

John H. Jameson
Sherene Baugher *Editors*

Creating Participatory Dialogue in Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Interpretation: Multinational Perspectives

 Springer

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Introduction



John H. Jameson and Sherene Baugher

With conceptual roots going back to first half of the twentieth century, the public interpretation and presentation of cultural and archaeological heritage have become an essential component in the conservation and protection of cultural heritage values and sites. The early twenty-first century has brought new mechanisms and processes of public interpretation that reach new heights in levels of sophistication and effectiveness. In the international arena, many leading organizations have emerged that are carrying the banner of interpretation principles for access, inclusion, and respect for multiple points of view. These principles emphasize the importance of community engagement expert/layperson-facilitated dialogue and participation in all phases of program planning, development, and delivery.

Cultural heritage, as an expression of a diversity of cultures, can be an important mediator between pasts and futures. In the past, people in power from the dominant ethnic, racial, socioeconomic, gender, and religious groups determined the heritage message. These people had the economic, political, and social power to erect monuments, pay for commemoration ceremonies, and establish national, state, and local heritage sites (Kammen, 1993; Shackel, 2001). In his book, *The Past is a Foreign Country*, heritage scholar David Lowenthal (1985) has written extensively about the theme of exclusionary memory and how some people and subordinate groups are

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written out of history and out of a community, a state or province, or even a nation's collective memory. Other scholars have discussed case studies of how not only minorities are silenced but also their participation in the building and growth of a city, county, or nation's history was purposefully ignored and forgotten (e.g., Trouillot, 1995; Shackel, 2003). However, for minorities some of these sites have what Dolores Hayden (1997) calls "the power of place." For example, in the United States, National Parks, such as Glacier and Grand Canyon, were forcefully taken from Native Americans; however, these sites still have religious and cultural importance to the indigenous peoples (Burnham, 2000; Keller & Turek, 1998).

New philosophical/methodological trends in public interpretation are reshaping the messages delivered at archaeological/cultural heritage sites worldwide. Laurajane Smith (2006:29) has written about "Authorized Heritage Discourse" and how the meaning of a site or monument is preserved. This control of the message of heritage sites enables minorities to continue to be silenced. Thus, Authorized Heritage Discourse serves to continue the status quo of the people in power. In 2010, the Association of Critical Heritage Studies was created by scholars from Australia, the United Kingdom, and Sweden to move away from the Authorized Heritage Discourse and "to promote a new way of thinking about and doing heritage" (ACHS 2012). Recently, scholars have written about the importance of listening to indigenous people, understanding indigenous perspectives, and, in turn, altering how we view their heritage sites (Schmidt & Kehoe, 2019). The role of the experts, as well as the participatory engagement of audiences and stakeholders, is being redefined and reassessed. For example, the communication technique of facilitated dialogue is used by professional interpreters to connect and interact with audiences (NPS, 2015; ICSC, n.d.; Jameson, this volume). Facilitated dialogue engages and fosters an environment where the experiences of participants are shared and explored. It is designed to join the experiences and expertise of participants to contemplate conditions and opportunities for impacting the topic or issue being discussed. Dialogue facilitators need not be topical experts.

Drawing on wider intellectual sources, we challenge the conservative cultural and economic power relations that outdated understandings of heritage seem to underpin and invite the active participation of people and communities who to date have been marginalized in the creation and management of "heritage." It follows that heritage studies need to be rebuilt from the ground up, which requires robust criticism of projects and literature, past and present, and the power relations that "heritage" has all too often been invoked to sustain. This can result in asking uncomfortable questions of traditional ways of thinking about heritage; the interests of the marginalized and excluded are brought to the forefront (ACHS, 2012).

This book explores case studies that provide the readers with examples of how to involve community members in creating new narratives of public interpretation that are reshaping the messages and how they are delivered at archaeological and cultural heritage sites. Our chapters challenge the conservative cultural and economic power relations that outdated understandings of heritage seem to underpin and invite the active participation of people and communities who have been marginalized in the creation and management of their heritage. We promote heritage studies

built from the ground up and challenge the past and present power relations that “heritage” has all too often been invoked to sustain. These power relations involve nationalism, imperialism, colonialism, cultural elitism, Western triumphalism, and social exclusion based on class and ethnicity and the exaltation of expert knowledge; they have all exerted strong influences on how heritage is used, defined, and managed.

This volume is presented in the context of the evolution of cultural heritage studies from the twentieth-century “expert approach” to the twenty-first-century “people-centered approach,” with public participation and community involvement at all phases of the decision-making process. We examine innovative dialogues within new trends and transnational perspectives in modern contexts of community engagement in the public interpretation of archaeological and cultural heritage sites. In addition, we address gaps in the existing literature on the topic, such as minority and Indigenous community involvement and heritage narratives that have previously been silenced or overlooked.

The goal of more inclusive interpretations requires an acceptance of divergent definitions of authenticity that depend on a level of tolerance of multiple definitions of significance with concomitant, objectively derived, assigned, and ascribed heritage values. We hope that these efforts lead to the recognition of humanistic values reflected in cultural heritage narratives and heritage tourism practices and site commemoration and protection decisions by controlling authorities (Silberman, 2015).

What Sets This Book Apart

Stemming from two academic sessions in 2018 and invited papers, these chapters examine evolving trends and transnational perspectives, as well as levels of communication – from local to regional, national, and international – on the public interpretation of archaeological and cultural heritage. They address several central questions: Do these actions represent new emphases or more fundamental pedagogical shifts in interpretation? Are they resulting in more effective interpretation in facilitating emotional and intellectual connections and meanings for audiences? Are they revealing silenced histories? Can they contribute to, or help mediate, dialogues among a diversity of cultures? Can they be shared experiences as examples of good practice at national and international levels? Finally, what are the interpretation and presentation challenges for the future?

We believe that readers who are involved with managing or interpreting heritage sites will appreciate having a book that goes beyond heritage theory to practical approaches and solutions. Most of our chapters are case studies that provide the readers with examples of how to involve community members, including descendant communities, in creating these new narratives. We have chosen examples that represent a broad global perspective. Our case studies highlight diverse and innovative methods and approaches. In this volume, we examine innovative dialogues in modern contexts of community engagement in the public interpretation of archaeological

and cultural heritage sites. Among other original contributions, we address gaps in the existing literature on the topic, such as minority and Indigenous community involvement and heritage narratives that have previously been silenced or overlooked.

Our Goals

Our goals have been to bring in new trends and perspectives, as well as levels of communication – from local to regional, national, and international – on public interpretations of archaeological and cultural heritage. Therefore, the chapters are assembled with the intention of covering the following content goals:

- Demonstrate how community members have actively become involved in the heritage narrative at a site.
- Show how the heritage of stakeholders has been silenced, or conversely, revealed.
- Represent innovative communication strategies in interpretation.
- Contribute to, or help mediate, dialogues between the identity and diversity of cultures.
- Demonstrate shared experiences as examples of best practice at local, national, and international levels.
- Point to the cultural heritage interpretation and presentation challenges for the future.

These international examples examine innovative dialogues in modern contexts of community engagement in the public presentation and interpretation of archaeological and cultural heritage sites. Another challenge is how to connect people with no apparent connection to an archaeological heritage site care about its interpretation and preservation. How do you make a site inclusive? How do you get people excited and interested in a history that is not theirs? How do diverse community members become involved in the interpretation and preservation of a site?

Our Case Studies

The book is composed of a series of international case studies from Canada, the United States, Spain, Romania, and Saipan examining the changing heritage narratives at historic sites. In the second chapter, *Facilitated Dialogue and the Evolving Philosophies on the Public Interpretation of Cultural Heritage Sites*, by John Jameson, is not a case study but rather a broad discussion of the worldwide changes in the way historic sites are presented to the public. He outlines new philosophical and methodological trends in public interpretation that are reshaping the messages delivered at archaeological and cultural heritage sites worldwide. His chapter on *Facilitated Dialogue* describes this communication technique designed to foster a shared experiences environment where the dialogue facilitators need not be experts on the topic being discussed. He examines how the

expert's role and the participatory engagement of audiences and stakeholders are being redefined and reassessed. In the final chapter of the book, Commentary and Conclusion, Jameson provides a commentary where he urges colleagues to learn from these case study examples to facilitate meaningful dialogue with and among local communities more effectively. The more we communicate our challenges and efforts to inspire and be inspired, he says, the better others are prepared to plan their own effective initiatives in interpretation and engaged dialogue.

Between these two bookends, the book organization is divided into two sections of case studies. Part I contains seven case studies of descendant communities revealing their silenced and sometimes forgotten histories. The descendent communities in this section are Native Americans, African Americans, Pacific Islanders, and German Americans reclaiming their heritage sites. The chapters in this section all examine silenced histories. The focus of these chapters is on democratizing heritage and embracing the insights of descendant communities. Four chapters on Native Americans range from communities involved in preserving their sacred landscapes and burial grounds, challenging the Eurocentric narratives that silences or distorts native history and changing heritage narratives to engaging the public in presenting the history of their sites. Chapter "[Refugees, Resettlement, and Revealed History: Archaeologists, Planners, Native Americans, and Landowners Working Together to Create Tutelo Park](#)" examines how a community collaboration of Cayuga and Tutelo Indians worked with archaeologists, planners, and homeowners to create a new commemorative park. Chapters "[Shifting the Narrative: Indigenous Cultural Heritage and Archaeology in Ontario](#)" and "[On the Horns of an Archaeological Dilemma: Balancing Site Confidentiality and Public Interpretation Imperatives at Delaware State Parks](#)" discuss the challenges and some resistance to getting government agencies to work collaboratively with indigenous people. After centuries of oppression by the European settler societies, it is understandable that it is challenging to build trust with Native Americans. These authors discuss how they created partnerships, built trust, and facilitated dialogues among diverse stakeholders. Chapter "[Memories of a Bloody Battle: Analyzing the Portrayals of the German Militiamen and Their Oneida Allies at the Battle of Oriskany](#)" examines how Oneida Indians, not archaeologists, challenged the Authorized Heritage Discourse and took the lead in changing the heritage narrative at two historic sites. The three final chapters in this section address heritage issues of non-Native American descendant communities. With World War I and II, German American history in the United States has become overlooked and, in some areas, silenced. Chapter "[The Germantown Archaeology Project: A Hudson Valley Community Collaboration](#)" examines how a community and academic collaboration reveals this history at a heritage site, and Chapter "[Memories of a Bloody Battle: Analyzing the Portrayals of the German Militiamen and Their Oneida Allies at the Battle of Oriskany](#)" examines how that history was silenced. Chapter "[Community Archaeology and Collaborative Interpretation at a Rosenwald School: Understanding Fairview's Past Through Its Present](#)" examines how African American community activists, not preservations, initiated a project to preserve the sites of their segregated schools and how a collaboration of community members and scholars accomplished this goal. The last chapter in this section, Chapter "[Collaboration, Investigation, and Interpretation: Indigenous Narratives and Archaeology of WWII in](#)

the Northern Mariana Islands,” examines how scholars have increased the dialogue with Pacific Islanders. The result was indigenous people on Saipan sharing their stories about World War II and internment camps.

In Part II, we address the challenges of engaging people at heritage sites where this is not their heritage. Unlike the chapters in Part I, these projects do not focus on descendant communities. The five examples of addressing these challenges come from sites in Spain, Romania, the Pacific Northwest, and Southern New Jersey. The authors provide numerous examples of ways to create a participatory dialogue with community members. For example, in Spain (Chapter “[Menorca Talayótica: Prehistoric and Current Communities – New Ways of Understanding](#)”), the Pacific Northwest (Chapter “[Decolonizing Fort Vancouver Through Archaeological Interpretation](#)”), and Chapter “[Community Archaeology in Action: A Case Study from the Sandy Hook Lighthouse, Gateway National Recreation Area](#),” Southern New Jersey, archaeologists engaged visitors in field and lab work to develop emotional and intellectual connections to heritage sites. In Spain (Chapter “[Menorca Talayótica: Prehistoric and Current Communities – New Ways of Understanding](#)”), they also had community members help give tours to tourists. In another part of Spain (Chapter “[Inclusive Archaeology: ‘Forgotten Groups’ That Empower Themselves Through Outreach Activities](#)”), the archaeologists used puppet shows, cooking classes, theatre, and art projects to help local people understand and emotionally connect to prehistoric heritage sites and the people who lived there. In Romania (Chapter “[Gold Rush vs. Heritage Preservation: Case of Roșia Montană, Romania](#)”), the facilitated dialogue was with diverse stakeholders, including local community members, archaeologists, preservationists, and environmentalists, to preserve, create, and legally protect a new heritage site.

Today, the central components of effective interpretation of cultural heritage sites entail the application of a participatory culture model and cultural specialist/layperson collaborative relationships (Jameson, 2019:2). As archaeologists and cultural heritage specialists, we should act as facilitators in sharing power and strive to be catalysts for peoples’ participation in their own history and its interpretation. As some of the chapters demonstrate, projects happily can be initiated by community members, not specialists. There is a commitment to an ongoing partnership in successful projects because trust develops over years of collaboration. The examples from this book are important additions to the literature of cultural heritage interpretation in demonstrating our attempts to meet this goal.

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Facilitated Dialogue and the Evolving Philosophies on the Public Interpretation of Cultural Heritage Sites



John H. Jameson

Introduction

With conceptual roots going back to the first half of the twentieth century, the public interpretation and presentation of cultural and archaeological heritage has become an essential component in the conservation and protection of cultural heritage values and sites. Beginning in the 1930s and accelerating as the expanding concepts of heritage and heritage conservation progressed in subsequent decades, an evolving list of international documents, conventions, and charters has led to more recent discussions and debates about resource significance. Concerns for relevancy, community engagement, and inclusion led to calls for the promulgation of principles of interpretation and presentation (Jameson, 2020).

By the late twentieth century, many archaeologists were addressing the contemporary context of their research as part of a growing practical and ethical awareness. The 1990s saw the emergence of greater energy and funding devoted to the public interface of archaeology as the professional community realized that intellectual introversion was no longer acceptable and that more attention should be paid to the mechanisms, programs, and standards of public interpretation and presentation. Inspired by visionaries such as Freeman Tilden (1957), interpretation practitioners increasingly rejected programs and presentations that did not attempt to go beyond a recitation of facts. Only programs that facilitated and provoked emotional and intellectual connections of the audience to meanings inherent in the resource were deemed acceptable.

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Standards development for cultural heritage public interpretation gained momentum with initiatives by the US National Park Service (NPS) and the National Association of Interpretation (NAI). NPS, through its Interpretive Development Program (IDP), promulgated a multifaceted, delivery mode-specific, employee training program (Jameson, 1997, 2007), and in the year 2000, NPS published online an “Effective Interpretation of Archeological Resources Study Guide” (Jameson, 2007). NAI, a non-governmental and non-profit, independent organization, also at this time emerged as a leading advocacy group for standards development among both government and non-government organizations and agencies, providing training and certification opportunities. The European counterpart to these organizations is Interpret Europe, established in 2010. Headquartered in Freiburg, Germany, Interpret Europe acts as a European platform for interpretation cooperation and exchange, especially on research and education (Interpret Europe, n.d.).

Probably the most important international document guideline to date relating to interpretation and presentation of archaeological heritage sites is the ICOMOS Charter on the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites (2008). The Charter lays out seven principles of interpretation and presentation about the conservation, education, and stewardship messages that represent the transcendent humanistic values of the resource. These principles provide an outline of professional and ethical standards, placing emphasis on the essential roles of public communication and education in heritage preservation. ICOMOS International Committee on Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites (ICIP), formed in 2006, in addition to promoting the development, adoption, and application of the Charter principles, sponsors events designed to foster the formulation of best practices in interpretation and presentation within prescribed cultural and political settings (Jameson, 2020).

With facilitated dialogue, experiences of participants are shared and explored, allowing participants to reflect on the topic or issue discussed. The facilitated dialogue communication technique emphasizes inclusiveness, negotiation, and contemporary relationships and is consistent with the emerging field of critical cultural studies. This chapter examines the communication technique of facilitated dialogue as used in NPS and elsewhere to connect, inspire, and interact with audiences.

Traditional Interpretation Practice

In the United States, the development of resource protection legislation and cultural resource management (CRM) strategies in the 1960s and 1970s, and the resultant very rapid accumulation of archaeological and historical site information and collected artifacts, led to concerns for inclusiveness and sensitivity to heritage values of multidimensional communities and constituent stakeholders.

From the input of Freeman Tilden and the experience of NPS, the United Kingdom and Canada were two of the countries which began to introduce

interpretation alongside conservation, first in natural surroundings and later in towns and historic sites. The Countryside Commission for Scotland and its sister organization in England and Wales produced a two-part guide to Countryside Interpretation in 1975, the year the Society for the Interpretation of Britain's Heritage was founded. It later became the Association for Heritage Interpretation. In North America, two organizations came together to form NAI, which was followed by similar bodies in Canada and Australia with several individual advocates located in other countries. Leaders such as Mark Sagan in the United States and Don Aldridge in the United Kingdom became spiritual successors of Freeman Tilden. They in turn inspired interpreters in Spain, Italy, Scandinavia, and elsewhere to take up the baton and introduce interpretation as a complement to environmental interpretation aimed at children.

By the late 1980s, many cultural heritage specialists in the United States and elsewhere were addressing the contemporary context of their research as part of a growing practical and ethical awareness. The 1990s saw the emergence of greater energy and funding devoted to the public interface of archaeology as the professional community became aware that intellectual introversion was no longer acceptable and that more attention should be paid to the mechanisms, programs, and standards of public presentation. In the face of an increasing public interest and demand for information, archaeologists and their cultural heritage colleagues began to collaborate more actively to devise the effective strategies for public presentation and interpretation. Until the 1990s, publications on public presentation and interpretation strategies and standards were rare and largely obscured in isolated accounts and academic gray literature.

By 2005, traditional definitions for the terms "heritage," "historic," "archaeological," and "scientific" were changing to incorporate intangibles such as aesthetic, artistic, spiritual, emotional, and other values stemming from introspection and reflection. In an expansion and broadening of the content of "archaeological knowledge," this term was increasingly subsumed in professional practice parlance under the more general category of "cultural heritage." This was seen to be more inclusive and less authoritative in broadening the definition and meaning of "expert." An important result has been the emergence of the interpretive narrative approach in archaeological and cultural heritage interpretation, where heritage specialists actively participate in structuring a compelling story instead of just presenting sets of derived information. The narrative is used as a vehicle for understanding and communicating, a sharing as well as an imparting, of cultural heritage values within the interpretation process. This trend is resulting in profound ramifications for definitions of significance in heritage management deliberations and what is ultimately classified, conserved, maintained, and interpreted. It has changed the role we play and the values we present in historic preservation and education. It affects our strategies for conducting research and the public interpretation of that research. The challenge presented to heritage managers, archaeologists, cultural historians, and other resource stewards was to educate ourselves on the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities to deal with these developments (Jameson & Baugher, 2007).

Paramount for professional educators and interpreters today is ensuring that their audiences connect with and understand cultural heritage values, those tangibles and intangibles that define what is important to people. They strive in these endeavors to develop more holistic interpretations in which the values of sustainable environment and heritage are inextricably linked. They also recognize that multidisciplinary, inclusive, and community-engaged approaches are the most effective. Heritage sites are no longer limited to great iconic monuments and places but include millions of places of importance to sectors of society that were once invisible or intentionally ignored. These under-recorded sites can play an important role in fostering peaceful multicultural societies, maintaining communal or ethnic identities, and serving as the indispensable theater in which the ancient traditions that make each culture a unique treasure are performed periodically, even daily. The values of these previously ignored and heretofore low-priority sites and features are often not readily obvious in the material fabric or surrounding geography, but today carry an imperative that they must be identified and require a narrative for the fullness of their meaning to be properly conveyed to local communities, site visitors, and the public at large. This is accomplished through processes of public interpretation, presentation, and education.

Interpretation is now a recognized skill and an essential part of managing special sites and protected areas worldwide. In many countries, there are degree and post-graduate courses in interpretation or that include interpretation alongside other subjects. Courses and programs are run for professional interpreters and for volunteers at heritage sites, museums, and visitor centers (Interpret Europe, n.d.).

Development of Community Activism and Collaboration

Today, application of a participatory culture model and cultural specialist/layperson collaborative relationships are central components of effective interpretation of cultural heritage sites. An active role by the community in the interpretation of material culture is an essential ingredient that gives non-archaeologists power to interpret the past. Practice shows that people can ascribe new relationships with sites, with technical or scientific interpretation being just one of many variations of meaning. The attainment of effective and sustainable outcomes is unlikely if heritage professionals plan interventions without consulting stakeholder groups or believe they are the exclusive experts in the field and know what is best for the community. Effective community engagement in heritage practice therefore involves ongoing consultation and support to develop the community's confidence, skills, and resources to identify, prioritize, organize, and collectively solve its heritage-related problems and issues.

Today, standard definitions of effective interpretation describe the creation of opportunities for people to form tangible-intangible links to resource meanings, values, and attributes of authenticity. Going beyond a recitation of facts, interpretation and presentation programs have sought to connect resource meanings to

audience experiences, demonstrating relevancy, encouraging stakeholder involvement, and promoting public stewardship.

Interpretation Through Inspiration and Cognitive Connection

Many cultural heritage specialists today are not content to rely solely on traditional methodologies and analytical techniques in their attempts to reconstruct human history and bring it to life for people. They want to venture beyond utilitarian explanations and explore the interpretive potential of cognitive imagery that archaeological and cultural heritage information and objects can inspire. They realize the value and power of artistic expression in helping to convey this information to the public and are increasingly concerned with how the past is presented to, and consumed by, non-specialists. They want to examine new ways of communicating cultural heritage information in educational venues such as national parks, museums, popular literature, film and television, music, and various multimedia formats.

Archaeology and archaeologically derived information and objects have inspired a wide variety of artistic expressions ranging from straightforward computer-generated reconstructions and traditional artists' conceptions to other art forms such as poetry, opera, and performance-based presentations. Although some level of conjecture will always be present in these works, they are often no less conjectural than technical interpretations and have the benefit of providing visual and conceptual imagery that can communicate contexts and settings in compelling ways. Two such interpretive formats, two-dimensional paintings and popular history writing, have been used by the National Park Service as public interpretation and education tools (Jameson et al., 2003).

Recurring Issues in Interpretation

Today, new philosophical and methodological trends in public interpretation are reshaping the messages delivered at archaeological and cultural heritage sites worldwide. The role of the expert, as well as the participatory engagement of audiences and stakeholders, is being redefined and reassessed. For example, the communication technique of facilitated dialogue is being utilized by professional interpreters to connect and interact with audiences. Pervading the philosophical underpinning and evolving global history of public interpretation are several issues and questions that carry over to present-day practice and program implementation. Examples include:

- *Why interpret?* What are the categories and cultural, and socio-political, circumstances that surround and influence our decisions to interpret?

- What are *effective mechanisms for securing stakeholder participation*? How do we define and promulgate mechanisms for securing stakeholder participation in that there are no universally shared views on who qualifies as valid stakeholders?
- *Establishing acceptable boundaries* for the interpretation of religious and sacred sites, places of memory, and “sites of conscience.”
- Debates surrounding the *nature and circumstances of “authenticity”* as it relates to both tangible and intangible heritage resources in both multicultural and more endemic societies.
- Defining and identifying *more inclusive target audience infrastructure* to include not only the professional preservation community but also the growing numbers of communities of specialists that conceive, design, and build interpretation programs and infrastructure that know little about the principles of heritage conservation and management.
- Recognition that *community participation, buy-in, and power sharing are essential*.

Many examples are emerging of a bottom-up approach where members of the respective communities provide feedback, actively participate, and effectively change the original design of the way cultural heritage is presented. Community participation and buy-in are essential ingredients for successful outcomes in terms of public understanding, support, and building collaborative relationships that effectively protect heritage sites and the dynamic traditions they represent.

The Facilitated Dialogue Communication Technique

Consistent with new philosophical and methodological trends in public interpretation, the communication technique of facilitated dialogue is being utilized by professional interpreters to connect and interact with audiences. Facilitated dialogue is a mode of communication which invites people with varied experiences and differing perspectives to engage in an open-ended conversation toward the express goal of personal and collective learning. Facilitated dialogue refers to a process “led” by a neutral facilitator. Facilitators use a combination of questions, techniques, activities, and ground rules to ensure that all participants can communicate with integrity. Facilitated dialogue is increasingly utilized by professional interpreters to connect and interact with audiences. It is a conversation between individuals in which a facilitator helps to overcome communication barriers regarding an issue of mutual concern. It is designed to join the experiences and expertise of participants to think through the conditions and opportunities necessary to impact the topic or issue discussed. Dialogue facilitators do not need to be experts on the topic being discussed.

With facilitated dialogue, discussions and debate center on interpreting *with* your audience rather than *for* them; integrating dialogue and co-creation techniques into new and existing programs and media; making the shift from didactic, one-way presentations to audience-centered, co-created programming; developing more

audience-centered, dialogic interpretation and presentation; using open-ended questions about cultural heritage to replace statements of fact; experimenting with new questions to facilitate a short conversation with your audience; and collaborating as a key ingredient for our work—not working in isolation to develop programs and media.

Conventional Interpretation Versus Facilitated Dialogue

The traditional/conventional approach for professional interpreters is exemplified by the US National Park Service Interpretive Development Program (IDP), a customized, outcome-based employee development program conceived and refined by hundreds of interpreters within the US National Park System and beyond. IDP has enabled employees and supervisors to tailor professional development efforts, increase efficiency, and demonstrate interpretation competency at a national standard. Grounded in “Ranger Careers,” the IDP identifies essential “Benchmark Competencies” (knowledge, skills, and abilities) for every interpretive ranger in Ranger Careers positions. The program is designed to be widely applicable to all interpretive work. The interpretive competencies are also pursuant to the “National Strategy for Training and Development,” which prescribes competency development for all career fields within the National Park Service (NPS IDP, 2009; Larson, 2011) (Fig. 1).

Within IDP, the Interpretive Equation $(KR + KA) \times AT = IO$ is a shorthand metaphor for understanding the foundational elements of interpretation, providing memorable scheme to visualize, analyze, articulate, and balance the substance of any interpretive program or product. Parts of the equation include KR (Knowledge of the Resource: more than the facts, compelling stories, multiple perspectives), KA (Knowledge of the Audience: recognition and familiarity with their backgrounds, acknowledgment and sensitivity to their needs, meanings they may associate with the resource; the interpreter asks questions and enters an information exchange or dialogue with the audience that “breaks the ice” in establishing a positive and communicative environment for all participants), AT (Appropriate Technique: active or

Conventional Interpretation Approach, represented by the 5 elements of the Interpretive Equation:	Facilitated Dialogic interpretive process, 6 stages:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Knowledge of the Resource (KR) 2. Knowledge of the Audience (KA) 3. Knowledge of Appropriate Techniques (AT) 4. The Interpretive Opportunity (IO) 5. The Interpretive Outcome 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction 2. Visitor Orientation 3. Connection Assessment 4. Content Delivery 5. Visitor Adjustments to Content 6. Final Articulation of Content

Fig. 1 Attributes and stages of conventional vs. facilitated dialogue interpretive communication techniques

passively engage the audience, provide access to resource meanings, facilitate opportunities for intellectual and emotional connections to resource meanings; “The chief aim of interpretation is not instruction, but provocation”), and IO (Interpretive Opportunity: create a favorable set of circumstances for audiences to make a personal connection to something in their own lives, experience or interest, create an opportunity for the audience to form their own intellectual and emotional connections to the meanings and significance inherent in the resource; the interpreter creates the opportunity; the visitor makes the connection). In this approach, the interpreter regularly evaluates whether interpretive activities are providing effective interpretive opportunities and whether these opportunities result in the ultimate desired outcome of a stronger stewardship ethic in the audience ((NPS IDP, n.d.). For example, at an American Civil War battle site, the interpreter could facilitate the discussion by asking the audience “What is heritage?” and “Is heritage worth protecting, commemorating, and explaining?”. In this scenario, just about everyone would have an opinion and likely reflect on the discussion in personal ways.

Facilitated dialogue, on the other hand, is a conversation or negotiation between individuals in which a facilitator helps parties overcome communication barriers and engage in productive conversation regarding an issue of mutual interest. Facilitated dialogue is not necessarily designed to produce or work toward a set of agreements or outcomes but can serve that purpose. It is designed to bring together the experiences and expertise of participants to think through the conditions and opportunities necessary to impact the issue discussed. For example, in the Civil War example above, the interpreter/facilitator could give a description of typical battlefield injuries that were dominated by minor cuts, scrapes, and bruises that everyone has experienced at one time or another and then transition to the traumatic reality of the fighting during various stages of the battle. As previously mentioned, dialogue facilitators do not need to be experts, such as archaeologists or historians, on the topic being discussed. But they *do* need to have personal communication skills that enable as many people who want to contribute to do so yet allowing others to feel comfortable about not wanting to be actively involved in the dialogue. Facilitated dialogue is designed to engage and foster an environment where the experiences of participants are shared and explored. The goal is to encourage an environment where people feel free to consider other perspectives (NPS, 2015). At NPS, employees receive training on interpretive techniques and delivery modes (e.g., a talk versus an exhibit), knowing the audience, and how to create opportunities for the audience to form intellectual and emotional connections to resource meanings and significance.

Facilitated Dialogue Skill Set and Delivery Outcomes

The facilitated dialogic interpretive process includes six parts: introduction; visitor orientation; connection assessment; content delivery; visitor adjustments to content; and final articulation of content. The six phases of this dialogic interpretive process call on an interpreter to possess the following skills and abilities:

1. Presence: being genuine and fully engaged in the specific interaction taking place.
2. Openness: recognizing and accepting the genuine being of the other person and understanding that the other is fundamentally different from oneself.
3. Emergence: understanding that the process and outcomes of dialogue are not predetermined.
4. Extraversion: marked by interest in and behavior directed toward others or the environment as opposed to or to the exclusion of self.
5. Knowledgeable: well informed regarding the resource site and the messages/content offered to the visitors.
6. Leadership: ability to forge connections through audience-centered experiences.

Facilitated dialogue requires the facilitator to use the twenty-first-century skill of communication and collaboration. To coordinate the many different parts require having access to colleagues who can help in planning and to give feedback. It is difficult to execute properly in isolation. The components of facilitated dialogue include facilitation skills, ground rules, questioning technique, shared experience, formulating the Arc of Dialogue, and techniques or strategies for engagement (NPS, 2014).

Facilitated dialogue structure can take many forms depending on the setting and intended outcomes. For example, in the “Arc of Dialogue” model, developed by Tammy Bormann and David Campt, the communication structure pairs a common experience shared by all participants with a sequence of questions designed to build trust and communication. This allows participants to interact in more relevant and personal ways. This sounds like one of the chapters from Tilden. The “Arc of Dialogue” model has four phases. In the first phase, “Community Building,” the facilitator is introduced, the intent of dialogue is explained, guidelines are established, and all “voices in the room” are engaged. The questions posed are nonthreatening and allow participants to share information about themselves. Second, “Sharing Experiences,” participants are invited to think about and share their own experiences with the topic. The facilitator helps participants recognize how their experiences are similar and different. Questions welcome each person’s experience equally and place minimal judgment on responses. Third, “Exploring Beyond” provokes participants to reach deeper into their assumptions and probe the underlying social conditions that inform a diversity of perspectives. The fourth phase, “Synthesizing and Closing the Learning Experience,” similar to “Final Articulation of Content,” concludes the dialogue by reinforcing a sense of community with questions that help participants, in an intellectual progression, if possible, to examine

what they have learned about themselves and each other and express the impact that the dialogue has had on them (ICSC, n.d.).

Traditionally, the public has embraced programming based on the expert and delivery, whereas the new direction leans toward an audience-centered, facilitated experience. Williams et al., 2018, in a recent study comparison of communication techniques designed to engage the public and create systemic changes in the way that audiences interact, compared the results of traditional interpretation versus facilitated dialogue in Grand Teton National Park, Wyoming. To determine how this shift is affecting the experience related to interpretation in the parks, the multi-method study was based on the research model by Stern et al. (2012), which examined program and visitor characteristics among 56 live interpretive programs in Grand Teton National Park. The goals of the study were to compare traditional communication program techniques with facilitated dialogue programs. Traditional programs were found to perform well in fact-based messaging, but facilitated dialogue scored higher and was found to provide higher overall popularity and effectiveness. Findings indicated that, although traditional programs were significantly more attended than facilitated dialogue programs (40 traditional programs versus 16 using facilitated dialogue, the comparative ratios being consistent with overall program offerings in the park during two summer seasons), facilitated dialogue programs received significantly higher audience ratings than traditional programs. This study confirmed the effectiveness of the four-step “Arc of Dialogue” model.

One of the goals of using facilitated dialogue is to reach beyond park boundaries and into the community; the visitor learns the technique of exchanging perspectives and shifting behavior to more accepting of cultural diversity. The NPS has been expanding its focus on facilitated dialogue to a more holistic approach of audience-centered interpretation with facilitated dialogue providing a key technique to meet that goal.

Facilitated Dialogue and Civic Engagement

The traditional approach in effective public interpretation defines Interpretation as a communication process that facilitates emotional and intellectual connections between the interests of the audience and the meanings inherent to the resource. Effective programs have designs and content that is appropriate for the audience and provides clear focus for these connections by demonstrating the cohesive development of a relevant idea or ideas, rather than relying primarily on a recital of a chronological narrative or series of facts or lists. One measure of success in the practice of heritage interpretation is a robust degree of community engagement. Many of these projects and programs emphasize substantial efforts in professional-community collaboration and power sharing.

Cultural heritage interpretation, as an expression of certain cultures, can be an important mediator between pasts and futures. We can use facilitated dialogue to connect and interact with audiences; to engage and foster an environment where the

experiences of participants are shared and explored; and to join the experiences and expertise of participants to contemplate conditions and opportunities for impacting the topic or issue being discussed. Dialogue facilitators need not be archaeologists or cultural heritage specialists, but they do need to have personal communication skills that enable as many people who want to contribute to do so yet allowing others to feel comfortable about not wanting to be actively involved in the dialogue.

In any group situation, facilitators take the lead in guiding or initiating the group dialogue.

Facilitated dialogue is designed to engage and foster an environment where the experiences of participants about cultural heritage are shared and explored. The goal is to encourage an environment where people feel free to consider and appreciate other perspectives, attitudes, and ways of thinking (NPS, 2019).

One possible concern to heritage specialists with the facilitated dialogue communication technique is the deemphasized role of the resource expert and his/her intrinsic knowledge of the resource. Will this lead to programs being developed that discount this role or an attitude by management that experts are not needed, and do not need to be hired, by management and interpretation entities? If so, does this represent a major conceptual shift in effective interpretation and presentation philosophy and practice?

The facilitated dialogue communication technique can be used to promote community empowerment, where people and communities become empowered and power is shared with the experts, a process enabling communities to increase control over their lives. In these settings, people are satisfied and confident within inclusive and organized groups where the formed networks are cooperative, supportive, and influential, promoting an enhanced and shared sense of resource stewardship among all participants, non-specialists and experts alike (NMAI, n.d.).

For example, in 2019, a 3-day professional development workshop was led by the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience and hosted by Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area, with support from the National Heritage Areas Program of the National Park Service. Through the workshop, participants developed tools and techniques to facilitate constructive dialogue about history and its relevance to today, especially on topics that people may have trouble discussing because of various experiences or perspectives. The National Park Service has often partnered with the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience, a worldwide network of places of memory and reflection (such as historic sites, museums, or memorials), because of their experience in facilitating conversations about difficult history and their commitment to connecting past to present, memory to action (insert citation).

Facilitated dialogue is a widely used communication technique in museum education. At the Smithsonian's Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C., the "Americans" exhibit features nearly 350 objects and images, from a Tomahawk missile to baking powder cans, all showing that Indian names and images are everywhere in American life. Through this display and an examination of the staying power of three stories—the life of Pocahontas, the Trail of Tears, and the Battle of Little Bighorn—the exhibition shows that Americans have always been fascinated, conflicted, and profoundly shaped by their relationship to American Indians. In "A

Dialogue Toolkit for Educators,” basic grounding in the practice of dialogue is provided and includes three 60-min models (focused on grades 4–12) that educators can use in the “Americans” exhibition to facilitate dialogue with students. Through the intentional use of dialogue, educators tap into the Americans material to facilitate new conversations with and among students about the power of images and words, the challenges of memory, and the relationship between personal and national values (NMAI, n.d.).

There is much discussion today about what to do with Confederate monuments. Should we destroy or remove them, seeing them as just symbols of oppression, or alternatively treat them as sites of conscience and reflection? For example, in 2019, in Richmond, Virginia, an African American sculptor erected a statue on horseback, “Rumours of War,” replete with modern clothing, in the close proximity to the statue of the “heroic” Confederate figure of JEB Stuart in the classic pose of the equestrian warrior. In this case, the African American “Rumours” statue provides an intentional counter-narrative to the nearby Confederate statue of JEB that was originally intended to promote the “lost cause” heroism mythology. But if you remove or destroy the statue of Jeb Stuart, the effect is to severely diminish the storytelling and counter-narrative power and reflective qualities of “Rumours.”

Facilitated Dialogue and the Emerging Field of Critical Heritage Studies

Facilitated dialogue, with its focus of inclusiveness, negotiation, and contemporary relationships, is connected to modern discussions within the emerging field of Critical Heritage Studies that sees “heritage” as an intangible that is constantly chosen, renewed, and renegotiated in the present (Wells, 2017; Matthes, 2020; Harrison, 2013). This new philosophical emphasis explores relationships between people, heritage, and power and represents a reaction against the AHD (Authorized Heritage Discourse) that redefines the role of the expert. In Critical Heritage Studies, heritage is seen as inherently dissonant and created through a continual process of conflict and negotiation and “narratives of conflict.” Heritage is defined as how the past becomes “active and alive” in the present (Smith, 2006; Silverman et al., 2017). Therefore, in contrast to the “top-down” nature of “official heritage,” heritage that is participatory and community engaged is “bottom-up” where individuals sort out their relationship to, and uses of, the past, which may be in tension with, or at least unrecognized by, the official (AHD) characterizations.

Applications for Performance-Based and Museum Interpretation

The museum world has been affected by recent developments in the experiential turn of interpretation design and presentation. Discussions about multimodal, participatory experiences and information from different senses meaningfully integrated, with intellectual as well as “full-bodied [emotional] engagements with surroundings,” emphasize the spatial construction of meaning. This is also in keeping with an emphasis in museum heritage interpretation that comprises cultural and historical accounts of objects and sites told via artistic representation and theatrical performances (Jameson et al., 2003). These discussions have some parallels in descriptions of a desired provocation of both emotional and intellectual connections to resource meanings, and shared senses of resource stewardship, among visitors at museums and national park sites in the United States and elsewhere (Tzortzi, 2014).

I have mentioned the Museum of the American Indian “Dialogue Toolkit for Educators.” Another example is the Lower East Side Tenement Museum in New York City that has embraced the challenge of serving as a democracy-building institution by providing a venue for dialogue about immigration-related issues. It has involved new immigrants in these dialogues and therefore has engaged people who are not yet naturalized citizens in the practice of citizenship. In this process, the museum is redefining what it means to be a citizen and, by extension, creating a more inclusive and thus more dynamic democracy:

International Organizations

Two international organizations have facilitated dialogue as their main focus: the European Network for Dialogue Facilitation (ENDF) and the Anna Lindh Foundation. The EU-supported ENDF, established in 2012, is a result of the multi-lateral project “DIALOGUE—Facilitating Creative Communication” which trained trainers from different countries in dialogue facilitation based on the methodological approach developed by David Bohm and others. The purpose of the network is further education for enhancing dialogical skills of individuals and groups in different fields of practice to promote respectful, tolerant, and diversity-appreciating attitudes for cooperation of people and organizations on different levels. Promoting dialogical intercultural and interreligious communication for common and mutual learning is one of the main aims (ENDF, n.d.). The Anna Lindh Foundation (<https://www.annalindhfoundation.org/>) serves as a network of networks, an international organization headquartered in Alexandria, Egypt, to promote intercultural and civil society dialogue in the face of growing mistrust and polarization. The Foundation was conceived in 2003 to “take action to restart dialogue and refuse the risk of a clash of civilizations.” Originally called the “Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for Dialogue between Cultures,” the Foundation was given the name of the late Swedish