaganda/news ... it has become a lot harder to sit on the sidelines, letting it happen.
Refugee Run Participant

Supplemental Educational Resources

Crossroads has worked with teachers in professional development seminars and workshops. In so doing they have catered the programs to various curricula and Hong Kong educational standards, which emphasize moral and civic educational experiences. Pre- and post-simulation lessons have been developed although are not prescriptive in order to participate.

Evaluation

There has been no formal summative evaluation conducted at Crossroads or TEAR Australia. Crossroads has gathered informal feedback and responses from their audience, sometimes making adjustments to the story (i.e. they used to perform a death scene but found it too difficult).



Talk-back with Raphael, former refugee from the Congo.

2: DIALOGUE IN THE DARK

DIALOGUE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE



The entrance to Dialogue in the Dark, Hong Kong.

Institutional Context

Mission: to facilitate social inclusion of marginalized people on a global basis.

Dialogue Social Enterprises is a “more-than-profit” organization, a business with social objectives. The goal of *DiD* is to, “raise awareness and create tolerance for Otherness, [overcome] barriers between ‘us’ and ‘them’, facilitate social inclusion of marginalized people on a global scale, and create jobs for the disadvantaged people through the world.” The exhibition (in Atlanta, Georgia) costs \$25.92 for adults, \$21.60 for seniors, and \$17.28 for children.

Location

International venues located in over 30 countries. Case study visitation was located in a commercial shopping center in Hong Kong.

Target Audience

Not recommended for children under 8, those under 12 require adult supervision.

Group Size

8-10 people.

Duration

60-75 minutes, audiences are pulsed through every 12 minutes.

Narrative Sequence

The audience is first given a brief orientation by a staff member and taught how to use a blind cane. They are asked to turn off any electronic devices, especially those with lights. The group then meets their guide, a blind individual, who leads them through the exhibition space in complete darkness.

The audience becomes accustomed to using their other senses in various environments. These include (in order of experience) a park, a boat ride, and a city street with a marketplace (in some locations this is replaced by an art gallery). Different tasks are asked of the participants, such as finding and sitting on a bench, picking out fruit at the market, etc. After an intense exploration without sight, the group is led to a concert hall for quiet reflection. They listen to a layered classical piece of music. The last blind experience is in a café where they can purchase a refreshment; they exchange money and receive change in complete darkness. The audience then sits with their blind guide and is free to ask him or her questions. Finally, the audience's vision is returned outside of the exhibition where they can explore further information or meet and debrief if they came as part of a group.

The same organization also created *Dialogue in Silence*, which gives visitors an opportunity to communicate without sound. Also led by a deaf guide, visitors wear sound cancellation headsets and practice mime, facial expressions, body language and sign language, and are tested on their new skills through games and at a Bar of Silence café. The web site says the programs are not merely simulation installations but platforms for encounters between “us” and “them.”

Design

The design of the environments is elaborately catered to enhance the sensations of touch, hearing, smell, and taste. Audiences can hold replica plants and market items, and can feel a breeze in the park and on the boat. The boat is on actual water and one is very conscious of the swaying motions and can smell the mist. Sounds of nature and street scenes are played, and the volume of the music in the concert hall encourages a closer inspection of instruments and sounds. Finally taste is incorporated in the café.

Audience Role-Play

The audience keeps their identities and do not play roles. They are, however, encouraged to communicate constantly to help other group members find their way and to dialogue with the guide. They are often in familiar groups, but can go through with strangers.

Degree of Audience Choice-Making

The audience has the freedom to explore each space in the allotted time as they desire. Interaction with other group members is inevitable, and can become quite intimate with all the blind grabbing, but the narrative sequence is strictly regulated by the guide.

Safety

Groups are encouraged to identify a partner and have someone volunteer to be the last in line. Visitors are told that they may be escorted out of the exhibition if need be, but this happens very infrequently.

The guide ensures everyone is okay through verbal communication. Each space is enclosed to allow for active and safe exploration. When the group is gathered in line to move to the next space, the guide releases the door, lets everyone through and then closes it.

Authenticity

While the environments are expertly reproduced, all the guides are blind individuals. The experience provokes a role reversal, the sighted become blind, and the blind guide becomes the expert navigator. The guides are generous with sharing their real life experiences with being blind, and this interaction is rated one of the most meaningful and memorable parts of the experience.

Pre- and Post-Simulation Briefing

Visitors can debrief and ask questions in the relaxed, although still dark, atmosphere of the café. Further space is offered for school groups to discuss, but this is not always facilitated by *DiD* staff.

Supplemental Educational Resources

A teacher's guide (referenced from the Atlanta location)

Only one hour, which has changed so much - in the head, in the heart!
Dialogue in the Dark Participant

has been created to enrich school groups' visits to *DiD* which is split into upper elementary to middle school and high school grade levels. The guide outlines the background of the exhibition, what to expect from the experience, activities for before and after the program, national and state curriculum standards, and includes a resource section for recommended books, projects, and other materials. The lesson plans focus on the themes of Communication, Empathy, and Tolerance and is made relevant to science, history, civics, language arts, social studies, visual arts, and character development classes.

Evaluation

In 1996, Orna & Co. performed extensive visitor evaluations (Fig. 7), studying *DiD*'s guest books and making calls with people five years after their visit. With the latter sample, 100% remembered the experience, 90% felt sensitized to the blind, 52% recommended it to others, and 34% wanted to go a second time. *DiD* found the exhibition's impact includes: reflection, social borders reduced, ignorance turned into openness and interest, pity turned into respect, greater effectiveness in business contexts, and increased awareness of human diversity. According to visitors, the consensus is that the exhibition changed their perspectives and they felt empathy and respect for their guides. *DiD* has determined they need to further evaluate what the change in perspective looks like (just in dialogue or also in action?) and conduct comparative studies between visitors experiences in different countries.⁵

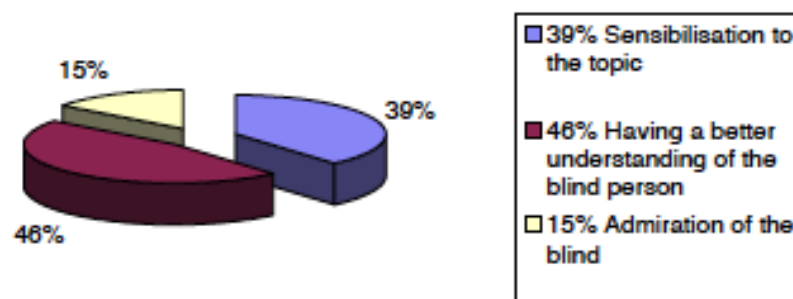


Fig 7: A graph of *DiD* audiences' change in perspective by Orna & Co.

3: FOLLOW THE NORTH STAR

CONNER PRAIRIE, INDIANA



Narrative Sequence

The narrative portrays a variety of different encounters a fugitive slave might have had in 1836 Indiana. The first event is an illegal slave sale where audience members are asked to stack wood to see if they are “hard workers.” One of the group emerges as a leader. The group meets two women who display typical attitudes of the time, “I don’t want to hurt you but you can’t stay here” and “I don’t want to get caught.” The women refer them to people who will help, the free black communities and Quakers, and warn about a local slave catcher. On the path again, they run into a former fugitive trying to rescue his family and who shares his story. The next encounter is a Southerner who complains about losing his job to free slave labor and his failure in making a life in Indiana. He sees the group as a way to make money and tells them to stay put as he leaves to find help in bringing them South. The group escapes from a barn to arrive safely at a Quaker home. They are treated with respect and offered food and water. Meanwhile a slave catcher arrives but the Quakers turn him away. The group moves again to the Wards’ home, a free black family, who offer advice for traveling to Robert’s Settlement, a nearby historical free black community. On the road again, the final encounter is a “prophet” character who reviews their experience and tells them of possible outcomes, good and bad, they might have had if they continued. The experience ends back in the Welcome Center to debrief and come down from the experience.

Design

FTNS takes place at dusk and little artificial light is used. A path has been cleared for the experience but without light, it is difficult to see what lies ahead. The

Institutional Context

Mission: To inspire curiosity and foster learning about Indiana’s past by providing engaging, individualized, and unique experiences.

Conner Prairie’s themed historic park spreads across 200 acres. Conner Prairie is a non-profit historic and interpretive site and is a Smithsonian affiliate. The goal of *FTNS* is to show a little-known side of Indiana history, the Underground Railroad, and for visitors to use the past to examine their lives today with issues of race and modern slavery. The exhibition costs \$20 admission. It was originally conceived from visiting a similar YMCA camp program.

Location

Outdoors at dusk among historical buildings, fields and woods. Participants travel along a dirt path and stop at barns and houses.

Target Audience

High school to adult, 12 minimum allowed age. Daytime version for 8th graders is available.

Group Size

12-15 people.

Duration

90 minutes, start times are staggered every 15 minutes. Limited runs in autumn and spring.

*If you're not upsetting someone,
you're not doing your job.*

Michelle Evans

*Quoting an advisor of
Follow the North Star*

use of gunfire and period props and costumes are employed. An indoor option in case of poor weather is also available but program developer Michelle Evans says the outside version has a greater impact.

Audience Role-Play

The audience represents fugitive slaves but are not given individual character roles and do not use props or clothing to get into character. They are often in familiar groups but can go through with strangers.

Degree of Audience Choice-Making

The audience is given an illusion of choice because there is time between events to consider the advice of the characters they meet and what the consequences might be. Actors sometimes act as an audience “plant” and engage the group in questions, such as whether or not they should be obedient when stacking the wood. But before the audience strays from the path, another actor stops them and keeps the story moving along. The group also receives a sense of freedom because they are given directions from location to location, and not always led by a guide.

Safety

A staff or volunteer goes with each audience group and will break character as a Conner Prairie representative should the need arise; otherwise the individual remains

in the background and tries to let the group take charge of their experience. Participants are given white sashes and are welcomed to wear them as headbands in case they feel too uncomfortable. If the sash is visible, staff treat them as though they are not there.

Authenticity

Conner Prairie underwent two years of research and development to prepare for the program. They consulted two advisory groups made up of an African American Historian, a Quaker historian, a professor of psychiatry and local teachers, community leaders, and church members. While the site and buildings are historically significant and add a level of authenticity to the experience, there are several things they felt they could not do. They do not use authentic language that would have been spoken that might be offensive, such as the “N” word, and they cannot accurately simulate the injuries or deaths that would have been common for fugitive slaves.

Pre- and Post-Simulation Briefing

The audience is first shown an orientation video in the Welcome Center and then taken by tram to the woods. A few points from orientation are reinforced by a staff member before they are led to the first stop. After the simulation is over, the group returns to a warm, well-lit interior to share cookies and lemonade. There they have an opportunity to discuss their experience. Staff members facilitate the conversation and are given some guiding questions for quieter groups. In general, they let the audience decide how much they feel like sharing and groups vary drastically. A bibliography is available for further inquiries.

Supplemental Educational Resources

A pre-visit packet for teachers has been created that outlines the program’s learning objectives, connection to academic standards, activities for before and after the program, and describes the program’s narrative. Included in the narrative description are biographies of the characters, summary of events, and logistical information. A “Teacher Leader Route Guide” and “Teacher & Chaperone Handout” are also available with important information about the program and messages (both factual and site rules) to relay to the students. Teachers are expected to participate within the simulation and instructions are provided to assist them in their role each step of the way.

Evaluation

An online survey is available and asks open-ended questions such as “How would you improve this experience?” and “What is one thing you remember about this experience?” Basic evaluation forms are available for the audience when they finish the program. A student at Indiana University conducted some long-term evaluations with participants six to twelve months after they visited Conner Prairie. Findings show participants generally feel they learned different aspects of history previously unconsidered, particularly in how slavery impacted those not directly involved. Many individuals draw parallels between historic slavery and modern day attitudes towards immigration. Conner Prairie made some adjustments to the experience based on visitor feedback, such as changing the actions of the slave hunter and the addition of the former fugitive character. Evans would like to rotate the stories to give variety for second time visitors and represent more historical perspectives.

4: OPERATION SPY

INTERNATIONAL SPY MUSEUM, D.C.



The entrance to International Spy Museum.

Institutional Context

Mission: To educate the public about espionage in an engaging manner and to provide a dynamic context that fosters understanding of its important role in, and impact on, current and historic events.

International Spy Museum is a for-profit organization owned by The Malrite Company and has no affiliation with any government, intelligence agencies, or political parties. The goal with *Op Spy* is that visitors understand what it feels like to be real intelligence officers. The exhibition costs \$16 admission.

Location

Permanent space at International Spy Museum, Washington D.C. *Op Spy* is ticketed in such a way that the audiences experience it before the rest of the museum 90% of the time.

Target Audience

12 and up.

Group Size

15 people maximum.

Duration

One hour. New groups pulsed through every 10 minutes.

Narrative Sequence

The audience begins in the first immersive environment of the simulation, a marketplace reminiscent of North Africa or Central Asia, and given a final opportunity to use rest rooms. Playing are several orientation videos about the fictional country of Khandar, the mission they are to complete, and characters of the operation. The audience act as intelligence officers helping an in-country team track down a nuclear trigger device that has gone missing. The group meets their guide who interacts with them during the experience. Pre-recorded “headquarters” and spy van tech agents provide instruction over TV monitors. Guides rely information through their headsets throughout.

The audience meet key players of the story in the mission “war room” where they manipulate surveillance cameras to follow an exchange that takes place with Agent Topaz, raising questions about her trustworthiness. The group then moves to an audio decryption room where they adjust the pitch, static, and speed of a phone conversation to listen in on a possible suspect. Next an elevator takes them “below the street” in order to break in to suspect Alec Bitar’s basement office. In an alleyway, the group works quietly in the shadows to deactivate security cameras and gain access to the office. Once inside the group is tasked with opening a safe and scanning documents without leaving any evidence that anyone was there. On hearing Bitar is on his way, the group is rushed into a getaway truck. They upload their documents and are debriefed on what they found. Twists to the story are revealed, including the affair between Bitar and Topaz. The group arrives at a safe house where they interrogate Topaz through a polygraph test.



She breaks down and admits to giving a rebel group information. The participants need to decide whether to call in reinforcements or allow the local government to take care of things. After a vote, the group flees up a staircase to a helicopter pad to leave the country. The station chief patches in to inform

them on the results of the case. Relaxing at a “bar” back in the U.S., the group watches a news report on the events as told by the media. The simulation ends with an explanation from the museum director about how the experience connects to real spy work.

Design

The environments are realistically fabricated depicting street scenes and interior spaces with close attention to detail. The elevator is a vibrating motion simulator giving the illusion of movement and the hydraulics of the getaway truck imply actual turns and breaks. While the exterior scenes (street and helicopter pad) are artificially lit, the rooftop is reinforced with strong wind and roaming spotlights. There is a high use of multimedia to aid in storytelling and interactive activities. Everything is pre-programmed and timed; after each group passes through, the rooms are reset.

Audience Role-Play

The audience represents intelligence officers but do not play individual roles and do not use costumes

to get into character. They actively participate by engaging with the interactives in large and small groups and the guide encourages dialogue as the events unfold. Typical groups include strangers except for pre-registered field trips.

Degree of Audience Choice-Making

How well the participants perform on the interactives influences the group’s final score. One example is in Bitar’s office; photographs are taken to compare the scene before and after to determine the group’s success in remaining unnoticed. Points are awarded along the way which, in addition to how the group votes on the final plot decision, determines which of five endings they will receive. An ending is provided if a group performs well, average, or poorly; the latter is only used for teams who deliberately mess up.

Safety

The group is under close supervision by their guide and all environments are professionally fabricated to avoid trip hazards and other dangers. While the pace of the story is fast and environments dramatic, the spaces are well-lit and egress safe.

Authenticity

The narrative is loosely based on the true story of A.Q. Khan who set up a black market in nuclear secrets. Besides a graphic wall label, the visitors do not have an opportunity to hear about the actual case. The timing of events is condensed, but not inappropriately so, as the aim was to convey the pressure and quick-thinking required of being a spy. Real intelligence officers helped conceptualize the experience and verified the authenticity of its gestalt. The set elements

were researched and sourced from authentic countries. The development team said the audience is not meant to understand the entire story and wanted the country to feel very exotic, but clearly fictitious, so as to avoid making any one nationality look like “the bad guys.”

Pre- and Post-Simulation Briefing

Audiences are provided an orientation to the story and the guide initiates conversation about the events. But there is no post-simulation discussion besides school groups who have a half hour reflection after the simulation. Visitors experience *Op Spy* before the rest of the museum so their experience can be reinforced through exhibitions and artifacts, but people can also choose to only experience the simulation. Director of Education and Programming, Anna Slafer, wishes there were more opportunities for discussion.

Supplemental Educational Resources

A school group package is offered that includes pre-visit activities and an on-site debriefing. *Op Spy* focuses mainly on history and government curriculum, using the experience to educate students on how intelligence impacts government policy decisions. In addition to relating the program to school curricula, the educational goals include building teamwork and conflict resolution skills, critical thinking and decision-making skills, and finding relevance to current events.

Evaluation

One thousand written surveys were conducted after opening, and comment cards are still used. Surveys reveal positive responses (ranking 4.5 out of 5) and that visitors do feel like real spies. Most common complaints are the price and large group sizes.



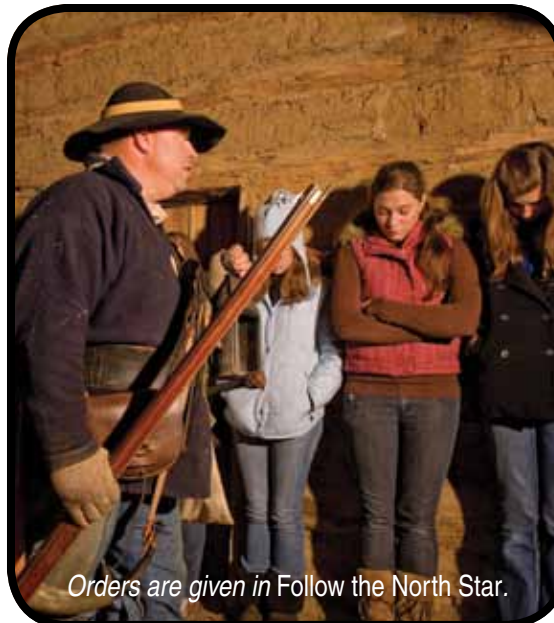
A participant holds up his Refugee Run ID card.



Negotiating food rations at Davos Refugee Run.



Participant explores further information after DiD.



Orders are given in Follow the North Star.



Participants deactivate cameras in Op Spy.

Cross-Analysis

All the presented case studies are driven by emotion and their effectiveness is aided by immersive environments. The conveyed feeling in *Refugee Run*, *FTNS*, and *DiD* is that of surviving under difficult circumstances. Empathy is achieved by stepping into the shoes of misfortunate individuals as visitors attempt to draw parallels to their daily lives.

Contrarily, *Op Spy* stirs suspense through the fast-paced decision-making of real spies. The power relationship shifts from the other cases. The audience is in control of the action, not victimized by a difficult circumstance, and acts as an intruder in a foreign place. The context of the espionage in a Middle Eastern country (albeit fictitious) could be considered controversial in light of the U.S. government's current political relationship with that region of world. In other words, *Op Spy* is a live-action, not a social action, simulation. However, it is one of the only permanent simulation experiences in a U.S. museum and its differences make it significant as a case study. Greg Macklin, Director of Operations, says the simulation, while rooted in authenticity, was intended to be entertaining. The rest of the museum fulfills the institution's educational mission and in this respect the simulation is successful. *Op Spy* is the most game-like in its approach in that it feels competitive, has clear objectives and tasks, and is action-driven; all appropriate qualities for a spy story. Additionally, *Op Spy* is the only simulation studied where the choices the audience make can determine the outcome of the

SEE THIS
ANALYSIS
APPLIED TO
THE PROJECT
WALK-THROUGH
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story. The competitive atmosphere injects urgency and motive into the audience, but risks undermining the core lessons trying to be taught. The spectacular quality of its technology and interactives can also distract from social action simulations' empathy goals.

The simulations' location is significant to the audiences' expectations of the experience before and their responses to it after. Crossroads' barracks are a humble backdrop for developing social conscience. The commute to the site away from the modern city provides a transition to get visitors in the mind-set of service learning. *NTFS*'s location in Indiana provides additional authenticity to the stories of the Underground Railroad. The atmosphere and risks of being outside at night in *NTFS* enhance the visitors' emotional responses, which is surely lost in their weather-friendly indoor version. At the end of *Op Spy*, visitors are dumped into the Spy Museum where they can further explore spy culture. Hong Kong's *DiD* takes place in a mall; the commercial environment risks bringing visitors back to their reality and comforts too quickly after the simulation. The more the environment and story differ from visitors' lives, the more unique the

experience and the longer it may resonate.

Audience enter the narrative "in media res" through an initial shocking experience (such as losing

sight or being ambushed) that quickly pulls them out of their everyday lives. The stories of *Refugee Run*, *FTNS*, and *Op Spy* are character-based and have a linear plot structure. Their duration is longer than most exhibitions but because the stories are condensed, the three cases found appropriate solutions to filling in or hiding transitional gaps of time and place. For example, in *Refugee Run* one may not consider the unrealistic proximity of the Afghan home to the border crossing because their attention is focused on actions - the yelling guards and running through the mine field.

The visitor flow in each case study is a directed path. This maintains control of the action and compliments the linear progression of the stories. The start and end of the simulations are made clear verbally. The environments hide the "real-world" and transitions in and out of the simulation are provided through orientation and reflection. *DiD* is the only case that is transparent about its being a simulation while the experience is taking place. The others use theatre and role-play to further suspend disbelief. The sets often reflect the budget and architecture of a given venue but are all equally immersive. The two for-profit institutions could afford to transform entire spaces while the non-profits made use of the aesthetics and/or history that their venues offered. According to Thomas Schubert's theories on spatial presence, if complete immersion cannot be achieved then the museum should avoid the misleading implication of reality. Instead, the use of creative storytelling and theatrics can help set the scene and engage the audiences' imagination.

Refugee Run and *FTNS* rely heavily on costumed actors playing characters. The guides' role in *DiD* and

Op Spy, as well as that of the staff "plants" in *FTNS*, is more transparent in that they break their roles to address the audience directly if required. *DiD* offers real sensory experiences, but the guide is truly blind (not acting) and the fabricated sets provide a lot of the stimulation. Much of the action in *Op Spy* is pre-recorded in sound and video installations; the guides act as officers telling the story, but are also there to trigger the multimedia.

Op Spy, *DiD*, and *FTNS* stagger small groups through the simulation while *Refugee Run* handles one group and performance at a time. Small groups are ideal for participation, but there are additional challenges in pacing and resetting each scene. During the polygraph test in *Op Spy*, it is easy to hear the sound of hydraulics as the subsequent group is experiencing the getaway truck in the previous room. Additionally, while groups can reserve tickets in all cases, *Op Spy* and *DiD* can also accommodate walk-in visitors, and as a result, participants may not be familiar with everyone.

The role-playing involved in the cases can be categorized according to Jackson's "involvement frame." In *Op Spy*, *DiD*, and *FTNS*, the audience performs periphery roles, communal members of intelligence officers, blind people, or fugitive slaves. How much participation or dissent from the group



Operation Spy's sound patching room.



FTNS participant meets a Quaker family.

they have is up to each individual, although *Op Spy* does a good job of involving everyone by separating

them into smaller groups. Alternatively, in the *Refugee Run*, visitors are asked to play a more central role, by reflecting upon or acting in accordance to a named individual's life. David Begbie claims adult audiences make more effort in role-play and can better relate to their characters because they have more life experience. For example, he witnessed an adult crying as he played a six year-old looking for his lost parents.

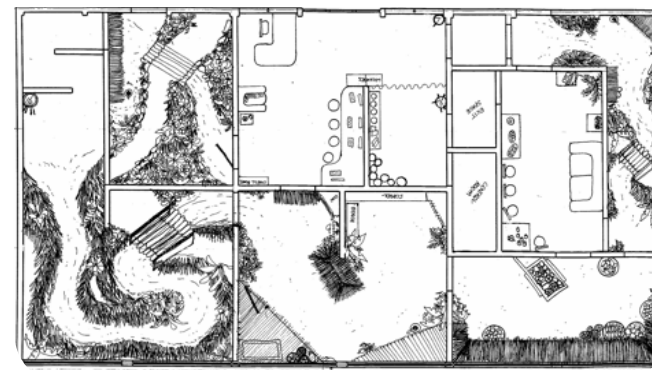
While the simulations reflect another reality certain things cannot be simulated authentically such as foreign language, injury, death, disease, and locational context. Except for a few props in the *Refugee Run*, the audiences in each simulation are dressed in contemporary clothing, which breaks the spatial presence. *FTNS* has additional challenges in authenticity in that it is the only case studied that simulates an historical period. Appropriately, they focus more on depicting accurate encounters of fugitive slaves, which they can back up with research, than the feeling of being one. The contributions from representatives of the issues, such as the blind guides in *DiD* and refugees in *Refugee Run*, add another personal firsthand connection for the audience and help to relate their simulated experience to that of real blind and displaced individuals.

Each program goes to lengths to ensure the audience is well-informed and warned about the simulations' emotional and physical challenges prior to experiencing them. And as observed, each program is equally as careful during and after the experience to ensure the audience feels safe to participate and leave, if they so choose. In the context of *FTNS*, Amy Tyson implies the excessive concern about the audiences' emotional comfort may negatively impact live-action performances. Tyson feels a program that is considered both "fun" and "scary" by participants is presenting mixed messages. She owes this inconsistency to the conflicting goals between customer service and education. For a while, participants were screened by psychologists immediately after the event and Tyson suggests that instead they be addressed by slave history scholars.⁶ The dialogue with refugees and the blind in the other cases address both content authenticity and audience empathy concerns after the simulation.

Tyson cites one example from *FTNS* in which teen participants were chastised by a guide for giggling, saying they would get the most value from the experience if they invest appropriate emotions. However, this reaction may have not been a reflection of them not taking the program seriously; rather, it may indicate teens' insecurities in not wanting to seem frightened or embarrassed in front of their friends. It cannot be assumed that if teenagers are giggling they are not personalizing or learning the content. One place to address the varying reactions inevitable with young audiences is in the classroom. If teachers treat the program with respect, adequately prepare the students for the simulation, and deconstruct it

afterwards, it is likely the students will open themselves up to the experience. All the programs offer additional resources for educators that link the simulation to classroom activities. Martin E. Schmidt supplements Crossroads' program by starting the simulation at school, "terrorizing" his students, taking away their belongings, and leading them blindfolded to the bus. As a result, the students sit in reflective silence for the 1.5 hour journey, in anticipation of what's to come, not unlike the fear real refugees might feel.

All cases, except for *Op Spy*, take advantage of a final talk-back to clarify content, share reactions, and discuss the relevancy to visitors' everyday lives. The discussion is communal and if role-play is involved, always conducted out of character. Crossroads tends to direct their sessions with a fixed set of questions and stories, aiming to reach certain conclusions, while *FTNS* makes the reflection more open-ended, allowing visitors to contribute and ask questions at their own desire. In general, each experience seems to achieve their stated goals. Part of their success is setting goals appropriate to the programs' role and capabilities in the greater context of their institutional mission.



Crossroads' Blind X-perience floor plan, similar to that of *DiD*.

Notes

1. This section is written from the author's personal experience at Crossroads and from interviews with staff, particularly David Begbie. Section verified by Begbie.
2. This section is written from the author's personal experience at *DiD's* Hong Kong location as well as the resources available on the program's web page.
3. This case study was not visited by the author. This section is written from interviews with Michelle Evans, Adult Interpretative Specialist at Conner Prairie, and the program's web page. Section verified by Evans.
4. This section is written from the author's personal experience at *Op Spy*, the program's web page, and interviews with Anna Slafer, Director of Education and Programming, Greg Macklin, Director of Operations, and Nina Simon, former Experience Developer at International Spy Museum. Section verified by Slafer.
5. Orna & Co. *Dialogue in the Dark: What are its consequences and how can they be proved?* March 2006. Web. 1 July 2010. < <http://www.dialogue-in-the-dark.com/> >.
6. Tyson 250-251.

Images, Tables, and Figures

- Pg. 36 Property of the author.
- Pg. 37 Property of the author. (left and right)
- Pg. 38 Property of the author.
- Pg. 39 Orna & Co. 11. (Fig. 7)
- Pg. 40 "Follow the North Star - 2." *Conner Prairie Newsroom*. Conner Prairie, n.d. Web. 14 Feb. 2011. < <http://www.connerprairie.org/Newsroom> >.
- Pg. 42 "ISM_Exterior." *Spy Museum Press Kit*. The Spy Museum, n.d. Web. 15 Nov. 2010. < <http://www.spymuseum.org/press/images> >.
- Pg. 43 "Courtyard." *Spy Museum Press Kit*. The Spy Museum, n.d. Web. 15 Nov. 2010. < <http://www.spymuseum.org/press/images> >.
- Pg. 44 Courtesy of Crossroads Foundation. (top left and middle left)
- Pg. 44 "Follow the North Star - 1." *Conner Prairie Newsroom*. Conner Prairie, n.d. Web. 14 Feb. 2011. < <http://www.connerprairie.org/Newsroom> >. (top right)
- Pg. 44 Property of the author. (bottom left)
- Pg. 44 "Tunnel Guests." *Spy Museum Press Kit*. The Spy Museum, n.d. Web. 15 Nov. 2010. < <http://www.spymuseum.org/press/images> >. (bottom right)
- Pg. 45 "Listening-Post." *Spy Museum Press Kit*. The Spy Museum, n.d. Web. 15 Nov. 2010. < <http://www.spymuseum.org/press/images> >. (left)
- Pg. 45 Courtesy of Crossroads Foundation. (right)
- Pg. 46 "Follow the North Star - 6." *Conner Prairie Newsroom*. Conner Prairie, n.d. Web. 14 Feb. 2011. < <http://www.connerprairie.org/Newsroom> >. (left)
- Pg. 46 Courtesy of Crossroads Foundation. (right)

Quotes

- Pg. 34 Bridal 132.
- Pg. 37 *Crossroads Foundation*, n.d. Web. 14 Nov. 2010. < <http://www.crossroads.org.hk/> >.
- Pg. 39 Orna & Co. 12.
- Pg. 41 Evans, Michelle. "Re: Thesis Questions." Message to author. 1 July. 2010. E-mail.

Risk-taking is about experimentation and pushing boundaries in ways which artists and practitioners themselves may not be sure will work. It demands courage, curiosity and desire, ... The biggest risk, of course, is taking no risks at all.

Sir Brian McMaster



CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSION



The thesis investigation explored a variety of subjects relevant to answering the question: **Can increased role-play and choice-making in museum social action simulations result in increased empathy and responsible action in daily life?** After considering the literature review, empirical research, front-end interviews, and case studies, the following chapter draws conclusions of best practices for social action simulation programs for museums and their audiences. Areas for further research is also addressed. Based on these recommendations, implications for this thesis project application are outlined. To see how these carry over into the project, continue to Part II.

Table 3: Summary of Best Practice Recommendations for Social Action Simulations in Museums

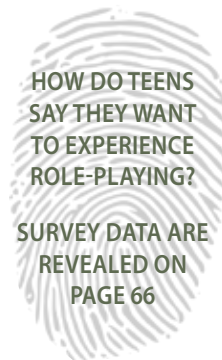
While there are many variables in producing social action simulations, the following is a general summary of best practices based on this thesis investigation.

1. The content needs to be thoroughly researched and verified by representatives of social groups.
2. The host institution needs to know their audience well, including an understanding of their expectations, social context and history, and how they construct learning within the program. This can be achieved through front-end surveys, focus groups, workshops, and prototypes.
3. Even once the organizing institution gets to know their audience, they should not assume that they know how each audience member will act and feel within a simulation. Each performance should give its audience the benefit of the doubt and be flexible to varying reactions.
4. The program should maintain an open-structure by supporting audiences while acknowledging multiple points of view and avoiding one agenda in order that participants feel free to form their own opinions.
5. The audience must be informed, understand the program's theatrical framework, and give their consent before participating in a simulation.
6. Trained actors should be hired to facilitate the program and talk-backs.
7. The program should be designed and marketed differently from the rest of the museum.
8. Ideally, a neutral, column-free space be provided for movement and fabricated or multimedia elements.
9. Groups should be small (around twelve) or opportunities provided for larger groups to divide and complete activities in smaller groups.
10. Most social action simulation narratives are linear so a directed path should be designated to represent different times and places and maintain control of the movement.
11. Multimedia is useful in enhancing the environments of social action simulations but should not be used to dramatically sway audiences' emotions and can never adequately replace live actors.
12. It should be made clear to the audience when the facilitators are acting and when they are not.
13. Participants should never be forced to participate and always be given a way out.
14. The experience should end on a hopeful note.
15. Time and a comfortable sitting environment should be provided for audiences to process post-simulation.
16. Follow-up opportunities should be offered after a simulation which can include curriculum supplements, group discussions, and resources for further information and ways to take action.
17. The facilitators must use positive, respectful, and encouraging language at all times.
18. During development, indicators of desired empathy transformation should be determined. Qualitative and long-term evaluation tools best reflect audience learning and transformation after the program.

CONCLUSION

In response to the question, **Can increased role-play and choice-making in museum social action simulations result in increased empathy and responsible action in daily life?**, it is anticipated that first person participation in difficult subjects will create personal and memorable experiences for audiences. Based on professional examples, in Jackson's quantitative study, the case studies, and front-end surveys to the museum field, it appears that when done well, participatory theatre is unparalleled in developing empathy and exploring difficult subjects. There is no shortage of theory and audience feedback to support this notion. While there will be many ethical and logistical concerns to producing this type of exhibition, the impact should outweigh the challenges.

However, what is also apparent is that while social action simulations can encourage moral and cognitive transformations, certainly more easily than many traditional object and text-based programs, they alone are not the means to an end to achieving social conscience and enacting social change. According to Schmidt's model of social conscience, social action simulations can make audiences more emotionally-engaged with their world but true empathy is a long-term process. Further work needs to be completed in a classroom beyond students' simulation visit. Social action simulations function as the initial "disorientating dilemma" by breaking participants' social bubble and giving them a close-to-authentic place to start their journey of social conscience. While institutional mission is important, learning goals must not be compromised in order to please audiences or earn revenue.



Educating through empathy can be a slippery slope, but Schmidt, Over, and Jackson demonstrate that deliberate unsettling of emotions may be necessary to achieve empathy. While true objectivity may be impossible - and discouraged - within a first person narrative, audiences should be exposed to other points of view, even if their role-play perspective remains constant. As Ochsner and Meszaros point out for stories of genocide, it can be more shocking to attempt to relate to the perpetrators' behaviors, to understand what humans are capable of doing to other humans, than just relating to the victims themselves. As long as the emotional experience is followed up with critical analysis, students can begin to form moral opinions and open themselves up to "otherness." It is clear that one major mistake would be to expose audiences to emotionally charged subject matter without providing adequate tools and space to make meaning of their experience. Using psychological perspectives, like those of Sunstein and Tesser, it is possible to anticipate how emotional responses in simulations can turn into cognitive processes and subsequently challenge negative collective norms.

Theatrical techniques that combat the "empathy paradox," the danger of empathy leading to incomplete conclusions, are representing multiple points of views, breaking the fourth wall to clarify content in pre- and post-simulation activities, and being transparent about what is real and what is theatre. This is also where the line between education and entertainment lies, as described by Macklin. The same is true of multimedia. Lights and sound can help direct audiences' attention and enhance their sensory experience, but should not be used to sway their emotions. For social action

simulations, this may indicate that complete immersion is not always necessary. Immersive sets are helpful in transitioning participants into the simulation world and in guiding imagination but are not alone responsible for suspension of disbelief. Young audiences have especially been found to be skillful in employing their imagination to connect their sensory presence to a story. If an institution is transparent about the context of a simulation during the experience, then audiences are less likely to get caught up on the elements that defy their sense of believability. Therefore, the museum avoids any possible threats to credibility. This contradicts Schubert's theories on spatial presence but by decreasing the immersive realism of environments, genuine engagement may alternatively be reached by harnessing participants' attention through increased role-play and choice-making. In other words, the focus of the experience is "how it feels" not "how it looks," and all elements should work together to support that authentically. Related to the matter of transparency, it was also found that audiences are curious about the elements that make up a production, and should feel free to ask about the actors and special effects.

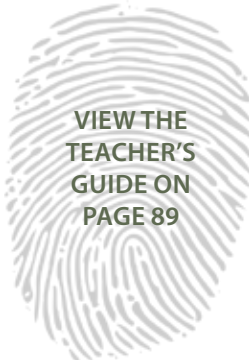
Audience expectations have a huge influence on the level and enjoyment of their participation. It is advantageous that participants have some knowledge of the subject and what a simulation entails before the experience takes place. This will increase the likelihood that they will participate and not feel tricked by the sometimes shocking nature of simulations. If participants have clear objectives within a simulation, (or "win criteria" as in games), their role-play can be more directed, less based on confidence or their perceived acting skills.

Role-play has been found to increase empathy, confidence, understanding, and recall. As Martin points out, role-play objectives can also provide a benchmark for participants to evaluate their feelings and the content. This is especially true for teenagers. Many sources suggested that of all audiences, teens are the least willing to participate in role-play. However, Jackson, Simon, and others acknowledge that if teens are given clear tasks and allowed to explore characters through their own sense of identity, they can become passionate about social subjects and take ownership of the choices the characters have to make.

While learning and empathy in theatre and simulations can be difficult to measure, many sources suggest that qualitative tools, such as interviews, are the most appropriate for evaluation. It is recommended that when creating the framework for social action simulations, developers determine clear indicators of social conscience transformation (cognitive, emotional, and behavioral) for their subject. These should remain broad; the museum should not enforce "the right response," but design tools that acknowledge each individuals' growth. After the simulation experience, those assessing can test whether or not the participants demonstrate any of the indicators. Audiences need time to process and reflect in order to accurately assess their experience, especially for difficult subjects. Long-term and short-term evaluation is beneficial in comparing responses at different stages and realizing the program's intended goals.

*Sometimes the brain needs a kick start, ...
Unusual spaces force [the] brain to process
inputs in novel ways, sprouting new connections
and making synapses where none existed before.*

Gregory Burns



VIEW THE
TEACHER'S
GUIDE ON
PAGE 89

NEXT STEPS

Implications for Thesis Project

In order that the journey of social conscience can continue after a social action simulation, this project is being targeted at school social studies or humanities classes. Santiago-Jirau, Thompson, and Jackson recommend that after opening participants up to difficult realities in a performance, proper follow-up take place. Consequently, the project is taking the form of a teacher's guide for a museum social action simulation, to best prepare the classes before and to continue their learning after the simulation experience. Simulations can stand alone for non-school groups as long as they provide appropriate transitions and context through orientations and talk-backs. The teacher's guide will provide extra relevance for students and teachers by connecting to state curriculum, offering role-play preparation targeted at specific age groups, and having a greater focus on finding solutions and taking action.

Clear indicators (cognitive, emotional, and behavioral) of social conscience transformation have been determined and aligned with the project's goals. An evaluation tool to test these is built into the teacher's guide in order to assess the program's long-term impact. Including evaluation in the guide will also allow for the possibility of creative and in-depth reflections, like Taylor's suggestion of student portfolios. The results can be shared with the host museum institution to further enhance the program's summative evaluation and to promote its success. Steps have been outlined that would need to be taken to develop the program beyond the preliminary conceptual scope of this thesis.

In incorporating more role-play and choice-making into the social action simulation, it is clear that the facilitators must maintain control of the experience at all times. As seen through Jackson's study, *Op Spy*, and *FTNS*, the illusion of choice can be just as effective as the audience having real influence on a narrative sequence. A design solution is that of *Choose Your Own Adventure (CYOA)* books, multiple options in a pre-determined plot. Building upon the identity cards in *Refugee Run*, characters can be given a task or goal within the simulation, providing objective "win criteria." While in the simulation, participants will come across different, often difficult, choices to make. Students will make choices that they think will best achieve their objectives, and like *CYOA* books, will see a cause-and-effect relationship of their choices. They will also begin to understand how in unequal circumstances, such as genocide, individuals may actually have little choice and their goals will often conflict with people they care about. At the end of the simulation, each group will present their final status and the next steps they would take for their future. There is no one "winner" but whether or not they met their objectives and why can be explored in the talk-back and classroom.

Based on the case studies and responses in the front-end survey, the simulation will accommodate large classes but separate into smaller groups or pairs. Within these small groups lies potential to represent different perspectives of the story and for increased individual participation; the multiple options of a *CYOA* format allow for this flexibility. The different experiences each group has could jump-start conversations when they reunite as a larger group during the talk-back. While live-action experiences can be fun and exciting,

this thesis does not intend to use their appeal to make a spectacle of serious subject matter. Tone will be balanced with authenticity and research will include input from content experts. To address the need to represent multiple points of views, *FTNS's* model of having the audience meet different individuals along the way seems the most appropriate and authentic to simulate. In other words, it would have been difficult and immoral to ask a student to play the role of the slave hunter, but that historical perspective is still being represented through monologue and can be further explored in discussion. Therefore, the participants are experiencing only refugees' point of view in a firsthand way, therefore empathizing the most with them, but are also hearing other voices during their journey. A refugee may however, still have to make the difficult decision of betraying a close friend in order to survive so the program can still push participants to consider what extremes humans are capable of reaching.

Areas for Further Research

This investigation focused on the conceptual and educational framework of role-play in social action simulations. Areas of further research outside of the scope of this thesis include the physical design of simulation environments and the development of traveling simulation programs. Based on an interview with a former tour coordinator at World Vision, the relatability of the traveling *AIDS Experience* varied drastically between college student audiences and audiences in small mid-western towns with no African-American population.¹ How simulation developers can get to know their audiences prior to implementation but still reach a broader public through travel is a challenge. Other role-play techniques, such as

improvisation, could be explored so that the audience creates the context and direction for the simulation. TO's approach of having each audience choose a forum scene relevant to them is a great place to start. Improvisation poses other challenges however, such as less control and authenticity, but could be targeted at specific age groups.

This project is catered to school groups with the understanding that an orientation and reflection bookend the program. School groups imply that everyone participating knows each other and are mostly coming from one demographic. Possibilities of incorporating a social action simulation as an open exhibition in a museum, rather than a separate timed and ticketed program, should be further explored. The interaction between strangers and different age groups offer dynamic possibilities for role-play and bring even more perspectives to a talk-back discussion. Right now, all case study programs last over an hour. Whether this is an appropriate model for an open exhibition format, and how long individuals are really able to suspend their disbelief, has yet to be determined.

Finding best practices of social action simulations for different demographics such as age, nationality, interests, etc. would be helpful in making the program accessible and appropriate for everyone. If, for instance, an advocacy group was interested in participating in a social action simulation in order to find solutions to fight a social cause, a museum could have an appropriate experience pre-prepared, with different goals, media, and scripts. How one simulation environment could be adapted for each audience type could be further studied.

S.W.O.T. ANALYSIS This diagram (Table 4) outlines the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of social action simulations in museums.

STRENGTHS:

- Experiential learning creates long-lasting meaning.
- Can be a powerful, intimate experience.
- Quality of experience stressed over quantity of participants.
- Role-play fosters empathy and reflection on choice-making.
- Opportunities to explore one social topic through multiple points of view.
- Direct firsthand experience of a social conflict without being at risk.
- Both a socially interactive and a personally reflective experience.
- Professional actors are flexible in improvising action and facilitating discussion.
- Talk-back at end of simulation provides opportunity to connect the experience to real-world, share reactions with others, and clarify content/authenticity.
- Simulations promote long-term memory of the experience.

WEAKNESSES:

- Learning and empathy evaluation is long-term and difficult to quantify.
- Large time commitment and manpower required to run simulations.
- Quantity of participants limited in a single simulation.
- Participants need to be willing to take on extra responsibility in role-play.
- Audience context removed from story and requires extra role-play preparation.
- No matter how accurately the simulation is rendered, it will never exactly replicate reality (time, language, etc.) and cannot simulate all aspects to difficult subjects such as death, disease, and starvation.
- May be accused of using “scare” tactics in live-action.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Museums seen as the most trustworthy source of information and are moving in the direction of deeper firsthand audience experiences.
- Focus on social issues can attract funding from corporations or government.
- May empower people to take responsible action beyond the simulation.
- Potential to connect visitors’ lives to others’ globally by expanding their worldview and empathy.
- Impact can extend beyond the museum through pre- and post-simulation lesson plans and a teacher’s guide.
- Relevant connections to discrimination and refugees in local communities.
- Role-play increases adaptability for traveling simulations because narrative is audience-driven.
- Developers without firsthand experience of displacement/genocide can take an objective point of view.
- Theatrical elements provides flexibility of applications in a variety of spaces.

THREATS:

- Expensive to produce and lengthy development process.
- Funding from government and corporations can impose an external agenda.
- Political sensitivities around depictions of the U.S. government’s role in social subjects like genocide.
- The experience may be disturbing to some and risks reopening past traumas.
- Lack of interest from teachers to participate in the simulation or do the recommended classroom work.
- Teenagers generally less willing to participate in role-play.
- Expensive and time-consuming for classes to take a field trip to museums.
- Represented topic is timely and may lose relevance when situation changes.
- Members of represented social subject disapprove of the use of their story or feel as though the program is too diplomatic (not advocacy driven).

Notes

1. Brandt, Courtney. Personal Interview. 28 May. 2010.

Images, Tables, and Figures

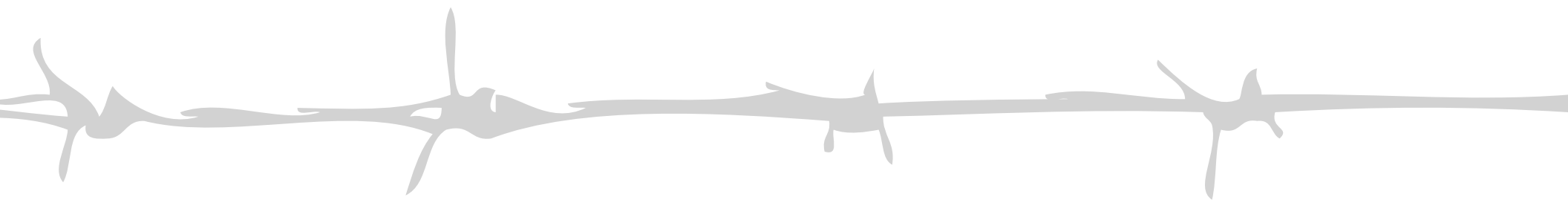
Pg. 50 Developed by the author. (Table 3)

Pg. 54 Developed by the author. (Table 4)

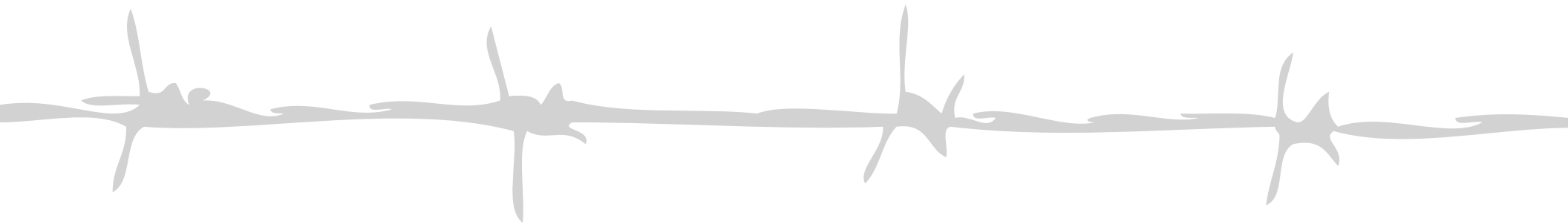
Quotes

Pg. 48 Jackson and Kidd 101.

Pg. 52 Burns, Gregory. *Iconoclast: A Neuroscientist Reveals How to Think Differently*. Cambridge: Harvard Business School Press, 2008: 33. Print. (original source)
Simon Wiesenthal Center. Museum of Tolerance, n.d. Web. 14 Nov. 2011. < <http://www.museumoftolerance.com> >. (quote originally viewed)



PART 2: **THE APPLICATION**



*The voyage of discovery is not in seeking
new landscapes but in having new eyes.*

Marcel Proust



CHAPTER 5: PROJECT BACKGROUND



This chapter outlines the conceptual framework and educational goals for the thesis application, a teacher's guide for a social action simulation program depicting the current genocide in Burma. The development of the project was enhanced by front-end surveys with the target audience group which are analyzed in this chapter. The appropriate steps for the project to be implemented beyond the schematic design phase are also addressed. The walk-through and corresponding diagrams provide a detailed description of the simulation narrative as well as the design gestalt. The framework and goals of the project were developed in order to address the question: **Can increased role-play and choice-making in museum social action simulations result in increased empathy and responsible action in daily life?**

PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT

In considering the difficult choices one has to make as a refugee from a firsthand perspective, the program will encourage teenagers to explore the roots of genocide and empathize with Burmese Karen refugee groups.

PROGRAM BIG IDEA

Many different factors contribute to the causes and consequences of genocide and as a result, those involved are faced with challenging personal and ethical choices.

PROGRAM TITLE

Myanmar Migrations: a social action simulation experience about refugees of genocide.

Note: For the purpose of this project, the term “program” is inclusive of the social action simulation at the museum and its pre- and post-visit classroom activities.

INTRODUCTION TO PROJECT

Based on the goals and the conclusions determined from Part I, the thesis project is a teacher's guide for a museum social action simulation program. Applying the research as a teacher's guide emphasizes the need for educators to be included in the design and development process early on. Educational materials are typically created after a program has been installed in a museum. The thesis project is instead taking the form of a teacher's guide in order to recognize the long-term transformational learning of social conscience education and make clear how the simulation will reach and assess its educational goals of empathy. The guide also serves as a proposal to raise funds and support in order to develop the program further, making it ready for real audiences.

The program is entitled *Myanmar Migrations: a social action simulation experience about refugees of genocide*. While not affiliated with one specific museum, the program is designed to fit the mission of any related history, social issues, anthropology, or peace museum. A similar approach are the school programs offered by Museum of Tolerance (MOT) Simon Wiesenthal Center in New York and Los Angeles. The center reserves their exhibition spaces specifically for school programs and includes topics such as "Confronting Prejudice and Discrimination."

The *Myanmar Migrations* teacher's guide is a combination of an educational resource for a museum program and instruction manual for a simulation game. The models used in designing the thesis project are MOT's teacher's guide for the museum's Holocaust

exhibition¹ and National Constitution Center's (NCC) *Living News* tool kit,² as well as the UNHCR *Passages*,³ Oxfam *Refugee Realities*,⁴ and TEAR simulation kits.⁵

MOT's Guide is intended to help educators optimize their time at the museum and it provides advice for teachers in exploring difficult content with students. Links to pre-visit and follow-up lesson plans are provided for grades 7-12 that address themes related to genocide: "Power of Words & Images," "Dynamics of Discrimination," "Pursuit of Democracy & Diversity," and "Personal Responsibility." These plans inspired the *Myanmar Migrations* worksheets included in the appendix. NCC's *Living News* is a play about how current Constitutional issues impact the everyday lives of three characters. Their tool kit exemplifies ways to connect state curriculum and lesson plans to the museum theatre performance and includes other useful resources like the play's trailer and teacher workshops. Similarly the *Myanmar Migrations* teacher's guide includes background information on genocide and Burma as well as classroom activities that relate to the museum simulation experience.

In addition, the *Myanmar Migrations* teacher's guide builds on UNHCR, Oxfam, and TEAR simulation kits in outlining the social action simulation portion of the program for teachers. While these kits are written in order for educators to produce a simulation in their community themselves, they offer useful language and formatting that can be applied to a museum simulation program to help readers understand the sequencing and intended outcomes of a game. For *Myanmar Migrations* this sequencing is described through a

summarized walk-through, narrative flow diagram, biographies of student and actor character roles, teacher resources, and lesson plans.

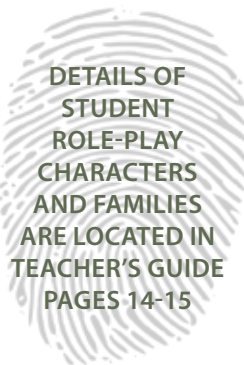
The project is also designed following Anthony Jackson's framework for audience participation in museum theatre:

- Cultural Frame: Pre-simulation classroom materials provide necessary background to Burma and prepare student expectations. These are largely based the social and cultural context of the target audience, as determined by the front-end surveys.
- Outer Theatrical Frame: The walk-through begins with cognitive and role-play preparation in the classroom and then transitions students into the simulation through an orientation at the museum.
- Inner Frame: The program has an involvement frame and so the students play roles that impact the course of the events within the simulation. The walk-through, bubble diagram, circulation diagrams, and narrative flow map illustrate the story sequence and how the educational goals are being met.
- Closing Frame: The walk-through ends with a post-simulation debriefing. Supplementary lesson plans, that tie into state curriculum, student portfolios (or to borrow a refugee term, "student trunks"), and an evaluation tool follow up the students' experience back in the classroom to further develop empathy and encourage responsible action.



ROLE OF AUDIENCE

The audience will experience the program from the first person point of view of a Karen refugee character through role-play. There are hundreds of Burmese minorities groups being targeted in the “Burmantization” ethnic cleansing. *Myanmar Migrations* focuses on the Karen people because they are one of the largest groups to resettle in the U.S. and a large majority are Christian, a religion that the target audience can recognize and may possibly share. The classroom of students will represent one Karen village but will be divided into smaller “family” groups. Each student will play the role of a father, mother, aunt, uncle, or child.



Prior to the program, each student will conduct research about Karen culture and history. With the help of their teacher, the students will be assigned a role. Their character will have an objective within the simulation from which to base their choices. After the program is over, the audience will participate in a talk-back, sharing their reactions and reflecting on whether or not they achieved their objectives. They will continue to deconstruct their experience in the classroom and consider possible responsible actions to take.

PROGRAM GOALS

To raise awareness about genocide happening in today’s society, specifically the one in Burma, and consider possible responsible actions.

Through role-play and choice-making, teenagers will begin to empathize with refugees of genocide and people of “otherness” who are discriminated against in their community.

To encourage teenagers to become responsible global citizens and speak out for those whose voice has been repressed.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Participants will be able to describe a typical refugee experience.

Participants will draw parallels between the root causes of genocide, such as classification and discrimination, and their everyday lives.

Participants will feel safe and willing to actively participate in role-play and discussions.

Participants will begin to understand the cause and effect of making difficult choices.

Teachers will make use of the teacher’s guide to expand the impact of program in the classroom.

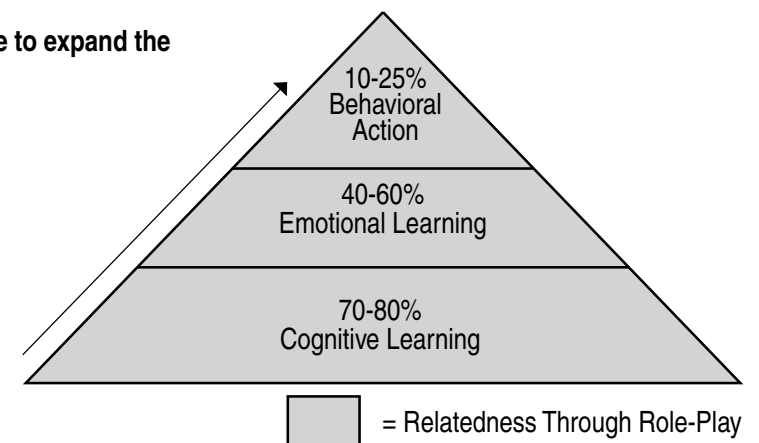


Fig. 8: Educational assessment corresponds to Schmidt’s pyramid of social conscience on page 11.

SUMMATIVE EVALUATION

Below are indicators to look for in students during post-simulation classroom work that demonstrate enhanced knowledge, transformation of perspective, empathy, or responsible action taking (also see Fig. 8). Questions that reflect these will be built into the teacher guide's evaluation tool and will be incorporated as part of the student "trunks" in the lesson plans. They are based on Schmidt's 18-step progression of social conscience (on page 10) and address the research question: **Can increased role-play and choice-making in museum social action simulations result in increased empathy and responsible action in daily life?** Much of the assessment is qualitative and the responses (verbal, written, or drawn) can be analyzed with the help of the teacher, who has an intimate knowledge of each student.

COGNITIVE | Experiential learning in the simulation triggers cognitive awareness and understanding of genocide and refugees.

Short Term - Program is successful when 80% of the audience demonstrate the following:

The student critically analyzes their simulation experience, recognizing the cause and effect of specific choices he or she made. The student forms new connections between the discriminatory symptoms of genocide and those in his or her own community, as well as between the genocide in Burma and other current events.

Long Term - Program is successful when 70% of the audience demonstrate the following:

The student can recall the experience of a refugee and is more familiar with the root causes of genocide. The student has a better understanding of the "big picture" of war and that it involves a complicated web of problems. He or she infers actions need to be taken to make a difference in the world.

EMOTIONAL | Experiential learning in the simulation triggers emotional understanding of genocide and refugees, and empathy is formed.

Short Term - Program is successful when 60% of the audience demonstrate the following:

The student expresses a connection between how he or she felt in the simulation to how refugees may feel. The student demonstrates personal insights and a concern, not merely sympathy, for the plight of refugees. The student battles with the negative feelings (such as guilt) that may emerge from the simulation.

Long Term - Program is successful when 40% of the audience demonstrate the following:

The student reflects on his or her feelings and his or her personal relationship within the world - physical, emotional, or spiritual - is shifted. The student feels increased ownership for global social issues and feels empowered to make a difference. He or she takes pleasure in helping others through responsible action taking.

BEHAVIORAL | Taking action requires cognitive and emotional transformation and is the ultimate indicator of increased social conscience.

Short Term - Program is successful when 25% of the audience demonstrate the following:

The student develops a well-informed stance towards genocide and discrimination and his or her behavior is in line with this stance. The student actively reflects on the experience and discusses it with family and friends.

Long Term - Program is successful when 10% of the audience demonstrate the following:

The choices the student makes in daily life reflect a consideration for "otherness." The student feels enabled through responsible action taking, which can take the form of joining community service groups or pursuing further information. He or she makes connections to others and engage in deeper conversations with family and friends.

FRONT-END SURVEY

TARGET AUDIENCE

Methodology

The audience survey took the form of a self-administered questionnaire in order to gather a large quantity of responses in a short period of time and to be conducted from afar. The survey was directed at the target audience, students between ages 12-15, or those in the 7th, 8th, and 9th grades, who were expected to have little understanding of the refugees in their communities. The audience survey was initially distributed among middle and high school students in Texas and Indiana through connections with local teachers. These regions have the highest population of Burmese immigrants in the U.S. But the response rate was low, only one all-girl class from Dallas completed the survey. Because one of the highest number of refugees being resettled in the Philadelphia region are coming from Burma, it was decided to survey the target audience locally. Two schools participated including the inner-city magnet school The Academy at Palumbo and the private Friends School Mullica Hill. The initial plan was to gather a minimum of 50 audience surveys. The final total of surveys collected and analyzed from Philadelphia was 78. The open-ended questions of the survey (questions 3, 5, and 6) were coded in order to quantify the responses. After reviewing a small sample of the surveys, codes were determined based on the most frequent responses.

Survey Goals

The front-end survey for the target audience was designed to evaluate 7th-9th grade students' expectations of and preferences for participating in a social action simulation, as well as their knowledge of and experience with refugees. The program hopes to raise awareness about the conflict in Burma with broader audiences, so schools were selected without large numbers of Burmese refugees in the student body. The survey intended to find a correlation between how young teenagers describe refugees and their exposure/prior knowledge of them, specifically how it pertains to the Burmese genocide. The resulting data are influential to the development of the thesis project in order to balance students' pre-existing knowledge of refugees with the educational goals of the program and with students' preferences for role-play. While the surveys provide a good foundation for understanding the audiences' expectations and context prior to the social action simulation program, were this thesis to be realized, further front-end research and workshops would need to be conducted to better equip the program in addressing the students' educational needs.

Question 1: On a scale of 1-5, how much do you know about refugees (1=no knowledge of refugees, 5=expert on refugees)

The average of the students' perceived knowledge of refugees is 2.54 out of 5, a middle-range degree of knowledge. The majority of responses are 2 or 3 out of 5 (34 and 25 or 44% and 32% respectively) and no student selected 5 out of 5, or expert knowledge on refugees (Fig. 9). This indicates that students this age do not feel like they know a great deal about refugees but have a basic familiarity with them. Additionally, the term "expert" may have caused students to shy away from rating a 5 out of 5.

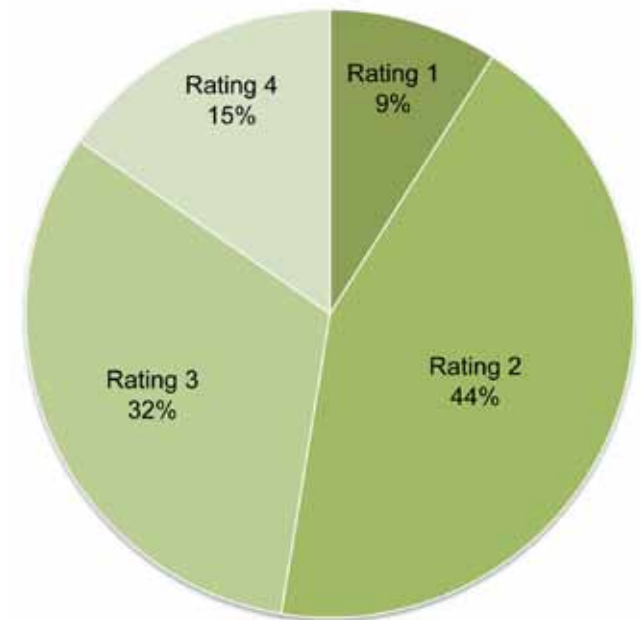


Fig. 9: Students perceived knowledge of refugees (out of 5).

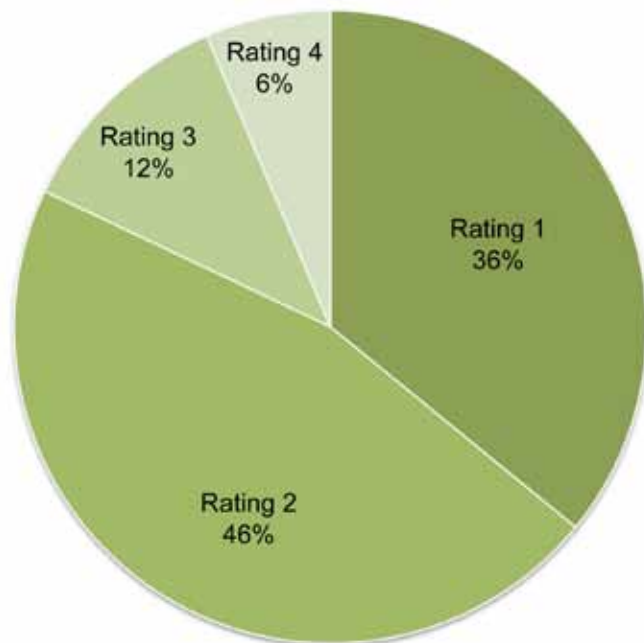


Fig. 10: Students ability to relate to refugees (out of 5).

Question 2: On a scale of 1-5, how much do you relate to a refugee experience? (1=no idea what refugees experience, 5=firsthand, personal understanding of what refugees experience)

The average of the students' perceived ability to relate to a refugee experience is 1.88 out of 5, a low level of relatability. The majority of responses are 1 or 2 out of 5 (28 and 36 or 36% and 46% respectively). Only nine rated a 3 out of 5 and five rated 4 out of 5. No students rated a 5 out of 5, a personal understanding of a refugee experience (Fig. 10). This indicates that the students have not personally experienced what they perceive to be a typical refugee experience and that the majority feel they do not understand what it is a refugee experiences.

Question 3: What comes to mind when you think about Burmese refugees?

The coding for this question is broken into four categories. If a response fits into more than one category it was given multiple codes; so the total number of responses does not equal 100%. The first category, "Displacement," includes any responses having to do with refugees not having a home or fleeing from a dangerous place, most commonly described as "running away." Additional comments about immigration or foreign countries are included here. The second category, "Events," includes any responses describing events having to do with Burmese refugees such as war, concentration camps, starvation, abuse, etc. The third category, "Feelings," includes any responses reflecting perceived emotions Burmese refugees would feel, such as scared, sad, etc. Included in this category are responses of how the individuals themselves feel when they think about

Burmese refugees, one example being, "I would feel bad and want to help them." The final category, "Other," includes any responses that do not fit into the other categories as well as those who replied that they did not know (the majority of responses) or left the question blank. Examples of the "Other" comments are "tsunamis" and "Khmer Rouge."

There are 18 responses under "Displacement" or 21% of responses; 19 responses under "Events" or 22% of responses; 11 responses under "Feelings" or 13% of responses; and 38 responses under "Other" or 44% of responses.

The data overwhelmingly show that students do not know very much about refugees (Fig. 11), especially those from Burma. The responses in the first three categories reflect a general understanding of refugees and war, or one that is not country or issue specific. This reflects the assumption that the Burmese refugee

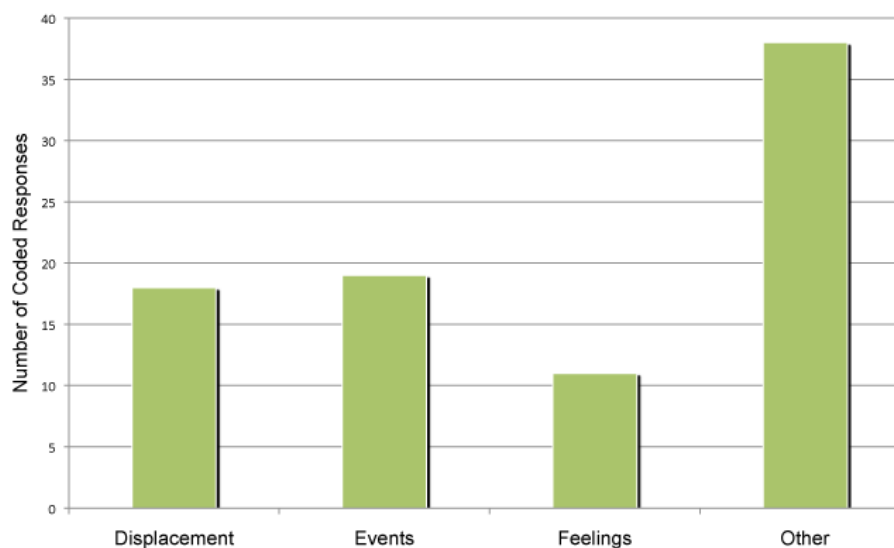


Fig. 11: Categorized responses to what students think of Burmese refugees.

story is not well-known and demonstrates that it is not being taught in these grades at schools. Because the topic of refugees is not very familiar to this age group, and Burma is less so, it is safe to assume that all students would require some background information about refugees and Burma prior to the simulation program.

Question 4: In social action simulations, participants play an active role in the story, in this case, the character of a refugee. Circle the options that would help you want to be involved in role-playing (you may select more than one):
a) Play lead roles, b) Smaller roles or observer, c) Responsible for choosing outcome of your character, d) Make up your own script, e) Make up your own character, f) Social interaction, g) Use of costumes and props, h) Movie-like suspense, i) Other (please specify)

Because students were allowed to circle more than one option, the results do not add up to 100%. There are 28 responses for A, “Play lead roles,” or 11% of responses; 28 responses for B, “Smaller roles or

observer,” or 11% of responses; 31 responses for C, “Responsible for choosing outcome of your character,” or 12% of responses; 16 responses for D, “Make up your own script,” or 6% of responses; 36 responses for E, “Make up your own character,” or 14% of responses; 33 responses for F, “Social interaction,” or 13% of responses; 39 responses for G, “Use of costumes and props,” or 15% of responses; 39 responses for H, “Movie-like suspense,” or 15% of responses; and 3 responses for I, “Other,” or 1% of responses. Those who selected “Other” wrote in: “relationship with other characters,” “choice of what to do,” and “medium role.”

The data indicate that the most popular preference for role-play is tied between “Use of costumes and props” and “Movie-like suspense,” and the least

popular (excluding the “Other” option) is “Make up your own script” (Fig. 12). This indicates that the highly immersive and theatrical elements are the most appealing to this age group. The options that reflect qualities of gaming, “Social interaction,” “Make up your own character,” and “Responsible for choosing outcome of your character” were also very popular, with a difference ranging only three to eight responses less than the most popular choices. These choices are all represented in social action simulations, and indicate that the students would be responsive to and enjoy the program.

The responses of those who circled A and B, the two options having to do with acting (“Play lead roles” and “Smaller roles or observer”), were exactly tied, with one additional individual student writing in a “medium role” option for I, “Other.” This demonstrates that there is a vast range of preferences for the degree of role-play in which students are willing to participate. Therefore, a variety of roles and responsibilities should be offered with different responsibilities in role-play acting.

Question 5: What would you EXPECT to see or experience in a simulation on refugees?

The coding for this question is broken into four categories. If a response fits into more than one category it was given multiple codes; so the total number of responses does not equal 100%. The first category, “Story line,” includes any responses relating to events or experiences students expect of a refugee story line, such as war, loss of home, begging, running away, etc. Any descriptions of these events such as “ripped clothing,” “poverty,” and “dirty” are included

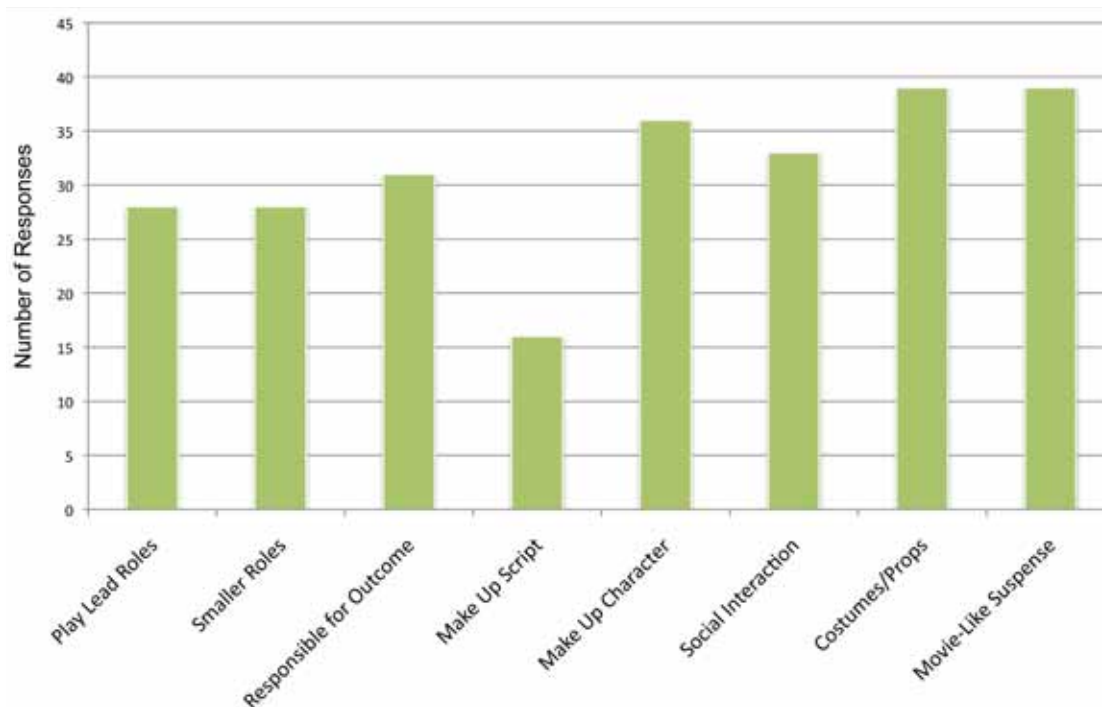


Fig. 12: Student preferences for simulation role-play.

here. The second category, “Feelings,” includes any responses relating to feelings they expect a refugee, or themselves in a simulated context, to have, such as suffering, sadness, pain, distraught, etc. The third category, “Elements,” includes any responses having to do with the simulation experience itself, such as actors, special effects, etc. Additional comments about what they expect to learn in the simulation are included in this category, like the example, “How everything started, what happened during the event, and the effect it had.” The final category, “Other,” includes any responses that do not fit into the other categories as well as those who replied that they did not know (the majority of responses) or left the question blank.

There are 25 responses under “Story line” or 30% of responses; 20 responses under “Feelings” or 24% of responses; 17 responses under “Elements” or 20% of responses; and 21 under “Other” or 25% of responses.

The data indicate that the majority of students’ expectations for a simulation on refugees have to do with the content or story line itself (Fig. 13). The results do not reflect whether the students’ description of the story line is what they would expect to see happening to others or if it is what they would expect to experience themselves from a firsthand point of view. The second largest category is tied between “Other” and “Feelings,” the latter reflecting empathy, one of the main goals of the program. The quantity of “Other” shows that a good percentage of individuals do not know what they expect to experience in a simulation on refugees. Because the responses are relatively evenly spread out among the categories (a difference of 9 responses between the most common category

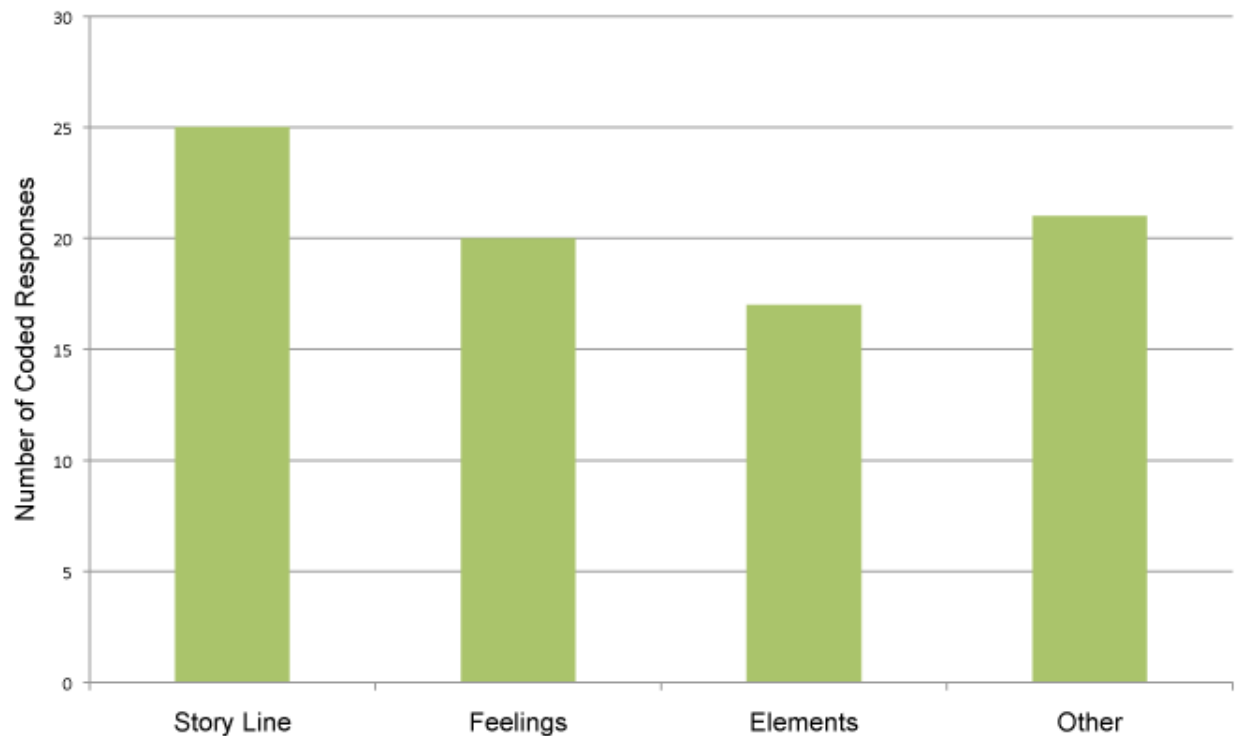


Fig. 13: Categorized responses to student expectations for a simulation on refugees.

and the least), it is clear that students have varying expectations. Therefore, classroom preparation is required to ensure they start the program from a more common base of understanding, both in the content on refugees and what the experience itself will entail.

Question 6: In your opinion, what are the causes of *genocide* (the destruction of a national, ethnic or religious group, such as the Holocaust)?

The coding for this question is broken into four categories. If a response fits into more than one category it was given multiple codes; so the total number of responses does not equal 100%. The first category, “Racism,” includes any responses relating

to prejudice against or differences among ethnicities, religions, or races. The second category, “Qualities,” include any responses having to do with personal feelings or characteristics students believe cause genocide, such as hatred, rage, jealousy, insanity, greed, etc. The third category, “Power,” includes any responses having to do with government and a person or group of people who exert power over, or believe themselves to be superior to, another group. The final category, “Other,” includes any responses that do not fit into the other categories as well as those who replied that they did not know (the majority of responses) or left the question blank. Some of the comments from “Other” were “home experiences” and “money.”

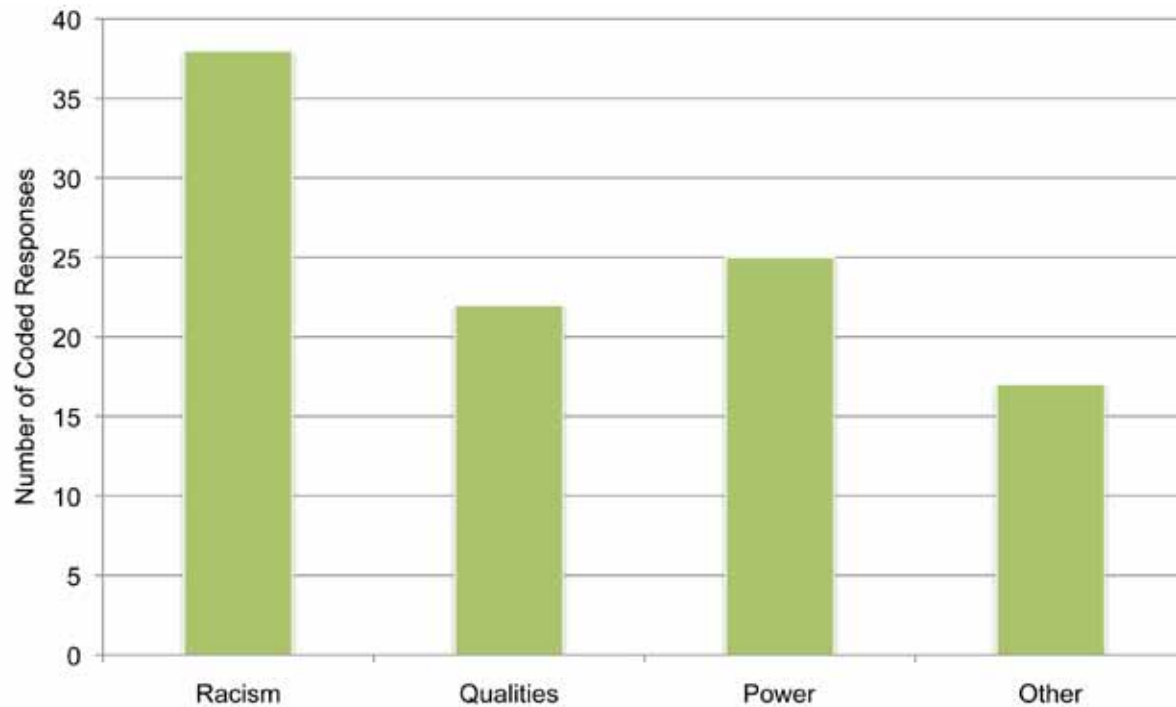


Fig. 14: Categorized responses for students' opinions on the causes of genocide.

There are 38 responses under "Racism," or 37% of responses; 22 responses under "Qualities," or 22% of responses; 25 responses under "Power," or 25% of responses; and 17 under "Other," or 17% of responses.

The data show that the majority of students believe the cause of genocide has to do with racism (Fig. 14). The least common response is "Other" which indicates that most students have some opinion on what causes genocide. None of the possible responses that fall under the first three categories are necessarily false. However, because most students have an opinion on what causes genocide does not mean they truly understand those causes and the curricula should enrich and clarify their existing presumptions.

Question 7: On a scale of 1-5, how interested are you in experiencing a simulation on refugees? (1=not interested, 5=very interested)

The average of the students' interest in experiencing a simulation on refugees is 3.32 out of 5, a middle-range amount of interest (Fig. 15). The majority of responses are 3 out of 5 (21 responses or 27%), followed closely behind by 4 out of 5 (20 responses or 26%). Only 6 selected 1 out of 5 (8% of responses). This indicates that students have a mixed interest in participating in a simulation on refugees. Therefore in order to increase their interest, the program should be marketed to teachers in order that they might better prepare and enthuse their students for the simulation.

Question 8: How often have you visited a museum (with your friends, family or school) in the past twelve months? a) 0-2 times, b) 3-5 times, c) 6-10 times, d) 11 or more times

There are 36 responses under A, "0-2 times," or 46% of responses; 29 responses under B, "3-5 times," or 37% of responses; 8 responses under C, "6-10 times," or 10% of responses; and 5 responses under D, "11 or more times," or 6 % of responses.

If options A and B represent less-frequent museum visitation to museums and C and D represent frequent visitation to museums then the vast majority of students (83%) are not frequent museum visitors. Therefore in addition to addressing students' expectations of a simulation, their expectations of the framing of a simulation as a museum program must be addressed as well. One thing that was not evaluated and should be further studied is students' expectations of or frequency in attending commercial theatre and museum theatre.

Question 9: Gender (circle one): a) Male, b) Female

Out of the total respondents, 49 are female (63%) and 29 are male (37%).

Question 10: Your age

Out of the total respondents, eight are 12 years old (10%), 16 are 13 years old (21%), 26 are 14 years old (33%), 27 are 15 years old (35%), and one is 16 years old (1%).

Question 11: Additional comments:

Most individuals did not add any additional comments but those who did (25 respondents) either wished the project good luck or explained that they do not know anything about Burmese refugees. Several students (five 9th graders from The Academy at Palumbo and three from Friends School Mullica Hill) expressed an interest in participating in the experience. Among these responses include: "... I would like to hear more about it," "I would be very excited to be able to participate in a very informational and fun event," "This sounds like a fun and interesting learning experience that can teach a valuable lesson." One Palumbo student even offered a suggestion: "Could it be seen in game format to make people think on how a refugee feels."

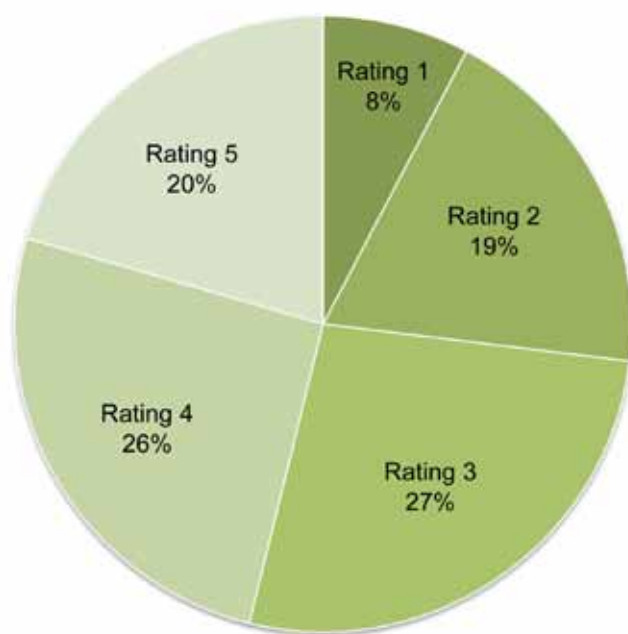


Fig. 15: *Students' interest in participating in a simulation on refugees (out of 5).*

Further Implications for Thesis Project

Because students' perceived knowledge of refugees (2.54 out of 5) is higher than their perceived ability to relate to refugees (1.88 out of 5), there is a need for an empathy-driven program. The empathy capable of social action simulations may give students a way to relate to refugees emotionally and may increase the "Feelings" response rate from question 3.

Students' understanding of genocide is greater than their understanding of Burmese refugees indicated by the small number of "Other" responses in question 6 (17 responses) compared to question 3 (38 responses). Therefore, building on students' existing understanding of genocide may be a good access point for addressing the circumstances in Burma and introducing refugee stories. One way to do so may be to use well-known genocides (like the Holocaust, which was used as an example in question 6) in order to compare to the situation in Burma. Gregory Stanton's Eight Stages of Genocide offers a qualitative, and easy to comprehend, format for comparison.

Students' average interest in participating in a refugee simulation (3.32 out of 5), while low, is higher than their average perceived knowledge (2.54 out of 5). This indicates that students' interest in experiencing a refugee story could be harnessed to improve their knowledge of refugees or that participating in the survey peaked their curiosity. The popular responses in question 4 indicate an interest in immersion and gaming, which suggests that social action simulations are indeed in line with students' interests and contrasts the low interest ratings from question 7. Therefore,

if designed skillfully and authentically, social action simulations could be an appropriate and fun way to increase students' knowledge of and empathy for refugees.

Based on these conclusions, the teacher's guide includes a similar survey to question 4 to be conducted in a classroom prior to the museum visit. Once the teacher determines the capacity each student wants to participate, in particular whether they want to play lead roles or observer roles, he or she can help assign the appropriate positions for each student. True to the traditional roles of a Karen family, adult characters represent lead roles and while children characters represent small roles. This addresses the concerns from the museum field front-end survey which address individuals' comfort level in participation. Assigning tasks according to each students' interests may increase comfort levels during the program (by giving them a constructive outlet and focus) and consequently increase their willingness to participate. Just because some individuals do not wish to play lead roles does not indicate that they are not learning from the experience. However, the simulation must be written in such a way that those individuals who do wish to play lead roles do not hog the spotlight and discourage others from participating.

CONTENT OUTLINE

Genocide

Gregory H. Stanton, President of Genocide Watch, has determined Eight Stages of Genocide (for a detailed description, turn to page 6 in the teacher's guide). They provide a thematic framework for a genocide narrative in a social action simulation because they illustrate a clear cause and effect of genocide and an urgency to take preventative actions early on. The stages occur in order but are not linear in that each stage continues to take place as the genocide progresses:

1. Classification
2. Symbolization
3. Dehumanization
4. Organization
5. Polarization
6. Preparation
7. Extermination
8. Denial

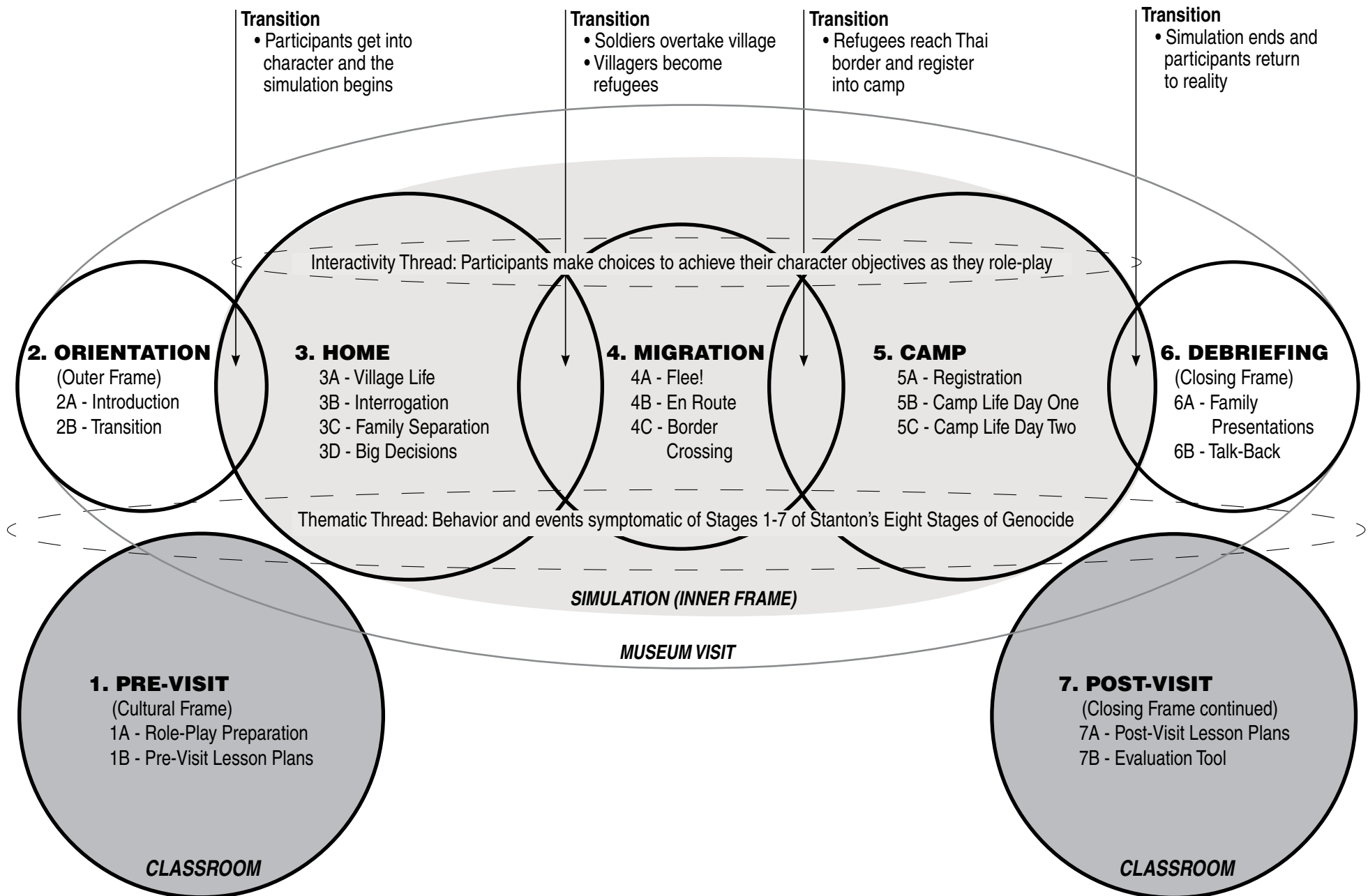
Myanmar Migrations narrative will take place in Stage Six, where refugees emerge. Therefore behavior and events indicative of Stages One through Five will be present in the story. Simulating the escape from Burma provides an opportunity to authentically “save” the characters from Stage Seven, Extermination. Exploration of Stages Seven and Eight can take place from the point of view of those who survived and have to cope with the destruction of life as they know it. After the simulation, discussions around genocides happening globally will be connected to audiences’ everyday lives through a look at historic examples of genocide, examples of Stages One and Two locally, and refugee resettlement in the U.S.

Burmese Refugee Narrative

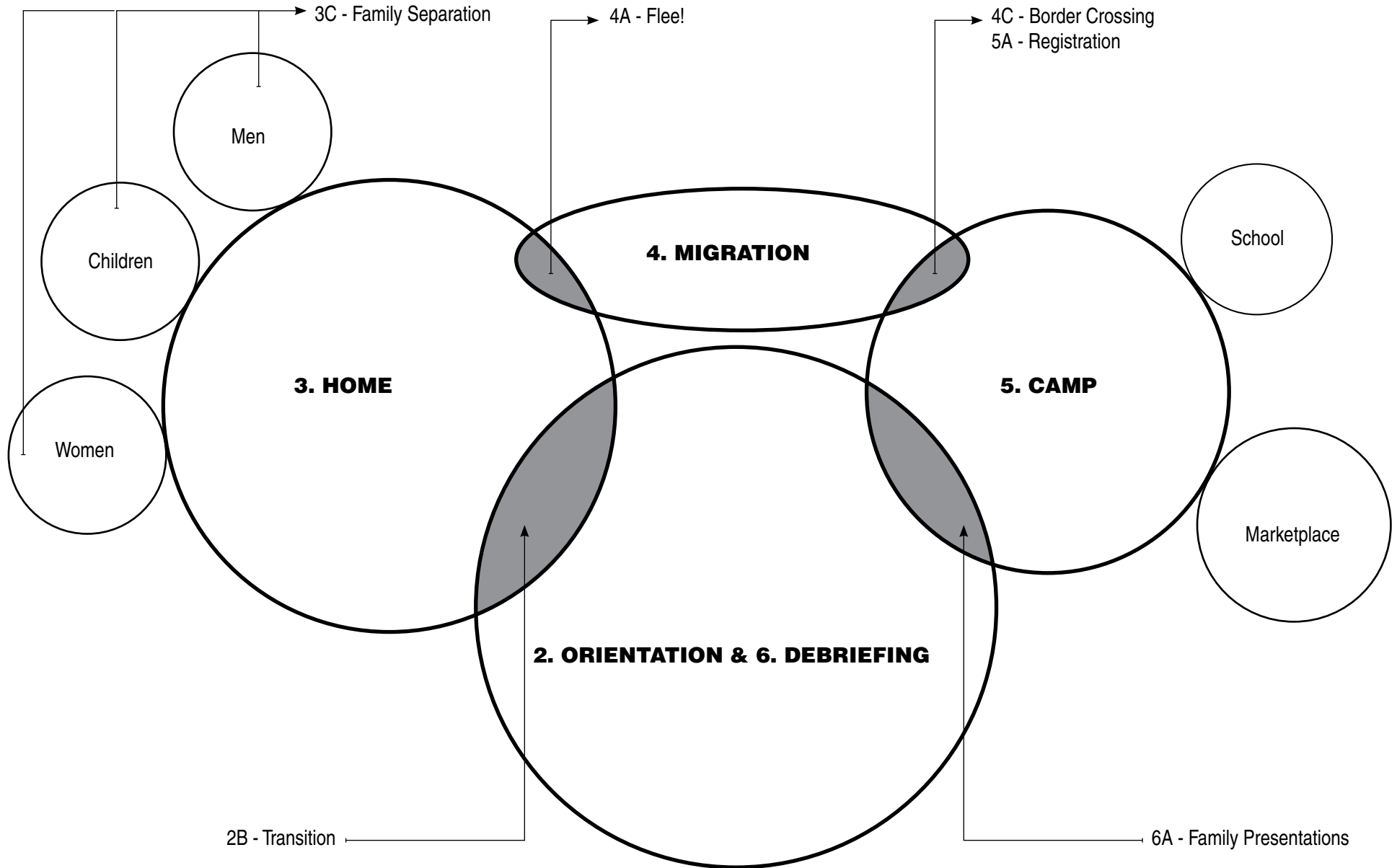
The simulation (sequences 3-5 on the bubble diagram) is broken in three major locales: Home, Migration, and Camp. “Home” represents a village in the Karen state of Burma and life for Karen people prior to becoming refugees. “Migration” is the transition between home and camp during which the Karen villagers flee their village and become refugees. “Camp” encompasses life in a Thai refugee camp. The simulation will end with a discussion of the process of resettling in another country. It was determined that the representation of multiple perspectives should be present in programs of difficult subject matter. The different points of view of this story, as well as significant content and action, are listed below (Table 5) according to where they fall in the sequence.

	HOME	MIGRATION	CAMP
CONTENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day Passes Out • Censorship/Propaganda • Arbitrary Taxation • Theft/Land Acquisition • Forced Labor • Restrictions in Education/Work • Human Trafficking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Destruction of Villages • Land Mines • Border Crossing • Risks of Fleeing • Risks of Sneaking Back 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registration • Daily Life • Clinic • School • Weather • Unfamiliar Languages • Black Market
POINTS OF VIEW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village Head • Roles of Men, Women, and Children • Democracy Leader • Burmese Soldier • Burmese Generals • Child Soldier 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victims of Mines • Refugees Sneaking Back into Burma • Karen National Union (KNU) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thai Officials • Other Minority Group Refugees • Stateless Children • Section Leaders • UN Representatives • Thai-Karen
ACTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interrogation by Soldiers • Denying Ethnic Origins • Obeying Soldiers • Using Illegal Radio • Whether or Not to Betray Democratic Leader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choosing What To Bring • Deciding Who/What to Leave Behind • Choosing the Safest Travel Route • Bribing Guards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to Spend/Earn Money • Election of Leaders • Deciding Who to Trust • Whether to Leave Thailand

BUBBLE DIAGRAM This diagram (Fig. 16) illustrates the sequences of *Myanmar Migrations* program which constitute its content, framing, and themes.



CIRCULATION DIAGRAM Illustration of visitor circulation in the simulation in terms of the spaces required, their proximity, and time spent in each (Fig. 17).



WALK-THROUGH

Preface: Building on the Case Studies

Over the next ten pages, the walk-through describes the entire program from the point of view of the audience and follows the sequence outlined in the bubble diagram. The simulation, sequences 3-5, is influenced by successful elements from each of the case studies which are fused into a design that reflects the best practices on page 50 of the conclusion. The analysis criteria used to investigate the case studies are also represented in the walk-through.

Tickets to the program would be booked in advanced, as is true in every case study, but because of the time, staffing, and space required for each sequence, it can only accommodate one group at a time like *Refugee Run* (as opposed to pulsing groups through every ten minutes). In order to build on the work of experienced simulation and content-experts, the design also reflects the narrative flow of *Refugee Run*. The sequences of Home, Migration, and Camp are similar to the action in *Refugee Run* but are adjusted to suit the story of Burma and increase the role-play responsibilities. A greater emphasis is placed on “home” in order to exemplify the first of Stanton’s Eight Stages and create a fuller experience of genocide.

Crossroads’ use of money and ID card props inspired the organization of character roles in *Myanmar Migrations* but the program also strives to reflect the strategic choice-making inherent in the *Basti Life* game. *Basti Life* is highly successful at illustrating the interconnected web of problems in slums, which can be applied to life as a refugee. Like *Basti Life*, students will decide how best to use (or save) their assets which, at the end of the simulation, also helps to quantify the consequences of the students’ choices.

Some choice-making will reflect *FTNS*’s “illusion of choice” (in which the actors have ultimate control) while other choices reflect those in *Op Spy* which trigger different outcomes to the story. Like a *CYOA* book, there are many choices and paths students can take in *Myanmar Migrations* which will, in addition to the final inventory of their remaining assets, help determine their “success.” Unlike *Op Spy*, however, there will be no clear “winner” as every refugee character will have experienced some loss or struggle in the story. These variables will be used to jump-start discussions in the talk-back and classroom.

Similar to Oxfam’s *Refugee Realities*, the audience is grouped into family units but are asked to consider more deeply their character objectives and relationships throughout the simulation. Each family has identity papers, like the passport booklets used in the youth *Refugee Run* prototype at Hong Kong International School, so that the students can keep track of their assets during the simulation and have something to take away afterwards. Because the students are older than the target audience in the prototype, the action will not stop to accommodate reflection but with the help of their teacher, they will still complete a reflection before, immediately after and several days following the simulation. They will keep these and other findings in their own “refugee trunks.”

FTNS’s approach to representing multiple points of view in actor monologues is being borrowed for the *Myanmar Migrations* simulation. Students will learn the darker sides of genocide, such as child soldiers and the Burmese government, without playing those roles themselves. They will also have to make a difficult choice of whether or not to betray a Democracy Leader. This choice gives students a sense of how regular people can be capable of murder during

genocide, without having to witness the results of their choice or inflict the action on each other. Bringing TO exercises into the classroom provides an opportunity for students to explore these other perspectives and continue to practice role-play beyond the simulation.

Myanmar Migrations will build on *AIDS Experience* and *Op Spy*’s application of tactile interactivity through role-play and props. Additionally, taking advantage of a museum’s collection could allow for an up-close look at related authentic objects during the orientation or talk-back, as Begbie does with his Afghan carpet prior to starting *Refugee Run*.

The gestalt of each sequence is described in the walk-through as well as through sketches and look and feel images. While the physical design of the environments is outside of the scope of this thesis, *Myanmar Migrations* falls in between the completely immersive, highly-fabricated sets of *Op Spy*, and the minimal but atmospheric sets of *Refugee Run*, relying heavily on lights, sound, and actors to direct the audiences’ attention. As determined in Chapter Five, the suspension of disbelief comes from first person role-play, rather than highly authentic sets. *Myanmar Migrations* strives to mimic *DiD*’s thorough evaluation approach and its transparency during the program, acknowledging and setting expectations for the simulation’s theatrical framing. When possible, *Myanmar Migrations* involves the opportunity to meet real Burmese refugees, as in *DiD* and *Refugee Run*. Ideally, the program will be developed and run in close collaboration with willing resettled Karen refugees and provide opportunities for students to meet refugees, whether online or in-person. This interaction proved one of the most meaningful take-aways for students who participated in *DiD* and *Refugee Run*.⁶

SEQUENCE 1: PRE-VISIT

Goals

- To prepare students for role-play and shape their expectations of the simulation experience.
- To create a foundation understanding of Burmese history and culture.
- To work closely with educators in registering their class for the program.

Duration

Three to four class meetings.

An eighth grade humanities teacher is interested in finding a new way to teach the subject of “conflict” in his curriculum that encourages students to empathize with others and become more socially conscious.



Reflecting in costume during orientation of Refugee Run.

He remembers hearing about an effective simulation program call *Myanmar Migrations* at the local museum that uses role-play to teach about genocide. He is keen on incorporating drama into his lesson plans and downloads the teacher's guide. He is also happy to find that the program adheres to national standards for social studies and language arts. After familiarizing himself with the guide and its resources, he asks his class if they know what a simulation is. Many of the students are unclear, but upon hearing that they will get to become characters in a story, they get excited.

1A - ROLE-PLAY PREPARATION: Even though he has never taught drama before, the guide walks the teacher step by step through preparing roles. The class fills out a role-play survey; students who are eager to play lead roles are assigned adult characters and the students who prefer supporting roles are assigned children characters. The teacher breaks the students into four family groups, Aung, Hla, Kyi, and Tun, ensuring each has a social dynamic that will encourage cooperation and support. The class feels more confident after playing role-play games; they had so much fun they were able to let go of any reservations they had with acting. The games also help them begin to think about their character roles and objectives.

1B - PRE-VISIT LESSON PLANS: The students have never heard of Burma before and have a vague notion of a refugee as someone who is poor, running away from something, or an illegal immigrant. To continue bonding within their families, each group is tasked with researching one aspect of Burmese history and culture to present to the class. In the process, they feel as though they have become experts on a topic and enjoy the responsibilities involved in teaching the rest of their class. They work together to explore what they have in common with Burmese people in order to find aspects



Possible Karen costume students can wear in simulation.

to relate to during role-play. Through visuals and vocabulary, students learn about refugees and begin to reflect on what it feels like to be one. The teacher has the students write these assumptions in a journal. They collect their work and impressions throughout the unit in their “refugee trunk” folder.

The museum maintains close communication with the teacher while he registers for the program. He fills out a pre-visit classroom profile to inform the museum of the number and demographic of students coming, and any other student concerns. The teacher is grateful for the ease of the process and for the museum's involvement. He senses that the museum cares about his students' learning experience and that they will be in professional hands. He agrees to participate in a long-term evaluation pilot with his class over the next year. After completing necessary field trip paperwork and consent forms for his school, he instructs his class to wear appropriate attire. Before long, the class is on their way to the museum.

SEQUENCE 2: ORIENTATION

Goals

- To create context for the simulation through background information on Burma.
- To create an atmosphere that makes students feel protected yet empowers them for the simulation.
- To communicate the safety regulations, rules, and theatrical framing of the simulation.

Duration

20 minutes

While on the bus, the teacher asks the class to imagine that they are not just traveling from school to the museum but from their hometown to Burma. The drive is 30 minutes but they imagine having to fly 19 hours to Burma. They arrive at the museum in the morning and are greeted by friendly museum staff who are wearing easily identifiable uniforms. A few of the students have visited the museum before but mostly remember its collections. The staff address these expectations by gearing the students up for an active and immersive experience. The group is led to an introduction area, bypassing the rest of the museum activity. The space feels calm and comfortable and is filled with posters, quotes, and other visuals about Burma. The students are given a few moments to use the toilets and stow their belongings in lockers. They are instructed to keep nothing on them. Meanwhile one of the staff members consults with the teacher and adult chaperone. While they will be participating in the simulation, they should keep an eye on the students to assist in making sure that everyone is okay. There will be staff to accompany students back to this room should the need arise. This has rarely happened, but in case, they show them a map of the space and point out the paths with the less challenging experiences for students at risk.

2A - INTRODUCTION: When everyone is ready the staff direct the class to a reflection area and ask them to sit in their family groups. The teacher helps to get the students settled. Staff members welcome the group again and thank for them for their participation up to this point. Their willingness to be there has been the first big step to making a difference for refugees. They engage the students by asking them their expectations of a simulation and what they know about Burmese refugees. Building on the students' responses, the staff elaborate on the history of Burma and the Karen people to set the context for the simulation. The staff let the students pass around some traditional Karen objects including women's neck rings, bone jewelry, and textiles.

The staff explain that the simulation will last 70 minutes followed by a 30 minute debriefing. The experience may be challenging, but the students should remember that it is a simulation and what they are feeling is a representation of what refugees may feel everyday. While no one will actually be harmed, it is up to each student to use their imagination and to make choices that better the outcome for their family. They remind the students that all the characters are played by actors and will be addressing them by their family roles. When the simulation is over it will be clearly announced and everyone will return to their own identities. They ask that all students give their best effort to participate in role-play. Should anyone feel sick or wish to leave, they can motion a "time out" with their hands and address one of the actors or their teachers directly. The staff then welcomes any questions the students might have.

2B - TRANSITION: The teacher and chaperone help the group get into their characters and distribute the costumes. Each adult character wears a traditional sarong over their clothes and keeping with tradition,

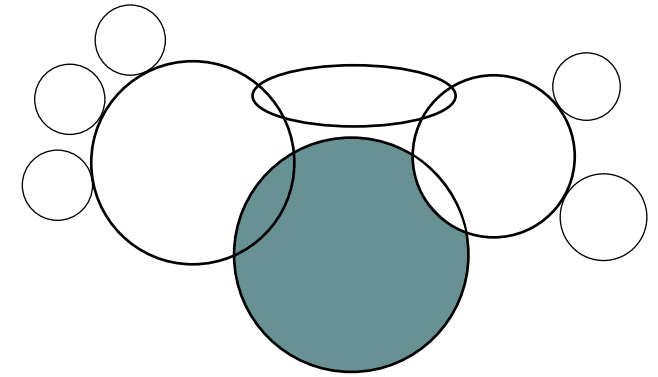


Fig. 17A: *Keyed Circulation Plan*

all the unmarried girls, wear a white garment over their clothes. Besides their character objectives, the students are told to remember the Karen cultural trends. They are a humble, trusting people, avoid confrontation, do not keep secrets amongst themselves, and do not like being referred to as Burmese. Additionally, they practice Christianity. The students recall learning these traits in their class presentations. Each family is given passports and a list of assets including prop money. They explain the traditional roles of each family member and because Karen people do not have surnames, they are referred to by the father's name. They practice the pronunciation of the Karen words for each family role, which is how the students will identify each other in the simulation.

The staff allow a few moments for the students to settle into their costumes, think about their character objectives, and look over their assets. Once the group is ready, and all questions answered, the staff asks for a moment of silent reflection to connect to the story and transition into character. The staff explain that they will then move into the first space in silence and show a brief introductory film, the completion of which signifies the start of the simulation.

SEQUENCE 3: HOME

Goals

- To transition students into the simulation and the world of Burmese Karen.
- To induce a sense of home and consequently despair when forced to leave it behind.
- To expose students to the various perspectives and realities of people in Burma.
- To encourage students to actively participate in role-play and make difficult choices regarding one's identity, home, and safety.

Duration

30 minutes

As the students move into the first space, they feel a nervous but excited anticipation of what is to come. They realize they are no longer in control of the situation but are grateful for responsibility required of their family roles and try to focus on those. They sit on



The look and feel of activities in a traditional Karen Village.

the floor as the film starts up with traditional music. The film, narrated by a Karen refugee, sets the scene of a Karen village near the Thai border. The visuals depict a beautiful tropical landscape. The villagers have simple means but take pride in their land. They find happiness practicing their cultural traditions. They heard rumors that the Burmese military are coming to remove all minority groups but the village has no way to communicate with the outside world. As the film winds down, lights come up and make visible the surrounding village environment. It feels peaceful and welcoming.

3A - VILLAGE LIFE: The Village Head actor takes over from the film and says that they must continue living despite the rumors. Village Head seems a friendly authority and the students immediately trust him, considering him one of their own. In preparation for the upcoming new year holiday, the Village Head allocates tasks for each household. Some students use props to help prepare food or bring in the agriculture, the girls have their turn at a loom, while others practice traditional songs and instruments. For a moment, the students are having so much fun concentrating on their allocated tasks that they forget about the impending threat of Burmese soldiers.

3B - INTERROGATION: The students suddenly hear the sound of trucks. Soldiers arrive, dressed in uniform and carrying guns, and announce themselves as officials of the Burmese military. The soldiers surround the village and corral the Karen together. They speak in pride about their government leaders. The students remember learning about

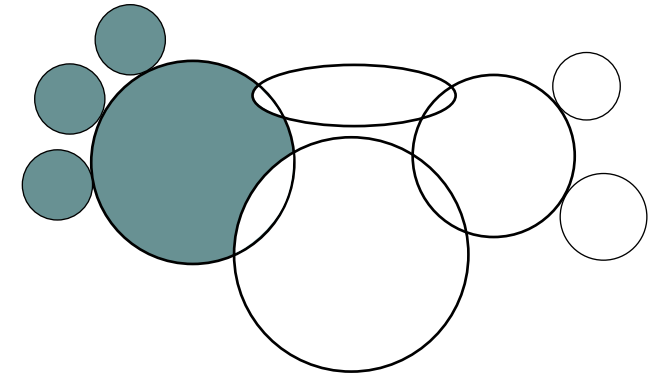


Fig. 17B: Keyed Circulation Plan

the dictators in class and immediately understand that they do not share the same affections. The soldiers' language is derogatory and condescending. According to the soldiers, the village is outside of government jurisdiction in a "black zone." They are at this village to conduct a mandatory survey of government loyalty. Village Head protests and is immediately ordered down. When the students observe him obeying, they know that they should too.

One soldier accompanies each family to a nearby area to start their questioning. The soldier asks for their family passports and addresses each member of the family starting with the adults. He asks questions such as, "Have you spread information about Burma to outsiders?", "Have you been involved in rebel militia groups like the Karen National Union?", "Do you give up your right to vote?", "Do you promise to disregard your faith and practice only the national religion?" The questions are challenging; on one hand the students do not want to deny their ethnic origins but on the other hand, they fear there will be consequences if they do not comply. If they answer agreeably, the soldier reminds them that they are never allowed to practice their traditions again. He stamps their papers with "BURMAN" which the students recognize as the

majority people. For simply associating with the Karen, he taxes the family by removing some of their assets. If the students answer disagreeably, the soldier threatens them, taxes their most valuable assets, and stamps “KAREN” on their papers. The soldier threatens them saying that as Karen people, they have given up their rights and citizenship of Burma. The groups fear for how the other families are responding.

3C - FAMILY SEPARATION: The soldiers explain that the government is taking ownership of this territory and everyone will have new responsibilities under their leadership. They separate the families, sending men, women, and children to different areas to be briefed on their new occupation. The students feel anxious being separated from their group and recognize that this is contrary to many of their character objectives.

The male adult roles meet another male actor. He is recognizably Karen because his attire is similar to their own. The man discusses life in his neighboring village under authority of the soldiers. In a monologue he tells the students how he was forced into labor, performing physically demanding tasks and having to walk miles to work everyday. To get permission to leave his village, he has to obtain day passes which cost a fee. He shows them his scars and asks them to try lifting one of the heavy objects he has to transport by foot. Before he sends them back to their village, he warns them by saying some of his own friends were shot for trying to run or failing to work. The women characters meet a similar Karen actress who was also forced into labor. She discusses additional challenges women face and tells the group not to trust any men outside of their village. If they get separated from their families they may be taken away and sold into the black market. It is best that they stay strong and learn how to support their families in case anything

happens to their husbands. The students learn that the a large majority of refugees are women. Meanwhile, the students representing children meet a teen Karen character who is carrying a gun. He describes how unfair the education and work opportunities are for minority groups, that their own ethnic culture and language is not taught beyond grade school. His story involves being abducted on his way to school where he was forced to become a child soldier. He has done things at a young age that most never have to in their lifetime. But if he had not, he might not have survived. The students are surprised to learn that Burma has the highest number of child soldiers in the world.

3D - BIG DECISIONS: The students are reunited with their families and the soldiers promise to report back the next day. They are relieved to be left alone but do not feel safe. As they start to discuss the possible futures they just witnessed, a Democratic Leader arrives on the scene. He introduces himself and says he has traveled far from his family to try to help their village. He talks about the National League for Democracy (NLD) led by popular leader Aung Sun Suu Kyi. The Leader tells the story of their past uprisings and how many political leaders and Buddhist monks have been unfairly imprisoned, banished, and risk dying in the fight for human rights. The students are both inspired and helpless upon hearing his story; they want democracy but are not sure if they would risk everything for it. With help from the U.S. Genocide Intervention Network, he was able to obtain a solar-powered radio to help warn villages of incoming attacks. He and some of the students set up the radio and tune into government propaganda. According to the military generals, they won the recent 2010 election by a landslide. The Leader is furious, explaining that the government rigged the votes and their democratic party was deemed illegal. On another channel, they



Students gather to listen to radio propaganda.

pick up warnings that the soldiers are still in the area and the village should prepare themselves. With this news, the Leader pleads for their secrecy and leaves.

With urgency, Village Head says one of the families must hide the radio. If no one volunteers, he has to assign the family with the most assets, or one deemed “BURMAN” in order to lessen the risk. Immediately after, the soldiers return; they have heard democracy leaders are in the area and demand to know if they have been visited by one. They were ordered to eliminate anyone supporting the illegal party. One of the soldiers tells his story in an aside of how he must obey orders to protect his own family. The students are faced with the difficult choice of whether or not to betray the Leader, either way they feel responsible for someone’s possible death. The soldiers promise to let them keep their property if they help, but the students do not want to bring harm to the Leader either. More worried about their immediate safety, they decide to comply with the soldier and point in the direction the Leader fled. The soldiers leave with a warning of what will happen if they were lying.

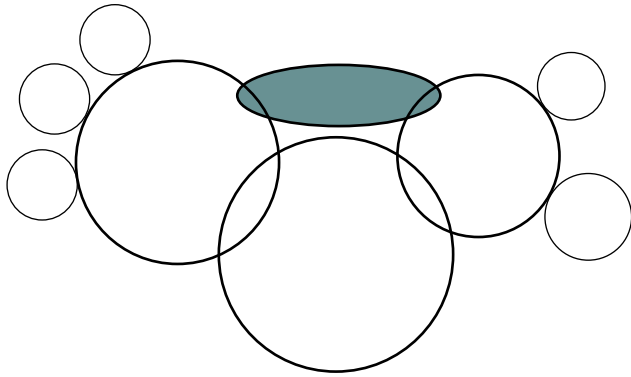


Fig. 17C: *Keyed Circulation Plan*

SEQUENCE 4: MIGRATION

Goals

- To induce the sense of uncertainty, loss, and risk in leaving one's home.
- To expose students to the various perspectives and realities of people forced to immigrate.
- To encourage students to actively participate in role-play and make difficult choices regarding migration.

Duration

15 minutes

4A - FLEE!: Knowing the soldiers are not gone for good, Village Head calls for a community vote. Based on the different scenes they witnessed, they must decide whether to leave their home, or stay under the soldiers' terms. If they leave they will go to Thailand, but there is no guarantee that they will be allowed entry. Most students decide it is safer to flee but Village Head says some must stay to protect the dignity of the village so they can one day return. A few brave students volunteer, but their family size has decreased. The teacher and chaperone split to stay with each group. Village Head tells those leaving to quickly pack, only to bring what they can carry, and not to forget their passports. Each family is limited to one small pouch. The students discuss what items to bring but this is different for each characters' objective: the students playing male characters are concerned with their valuable assets, the women characters consider safety supplies, and the children want to bring their toys or sentimental objects. The students imagine what it would be like

to live on so few possessions and consider what of their own objects at home they would bring if in this situation. As they hear the sounds of gunshots in the distance, Village Head hurries the families and directs them to the path that leads to Thailand. The lights dim and a red glow is cast, signifying both the onset of night and villages burning in the distance. As they leave he tells them to watch out for mines and hide if they hear anyone coming.

4B - EN ROUTE: The student feel anxious leaving behind their classmates but their attention is drawn to the new environment, that of a dense forest. They follow a path, the ground feels uneven and they can hear the sounds of wild animals. Village Head said it was safer to travel under the cover of night but the sense of uncertainty and danger lingers. Before long they hear people shouting "who is out there?" and the students immediately crouch down. The strangers let down their guard when they see that they are refugees and the students recognize them as Karen people. The strangers are refugees too and give the students a perspective of what to expect on the journey ahead of them. They explain how life is tough in Thailand but it is better than being in Burma. They sometimes have to sneak back into the country in order to get food but this time they are trying to find lost family members. One journey can take months. When the students hear that have been at the camp for years with no contact with their relatives, they wonder if the same fate will be true of the family they left behind.

The refugees offer the students a map of the paths. At the fork in the road, they have the choice of traveling a short route through a dangerous minefield or a longer route where they increase the chances of running into dangerous people. The refugees warn the students of members of the KNU in the area. Even though they



Students vote on whether or not to flee home.

are fighting to protect the Karen, their presence also welcomes conflict from the Burmese soldiers. The KNU will try to tax the villagers in order to fund their troops. The refugees leave in a hurry. The students move on and reach the fork in the road. The group decides which path they want to take. The women characters again consider safety and prefer the long route while the men would rather risk the mines to avoid further taxation and to get there faster. The students playing children remember what Child Soldier said about mines and stick with the female characters. If the families separate yet again, some will have no assets on them. For those that travel on the longer route they are ambushed by the KNU. Dressed in uniform with rebel flags, the actor delivers a monologue about his mission as KNU. Even though he is also Karen, he uses similar authoritative language as the Burmese soldiers. In exchange for his protection, he taxes the families by taking some of their assets. Finally, they are allowed to move on but feel worse for the wear; they do not think it is fair that they are being taxed and threatened when they did not do anything wrong. When they encounter the river that is on the map, they know they have reached the Thai border.

The students that stayed in the village hide as they consider their next steps. They feel concerned and wonder what is happening to their family groups. Before they have much time to think, the KNU arrives. The actors perform the same monologue that the "Flee!" group will hear on the path. The students worry about what would happen if the Burmese soldiers return and saw them associating with the KNU. Suddenly the lights flash and they hear explosions. The KNU reports that the soldiers did not uphold their promises of safety and other villages in the area are being burned. The atmosphere turns to one of emergency. The group ducks down and follows the



Decisions are made about the safest route to travel.

KNU out of the village without the opportunity to pack any belongings. They are led down the minefield path which is dark and winding. The KNU points out the mine markers but sounds of explosions and cries make it hard to navigate. The students move quickly.

4C - BORDER CROSSING: The students' arrival at the border crossing is staggered. The border is allocated with wire fences and spotlights. They are met by stern-looking guards in foreign uniforms who urgently order them to get in line. The guards speak with broken English and a thick accent, making it hard for the students to understand. The students obey in hopes to be let in. Those that fled through the minefield have no paperwork on them and the guards question them on their identity. Without paperwork, they cannot be let in. As the other students arrive they scramble to reconnect with their families. The guards grow angry as the longer they are there, the more danger they are in as well. They shout orders for everyone to get their documents ready. The students are shocked that the

people who are providing them safe refuge are not any more friendly than those persecuting them.

The families that were identified as "KAREN" in the interrogation are asked a few questions and let in. The guards recognize that Karen people are not welcomed in Burma and therefore seek asylum. However, those who were identified as "BURMAN" are interrogated more thoroughly; if they have renounced themselves as Karen, then why do they seek asylum? The students regret their choices from the interrogation and quickly describe the events that transpired including that their home was destroyed. The guards do not seem convinced but say instead they will be let in for a price; they have families to provide for too. The students feel obliged to give up more of their assets and in many cases, the guards take jewelry, watches, or shoes the students are wearing. The students imagine how it feels to be violated and have to sacrifice objects important to them.

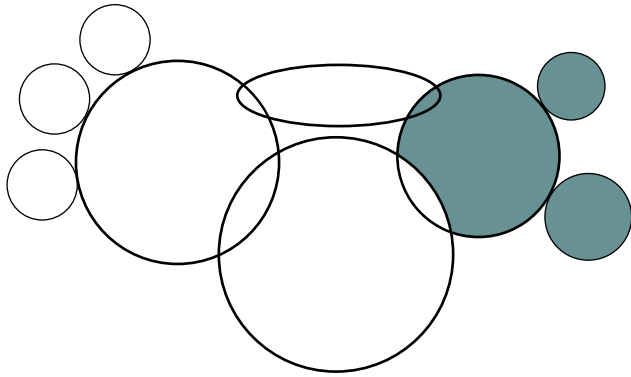


Fig. 17D: *Keyed Circulation Plan*

SEQUENCE 5: CAMP

Goals

- To induce a sense of fearful safety, and of not belonging anywhere.
- To expose students to the various perspectives and realities of people living in refugee camps.
- To encourage students to actively participate in role-play and make difficult choices regarding migration.

Duration

25 minutes

5A - REGISTRATION: The students are rushed into the next area and ordered to fill out registration papers. The environment consist of materials like corrugated iron, barbed wire, and bamboo. It suggests harsh fluorescent lighting and has the uninviting, official look of an immigration center. The officials are speaking in a language the students do not understand, only catching a few familiar words. The students struggle to make out the text on the forms, which simulate a foreign language. They work as a family to answer the questions as best they can. When they turn their registration into the officials, they are all given a refugee identification number and relabeled “KAREN.” They are instructed that anyone in the camp without a “KAREN” label is another minority group with whom they cannot communicate because they speak a different language. The students are amazed at how many dialects exist in one small region of the world.

The next area is a clinic, made up of make-shift equipment. The medics are dressed in white and are from a Western NGO. The students are questioned and some of those who passed through the mines are given arm or head bandages to wear. As they check

each students’ eyes, pulse, and throat, they inform them of medical concerns in the camp. They discuss the lack of supplies and how disease is common due to close living quarters and lack of sanitation. Hearing about how certain health problems could be easily avoided with proper education and equipment makes the students think about how they have taken their health for granted and wish they could help.

Once all students have passed through camp registration, one of the Thai Soldiers makes an announcement about the schedules and rules that make up daily life in camp. His speech includes a perspective of what Thai people think about the Burmese refugees. While the country does not acknowledge their rights, the soldiers often take sympathy as they are living in similarly oppressive conditions. Each family is assigned a tent, the size of which is dependent on how much they are willing to spend. Those who spend more, or deliver a more convincing argument, are given a larger mat while other families receive a small mat. The students construct a canvas tent above their mat. They squeeze themselves into their tents and try to imagine living in such close quarters over a long period of time. They are told their entire family must stay within that tent during curfew and are never to leave the camp.

5B - CAMP LIFE DAY ONE: The Soldiers state that the first order of business for the new refugees is to elect two to three Section Leaders who will oversee this residential zone. The students debate and ultimately, a few students, who were not left behind in the village sequence, are chosen to lead. They are taken away by U.N. Representatives who inform them of the role of NGOs in the camps. Those students are put in charge of the food ration cards for their entire community and for instructing the others on the process of



Registration and health check upon entering the camp.

resettlement. They learn that this can take years but if they can prove their need to receive asylum to the UNHCR, they may have a chance of being resettled to the U.S. or Canada. At first the students are relieved because they know the U.S. but when they are told about some of the struggles on the other end, they think more deeply about what refugees must go through in a new, foreign place.

Meanwhile the other families were broken up by officials and rushed to their tasks for the day. The Aung and Hla family scurry to the school where they join other refugees who are not Karen. They are welcomed by a teen actor who speaks broken English, signifying that he has learned some Karen. He welcomes them to the school and tells his story. The boy was born in the camp and therefore has no citizenship in Burma nor Thailand. As he describes the things he is vulnerable to without citizenship, the students feel lucky to have a passport and civic rights. In the school they are taught basic words in Thai and asked to write down some of the characters. The students struggle to keep up as everything sounds so foreign to them.

The Kyi and Tun families have been directed to a marketplace where they meet vendors from outside the camp. Some are Thai-Karen who explain that they have similar traditions but are citizens of Thailand. For a price, they know of some families willing to help refugees, but they would have to break rules to sneak out of the camp. The students want to buy some of the items offered by vendors but struggle to communicate with those not speaking English. Some things like rice they cannot purchase without owning equipment to cook; they feel they are being ripped off. Other black market vendors, who do not appear very trustworthy, offer a get-rich-quick scheme of selling illegal goods like drugs.

Before they know it, the students are being rushed back into the tents. Curfew is called and the students immediately obey. The lights go dark but the noise of people and dogs barking does not stop. The sound of heavy rain starts up and it even feels like their tents are swaying in the wind. They try to imagine sleeping in these conditions. They are soon interrupted by a few men running into the camp, who they recognize as the members of the KNU they met earlier. The KNU gather the students for a secret announcement and they feel nervous leaving their tents. Huddled together, the KNU tell them that someone gave up Democracy Leader's location and he was caught and killed by the Burmese Soldiers. The hope for the democratic party is decreasing. The students feel shocked and guilty; they know they would never wish for someone's death but consider what actions they would be capable of committing if their lives depended on it.

5C - CAMP LIFE DAY TWO: Sirens announcing an intrusion start up and the KNU run off. The students can hear a fight taking place. Thai Officials round up the students and give a strict warning about associating with militia from Burma, it risks the safety of the entire camp. Lights come up again signifying the start of a new day. The Section Leaders are instructed to present the message they received from the U.N. These students try to represent the facts about resettlement as best they can, and they work as a class to distribute the food ration cards fairly.

The Officials start day two, this time sending The Kyi and Tun families to the school and Aung and Hla families to the marketplace. Like the first day, the atmosphere is chaotic and overwhelming. The students also make efforts to cash in their rations, starting to feel hungry themselves, and find themselves spending more assets in bribes than they had hoped to.



Night falls on the camp as family groups huddle in their tents.

SEQUENCE 6: DEBRIEFING

Goals

- To reflect, critically analyze, and evaluate the simulation experience through open dialogue.
- To clarify authenticity of the simulation.
- To connect students' experience to a greater picture of genocide and to their everyday lives.
- To make accessible resources for further information and ways to take action.

Duration

30 minutes

In the midst of the activity, the students hear “The simulation is now over!” loud and clear. Everyone breaks out of character and releases some of the energy they felt through sighs and laughter. The students feel moved by what they just experienced.

6A - FAMILY PRESENTATIONS: Before anyone can relax too much, the actors task each family with counting their remaining assets and discussing the next steps for their family. Staff explain that they heard the perspectives of the U.N., Refugees Sneaking Back In, Thai-Karen, and people from the black market:

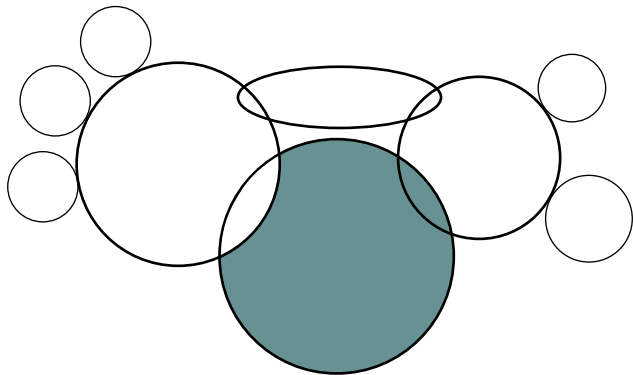


Fig. 17E: *Keyed Circulation Plan*

what does each possible future offer? The students quickly brainstorm their options considering the state they are in at the end of the simulation. Staff and teachers check in with each group, reminding them to consider these decisions from the point of view of their characters. The students playing Uncles know that the black market would help them achieve their objective of earning more assets, but they weigh that against those playing Mother roles who plead for the safety of their family in resettlement. After discussing for five minutes, each family presents the state of their family at the end of the simulation, their decisions, and any other immediate reactions they shared as a group. Once everyone has a chance to speak, the staff use their comments as a springboard to explore the realities of refugees who have made these same decisions. They relate to how hard it was to achieve their character objectives. Many of the students opted to resettle through the UNHCR and the staff wow the students with facts about the number of Burmese refugees immigrating to the U.S., including their very own neighborhood, and the challenges they face.

6B - TALK-BACK: The actors bring everyone back to the reflection room where they have refreshments. Its decor has changed; now the visuals reflect the work of relief organizations and there are objects like replica mines and prosthetics for the students to observe. The students take off their costumes and relax on cushions. Before they open up the floor for questions, the staff want to share a special visitor with the group. The students then meet a Karen volunteer who was a former refugee himself. The students listen intently as he shares his own story, likening it to that of the simulation. The impact of the simulation hits the students much more strongly when they learn that their experience really does reflect reality. The actors ask the students if they know what genocide

is. Some respond based on their previous classroom lessons. The facilitators continue to discuss the roots of genocide using aspects of the simulation to draw connections, “Did you ever feel unjustly discriminated against?”, “Did any characters treat you as less than human?”, “How often were you separated from family?”

The students are introduced to genocides like the one in Burma that are happening in other areas of the world. They have mixed feelings; they are angry that this is happening and confused as to why it does not stop. They also feel guilty for the comforts of their own lives in considering the unequal distribution of resources. The actors help the students cope with the challenging nature of genocide and the vast proportion of global social need. They assure the students that their reactions are normal and acknowledging these feelings is more than many are comfortable doing. They do not land on one solution but offer active things students can do to help. When the students hear examples of things people have done, both global leaders and kids their age, they feel empowered. They think about times they’ve seen discrimination in their school and consider how they would react now.

The staff remains positive and hopeful and are open to all questions the students ask. The class appreciates being able to speak candidly and feels equal to the staff. In another attempt to make sense of their experience, they ask the actors questions about their process and involvement. The actors respond with transparency and maintain a respectful approach to the subject matter. All parties are thanked for their participation, students’ possessions returned, and the group gives themselves a round of applause. On their way out they are welcomed to fill out a brief survey evaluating their immediate reaction to the program. Students sign the guest book and read other entries.

SEQUENCE 7: POST-VISIT

Goals

- To use students' simulation experience as an access point to lessons on genocide and refugees.
- To transform any negative emotions in the simulation (like guilt or anger) and encourage hope.
- To enable students to take responsible actions against discrimination in their everyday lives.
- To work closely with educators in installing a long-term plan for evaluating learning and empathy transformation.

Duration

Five to eight class meetings.

7A - POST-VISIT LESSON PLANS: For homework, the teacher has the class write a reflection of their experience, one from the point of view of their character and one from their own point of view. Back in the classroom, the teacher encourages those who feel comfortable to share some of the reflections from their writing. The students are still reeling from the experience and many discussed it with their families at home. The teacher prepares lessons based on the *Myanmar Migrations* teacher's guide that illustrate Gregory Stanton's Eight Stages of Genocide. They brainstorm instances in the simulation that were reflective of each Stage including the "KAREN" stamp symbolization that categorized them and the examples of Karen people being treated differently than others. Through videos and readings, they analyze their experience in the simulation and connect their discoveries to other genocides. They discuss the implications of refugees resettling in their community.

They begin to explore in more detail the multiple perspectives represented in the simulation considering the context that influences people to make the choices they do through a mock debate. Building on the role-play from the pre-visit lessons and simulation, they perform exercises from Theatre of the Oppressed to visualize power relationships in society. They empathize with the refugees but begin to understand conflicts are not always black and white. They continue to add reflections and news clippings to their "trunks."

Many of the students want to take action but feel helpless doing so. Exploring some of the resources provided by the museum, the class makes action pledges and focus on discrimination in their own community. Additionally, they willingly chip in funds to take action in the classroom by participating in the One Million Bones project. The students excitedly make bones and feel good knowing that something they created will be on display at the Washington Mall protesting genocide. The project gives them a sense of connectedness to other people in the country who want to combat genocide. At the end of the unit, the teacher has the class write one more reflection on the museum's web page. Looking at their previous journal entries, they reflect further on whether their perspectives and feelings towards the simulation experience and its content have changed. Additionally, they join conversation on the museum's online Student Forum. They are excited about the chance to Skype with Burmese refugees that have resettled all over the world and connect with other students who have participated in the simulation. Here they explore additional media and make action pledges for things they can do to raise awareness about genocide.



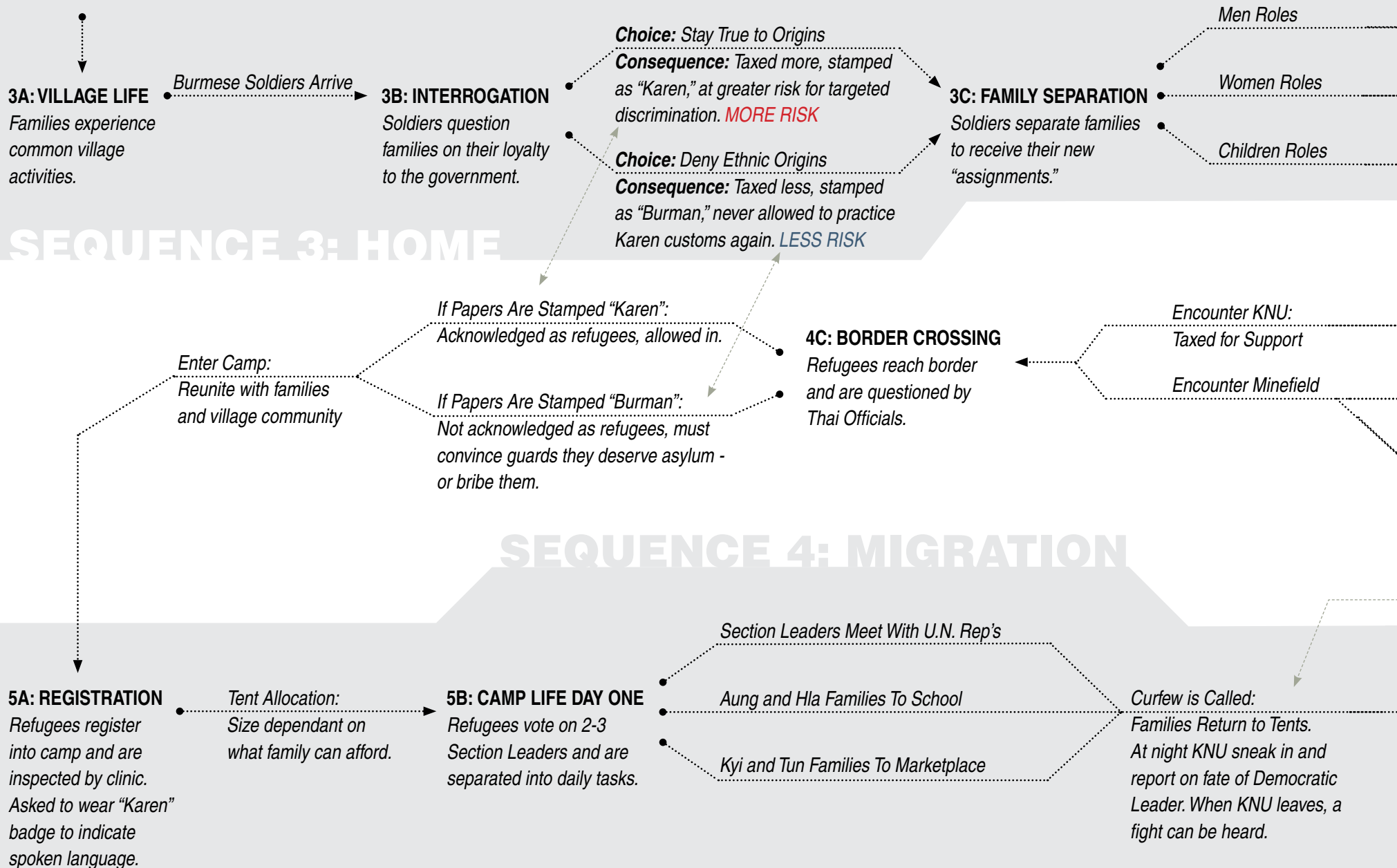
Students fill out their "passport" journals.

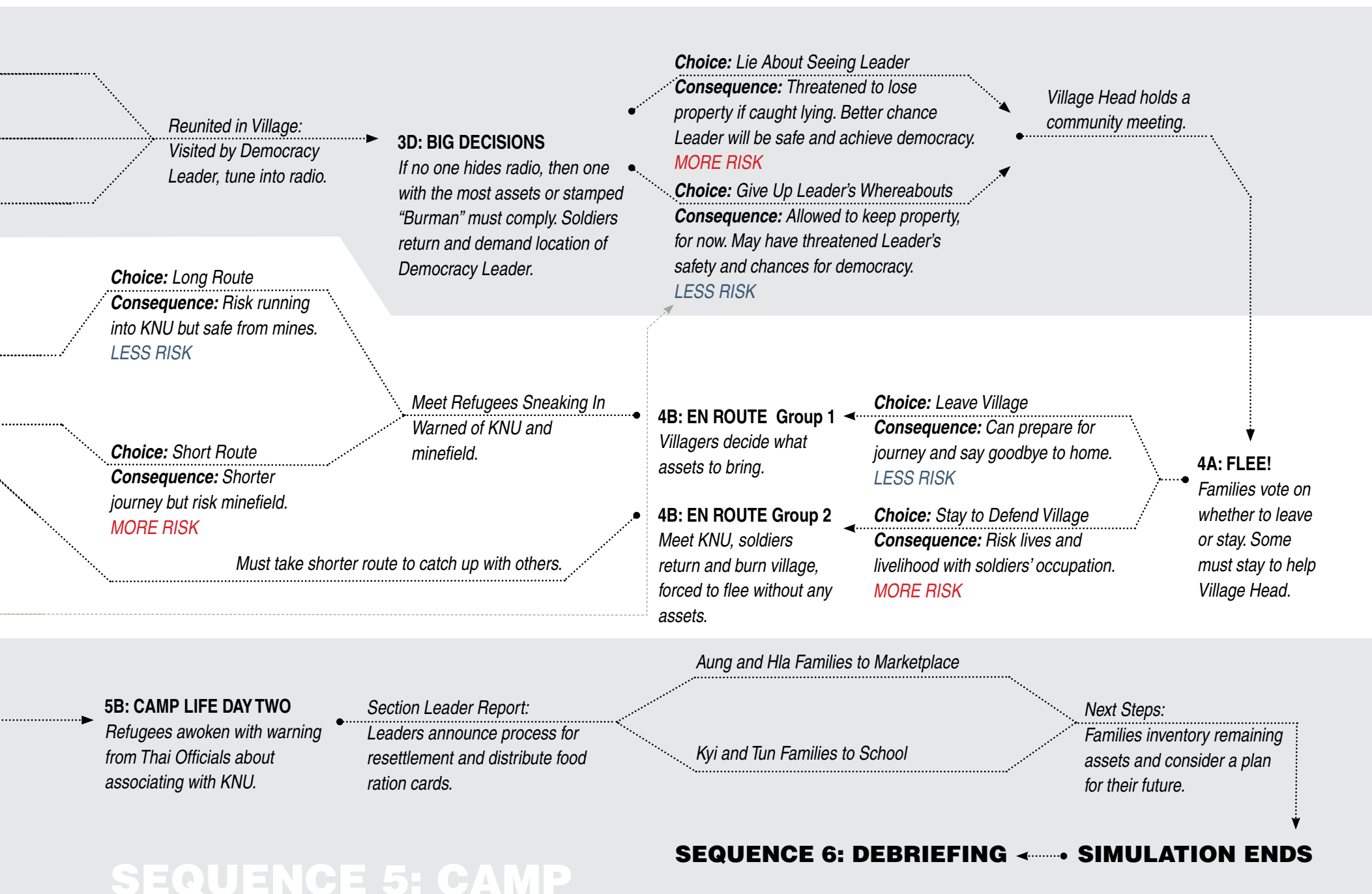
7B - EVALUATION TOOL: Working closely with the museum, the teacher cumulates the reflections and action pledges from the students, careful to avoid reading anything the students designated as private. He forms a qualitative opinion on the educational transformations that took place and makes note of any improvements that could be made to better the program for future users. The teacher submits a survey of his own and offers suggestions. Over a few months, the museum continues to evaluate the program's impact on students through visits to the classroom and online student entries.

NARRATIVE FLOW MAP

This CYOA-style map (Fig. 18) breaks down the different choices and actions participants role-play within the simulation.

SIMULATION BEGINS • SEQUENCE 2: ORIENTATION





PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Social action simulations have potential to sustain interest and popularity for several years, especially if the story and actors remain flexible to changes in audience and content. The program is more relevant when the depicted subject is currently taking place.

Development

In order to implement this program further development would need to take place with all stakeholders, including actors, audience, educators, exhibition designers, museum administration, and content experts. A playwright needs to be hired to create a script, iterations of which can be workshopped with professional actors. Collaborating with actors on the script early in the process makes use of the tools of improvisation and scene work for character development, and familiarizes them with the museum's mission and target audience.

Bridal's *Exploring Museum Theatre* offers the field suggestions for hiring, auditioning, and training theatre professionals for museum programs. Closer to the opening, actors would go through an extensive rehearsal process to prepare for the simulation and facilitating talk-backs. Around ten to twelve actors are required, preferably from Asian descent, to tell the represented Burmese and Thai stories. All the actors would double up roles. Nora Berger-Green, Director of Theatre Programs at NCC, has found that audiences have no problem imagining one actor in two roles, but are more confused when two actors play one role, which would be avoided. A stage manager would be required to oversee the simulation including timing with

multimedia, resetting props, and audience traffic. They would be a coordinator for actors whose focus during the production is on their roles and the audience.

Physical Space

Ideally an open, flexible, and neutral space (indoor or outdoor) is made available to host the simulation that is capable of housing an array of multimedia, lighting, and/or scenic elements. Space needs to be designated for actors to change and rest between performances. Access needs to be provided for actors to move between areas during the simulation that make for safe and effective entrances. It is crucial to have a transition area between the museum (or outdoors) and the simulation environment in order for audience to acquaint themselves with, and agree to, the theatrical framing of the simulation. Many will be unfamiliar with commercial theatre framing much less the first person framing required of simulations. Finally, a comfortable sitting area needs to be designated for participants to prepare for and reflect after their experience, which takes place out of character.

Due to the highly active nature of social action simulations, the physical space must avoid bottlenecks, be carefully checked for possible hazards, allow accessibility for everyone, and be entirely flame retardant. Prior to opening, inspectors need to enforce safety codes and insure that the space complies with the museum's existing Emergency and Disaster Preparedness Plan. The actors would be trained in safety precautions and have a straightforward procedure for handling emergencies during the simulation. This, among other protocols and regulations, would be outlined in an actor's manual.

Front-End Evaluation

Further front-end evaluation needs to take place with students and teachers to best cater the program to their existing expectations and understanding of content. During development of their theatre programs, NCC holds a two-week workshop during which they build a miniature version of the production and run it with draft scripts, rehearsal props, and audience members. In exchange, NCC offers the participating teachers and students free entry to preview shows. Inviting content experts (including former refugees if possible) to experience the workshop can further refine its authenticity. In documenting the workshop, museum developers and actors can begin to predict common reactions and possible questions in order to prepare talk-back guidelines. NCC also hosts open houses, and offers free admission to teachers for a full year to further test and build interest in their programs.

Marketing

Holding focus groups with teachers of different ages, school districts, and disciplines can provide insight on what would make the program relevant to them and generate buzz. Involving educators in the process also means getting to know the resources and curriculum the teachers are currently using, as well as their field trip procedures. Museums need to be flexible and offer a "plan B," acknowledging that it can be a challenge for schools to support field trips even in economically stable times. While the impact of the program is targeted at students, it is the teachers who decide to attend and are therefore targeted in marketing. The program must be affordable and make the best use of teachers' time; schools are unlikely to travel more than an hour to visit a museum.⁷ The museum

should clearly communicate how the program offers something not possible in a classroom. An added benefit to the workshops is gathering preliminary feedback, quotes from which can be used in marketing materials before the program opens.

Summative Evaluation

Administrators (both school and museum) want to see proven results so proper evaluation is necessary not just to assess learning but the program's impact. A guest book can be available or brief surveys handed out after the simulation to gather immediate feedback. To assess the long-term empathy development addressed in the goals, a pilot class can be followed for a year. With permission, the museum can evaluate the class several months after the program to assess empathy development, the use of the teacher's guide, and other program impacts over time. Volunteers for the long-term study can also be recruited at a museum kiosk outside the simulation entrance.

During registration, teachers can be solicited to involve their class in an online Student Forum after the program to further track student perspectives over time. Besides evaluation, there are opportunities in a blog or social media site for those who want continued involvement to network and converse with other classes who experienced the program, as well as willing refugees from all over the world. Program registration should be available online and over the phone. Similarly there should be a hard and soft copy of the teacher's guide and any supplemental materials. The museum should work closely with the teachers during their registration to conduct a pre-program profile of the students' demographics to prepare actors.

Notes

1. *Museum of Tolerance, Lessons and Activities*, n.d. 28 Feb. 2011. < http://www.museumoftolerance.com/site/ctmL6KfNVLtH/b.5063231/k.5AC2/Lessons_and_Activities.htm >. (source of downloadable teacher's guide and lesson plans)
2. *Living News* tool kit provided courtesy of Nora Berger-Green.
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6. Determined during focus group interviews after *Refugee Run* youth prototype 12 March 2010.
7. Fortney, Kim. "Magic Bus, Museum Programs for School Audiences: The Basics." *Museum*. Jan-Feb 2011: 47. Print.

Images, Tables, and Figures

All figures (Fig. 8-18) and tables (Table 5) illustrated in this chapter were developed by the author.

Pg. 74 Property of the author. (left)

Pg. 74 *Karen Refugees from Burma*. Minnesota Department of Health, 2009. Web. 16 Mar. 2011. < <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/refugee/metrotf/karen09.pdf> >. 22. (right)

Pg. 76-81 Sketches property of the author.

Pg. 83 Property of the author.

Quotes

Pg. 58 Kielburger 74.

I think there are two ways in which learning about the Holocaust helps inform the way we look at genocide. The first is it raises questions about responsibility. ... The second thing, is that it shows us choices have consequences. We see in the history of the Holocaust people making choices. Some choices led to the worst sort of evil, other choices led to extraordinary goodness and selflessness.

Jerry Fowler, USHMM

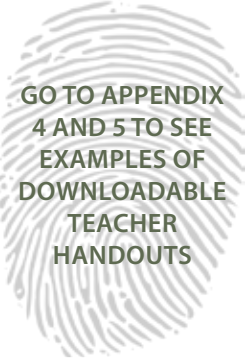
Director of the Committee on Conscience



CHAPTER 6: THE PROJECT



The final chapter is the thesis project, an application of the research and conclusions developed in Part I and the goals and structure outlined in Chapter Five. The project takes the form of a teacher's guide and frames the social action simulation program with supplemental educational material. Extending the program's impact beyond a museum and into the classroom attempts to exemplify a solution to the question: **Can increased role-play and choice-making in a social action simulation result in increased empathy and responsible action in daily life?**



GO TO APPENDIX
4 AND 5 TO SEE
EXAMPLES OF
DOWNLOADABLE
TEACHER
HANDOUTS



Myanmar Migrations

A social action simulation experience about refugees of genocide

Teacher's Guide

Background, Curriculum, and Instructions

Grades 7-9

INTRODUCTION

- 2 | Program Overview
- 4 | Preparation

PROGRAM INFORMATION

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- 21 | Taking Action

EVALUATION TOOL

- 22 | Student Forum
- 23 | Teacher Feedback Form

Dear Teacher,

Thank you for your interest in Myanmar Migrations: a social action simulation on refugees of genocide. By demonstrating an interest in this program, you have taken the first step to helping your students make meaningful connections to refugees and begin their journey to a greater social conscience.

This program is unique and offers a firsthand experiential learning experience rarely found in schools or museums. Instead of having students watch a film about genocide, they will actually become refugees and experience what it may feel like to lose one's home because of extreme targeted discrimination. The program offers challenges that are both physical and emotional in nature but has been found to create memorable and transformative learning experiences.

Your role, and your connection to the students, is crucial for the success of this program. This guide is designed to help you best prepare you and your students for your museum visit. In addition, it contains post-program lesson plans that will help you connect the students' firsthand experience as refugees to curriculum.

We are excited to partner with educators like you in fostering a sense of empathy among young people for shared problems afflicting the world. We know how important it is to build character early on and show students that there are actions they can take to actually make a difference.

Sincerely,

Developers of Myanmar Migrations

Program Overview

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Myanmar Migrations is a social action simulation that reenacts the story of Burmese refugees. A **social action simulation** is a representation of a subject of social concern that employs such immersive theatrical techniques as actors, lifelike sets/costumes, and role-play. Students do not need any prior experience in acting or theatre to participate. The simulation offers a **personal and close-to-authentic experience** for students to explore the roots of genocide and will challenge them to consider what are **essential human rights**. By learning firsthand how it feels to be in a certain situation, students will be more likely to **empathize with otherwise foreign topics**.

The **goals** of *Myanmar Migrations* are to:

- » **Foster empathy** for refugees, and ultimately, develop a greater social conscience
- » **Raise awareness** of genocide and refugees locally and globally
- » **Question** the factors that cause, and maintain, genocide
- » **Promote global citizenship** by considering possible actions to address the problems

The simulation will push students **out of their comfort zone** and in confronting the difficult reality of a refugee firsthand will encourage them to grapple with a range of emotions. Through writing, group discussions, and critical analysis, their simulation experience

will be deconstructed and made relevant to their everyday lives. Through role-play, students will also develop **problem-solving, communication, and reflection skills**.

The transformations involved in fostering a greater social conscience do not take place over night. The simulation is framed with an orientation and debriefing, but the lesson plans included in this guide will help to further **prepare** your students prior to the simulation, and **deepen** their understanding of it afterwards.

Objectives

Through their participation in the simulation and classroom unit, students will:

- » **Recall** a typical refugee story
- » **Understand** the 8 Stages of Genocide
- » **Draw parallels** between the root causes of genocide and their everyday lives
- » **Connect** the genocide in Burma to other historic and contemporary genocides
- » **Identify** the multiple perspectives and attitudes around genocide
- » **Recognize** many of the **difficult choices** refugees, and others involved in genocide, have to make
- » **Seek solutions** and **actions** to combat genocide
- » **Actively** and **cooperatively** participate in **role-play** and discussions

SUMMARY: Participants role-play a Karen (Burmese minority) refugee character and will work together to make choices that best guarantee their survival. Some of the introduction and role-play preparation takes place in the classroom prior to your visit to the museum. The program begins with an orientation and announcement of safety regulations. Once in the simulation, participants journey from a Karen village home to a Thai refugee camp, throughout which they will encounter a series of characters and events that will influence their choices. The program ends with a talk-back where students can reflect and discuss their experience. Further post-program classroom activities are provided.

DURATION: The simulation lasts two hours. Including classroom activities, the entire program can take two to three weeks.

WHEN: Reservations are required. We prefer to run the simulation before lunch time to induce a sense of simulated hunger.

ATTIRE: Because students are actively moving and role-playing throughout the simulation, they should be advised to wear comfortable clothes. Some costumes will be provided that can be worn on top of clothes. No backpacks or any other items, besides required props and any medical needs, are allowed in the simulation. Some possessions, such as watches, jewelry or shoes, may be taken as “bribes” during the role-play, but will be kept safe and returned immediately after the simulation.

MAXIMUM CAPACITY: The simulation can accommodate up to 40 persons at a time. Students are broken into four groups of around nine individuals. This capacity is set in order for each student to have an opportunity to participate and to receive the greatest impact.

ACCESSIBILITY: *Myanmar Migrations* welcomes participation by individuals of all abilities. Should any special needs be required, please advise museum staff.

TEACHER’S ROLE: We recommend at least two adult supervisors be present. Teachers are encouraged to participate in the simulation role-play and model appropriate behavior. Additionally, we ask that teachers assist in forming groups and assigning each student an appropriate character role according to their level of comfort.

PHOTOGRAPHY: Cameras are not allowed within the simulation. If you wish to document your class’ experience designate one person, ideally an adult chaperone, to play the “reporter.”

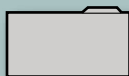
TIME OUT: Should any participant feel the need to step away from the experience, they can address any actor or staff member by saying they need a time out, or simply motion a “T” with their hands. Staff will direct them to the reflection room. If you notice any symptoms of distress unusual for your students, please inform staff. Additionally, you will be advised of the paths and choices that offer less risk.

LESSON PLANS: A MENU OF OPTIONS

This guide offers many types of pre- and post-simulation lesson plans:



» Online Sources,
Downloadable Worksheets,
Videos and Images



» Student “Refugee Trunks”



» Online Student Forum
& Discussion Points



» Role-Play Games



» Taking Action

You are welcome to **mix and match** activities to best suit the needs of your classroom. The lesson plans included in this guide are designed to promote **long-term empathy** but your museum visit will not suffer if you cannot complete them all. Students’ will be transitioned in and out of the simulation by museum staff. We are interested in hearing which activities you found most useful - please take time to fill out the **teacher’s feedback form** in the back of this guide!

Below are some tips for creating a safe and comfortable classroom for exploring sensitive subjects. Additionally, take advantage of the counselors at your school. They can assist you in communicating difficult subject matter and how to best respond to students' needs.

Tips For Teachers: Sensitive Subjects

- » **Listen** to students without interrupting them or moving on too quickly.
- » **Respond positively** to students' participation even if they answer incorrectly. Avoid negative, judgment words.
- » **Remind students** that people of all ages feel sad, angry or guilty and **that's OK**.
- » **Remember** that young people often mix fact and fantasy when recalling traumatic events.
- » **Acknowledge feelings** that might be generated by events.
- » **Affirm bravery** in speaking up about feelings or opinions.
- » **Make yourself available** to students if they wish to discuss the issues further.
- » Students often lack confidence or feel embarrassed sharing their feelings. **Encourage them without forcing them.** Remember that some students express themselves better in writing than verbally.

Refugees in Your Class

Determine whether anyone in your class or their parents have a refugee background or similar traumatic experience. These students may have difficulty being asked to relive these experiences through role-play and may feel embarrassed being singled out. Hold a meeting with the student, his or her counselors, and when possible, their parents. Accept whatever level of participation the student is comfortable giving and let him or her know that however much they are willing to disclose is acceptable. Provide alternative lessons if they do not wish to participate in the simulation.

Safety in the Simulation

A lot of consideration has been put into making sure your students feel safe in the simulation. We ask that students try their best to finish the simulation; they will often feel a sense of accomplishment in doing so. Should anyone feel the need to leave they can signal a **"time out"** to the actors and they will be escorted to the reflection room where they will be accompanied by volunteers. There they can rest or call a designated guardian until the simulation is finished.

The actors have been thoroughly trained in handling the range of behavioral reactions participants may display. While this is rare, as a precaution we ask you to help the actors look out for unusual signs of stress:

Physical Stress: fainting, headaches, dizziness, increased perspiration, pain, nausea, elevated blood pressure, visual or hearing difficulties

Cognitive Stress: disorientation, memory impairment, poor concentration, loss of self-confidence, racing thoughts, disturbed thoughts

Emotional Stress: fear, panic, apprehension, irritability, anger, agitation, feeling overwhelmed

Behavioral Signs of Stress: erratic movements, outbursts, antisocial behavior, inappropriate behavior, nervous mannerisms (nail biting, foot tapping, etc.)

Developed by Oxfam Foundation

Preparation

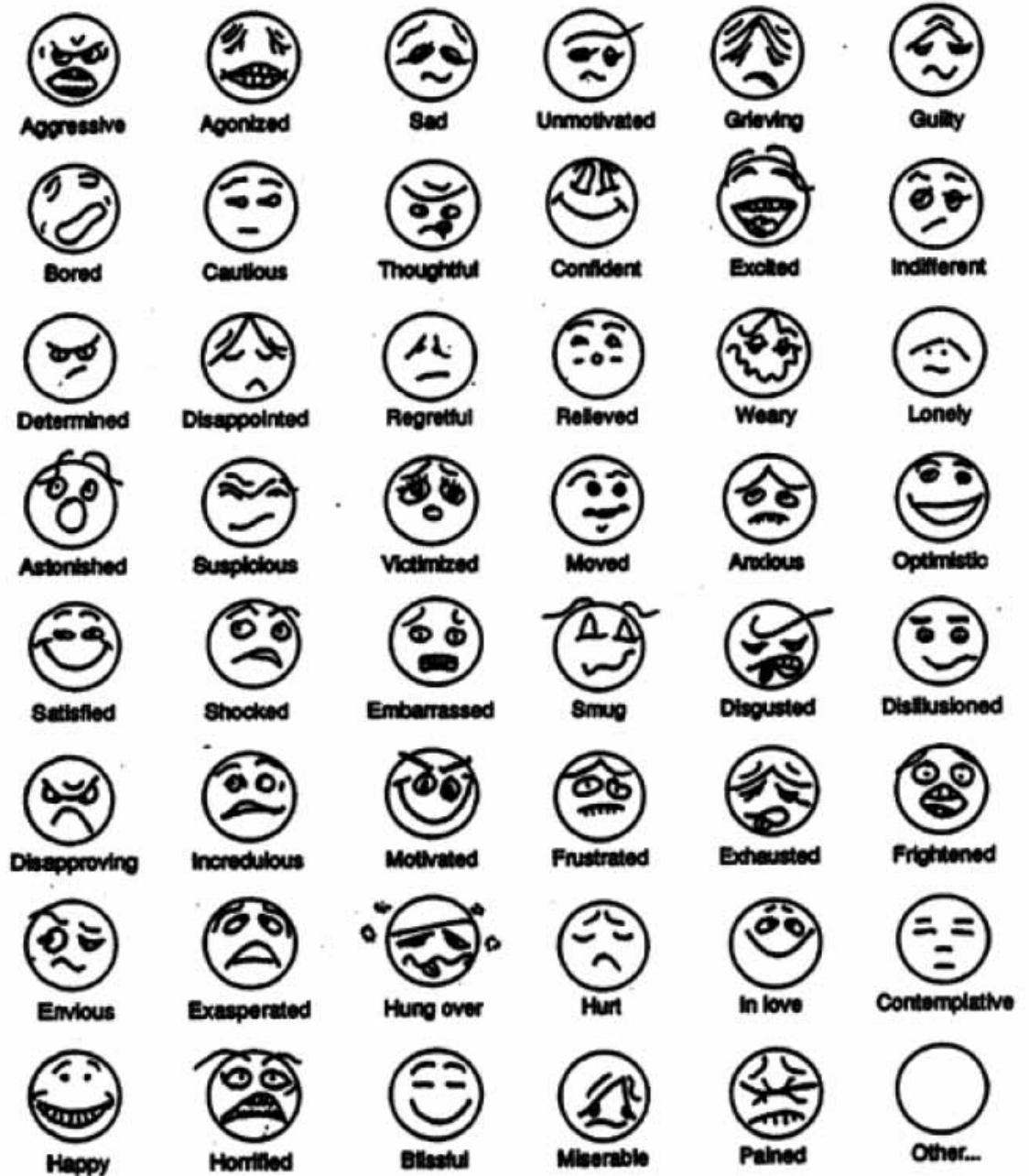
EXPRESSING EMOTIONS

Students will feel a range of emotions at all stages of the program, and should be encouraged to do so. Emotions are not always easy to verbalize and these diagrams are available to help. Students will write reflections in personal journals at several stages of the program. To make the students feel more comfortable expressing their emotions, remind them that if they do not wish to share something they wrote to indicate those passages as private. Instruct them to circle the faces and thermometer scale with the following:

- » **What emotions do you feel and how strongly do you feel them?**
- » **When was the last time you felt these emotions?**
- » **How did you deal with it?**



Assessment: These diagrams will also enable you to evaluate any empathy transformations the students demonstrate. Look for a changes in expressions over time, stated emotions that reflect how refugees might feel, personal concern versus sympathy, a reflection on any negative emotions felt, and a desire to take action.



Thanks to Oxfam Foundation for the use of these images.

GENOCIDE



Karen children on the run.

The term “genocide” was coined in 1944 by Raphael Lemkin, a Polish lawyer of Jewish descent who managed to escape to the U.S. during World War II. His stance on genocide influenced the outcome of the Nuremberg Trials and helped the crime be defined by international law. Today 140 countries have agreed to uphold the legal terms outlined in the articles of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, started by Lemkin; Burma, also known as Myanmar, is not one of them. Despite this agreement, governments often do not declare genocide until after the mass killings have occurred. The conflict in Darfur is the first to have been declared a genocide by the U.S. while the atrocities were still taking place. Even once the crimes receive global attention, it can still take years for any direct action and longer still for the nation to recover.

Being able to recognize the precursors to genocide therefore is of crucial importance. Genocide Watch is an organization whose mission is to predict, prevent, stop, and punish genocide. Their president, Gregory H. Stanton, outlined Eight Stages of Genocide which occur in order but are not linear in that each stage continues to take place as the genocide progresses. The eight stages of genocide are:

1. CLASSIFICATION: The division of people into categories based on nationality, ethnicity, race, or religion. A societal sense of “otherness” towards one group breeds power struggles. Finding common ground and promoting a common language (lingual or other, such as music) are ways of preventing discriminatory classification.

2. SYMBOLIZATION: The assignment of names and physical characteristics to identify classifications such as yellow stars in the Holocaust. While classification and symbolization are an innate part of human behavior, when combined with hatred and discrimination, they lead to subsequent steps of genocide. Preventative measures include making hate symbols and speech illegal.

3. DEHUMANIZATION: When one classification group is considered subhuman by another, often accompanied by propaganda. Stanton believes the normal revulsion against murder is lessened when a group is equated to vermin or



A burned Karen village.

Content Background

disease. He recommends replacing propaganda with material supporting tolerance and encouraging leaders to speak out and educate for tolerance.

4. ORGANIZATION: Because genocide is a group crime, organizations form. Often within the government, these groups fund and support the people who wish to eliminate “the others.” Plans for killings are made. These organizations can be stopped when the U.N. outlaws militias, imposes arms embargoes and investigates any violations.

5. POLARIZATION: Groups are driven apart by extremist leaders that continue propaganda and forbid intermarriage and social interaction. The moderate center is threatened, silenced, and often killed. Prevention includes keeping moderate leaders safe and protesting inhumane laws or gatherings by extremists.

6. PREPARATION: Targeted groups are identified, separated into ghettos or camps, forced to wear identifying symbols, and death lists are made. At this point an emergency should be declared. The U.N. must be urged to provide relief and mobilize their Security Council. Armed intervention forces should prepare to step in.

7. EXTERMINATION: The legal definition of “genocide” takes place with mass killings, which are often referred to as “cleansing” since the perpetrators do not see their victims as human. Sometimes this leads to further revenge killings. In most cases, extermination is sponsored and committed by government states, with the help of militias. To stop genocide the U.N. Security Council should authorize fast and overwhelming military force in compliance to The Rules of Engagement and cease economic trade of oil and gasoline to the region.

8. DENIAL: Denial occurs during and after a genocide and is a strong indicator of further massacres. Denial passes the intent to destroy to future generations. Denial can take the form of destroying evidence, claiming civil war, minimizing statistics, killing off witnesses and truth-tellers, and blaming deaths on the victims, natural forces, or ancient conflicts. The perpetrators, and sometimes other nations who do not want to intervene, try to twist the definition of genocide to undermine the events that took place. To combat Denial the perpetrators must be publicly indicted by the International Criminal Court and held accountable. People must be educated about genocide, particularly children of the groups who committed the crime.

Stanton believes one of the important steps to preventing genocide is education and feels genocide should be in the curricula of every secondary school in the world. If you are interested in further activities and lesson plans beyond this guide, much genocide curricula already exists for grades K-12 and beyond. There are a lot of resources out there for the Holocaust and genocides in Cambodia, Armenia, Bosnia, Rwanda and Darfur, but significantly less about Burma. This is why we feel it is important to tell Burma's story. Check out our educational resources on page 11.



A mine victim continues to fight for his people as part of the Karen National Union.



WEB RESOURCE

Download Handout 1.1 & 1.2 for full scale time line and map with images.

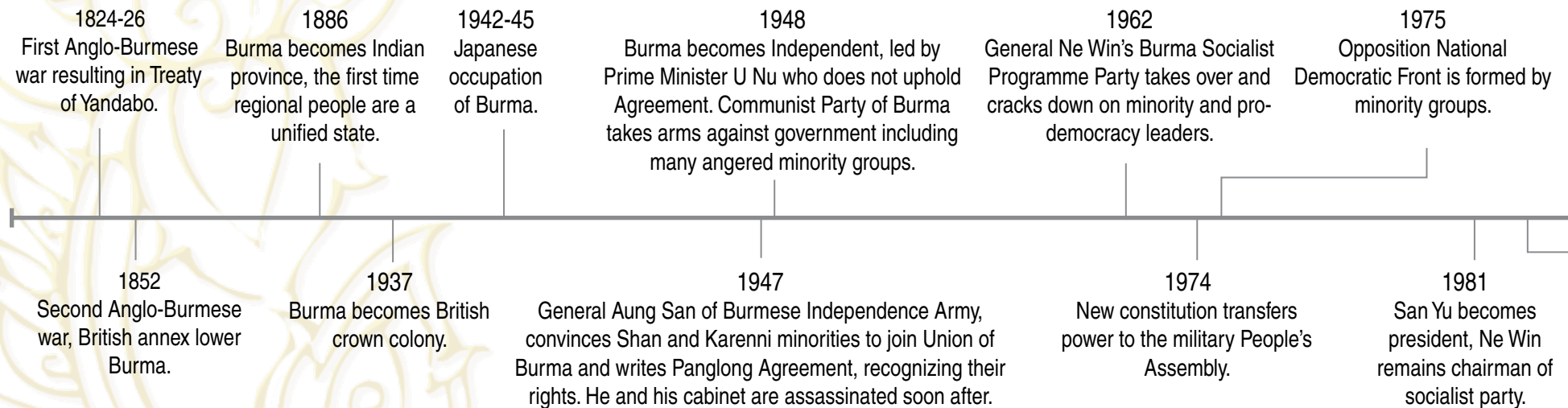


BURMA

Burma has one of the most diverse ethnic populations in Asia, with over 100 different groups and languages. Over thousands of years its proximity to India, China, Thailand, and Laos and varied topography resulted in a diverse mixing of cultures and communities. While there is no reliable consensus, the “national” Bamar people are estimated to constitute around two-thirds of the country’s population. The minorities tend to live in rural areas, the largest groups being the Shan and Karen who represent 9% and 7% of the population respectively, while the remaining groups total 5%, including among many others the Mon, Rakhine, Chin, Kachin, Rohingya, Kayan, and Wa. Within each minority group, there are many smaller ethnic communities. When the military regime enforced a **“Burmantization”** campaign striving to “purify” the country through mass killing of minority groups and

Time Line

Burma has a long history of violence and instability, felt the hardest by its ethnic minorities.



forced pregnancies, the minority groups had to put aside their own differences to unify against a common enemy.

Genocide in Burma

Burma is currently in Stage Seven of Stanton's genocide watch and is also in a state of policide, the intentional destruction of a nation. The Karen people have been fighting longest ongoing war in history. Burma severely defies international human rights laws despite having signed several international treaties. Half of the government's budget is spent on the military but one of their strongest weapons is censorship. They ban assemblies, unions, communication, and expression of any kind as well as international aid.

In order to stop ethnic rebels and pro-democracy leaders, the military targets its

violence towards ethnic civilians. The regions outside of the government's control, especially the border areas, are considered "black zones" where soldiers are allowed to shoot anyone they see. Rape and human trafficking is rampant and forced labor is a major problem. Burma has one of the largest number of child soldiers, the youngest forced into military at nine years old. Minorities are also targeted for their religious beliefs. Most of Burma practices Theravada Buddhism but the government demands that monks uphold their rule. Christian groups, like the Chin, Karen and Karenni are prosecuted and the Rohingya Muslim are even denied citizenship and restricted to certain areas.

The government's targeted discrimination caused the destruction of thousands of villages, resulting in over 1 million refugees and 2,100 political prisoners. Many are internally displaced

but most have fled to neighboring countries where they face other challenges. They are often not very welcomed; both the Shan and Rohingya groups are denied entry into Thailand. Despite the cease-fires, many are too scared to return to Burma.

Resettlement in the U.S.

In 2009, according in the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement, 18,275 refugees resettled from Burma. The states with the largest Burmese communities are Texas, Indiana and New York. Thousands live in Pennsylvania, and the Burmese constitute the second highest number of refugees to resettle in the counties around Philadelphia. Once in the U.S., the multiple ethnic languages make it difficult to form a community and suicide is common. It is the youth who have the best chance of integrating into the larger community.



The different perspectives that are represented by actors within the simulation are:

BURMESE GENERALS: The authoritarian rulers of Burma who control the Burmese army, or “Tatmadaw.” They use propaganda, fake elections, and censorship to maintain power. In order to extinguish the threat of militia groups like KNU, the government military targets all minority groups, including citizens. The result is the ethnic cleansing campaign, or “Burmantization,” that led to genocide.

BURMESE SOLDIER: Members of the national SPDC army who are ordered to take violent action against minority groups and often disregard human rights. The soldiers are allowed to “shoot on sight” in black zones (non-government regions). They commit crimes against villagers such as forced labor, rape, human trafficking, arbitrary taxation, etc. Soldiers are not well compensated and many commit these acts out of fear and desperation.

CHILD SOLDIERS: The Burmese military or other militia groups recruit individuals as young as nine, even though 18 is the minimum age by law. As a result, Burma has the largest number of child soldiers in the world. Children are often abducted or threatened into fighting and committing human rights abuses and many never see their families again.

DEMOCRACY LEADER: The National League for Democracy was formed after the 8888 Uprising and practices non-violent resistance, promotes human rights, and supports national reconciliation. The party was declared illegal in 2010 by the government. Leaders within this movement, including Aung San Suu Kyi, face dangerous risks in supporting democracy and are often unfairly imprisoned.

KAREN NATIONAL UNION (KNU): A Karen militia troop who has been fighting the Burmese government and operating underground networks around the Thai border since 1949. Although the KNU’s intentions are to protect the Karen people, they also tax villagers and play the black market in order to fund their work. Many villagers fear the KNU as much as the Burmese military soldiers.

OTHER MINORITY GROUP REFUGEES: Within the camp, there are often several minority groups represented, all of whom speak different languages. In order to communicate, refugees learn Burmese (national language) or English.

THAI-KAREN: One of the largest hill tribes in Thailand. They share many of the same cultural traits as Burmese Karen but are legal residents of Thailand. They are sometimes willing to help Karen refugees in the camps, but at great risk to their own livelihoods. Such protection often comes with a price.

REFUGEES SNEAKING BACK IN: Most refugees never return to Burma because everything has been destroyed. However, some risk returning because there are more food crops or to find

lost family members. Every time they sneak in it may be their last and many fall victim to mines.

STATELESS CHILDREN: Children born in refugee camps who have neither Burmese or Thai citizenship. Without official papers, these children are more vulnerable to exploitation and are denied education and health services. Many unregistered mothers refuse to give birth in hospitals because they fear being deported.

SECTION LEADERS: The camps are densely populated and are therefore organized into sections. Elected individuals (played by students) oversee their zone. For a small stipend, they help with security and food rations.

THAI OFFICIALS: Thai guards of the refugee camps who maintain order and curfews. The Thai government has no obligation or interest towards the lives of Burmese refugees and keeps them confined to the camps. However the guards live in close proximity and share many of the same daily hardships so are often seen as trustworthy.

U.N. REPRESENTATIVES: Among other aid organizations, they work to provide refugees with official papers, food, medical, and other supplies. They often have fewer portions than people because the Thai government only registers new refugees once a year.

VILLAGE HEAD: The leader or spokesperson for a village who make many decisions on behalf of the community. Areas where the military is active, village heads have the risky job of reporting to the military camps.

The Story

Prepare students for role-play and familiarize them with the content so that they can set up expectations for their simulation experience.

Part 1: Orientation

Simulation begins with an orientation facilitated by museum staff. Background to the Burmese genocide will be reiterated as well as safety rules. Each family group is provided passport papers and a list of assets to use throughout the simulation. Costumes and props will be handed out. A moment of silent reflection will take place to transition students into their character roles.

Part 2: Home

A video, narrated by a Karen refugee, sets the stage. In this sequence, students experience Karen life before and after an invasion by Burmese soldiers. The families are interrogated,

then are separated into men, women, and children to hear monologues about their possible futures under the soldiers' authority (including Child Soldier). Reunited, they meet a Democracy Leader who tunes into the propaganda of Burmese Generals and provides a radio warning of incoming soldiers. Students make a big decision of whether or not to disclose the Leader's whereabouts. The Village Head poses the question of whether they flee.

Part 3: Migration

Separated again, a sense of urgency is instilled as families decide what assets to bring and which route to travel. This sequence exemplifies the risks and consequences of leaving one's home. They encounter Refugees Sneaking Back In and the Karen National Union and consider who they can trust. They are not very welcomed

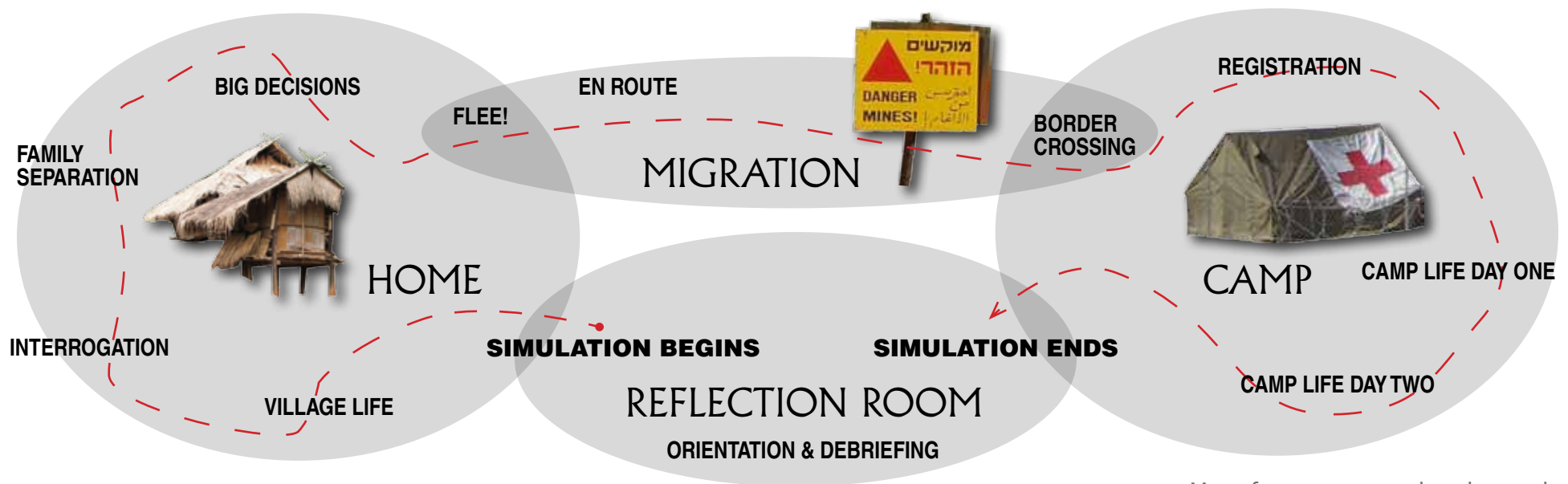
at the Thai border crossing and face more challenges registering into the camp.

Part 4: Camp

Students are asked to consider the cost of safety by experiencing life in a refugee camp. The families visit a clinic, a market place, and school and they hear the perspectives of Thai Officials, Other Minority Group Refugees, Thai-Karen, U.N. Representatives, and Stateless Children. Two to three students are elected as Section Leaders who oversee rations and the resettlement process. Families strategize on next steps.

Part 5: Debriefing

Simulation ends and each family presents the choices they made and their remaining assets. Museum staff lead a discussion and connect the experience to other examples of discrimination.



Map of story events and student path.

Myanmar Migrations was developed in accordance to National Educational Standards, in particular those by the National Council for the Social Studies. Comparisons can be drawn between U.S. government and the cultural and political context of Burma. Implications of the migration of refugees to the U.S. can be explored. Additionally, the Burmese genocide can be compared to similar catastrophes in history and present society. In exploring these subjects, students develop writing, dramatic, and analytical skills relevant to standards in Language Arts and Fine Arts. Some relevant standards from which to draw are:

Social Studies: CIVICS

NSS-C.5-8.4 & NSS-C.9-12.4: Other Nations and World Affairs

- » How is the relationship of the U.S. to other nations and to world affairs?
- » How is the world organized politically?

NSS-C.5-8.5 & NSS-C.9-12.5: Roles of the Citizen

- » What is citizenship?
- » What are the rights of citizens?
- » What are the responsibilities of citizens?

Social Studies: U.S. HISTORY

NSS-USH.5-12.10: Era 10 - Contemporary U.S.

- » Understands recent developments in foreign and domestic politics
- » Understands economic, social, and cultural developments in contemporary U.S.

Social Studies: WORLD HISTORY

NSS-WH.5-12.8: Era 8 - A Half-Century of Crisis and Achievement

- » The causes and global consequences of World War II

NSS-WH.5-12.0: Era 9 - The 20th Century Since 1945, Promises and Paradoxes

- » How post-World War II reconstruction occurred, new international power relations took shape, and colonial empires broke up
- » The search for community, stability, and peace in an interdependent world
- » Major global trends since World War II

Social Studies: GEOGRAPHY

NSS-G.K-12.2: Places and Regions

- » Understand that people create regions to interpret Earth's complexity
- » Understand how culture and experience influence people's perceptions of places and regions

NSS-G.K-12.4: Human Systems

- » Understand the characteristics, distribution, and migration of human populations on Earth's surface
- » Understand the characteristics, distribution, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics
- » Understand the processes, patterns, and functions of human settlement
- » Understand how the forces of cooperation and conflict among people influence the division and control of Earth's surface

Language Arts: ENGLISH

NL-ENG.K-12.9: Multicultural Understanding

- » Students develop an understanding of and respect for diversity in language use, patterns, and dialects across cultures, ethnic groups, geographic regions, and social roles

NL-ENG.K-12.11: Participating in Society

- » Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities

NL-ENG.K-12.12: Applying Language Skills

- » Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes

Fine Arts: THEATRE STANDARDS

NA-T.5-8.2 & NA-T.9-12.2: Acting by Developing Communicating and Sustaining Characters in Improvisations and Formal or Informal Productions

- » Students analyze the physical, emotional, and social dimensions of characters
- » Students in an ensemble, create and sustain characters that communicate with audiences

NA-T.5-8.5 & NA-T.9-12.5: Researching by Finding Information to Support Classroom Dramatizations

- » Students identify and research cultural, historical, and symbolic clues in dramatic texts

The National Council for the Social Studies states that social studies programs should:

- » Include experiences that provide for the study of the ideals, principles, and practices of citizenship in a democratic republic
- » Include experiences that provide for the study of how people create and change structures of power, authority, and governance
- » Include experiences that provide for the study of interactions among individuals, groups, and institutions
- » Include experiences that provide for the study of individual development and identity
- » Include experiences that provide for the study of people, places, and environments

Special Thanks!

Lesson plans and resources inspired by Museum of Tolerance, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and National Constitution Center. Check out their web pages for further museum educational materials about challenging social subjects.

BURMA RESOURCES

- » **Burma Border Projects:** <http://www.burmaprojects.org>
- » **Burma Campaign UK:** <http://www.burmacampaign.org.uk>
- » **Free Burma Rangers:** <http://www.freeburmarangers.org>
- » **Genocide Intervention Network:** <http://www.genocideintervention.net/educate/crisis/Burma>
- » **The Burmese Refugee Project:** <http://www.burmeserefugeeproject.org>

GENOCIDE EDUCATION

- » **PBS:** <http://www.pbs.org/teachers/thismonth/genocide>
- » **Genocide Watch:** <http://www.genocidewatch.org>
- » **Facing History Facing Ourselves:** <http://www.facinghistory.org>
- » **Teaching Tolerance:** <http://www.tolerance.org>
- » **Teach Against Genocide:** <http://www.teachagainstgenocide.org>
- » **UNHCR's Teachers Corner:** <http://www.unrefugees.org/teachers-corner>

ROLE-PLAY/TAKING ACTION

- » **Do Something.Org:** <http://www.dosomething.org>
- » **Kids Acting Out:** <http://www.kidsactingout.org/improv.html>
- » **One Million Bones:** <http://www.onemillionbones.org/>
- » **Training for Change:** <http://www.trainingforchange.org>
- » **STAND:** (Student-led division of Genocide Intervention): <http://www.standnow.org>

BOOKS

- » *Games for Actors and Non-Actors* by Augusto Boal
- » *Letters from Burma* by Aung San Suu Kyi
- » *Secret Genocide: Voices of the Karen of Burma* by Daniel Pederson
- » *Teaching About Genocide: Issues, Approaches, and Resources* by Samuel Totten
- » *The Problem From Hell: America and the Age of Genocide* by Samantha Power
- » *Theater Games for the Classroom: A Teacher's Handbook* by Viola Spolin
- » *Theatre for Community, Conflict & Dialogue* by Michael Rohd

FILMS

- » *Beyond Section 10: A Documentary About a Nation on the Run*
- » *Burma VJ: Reporting from a Closed Country*
- » *Meh Sha*

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

The first step to the program is breaking your students up into four groups. These groups will represent Karen family units within the simulation but will also work together during classroom activities. Prior to your museum visit, your group should be well acquainted with each other and have considered their individual roles within the family. Use your best judgment in assigning groups. Because of the unsettling nature of the simulation, it is advisable that students have friends or people with whom they feel comfortable within their group. Students will learn a lot from each other during the program and should be grouped in ways that promote cooperation and communication.

Prior to forming the groups, explain to your students what simulation and role-play are and ask them the following questions:

- » **Would you rather play a lead role or an supporting observer role?**
- » **On a scale from 1 - 10, how comfortable are you participating in role-play?**

They should turn in their responses to you without having to share them out loud. Their responses will help you identify which family role each student will play - adult characters represent lead roles and children characters represent supporting roles. Encourage students to use their imagination but remind them the simulation reflects reality but is not real itself.

Role-Play

THE ROLES

Students play members of the Karen ethnic minority and are placed into one of four family groups: **Aung, Hla, Kyi, and Tun**. Depending on your class size, 2-4 students per group should play adult roles and the rest play children (minimum of two children roles per family). If you are documenting the event, a chaperone may play a pro-democracy reporter, whose objective is to shoot the action but stay hidden. The actors will treat the students according to their roles, but will be lenient with the reporter to ensure good footage. The teacher(s) may play an extra adult role in a family and, when possible, students should be assigned a role of their same gender.

FATHER (ba): The leader of the family who makes a living working in the fields. His task is to manage the family's belongings and his objective in the simulation is to save as much as possible. Role best suited for students who rated a 8+, or lead role.

MOTHER (mo): The caretaker of the family and household, considered equal to her husband. Her task is to oversee the personal decisions and her objective is to look after the safety of her family. Role best suited for students who rated a 8+, or lead role.

UNCLE (tee): Another leader in the family, brother to the Father or Mother character. His role is to also provide for the family and his objective in the simulation is to earn as many assets as possible. Role best suited for students who rated a 6+, or lead role.

AUNT (nu): Another caretaker, married into the family through her union with Uncle. Her role is to help oversee family and household matters and her objective in the simulation is to make sure everyone is taken care of and fed. Role best suited for students who rated a 6+, or lead role.

OLDER CHILD (jyaw - brother, naw -sister): Between 15-18 years old, they are expected to work and gain an education, their objective in the simulation is to align themselves for the best possible future. Role best suited for students who rated 3-5, or supporting role. Can be male or female.

MIDDLE CHILD: Between 10-15 years old, they are expected to take care of younger siblings, gain an education, and help around the house. Their objective in the simulation is to stay close to Mother or Aunt. Role best suited for students who rated 1-2, or supporting role. Can be male or female.

YOUNGER CHILD (daytoe - brother, daynu - sister): Between 6-10 years old, they have the least responsibilities in the household. Their objective is to play. Role best suited for students who rated 1-2, or supporting role. Can be male or female.



KAREN CULTURE

Have your students **explore the culture** they will be role-playing and reflect on their family roles. "Passports" of family descriptions and assets will be provided in the simulation orientation.

The Karen originally descended from Mongolian people and are thought to be one of the first to settle on Burmese land. The largest sub-groups are the Sgaw Karen and Pwo Karen. During World War II, the Karen allied with the British against the Japanese who promised to grant them an independent state. When Burma became a nation, the Karen were marginalized and their State not given the right to succession. The Karen felt betrayed by Great Britain and stood up against Burmese rule in the Karen insurgency of 1949 when the Karen National Union was born. Since, they have experienced numerous human rights violations from the Burmese military, displacing thousands.

The Karen have their own language, culture, and education system. Most of the Karen work in agriculture, raising animals, harvesting the forest, and planting rice. They are known

for their pious religious beliefs; the majority of Karen practice Christianity or Buddhism. Besides religious holidays, the most important festivals for the Karen are New Years, Revolution Day, and Karen National Day, during which everyone gets together to celebrate their culture and hope for a better future. Karen are known for being a humble, trusting people. They avoid confrontations, never interrupt when others are talking, nor keep secrets. Most of all, they do not like being referred to as Burmese.

Entire extended families often live in one home. The family elders are respected and everything they say is treated as truth even if they are wrong. Husbands and wives are seen as equal in leadership even though the men are considered "heads" of the family. Men work while women are in charge of the family and household, sometimes even the budget. Likewise, sons and daughters are valued equally in Karen culture. Children are expected to be helpful around the house and care for their parents in old age. The average family has two or three children. Karen do not have surnames but call each other by title; family groups use the fathers' name.

AUNG: The Aung are farmers. The majority of their assets are animals and farming equipment. They are given K2000 (kyat, Burmese currency).

HLA: The Hla work in the rice patties, their assets include food supplies and cooking equipment. They are given K1500.

KYI: The Kyi work in the forest, harvesting honey, medicines, and other goods which they sell in the markets. They have the most money with K3000. Their assets are good bargaining objects but not ideal for survival.

TUN: The adults of the Tun are the spiritual leaders of the village. They have the fewest assets, with K900, but own some objects significant to the community like the Bible.



Karen State Flag

FAMILIES



WEB RESOURCE

Click on the media tab of our web page to download full resolution images of Karen people for your classroom.

LESSON ONE: WHO ARE THE KAREN?

Objective: In groups, students **research** the history, geography, people, and culture of the Karen. Students will develop **summarization, teamwork, and presentation skills.**

Time: 2-3 class meetings

Materials: Handouts 1.1-4 (Time Line, Map, Karen Culture, and Profiles)

Activity 1.1: Assign each family group one of the four topics of **History, Geography/Agriculture, Significant People, and Cultural Traditions.** Have students look over the corresponding handouts and supplement them with further research. Their task is to become the “experts” on their topic and present it to the class. Guide their research using content from our web page resources or your school library and encourage them to find visuals for their presentation. While each group presents, have the other students take notes. Students can add their findings to their “refugee trunks.”

Activity 1.2: Discuss how this research can apply to role-playing during the simulation: **How might we act? What are typical motions/behavior?**

Pre-Visit Lesson Plans

LESSON TWO: WORDS AND MEANINGS

Objective: Students **familiarize** themselves with important **vocabulary** words related to genocide, refugees, and Burma, and apply them to examples.

Time: 1 class meeting

Materials: Worksheet 2.1-2 (Vocabulary and Scenarios)

Activity 2.1: Download the worksheets and have the students work together to **match** the vocabulary terms to their corresponding definitions. Help **clarify** the differences between the terms.

Activity 2.2: Allow 5-10 minutes for students to individually apply the terms to examples in Worksheet 2.2. Once they have finished, let them switch papers to compare answers and discuss their reasons for their choices. Each response may have more than one correct term associated with it. The goal is to **explore the uses of the terms in the real-world**, rather than finding the “correct” answer. **Discuss** how words can have different meanings to different people and what problems this may cause in society.

Keeping a journal is a great way for students to **express their feelings, remember their experience**, and for you to **track their change in empathy over time.** Provide each student with a folder with which they can write journal entries and collect material from the simulation (such as their “passport” papers) and other sources (such as worksheets, news clippings, etc.). Suggested journal questions are provided at different stages of the unit, they can also be used for homework and discussions.

JOURNAL ENTRY #1: Pre-Visit

- 1) What is your reaction to what we learned about refugees? How do you think you would feel if you had to leave your home?
- 2) What expectations do you have about the simulation you are about to experience? How does it make you feel?
- 3) Come up with some questions about refugees or simulations and write them down.

CREATIVE WRITING ENTRY #1

Write a brief biography from the point of view of your character role, keeping in mind what you learned about Karen culture.

STUDENT “REFUGEE TRUNKS”

ROLE-PLAY GAMES

Role-Play games can supplement any lesson plan. They are a great way to get students to **break the ice** amongst themselves and into the world of dramatic role-play. Regardless of your students' prior experience and comfort level, these games provide a **fun and purposeful** way for them to begin to think about their character roles. The more time you dedicate to practicing role-play, the more comfortable they will feel and the more risks they will be likely to take.

Tips For Teachers: Role-Play

- » Work with students **where they are**, not where you think they should be. Students' level of participation will be different but may reflect their potential at a given time. Their skill will improve with practice.
- » Even though the students will be fighting for survival as refugees, they should not be encouraged to compete. **Competition can cause anxiety**, defensiveness, and can derail their focus from the more important message of empathy.
- » There are **no wrong choices** in role-play, only difficult ones. Help students take risks.
- » Create a **positive and safe atmosphere** by avoiding judgment words. Encourage students to **support each other** after completing an activity.
- » Your role and that of students should be **equal** during role-play activities and ensure that no one person dominates allotted time.
- » Emphasize the **importance of focus**; it prevents the distractions that come with feeling self-conscious and helps students **reflect more deeply and personally**.

MACHINE GAME

Goal: To **build cooperation, trust, physical, and verbal participation**.

Requirements: Break class into family groups or do as an entire class.

Allow 10 minutes.

Play: Have the group face each other in a circle. One student starts by making a noise coupled with a simple action and repeats this motion. In turn, each student joins with a new sound and motion, adding to the collective rhythm and sound. They cannot use any recognizable words. Once everyone has joined instruct them to convincingly "power down" the machine as a group.



GRANDMA'S KEYS

Goal: To explore **tactics** for achieving one's objective and **prepare** students for role-play objectives within the simulation. Also develops teamwork, focus, and physical movement.

Requirements: An open room and a set of keys. Allow 15-25 minutes.

Play: Ask for a volunteer to play grandma (or grandpa). This individual stands at one end of the space, and cannot move from it, while the rest of the class lines up on the other side. The keys are placed at grandma's feet. The class' objective is to retrieve the keys and return to the starting line without grandma seeing them move. Whenever grandma is turned away, the students can move freely but if grandma catches any movement when turned toward them, those caught must return to the starting line. The students develop tactics and **work together** to capture the keys and the grandma actor may also devise tactics to catch movement. Once the game is over, or if time passes without successful transfer of the keys, ask for another grandma volunteer and play again. Afterwards discuss reactions and which tactics worked well.

PLEASE/NO

Goal: Building on Grandma's Keys, participants try tactics in a familiar scenario and consider **motivations behind behavior**.

Requirements: Allow 20-30 minutes to give everyone who wants a chance to participate. It helps to have furniture or other props to let students to explore the scene in character.

Play: Create a scenario that is familiar to students and involves two characters with opposing objectives. For example, one sibling wants to play the other sibling's X-Box but the second sibling does not want to share. Ask for two volunteers and set up the scene for them. Each student must then try to achieve their objective (to play X-Box or to refuse its use) but the first participant can only say "Please" and the second can only say "No." The students can **try any action and may express the words in any way they want**, but are limited to their one word. One actor may give in or both may fail to achieve their objectives. Discuss the strategies each used as an entire class and then call two more volunteers. You can build on this game by having the students create their own secret objectives within a predetermined scene.

FOR MORE GAMES VISIT: Kids Acting Out at < <http://www.kidsactingout.org/improv.html> >



LESSON THREE: LETTERS FROM BURMA

Objective: Students will conduct a **close reading** of a passage by Aung San Suu Kyi and **interpret meaning** through verbal and written responses.

Time: 1 class meeting

Materials: **Worksheet 3.1** (Reading Challenge), *Burma VJ* clip (link provided on web page with this lesson)

Activity 3.1: Give background on Aung San Suu Kyi, her house arrest and the NLD. Show the clip from *Burma VJ* of the admiration Burmese people show for her. Hand out the worksheet and give 20 minutes to read and respond to the questions in silence. Instruct students to underline examples of **positive and negative words** in the writing and to circle passages or words that they are unclear about. Encourage them to form their own opinions.

Activity 3.2: Lead a discussion around the questions. Encourage every student to **share something they wrote**. Have them consider the positive and negative sides of human nature that emerge in times of war as reflected in her writing. Discuss the **courage of those who stand up against moral injustices**. Recall the Democracy Leader in the simulation: now how do the students feel about their choice to give up the leaders' whereabouts? Would they make a different choice?



Post-Visit Lesson Plans

LESSON FOUR: IN THE NEWS

Objective: Students connect to **current events** and explore contemporary genocides.

Time: Overnight homework and 1 class meeting

Materials: **Handout 4.1** (Censorship), Clips from *The Devil Came on Horseback*, Censorship Study clips (link provided on web page with this lesson)

Activity 4.1: Introduce the topic of genocide by having the class look for recent news articles related to Burma, and other current genocides, over the course of a few days. Encourage them to **talk to their parents** for suggestions. Instruct them to bring in clippings and to select one article that stood out to them to show and tell the class. They should be able to describe who is involved, what is the conflict, and why they think it is about genocide. After everyone has shared something they found, sort through the clippings and see **which topics are covered more by the media**. Formulate a discussion around their findings. Show clips from *The Devil Came on Horseback* to show how individuals work hard to get a voice to those whose voice is repressed. Consider why Darfur has more media attention than Burma.



Activity 4.2: Using Handout 4.1 have them **compare a scene** from a familiar movie to one from the same scene that has been **politically censored**. How would they feel if their media was censored in the U.S.? Were there any examples of political censorship during the simulation? What might their news clipping say if they were politically censored by the government?

JOURNAL ENTRY #2: Post-Visit

- 1) What moments/feelings/words stand out when you think about the simulation?
Draw a picture representing one of these descriptions.
- 2) How does your reaction to the simulation compare to your expectations before?
- 3) Which characters did you feel were helpful to you as a refugee? Not helpful?
- 4) Was there a character or moment that made you think about something differently than you did before the simulation? Why?
- 5) After the simulation, has your impression of Burma and refugees changed? How?

CREATIVE WRITING ENTRY #2

Describe one instance from the simulation in detail from the point of view of your character. What happened? Who was involved? How did you feel?



Continue the role-play beyond the simulation! The following games are derived from **Theatre of the Oppressed**, a forum for exploring societal oppressions through role-play. They can help students **visualize the power struggles** evident in genocide and allow them to consider issues from **different points of view**. The games and discussions around them may **spark memories** or **clarify action** from the simulation. For more games check out: *Theatre for Community, Conflict & Dialogue* by Michael Rohd and *Games for Actors and Non-Actors* by Augusto Boal.

COLOMBIAN HYPNOSIS

Goal: To promote **physical and social awareness** of others and raise questions about power relationships. Develops concentration and movement.

Requirements: An open space for movement. Allow 10-15 minutes.

Play: Participants pair up and one acts as “leader” and the other as “follower.” The leader raises their hand several inches in front of the face of the follower whose task is to stay magnetized to the hand. Any way the leaders move their hands, the followers must move too, the top of their head aligning with the tops of the leaders’ fingers. The imagery resembles a **puppet master** controlling his puppets with strings. After several minutes, the facilitator stops action and the roles are reversed. After everyone has experienced both roles, start a reflection on how it felt to lead and to follow. In the next iteration of this game, have one volunteer lead with both hands with the remaining participants in a line following the hand in front while leading someone else with their own hand(s). This time the discussion is more focused on how the activity evokes issues related to status and power. The line reflects a system of power with a dictator, who follows no one, and whose influence is felt at the end of the line (peasants or refugees) whose only option is to follow. The message of the game is to **lead as you would like to be led**.

THE GREAT GAME OF POWER

Goal: To **illustrate power relationships** in society and **apply them to real-world examples** through discussion.

Requirements: An open space, four-five chairs (preferably one of a different color), a table and empty water bottle. Allow 15-20 minutes.

Play: Arrange the objects, such as with three chairs facing a table, one chair on the other side facing the students, and the water bottle under the table. Ask the participants which has the most power and why they think so. The objects do not speak but participants apply human qualities or associate life experiences to the image; perhaps reminded of situations like a principal’s office. Then ask one volunteer at a time to silently rearrange the objects to change the position of power. Students can **get creative** in arranging the objects by stacking, placing them on atypical sides, etc. Color, material, and tactile surfaces play into the images as well, but no words are spoken while creating the image. A final step in this game is to incorporate people into the frozen image. Observing people in different positions of power allows participants to **recognize and analyze the body language** and expressions common to each position. Ask the class which power position relates to different characters from the simulation.

REAL/IDEAL

Goal: To **imagine a world without oppression** and consider possible responsible actions that **promote social change**.

Requirements: An open space for movement, allow 15-20 minutes.

Play: Divided into groups (can be family groups or not), students develop a frozen image with their bodies that depicts a real scene of oppression (perhaps, from the simulation). Then instruct them to create an **ideal image** of the same scene in which the oppression no longer exists. Have them transition from the real to ideal several times without speaking in front of the whole class, one time in slow motion. Have the rest of the class observe closely and then discuss **how real** they think both images are and why. Is the ideal image unattainable? **What actions could take place to help that ideal image become more real?** Have the groups perform one scenario about genocide and/or refugees and one about oppressions they have experienced or witnessed at home.



LESSON FIVE: 8 STAGES OF GENOCIDE

Objective: Students will clarify the **cause and effects** of genocide through **Gregory Stanton's Eight Stages of Genocide** and in connecting the Stages to various examples of genocide, explore possible preventative solutions.

Time: 2 class meetings

Materials: Stanton's Power Point (from Genocide Watch web page), **Handout 5.1** (Stanton's Stages)

Activity 5.1: Walk-through Stanton's Power Point to introduce the class to the systematic steps that take place during genocide. Encourage them to **find connections** to the news clippings they found during Lesson Four as well as examples of **discrimination in their own community**. Working in teams, students read brief backgrounds to historic genocides in Handout 5.1 and identify examples of each Stage. Finally, discuss possible preventions and solutions to each example using Stanton's Power Point as a guide.

Activity 5.2: Have the students list **characters, moments, and words** from *Myanmar Migrations* that are symptomatic of each of Stanton's Eight Stages. After several minutes of **brainstorming**, invite them to share their thoughts with the rest of the class. Possible examples are the ethnicity stamps (Stage 1 and 2), government radio broadcast (Stage 3 and 4), village burning (Stage 6); there are many others and some exemplify more than one stage.

LESSON SIX: ON TRIAL

Objective: Students will **explore multiple points of view** and practice defending them through **informed debate**. Students will mimic the legal process that takes place after genocide and consider their own **moral stance** surrounded complicated ethical situations.

Time: 2 class meetings

Materials: **Handout 6.1-2** (Case Profiles)

Activity 6.1: Introduce the United Nations and International Criminal Court (ICC) using the **Nuremberg Trials** as a historical example. Set up an imaginary scenario in which a Burmese soldier is on trial in a democratic legal system. Divide the class in two and have one half represent lawyers defending the Burmese soldier and one represent the ICC. Have them study the handouts which outline their case. The ICC must argue for international human rights laws while the soldier's case is founded on his obeying the government and protecting his family. Spend one whole class period having the students prepare arguments, rebuttals and concluding remarks. Each student should **participate** in the debate, prepare them with **rhetoric** tips. Remind them that they may be representing a side they do not personally agree with and to **be respectful** during the debate. You as the teacher will act as the "judge" and decide who gives a more convincing argument. Be prepared to facilitate heated discussions that arise after the debate.

JOURNAL ENTRY #3: Genocide

- 1) At any point in the simulation did you feel you were unfairly treated because of your ethnic identity? How did that make you feel? Have you ever felt this way in real life?
- 2) Have you noticed or participated in any instances of discrimination in your community? How did that make you feel? If it happens again, how will you react?
- 3) In many cases, genocide is not declared until it is too late and many countries hesitate to get involved. Despite sufficient evidence, the war in Burma has not been officially declared a genocide by the U.S. government. Why do you think that is? How does that make you feel?
- 4) Make a pledge: What can you do, large or small, to help combat genocide?

CREATIVE WRITING ENTRY #3

Imagine it is ten years after you arrived at the refugee camp and you just resettled in the U.S. From the point of view of your character, reflect on how it feels to move to a foreign country. What is new or different for you? What do you like/dislike? How do people treat you? How does it feel knowing that you may never be able to see your home again?

LESSON SEVEN: DISCRIMINATION AT HOME

Objective: Students **analyze** the forms of classification, both **good and bad**, in their own community. Students will **think deeply** about their own **cultural identity and their personal responsibility** for ending discrimination through the creation of an action plan.

Time: 3 lessons or ongoing over several class meetings

Materials: Teens Take Action video (link provided on web page with this lesson)

Activity 7.1: In small groups, have students answer the questions: “**How do you describe yourself? How important is race as an aspect of your identity?**” As a whole class, have the students identify as many forms of classifications of people as possible. Have them consider when these classifications are beneficial and when they are harmful. What makes those classifications discriminatory and in extreme cases, lead to genocide? This can be a sensitive subject to discuss and it is recommended that it take place at the end of the unit once students have become comfortable with each other. For homework, ask students to **interview one adult** (a parent, guardian, etc.) and one friend to find out what they feel about classifications and discrimination.



Activity 7.2: Watch the short “Teens Take Action” video developed by the museum that discussed real examples of teens making a difference, including the founders of Pink Shirt Day and Free the Children. Help the class select an area of discrimination in their community that they want to address. Under your leadership, the class should write a brief (1-2 page) **action plan to address this cause**. The plan should state their findings and propose an action in a **succinct, professional manner**. Students could perform at a school assembly, write letters, create a petition, or host an event to raise money for a specific charity. Use the “Act Now!” Matrix at < <http://www.dosomething.org> > for some additional ideas. Help the students connect to the necessary administrators or organizations to see their plan to reality.

Taking Action

TAKE ACTION: ONE MILLION BONES



If your students want to join a **real advocacy effort** for ongoing genocides, including the one in Burma, bring **One Million Bones** to your classroom. One Million Bones is a fund-raising **art installation** that recognizes the millions of victims killed or displaced by genocide. One million people will each create one bone to represent these individuals and the bones will be installed on the National Mall in **Washington D.C. in 2013**. Dedicate one class period to building bones or have it be an ongoing project. Lesson plans are available online and are catered to subjects ranging from social studies to math. If your students are passionate about doing more, they can start a One Million Bones chapter at your school. Visit < <http://www.onemillionbones.org> > for more information.



ONE MILLION BONES



Myanmar Migrations can continue to enrich your classroom long after the simulation. If your students have been keeping personal journals, we invite them to continue the conversations online. Join the museum's online student community. Simply to go the *Myanmar Migrations* web page, click on the Student Forum link. Enter in your school name and registration number. Here students can:

- » **Join live chats** with Burmese refugees who have resettled all over the world.
- » **Communicate** with students from other schools and districts who have participated in the simulation.
- » **Upload pictures** from your simulation experience and browse through the ongoing collection.

- » **Respond to changing reflection questions** and see the responses from others.
- » **Relive the simulation** experience through other **games** and activities.
- » **View current events** related to the genocide in Burma and others around the world. See what people are doing to help.
- » **Explore student advocacy clubs** and other possible action-taking that involves one minute, one day, or one semester of dedication.
- » **Make pledges to combat genocide** and view other pledges students have made.



Student Forum

EVALUATION PILOT

When you register for the program, sign up to join our long-term study. Over the next year, the museum will intermittently interview you and your class to assess the program's **long-term impact** and the students' social conscience development. The long-term study helps us to improve our program to **fit your needs** but also provides opportunities for students to further connect their experience at *Myanmar Migrations* to other social studies and language arts curricula **throughout the year**. Go to the **Educators Link on our web page** to find further suggestions for long-term applications of this program in your classroom.

If you have already registered, it is **not too late** to sign up for the pilot! We **thank you** for your continued interest in the program.

JOURNAL ENTRY #4 (OR COMPLETE ONLINE): 3 months later

- 1) What stands out the most when you think about *Myanmar Migrations* simulation?
- 2) Did you talk to anyone outside of class about your experience? If so, who?
- 3) How often do you think about or reflect on the experience now? What prompts those memories?
- 4) What comes to mind when you think about Burmese refugees? Genocide in general?
- 5) What do you feel when you think about Burmese refugees? Genocide in general?

CREATIVE WRITING ENTRY #4

Write a letter to your congress person or President about the genocide in Burma. Describe what you learned in school or at *Myanmar Migrations*. Express your opinions or feelings about the situation and what changes you would like to see take place.

The full impact of this program could not have been achieved without you. We value your impressions and feedback. After you have completed your entire unit, please take a few minutes to complete this survey. Tear this page out, fold and mail to the address on the back.

School: _____

Subject/Grade you Teach: _____

1 | Which parts of the teacher's guide did you use? Circle all that apply.

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| a) Program Overview | e) List of Resources |
| b) Content Background | f) Preparation |
| c) The Story | g) Role-Play |
| d) Educational Standards | h) "Refugee Trunk" Portfolios |
| i) Indicate which lesson plans/worksheets/games you used: | |

2 | Were there any parts of the teacher's guide that were not helpful? Please explain:

3 | How did you receive your teacher's guide (circle one):

- a) Online b) At the museum c) Through the mail

4 | Will you return to *Myanmar Migrations* next year (circle one)?

- a) Yes b) No, because: _____

5 | Based on your observations during their simulation experience and in subsequent classroom work, rate the following components in how strongly they impacted your students:

	No impact		Some Impact		Strong Impact			
Role-Play Games	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
Role-play	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
Choices during simulation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
Special effects	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
Actors	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
Family "passport"	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
Debriefing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
Interacting with real refugees	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
"Refugee Trunks"	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
Classroom handouts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
Opportunities to take action	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
Online Student Forum	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A

6 | In your opinion, have the students demonstrated an increased understanding of refugees and genocide? Please explain:

7 | In your opinion, were your students more emotionally engaged with refugees and genocide after the simulation? Please explain:

8 | In your opinion, have your students demonstrated a change in behavior or expressed interest in taking action? Please explain:

Additional room provided on the back.

Further space for comments and any additional suggestions:

This side on top. Fold here. 

Return Address:

NON-PROFIT
US POSTAGE
PAID
AD-VANTAGE

Evaluation Department
Sample Museum
Sample Address
Sample State, Zip Code

This side on bottom. Fold here. 

Glue here.

References (page numbers from teacher's guide)

- Pg. 4-5 Content inspired from Oxfam Australia's "Refugee Realities Prep Guide."
- Pg. 6-7 Content inspired from Gregory H. Stanton's "The 8 Stages of Genocide." (full citation on page 127).
- Pg. 8-9 Content inspired from *Minorities Rights Group International: Briefing Papers, Burma Issues* and Office of Refugee Settlement. (full citations in bibliography)
- Pg. 10, 14-15 Content inspired from interviews with Dai Lai Htoo and Ehklay Klay, locally resettled Karen refugees.
- Pg. 12-13 "National Standards." Education World, n.d. Web. 18 Mar. 2011. < <http://www.educationworld.com/standards> >. (National Standards content)
- Pg. 16 Lesson Two inspired by MOT's "Essential Vocabulary and Concepts" lesson plan.
- Pg. 17 Spolin 3-47. (Tips for Teachers: Role-Play)
- Pg. 19 Cahnmann-Taylor and Souto-Manning 73-75, 85-88.
- Pg. 21 Lesson Seven inspired by MOT's "Improving My Community Through Social Action" lesson plan.

Images

- Pg. 5 Oxfam Australia. "Refugee Realities Prep Guide." *Refugee Realities, Your Rights in Crisis*, 2010. Web. 28 Mar. 2011. < <http://www.oxfam.org.au/refugee/public/index.php> >. 14-15.
- Pg. 6 "Forced-relocation-in-Burma-little-girl-carrying-heavy-load." *Photo Gallery*. Burma Campaign UK, n.d. Web. 28 Mar. 2011. < <http://www.burmacampaign.org.uk> >.(top left)
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- Pg. 7 "Karen-soldier-protecting-the-Karen-people-on-one-leg." *Photos*. Free Burma Rangers, n.d. Web. 28 Mar. 2011. < <http://www.freeburmarangers.org/Resources/Photos/> >.
- Pg. 8 BBC. *Burma time line: A chronology of key events*, 4 Feb. 2011. Web. 20 Feb. 2011. < <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/1300082.stm> >. (time line)
- Ekeh, Chizom and Martin Smith. "Minorities in Burma." *Minorities Rights Group International: Briefing Papers*, 7 October. 2007. Web. 20 Feb. 2011. < <http://www.minorityrights.org/3546/briefing-papers/minorities-in-burma.html> >. (time line and map)
- Pg. 11 "Akha Hut." Wiki commons, 25 May. 2008. Web. 28 Mar. 2011. < <http://www.commons.wikimedia.org> >.
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- Pg. 15 "Karen_Girl." Wiki commons, 15 Apr. 2008. Web. 28 Mar. 2011. < <http://www.commons.wikimedia.org> >. (far left)
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- Minnesota Department of Health 7, 29. (middle image and flag)
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Quotes

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APPENDICES & BIBLIOGRAPHY



Appendices (Pages 118-124)

1. Notes From Defense: Further Thoughts (one page)
2. Museum Field Front-End Survey Instrument (one page)
3. Target Audience Front-End Survey Instrument (two pages)
4. Teacher's Guide Worksheet 2.1 and 2.2 (two pages)
5. Teacher's Guide Worksheet 3.1 (one page)

Bibliography (Pages 125-129)

Full list of resources viewed or read during the entire thesis investigation, inclusive of works cited listed in chapter endnotes.

NOTES FROM DEFENSE: FURTHER THOUGHTS

This thesis was defended and passed on 19 April, 2011. The defense was attended by Nora Berger-Green (thesis chair), Joseph A. Nicholson, Thoai Nguyen, and Keith Ragone. The main topic of discussion was the various applications social action simulations can have in the classroom. *Myanmar Migrations* focuses on global empathy by having students become familiar with a relatively unknown country and conflict. It then draws parallels with students' everyday lives by exploring refugee resettlement in the U.S. and other modern-day genocides, as well as identifying local examples of the Eight Stages of Genocide. This is achieved through discussion, role-play games, and lesson plans (especially Lessons Five and Seven). Cross-cultural understanding of the plight of Burmese refugees can be a subject of local concern and may empower students to become global citizens.

However, *Myanmar Migrations* is dynamic in that further emphasis can be placed on increasing national citizenship, even though the simulation is set in a foreign country. The teacher's guide can be adapted to focus on specific disciplines or units currently being taught in schools. The curricula listed in the guide offers a general range of national standards for which educators could strive. Should a teacher be interested in one specific outcome or subject, different lesson plans could be created and made available as appendices or in a drop-down menu on the museum's web page. For example, a history teacher could benefit from specific applications to American history, such as the Trail of Tears, or European history, such as World War II and the Holocaust. Another specific outlet for the "otherness" referred to in this thesis is the topical issue of immigration. Empathy created in the simulation could address the consequences of local immigration trends, national immigration politics, and the historic immigrations that helped form the U.S. identity. So not only does *Myanmar Migrations* simulate the discrimination of the Karen in their homeland, it can help students consider the struggles all immigrants face once they resettle in another country. Corresponding options for action-taking, with either local and global impacts, can be provided in the museum's online Student Forum or lesson plans.

These possibilities could be expanded upon in the next iterations of the teacher's guide. The direction *Myanmar Migrations* takes is also dependent on the institutional and community context. The workshops with students and teachers outlined in "Program Implementation" in Chapter Five would help developers best adapt the program to local demand. These surveys could eventually help design other simulations that represent subjects deemed important by the community. Finally, if *Myanmar Migrations* were to travel, further development of these educational possibilities would help make the program more relevant to different communities. Any changes to the curricula should also be reflected in refinements to the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral indicators of empathy, as well as the evaluation tools. Those at the defense, and other advisors, believe *Myanmar Migrations* is wanting life beyond the thesis. No one educational path to social conscience is less worthy than another and these further thoughts help ensure social action simulations do justice to their audiences.

My name is Amy Vlastelica and I am a MFA student at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia. I am designing a social action simulation on Burmese refugees for my thesis. Social action simulations are immersive, live-action reenactments of a social issue in which the audience plays an active role in the story. Example simulation case studies I am researching are *Follow the North Star* at Conner Prairie and *Operation Spy* at the Spy Museum.

The simulation is targeted at ages 12-15 and the goal is to awaken social conscience through experiential learning and to encourage responsible action-taking. This survey is designed to help me gain insight on how the museum field handles difficult subject matter (such as poverty, war and human rights) and audience role-playing.

Please review which questions are relevant to you and take your time responding. I hope to complete my surveying by **January 18, 2011. You may respond whenever is most convenient to you: typed document (bullet points are fine), e-mail or phone interview. Thank you for your contribution to my investigation, and I am happy to share my final thesis with you when it is completed.**

Name:

Institution:

Position:

Date:

Contact Information:

1. Have you worked with or exhibited difficult subject matter? If yes, please answer 1a-c.

1a. Briefly describe your work:

1b. What approaches to exhibiting difficult subjects work well and do not work well?

1c. How do you evaluate/assess your exhibition and your visitors?

2. Have you worked in museum theatre? If yes, please answer 2a-e.

2a. Briefly describe your work:

2b. In your opinion, how willing are audiences to participate in role-playing?

2c. Does your program include talk-backs? If so, how are they structured?

2d. Have you used museum theatre to explore difficult subjects? If so, what approaches work well and do not work well?

2e. How do you evaluate/assess your program and your visitors?

3. Have you had experience exhibiting difficult subject matter with early teens? If yes, please answer 3a-d.

3a. What approaches work well and do not work well?

3b. How do you create a safe and respectful environment for discussing difficult subjects?

3c. In your opinion, what is the capacity of early teens to empathize with the subject?

3d. What group size range do you think is appropriate for a simulation with early teens?

4. Additional comments, advice and areas for further research are appreciated.

Dear teacher or facilitator,

Thank you for helping me with my thesis investigation. I am a graduate student at University of the Arts in Philadelphia studying Museum Exhibition Planning and Design. I am researching and designing simulations that develop empathy about social issues (specifically, refugees that have been displaced due to ethnic genocide). By simulations, I refer to live-action experiences where participants take on the role of someone else and enter an environment outside their comfort zone that includes characters played by actors and immersive sets. I believe that by learning firsthand how it feels to be in a certain situation, people will be more likely to empathize and take action to correct social injustices. I am happy to provide resources to other groups who are doing similar work for examples of these types of projects.

My target audience is students aged 12-15, and I am using the topic of the current Burmese genocide as a lens for my project. It is a little-known conflict, but there are thousands of Burmese refugees that immigrate to the U.S. every year. I want to target my project in areas where they have resettled to help bring awareness to their stories.

I am gathering surveys that will help inform my research. My survey is a one-page questionnaire and shouldn't take more than a few minutes to complete. When distributing to your class, please remind them to read the instructions carefully and respond honestly and to the best of their ability. There are no right or wrong answers. They do not need to fill in the survey # at the top of the page; that is for my reference. Their responses will be invaluable to my research and I would be happy to share my final thesis with you when it is finished.

I appreciate whatever help you can give and am happy to answer any questions you may have. Thank you again for your help.

Sincerely,

Amy Vlastelica

I can be reached at:

avlastelica@uarts.edu
917.533.0686

I would like to receive the completed surveys no later than **February 28, 2011**. When the surveys are completed, please email them to:

Amy Vlastelica
1208 Spruce Street
#402
Philadelphia, PA 19107

I am more than happy to reimburse for postage. Please email me the name and address of who to reimburse and the cost. Or you could scan them and email them to the above address.

School: _____

Date: _____

Survey #: _____

I am a graduate student at the University of the Arts and I am designing a social action simulation on Burmese refugees for my Masters thesis. Social action simulations are immersive, live-action reenactments of a conflict involving actors, sets and special effects. This survey is designed to help me gain insight on students would like to participate in simulations and how students view refugees. Please answer the following questions honestly and to the best of your ability.

1. On a scale of 1-5, how much do you know about refugees? (1=no knowledge of refugees, 5=expert on refugees)

1 2 3 4 5

2. On a scale of 1-5, how do you relate to a refugee experience? (1=no idea what refugees experience, 5=firsthand, personal understanding of what refugees experience)

1 2 3 4 5

3. What comes to mind when you think about Burmese refugees?

4. In social action simulations, participants play an active role in a story, in this case, the character of a refugee. Circle the options that would help you want to be involved in role-playing (you may select more than one):

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| a. Play lead roles | f. Social interaction |
| b. Smaller roles or observer | g. Use of costumes and props |
| c. Responsible for choosing outcome of your character | h. Movie-like suspense |
| d. Make up your own script | i. Other (please specify): _____ |
| e. Make up your own character | |

5. What would you EXPECT to see or experience in a simulation on refugees?

6. In your opinion, what are the causes of *genocide* (the destruction of a national, ethnic or religious group, such as the Holocaust)?

7. On a scale of 1-5, how interested are you in experiencing a simulation on refugees? (1=not interested, 5= very interested)

1 2 3 4 5

8. How often have you visited a museum (with your friends, family or school) in the past twelve months?

- | | |
|--------------|---------------------|
| a. 0-2 times | c. 6-10 times |
| b. 3-5 times | d. 11 or more times |

9. Gender (circle one): a. Male b. Female

10. Your Age: _____

11. Additional comments: _____

Worksheet 2.1 | Vocabulary

Directions: Match the 13 terms and places with their corresponding definition on the right. Place the letter of the term in the blank next to the definition you think best matches.

Thanks to Museum of Tolerance for the inspiration for this lesson plan.

A. Political Censorship

B. Discrimination

C. Empathy

D. Genocide

E. Human Rights

F. Internally Displaced Persons

G. Karen

H. Myanmar

I. Prejudice

J. Refugee

K. Responsibility

L. Simulation

M. Xenophobia

1. _____ Fundamental rights, such as to speak and to work, in whose exercise a government may not interfere.
2. _____ Personal and social accountability reflected in choices and actions that promote social justice.
3. _____ The deliberate and systematic attempted annihilation of a national, racial, ethnic or religious group of people.
4. _____ An unreasonable fear or hatred of foreigners or strangers or of that which is foreign or strange.
5. _____ A person who flees for refuge or safety, especially to a foreign country, as in time of political upheaval, war, etc.
6. _____ A representation of a real situation using immersive theatrical techniques, in which the participants play a role in the story.
7. _____ Action based on prejudice or racist beliefs that results in unfair treatment of individuals or groups.
8. _____ When a government attempts to conceal, distort, or falsify information that its citizens receive by suppressing or crowding out political news the public might receive.
9. _____ An ethnic minority group from Eastern Burma who makes up 7% of the total population.
10. _____ The identification with or vicarious experiencing of the feelings, thoughts, or attitudes of another.
11. _____ Someone who is forced to flee their home but who remains within their country's borders.
12. _____ The official name of the country in Southeast Asia that borders China, Laos, Thailand, Bangladesh, and India, also known as Burma.
13. _____ A preconceived attitude, opinion or feeling, usually negative, formed without adequate knowledge, thought, or reason.

Worksheet 2.2 | Scenarios

Directions: Read the scenarios and then select which vocabulary words define each scenario. You may use a word more than once and can use multiple words to describe one scenario. Work individually for seven minutes, then we will switch papers and compare responses.

Thanks to Museum of Tolerance for the inspiration for this lesson plan.

VOCABULARY WORDS

Political Censorship

Discrimination

Genocide

Prejudice

Xenophobia

SCENARIOS

A Cuban American is accused of being an illegal immigrant.

China controls use of the internet to silence criticism of government and communist party.

The Nazi “Final Solution” to kill all Jews.

Women are not paid as much as men in the same position by their employers.

Thousands of Native Americans are forced off their land in the “Trail of Tears.”

A job is given to able-bodied people only.

Muslim Americans are prohibited from practicing their religion because of terrorist attacks.

Khmer Rouge destroys evidence of mass murder.

SELECTIONS

Worksheet 3.1 | Reading Challenge

... I doubt that in other countries you would find ... a gigantic, double-faced, particularly unattractive version of a traditional boy doll with white puffy face, staring eyes, a stiff smile ... welcoming tourists to Visit Myanmar Year. Bizarre is the word that springs to mind. 'Fascist Disneyland,' one frequent visitor to Burma commented.

How simple it would be if a mere turn of light could make everything that was ugly beautiful. How wonderful it would be if twilight were a time when we could all lay down the cares of the day and look forward to the tranquil night of well earned rest. But in Fascist Disneyland the velvety night is too often night in the worst sense of the word, a time deprived of light in more ways than one. Even in the capital city of Rangoon, electricity cuts are not infrequent and we are suddenly plunged into darkness. The inability of the government to supply adequate electric power makes it necessary for many households to contrive arrangements of their own, linking up a wire to a neighbouring source that they might enjoy a bit of light at night. The local authorities turn a blind eye to such arrangements, accepting due compensation for their discretion. However, if you happen to be a member of the NLD, trying to bring light into your household can easily result in a two-year prison sentence. The other, and more real, darkness of night in Fascist Disneyland is that so many political arrests are made during the hours when all decent people should be resting and allowing others to rest.

Visitors to my country often speak of the friendliness, the hospitality and the sense of humour of the Burmese. Then they ask how it is possible that a brutal, humourless, authoritarian regime could have emerged from such a people. A comprehensive answer to that question would involve a whole thesis but a short answer might be, as one writer has put it, that Burma is indeed one of those lands of charm and cruelty. I have found more warmth, more wholehearted love, more tenderness, more courage and more caring concern among my people, as we hope together, suffer together and struggle together, than anywhere else in the world. But those who exude hate and vindictiveness and rave about annihilating and crushing us are also Burmese, our own people.

How many can be said to be leading normal lives in a country where there are such deep divisions of heart and mind, where there is neither freedom nor security? When we ask for democracy, all we are asking is that our people should be allowed to live tranquilly under the rule of law, protected by institutions which will guarantee our rights, the rights that will enable us to maintain our human dignity, to heal long festering wounds and to allow love and courage to flourish. Is that such a very unreasonable demand?

Source: Aung Sun Suu Kyi. "A Normal Life." Letters from Burma. London: Penguin Book, 1996. 204-5.

Directions: Read the passage on the left closely then answer the following questions in complete sentences, write on the back if necessary. *Note - NLD stands for National League of Democracy.*

1. What is a "normal life" for someone in living in Burma according to Aung San Suu Kyi? Do Burma's visitors witness this normal life, why or why not?
2. "Fascist" refers to people who subscribe to a dictator government, one that maintains complete power through force and oppression. What do you think is meant by "Fascist Disneyland"?
3. What is the significance of light in this passage?
4. What are the extreme sides of human behavior as described by Aung San Suu Kyi and why do you think this exists in Burma?
5. Respond to Aung Sun Suu Kyi final question. Why do you feel this way?

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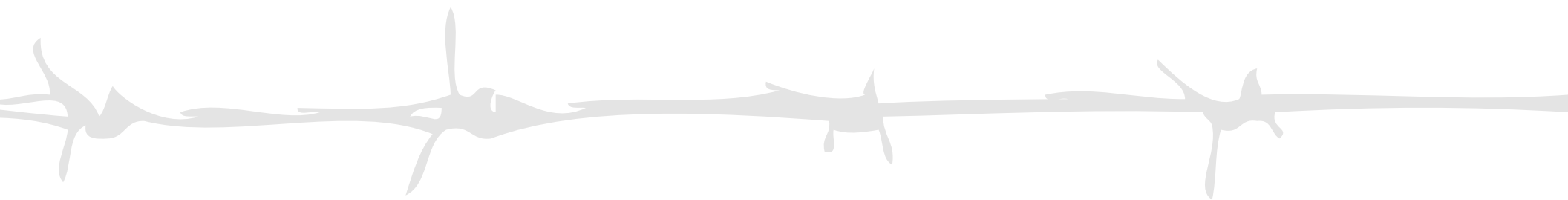
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THE END
THANK YOU



