BUILDING A CULTURE OF PHILANTHROPY

THROUGH THE EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT OF YOUNG ADULTS AT

THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART

by

CAROLINE CLEVELAND MADDOX

(Under the Direction of Carole Henry)

ABSTRACT

This descriptive case study examines a program at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art called the Avant-Garde that is specifically designed to educate and engage young adults between the ages of 21 and 40 to foster future patronage for the museum. To build the case, data was constructed from interviews, observations, surveys and existing documentation about the program. Operating in a constructivist paradigm, this study asks the following questions: What are young adults learning through their participation in this program? What meanings do young adults attach to these museum experiences? Do they value the knowledge that they acquire through this program? How can an educational program inspire future philanthropy and strengthen relationships between the members of the program and the museum?

What I discovered through this study is that the educational components of the Avant-Garde program at LACMA provide experiential learning opportunities for the young adult members that are both enriching and enjoyable. The varied programs offered allow for members to learn about art at the museum and in the community in addition to providing encounters with artists, collectors, dealers, and curators. Members who participate in the program are satisfying

identity-related needs through their experiences, and they value what they are learning in addition to the peer group that is provided and the insider access that they receive at the museum and other art related events because of their involvement with this group. Furthermore, the members' relationships with the museum are deepening through their involvement even though many of the participants do not understand the impact that the museum has on the community. This research demonstrates the need to more overtly address the possible impact that education can have on philanthropy and the concept of fostering future patronage through an educational program, which is a goal that many museums share.

INDEX WORDS: Art education, Museum education, Young adults, Millennial generation, Case study, Members, Avant-Garde, LACMA, Philanthropy, Experiential learning, Donors, Patrons

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DEDICATION

To my husband, Charlie, who supported me through the evening classes and the late nights and long weekends of writing, and to my parents, Richard and Angie, who supported me throughout my academic career and encouraged me to follow my passion, and to my children, Elliot and Rosie. You can achieve great things in life if you work hard and DREAM BIG!

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INTRODUCTION

Museums play a significant role in the cultural landscape of our nation and directly contribute to its prosperity. The purpose of museums is to collect, preserve, and interpret the objects of historical, scientific, artistic or cultural interest, and use the objects in their collections to educate and to inspire the population. The United States currently has 35,144 active museums, a number that continues to grow each year (Institute of Museum and Library Services [IMLS], 2014). These institutions receive more than 850 million visitors a year, which is greater than the attendance to all major-league sporting events and theme parks combined. Museums directly contribute $21 billion to the U.S. economy each year and billions more through the indirect spending of their visitors. They also sustain more than 400,000 jobs nationwide. According to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, arts and cultural production constitutes 4.32 % of the U.S. economy, a $698 billion industry (American Alliance of Museums [AAM], 2013b).

Museums provide opportunities to learn objective information about art, history, botany, biology, cultural heritage, and much more. They partner with schools to help teach the local, state, or core curriculum by tailoring their programs to meet the grade-level requirements in math, science, art literacy, language arts, history, civics and government, economics and financial literacy, geography, and social studies. Museums spend more than $2 billion annually on the educational programming that they offer, and typically at least three-quarters of their education budget is devoted to students in grades kindergarten through 12th grade (AAM,

2013b). As stewards of the nation's heritage and cultural capital, they are compelled to advance an understanding of all natural forms and of the human experience. The American Alliance of Museums (AAM) states in its code of ethics, "It is incumbent on museums to be resources for humankind and in all their activities to foster an informed appreciation of the rich and diverse world we have inherited" (AAM, 2000, para. 3).

What Is a Museum?

The terms that define museums and how they function have evolved with developments in society. For example, when museums changed their focus from a collection-driven model to a visitor-centered, educational model, their mission and strategic initiatives shifted considerably. Even the definition of what constitutes a museum has evolved and will continue to evolve as new institutions that call themselves museums emerge and challenge the founding principles upon which current museums stand (Falk & Dierking, 2013). The American Alliance of Museums, formerly known as the American Association of Museums, has classified the following types of institutions as museums: aquariums, arboretums, botanic gardens, art museums, children's museums, culturally specific museums, halls of fame, historic houses and sites, history museums, historical societies, military and battlefield sites, nature centers, planetariums, natural history museums, presidential libraries, science and technology museums, transportation museums, visitor centers, and zoos. This ever-changing list demonstrates the breadth of museums and their collections (AAM, 2013b).

AAM and the International Council of Museums (ICOM) are two leading organizations that support and promote museums around the world. Professionals in the field join these affiliated groups to learn from their peers, to attend conferences, and to gain access to cutting-

edge institutional knowledge produced through studies conducted by these organizations. AAM and ICOM have separately created standards and a code of ethics for museum practice. Both of these organizations have evolving definitions of what a museum is because they understand the shifting role that these institutions play in society. AAM defines a museum as "an organized and permanent non-profit institution, essentially educational or aesthetic in purpose, with professional staff, which owns or utilizes tangible objects, cares for them, and exhibits them to the public on some regular schedule" (Alexander & Alexander, 2008, p. 2). ICOM (2016) defines a museum as:

> a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment. (p.2)

Both organizations convey a similar message about the purpose of museums. Even with the evolution of the defining terminology, it is clear that one of the primary functions of museums today is to educate the public.

A Brief History of Museum Education

Only within the last 40 years has education become a strategic priority for museums. Although education has been a part of museum practice since museums opened to the public, little theoretical, evaluative, or research-oriented literature on museum education emerged before the 1970s (Buffington, 2007). The 1969 Tax Reform Act granted tax-exempt status to non-profit organizations that stated education as their primary function; this act served as a catalyst for the

evolution of the museum's mission and the advancement of theoretical discourse surrounding educational programming to serve the broader public.

In 1972 the Council on Museum Education met in New York City to examine issues in museum education, primarily but not exclusively in New York, and to discuss ways in which foundations and government grants might be most useful to these organizations. It soon became apparent in the Council's discussion that not only was there great wealth and diversity in the educational activities taking place in museums across the country, but also that the field of museum education could benefit substantially from an investigation of and a report on what was happening in museum and visual arts education nationwide (Newsom & Silver, 1978). The council considered that a study of this kind could potentially raise the level of discourse about arts education and support professionals in the museum field. According to Newsom and Silver (1978), museum educators had long suffered from a sense of professional inferiority in the museum pecking order. Often, they were asked to invent programs with only the most loosely sketched idea to guide them and with little to no formal training. The Council thought that it was time to try to define the field of museum education better to give both educators and policy makers a realistic picture of what museums were doing and what was possible for them to do (Newsom & Silver, 1978).

The Museum Panel of the National Endowment for the Arts agreed in the fall of 1972 to award a $75,000 grant for this project, and the Council on Museum Education reconstituted itself as the Council on Museums and Education in the Visual Arts (Newsom & Silver, 1978). By 1973, the Council had begun the study, which concluded in 1978 with the publishing of a book on its members' findings that included their case studies: *The Art Museum as Educator: A Collection of Studies as Guides to Practice and Policy.* This book was conceived as a

combination reference work and textbook with 103 cases represented. It focused on the art museum, what it does, what it can do, and what it cannot do as an educational institution. The case studies found within the text are a valuable and impressive record of the range of activities pursued in the name of education by art museums at the time. The studies served as models that could be duplicated in whole or in part by other museum educators, and the book became one of the first publications that validated museum education and elevated the educator's role. It was a resource and record of the activities taking place in the field and, therefore, a monumental publication and a step forward in professionalizing the field of museum education.

Continuing the quest to clarify the issues in art museum education and to identify the field's needs, the Getty Center for Education in the Arts commissioned a national study prepared by Stephen Dobbs and Elliot Eisner. Released in 1986, it was titled *The Uncertain Profession: Observations on the State of Museum Education in Twenty American Art Museums* (Dobbs & Eisner, 1987). Dobbs and Eisner state "Our aim was to secure the perceptions of museum directors and museum educators regarding the role, the needs, and the possibilities of museum education in their art museums" (p. 78). They asked questions such as,

> Who determines the educational policy, and who is responsible for carrying it out? What kind of backgrounds and professional training do museum educators have, and what ought they to have? How are the educational functions and the activities of museum educators integrated with those of other museum professionals? On what theoretical and intellectual grounds is the educational program based? (Dobbs & Eisner, 1987, p. 78)

In short, the purpose of their study was to piece together a complete picture of the state of museum education and of its practitioners and needs in the American art museum.

What Dobbs and Eisner found through their research was that a considerable amount of confusion existed over the specific role of museum education within the larger institutional framework. There was a distressing lack of clarity about what education meant and who its primary agents were within the museum (Dobbs & Eisner, 1987). There was also great energy directed toward strengthening the profession, and everyone that interviewed agreed that education was important. This study contributed to the field of museum education by fostering discussion and by bringing initiatives forward. Dobbs and Eisner concluded the study with eight recommendations that offered some ways in which the field of museum education could grow and mature. These recommendations included the following: a summer institute for museum education; a handbook for museum education in theory, research, and practice; an annual conference on museum education; research studies in museum education; visiting fellowships in museum education; a journal of museum education; a videotape series to be used for in-service education of museum professionals; and collaborative program development with schools (Dobbs & Eisner, 1987). These recommendations are all standard offerings to educators in the field today, and, in conjunction with *The Art Museum as Educator,* Dobbs and Eisner's study began the discussion that eventually led to the formalization of museum education.

Another important publication in the history of museum education is *Excellence in Equity: Education and the Public Dimension of Museums,* published by AAM in 1992. This landmark document was the first major report on the educational role of museums that pointed out ways for museums to expand their role as educational institutions without boundaries (AAM, 1992). Three key ideas emerge from this document. First, the museum's commitment to education must be central to its mission and pivotal to every museum activity. Second, museums must become more inclusive places that welcome diverse audiences and reflect our society's

pluralism in every aspect of their operation and programs. Lastly, dynamic leadership by key individuals inside and outside the institution is required for a museum to reach its full potential in terms of public service in the 21st century (AAM, 1992).

In 2002 AAM's Standing Professional Committee on Education developed a guide to inform the practice of museum education, intended for museum educators, directors, curators, exhibit developers, board members, peer reviewers, and others who support informal education and teaching with objects, both inside and outside the museum field. This report emphasized the significant role that museums play in the advancement of knowledge and the nourishment of the human spirit. It speaks to the way in which museum educational programs should function to be successful in the 21st century. The principles and standards included are categorized into three functional areas related to museum education: accessibility, accountability, and advocacy.

AAM's Standing Professional Committee on Education (2002) recommends that for a museum to be successful they must be accessible in terms of diversity, content, and socio-economic positioning. The programming should reflect the needs and complexities of a changing society, and the content should be shaped and interpreted to reflect relevant issues within society. By providing multiple levels and points of entry into content and programs that serve diverse populations within their communities, museums can stimulate and engage the largest percentage of participants in learning and eliminate barriers to entry (AAM, 2002). Secondly, museum professionals must be accountable for the educational content that they disseminate to the public through programming. Successful programs incorporate learning theories and demonstrate excellence in content knowledge, teaching participants about the collection, exhibitions, and mission of the museum. Finally, successful educational programs promote education as central to the museum's mission. To ensure that education is clearly incorporated into the mission, goals,

and financial strategy of the museum, professionals should include educational considerations in interdepartmental discussions. Programs that promote the spirit of inquiry and openness to new ideas and approaches and share the joys of learning with all people are important and meaningful to the communities they serve (AAM, 2002).

Museum professionals continue to consider accessibility, accountability, and advocacy when designing and implementing programs, and researchers in the field continue to investigate how the museum engages learners to further define the visitor experience. In addition to these critical documents that professionalized the field of museum education and influenced practice, two important theories also emerged in museum education and changed the way we understand learning in the museum and the visitor experience. Hein (1995) advocated for constructivist theory in terms of the nature of learning in the museum. In his groundbreaking text, *The Constructivist Museum*, he argued that museums should focus on the visitor, not on the content of the museum, and assist the visitor in making connections between prior knowledge and his or her museum experience to maximize the potential for learning. Hooper-Greenhill (2007) applied Gadamer's hermeneutic circles to the discussion of the process of interpreting objects and the effects of educational psychology on museum practice. She argued that meaning making is a continual process involving past experiences, traditions, representations, cultures, human biases, current situations, the art objects, and the social setting. She believed that all of these aspects must be considered when interpreting what can be learned in the museum setting and how visitors perceive the information that is available to them through educational experiences with objects (Hooper-Greenhill, 2000). Both of these theories now influence how museum educators teach and their interactions with visitors in the galleries.

To improve educational programs, museums continue to conduct research often. Studies on visitors and their experiences, how visitors learn, and the effects of the museum experience are only a few of the topics covered in the current scholarship (Burnham and Kai-Kee, 2011; Falk, 1998, 2009; Falk and Dierking, 2000, 2013; Hein, 1995; Hooper-Greenhill, 2000, 2007). Some studies document the conditions in museum educational programs, while others offer in-depth investigations of a particular group or experience in the museum setting (AAM, 2002; Buffington, 2007; Harlow, Thomas, Dalton & Field, 2011; Randi Korn & Associates, 2011). Like the definition of a museum, educational programming is constantly evolving because of emergent needs of museum audiences and the scholarship produced evaluating current museum practice.

Problem Statement

Since the 1990s, many museums have committed resources to growing and diversifying their audiences through outreach efforts and by offering a variety of programs designed to engage different groups within the population. As a result, museums today have much larger audiences than they had 50 years ago, but this growth has not necessarily meant an expansion in diversity when it comes to the range of ages or the ethnicity of visitors (Falk, 1998). In 2010, Reach Advisors, a New York–based strategy, research and predictive analytics firm that focuses on museums and culture, conducted a study surveying 40,000 households to determine who visits museums. This report found that 65% of art museum visitors were over the age of 50 and 92% identified as White (Reach Advisors, 2010). This narrow socio-demographic group continues to be the largest, most engaged subset of art museum audiences. With the ethnic and racial composition of the United States population shifting rapidly and transforming our social

landscape, this identifiable group—characterized by museums as their most devoted patrons—will be a minority of the U.S. population within the next four decades (Farrell & Medvedeva, 2010). It is important for museums to grapple with these changes and plan for the upcoming demographic shift of their audiences.

Unlike museums in other countries, which are often largely supported by their national governments, American museums rely heavily on the financial support of their patrons and must cobble together a variety of funding sources to keep their operations going (Bell, 2012). These streams of revenue can be categorized as four types: government grants, private donations, earned revenue, and investment income. Individual donors who give private donations account for the largest portion of museums' total revenue, at 38% (Bell, 2012). Without contributions from patrons, museums would suffer to a significant degree due to their current financial positioning. Government grants at the federal, state, and local level make up just over 24% of museums' operating revenue and are trending lower in their dollar amounts, which means individual giving will most likely need to grow to cover a larger percentage of the budget for museums (Bell, 2012). In 2013, AAM's *Annual Condition of Museums and the Economy* (ACME) survey reported that only a small fraction of American museums received federal funding of any kind and that fraction was shrinking. The survey results stated that 35% of museums reported a decline in government funding, on top of widespread declines in government support in 2009, 2010, and 2011 (AAM, 2013a). The ACME survey reemphasized Bell's assumption about the downward trend of government funding and the need to raise the amount generated from private dollars.

The other two streams of revenue Bell mentioned were generated internally. Earned income from exhibitions, rentals, retail, and admission is a new revenue stream for most

museums. It provides 27% of the revenue today and has the potential to grow considerably but often requires that museums fund upfront costs such as marketing and shop inventory. They must be financially stable to afford these costs, which is not the case for all museums. The final revenue stream Bell discusses is investment income, which makes up the smallest percentage of revenue generated. Investment income is the return on an endowed fund established by a private donor or group of donors. A percentage of the fund's earnings, called a spending budget, is allocated as revenue each year, while the principal of the fund remains untouched. According to Bell, investment income was hard to come by for many museums from late 2007 through early 2010 because of the Great Recession. A museum rich in endowed funds has investment income in perpetuity, but it takes a significant amount of money to create an endowment. Even though the economy continues to improve, museum leaders must continue to be creative and entrepreneurial in ensuring the financial stability of their institutions for the present and the future (Bell, 2012).

As the demographics of the population change, the most engaged patrons continue to age, and the emphasis remains on increasing private donations, the need to engage the next generation of patrons has shifted from a conversational topic of concern to an issue that requires immediate attention. If young adults do not develop an affinity for museums and an understanding of the important societal role that they play in creating cultural consciousness and preserving heritage, these institutions could dissolve due to lack of funding. Many museums across the United States are considering new programs specifically designed to reach young adults because they recognize that "buy in" from the next generation is mandatory for the future health and vitality of their organization.

Purpose of the Study

This study was designed to examine a type of educational program for young adults currently in use at forward-thinking museums across the United States. This kind of program offers its members experiential learning opportunities uniquely focused on art and collecting. It also provides insider access to exhibitions, artists, galleries, collectors, and curators. To date, this nontraditional style of programming has not been thoroughly investigated by scholars in the field of museum education but has been in practice to some degree at most of the major urban museums nationwide for more than a decade. Because programming of this variety was developed under the umbrella of membership instead of education, it has been generally overlooked and not assessed for its educational merit.

Little attention has been devoted to investigating the ways in which education can build and sustain relationships for the museum and encourage future philanthropy. These variables are rarely linked but, as this study will demonstrate, are intimately connected. This study investigated what young adults are learning through this type of program and explored its curricula and the benefits of this kind of education. It also investigated the meanings and values that young adults attach to their museum experiences through this type of program and developed an understanding of the role that educational programming can play in the development of relationships with members by deepening their connection to the museum through the experiences provided by the program. The purpose of my research was to determine the ways in which a museum can build and sustain a culture of philanthropy through the educational programs that it offers. Without this culture of philanthropy, it will be challenging for museums to develop relationships with patrons in the future, and without patronage, there

will be no funding for educational programming. If there is no programming, then museums cannot fulfill their mission to educate.

Approach to the Research

Through a descriptive case study, I investigated one of the leading educational programs for young adults: the Avant-Garde at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA). During the course of my study, I was concurrently employed by the museum and serving in the role of a Major Gift Officer. In this role I am tasked with raising funds for the museum and building relationships with individual donors and their families. My position at the museum provided insider access to the Avant-Garde program and allowed for a more rigorous investigation. I gathered documents pertaining to the program to contextualize my case, such as public relations materials, previous surveys, statistical reports, and attendance records. I then interviewed the museum professionals who administer this program and the stakeholders such as the chairs and ambassadors of the program, young adults who assist in growing the membership base and planning the program and also participate in its offerings. I observed three programs offered to the Avant-Garde and asked members who attended to participate in an online survey. Through interviews, observations, surveys, and the documents collected, I developed a well-rounded view of the program and its effectiveness in terms of educating, engaging, and building relationships with this particular group of young adults. The following research questions guided my study:

1. What are young adults learning through their participation in this program?
2. What meanings do young adults attach to these museum experiences? Do they value the knowledge that they acquire through this program?

3. How can an educational program inspire future philanthropy and strengthen relationships between the members of the program and the museum?

Definition of Key Terms

Some concepts lend themselves to a variety of imprecise definitions. Here are key terms used in this research as a means of clarification, though these definitions are not the only available ones of the following terms. The key terms are as follows:

1. Millennial Generation: A generational cohort of individuals born between the years of 1982 and 2004 that is comprised of roughly 100 million people (Howe, 2014).

2. Informal Learning: Voluntary and self-directed learning opportunities driven by curiosity, discovery, and free exploration in settings such as museums that offer untapped potential for communicating socially, learning about culture, correcting misconceptions, and improving attitudes (Infed.org, 2002).

3. Philanthropy: An altruistic concern for human welfare and advancement, usually manifested by donations of money, property, or time given to an institution of learning for a socially useful purpose (Dictionary.com, 2017).

4. Patron: A person who supports a non-profit organization with money, gifts, time, or endorsement (Dictionary.com, 2016).

5. Experiential Learning: a method of educating through first-hand experience that allows for skills, knowledge and experiences to be acquired outside of a traditional classroom setting. Different types of experiential learning experiences include but are not limited to internships, studies abroad, field trips, field research and service-learning projects (Firestone, 2016).

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

When reviewing the literature that directly informed my research, many of the reports and articles I found expressed a sense of urgency with regard to the engagement of young adults in museums, yet none offered a solution to the problem or guidelines to help museums address this issue (Dudzinska-Przesmitzki & Grenier, 2008; Farrell & Medvedeva, 2010; Xanthoudaki, Tickle, & Sekules 2003). What I learned through further investigation is that there is a considerable gap in the literature on this topic, and scholars attribute the gap to various sources, such as limited funding, the way in which the programs are formed, and the shifting role that the museum must play within society (Dudzinska-Przesmitzki & Grenier, 2008; Farrell & Medvedeva, 2010; Xanthoudaki et al., 2003). According to Farrell and Medvedeva (2010), the research currently available in the field of museum education regarding young adults is spotty, outdated, and too narrow in focus, resulting in a shallow base of established evidence on which to build new knowledge. The urgency to create lively programming to meet the visitor's needs has led to a great deal of undocumented, innovative practice in the field, and the educational issues surrounding these programs have not been adequately debated by professionals and scholars (Xanthoudaki, Tickle, & Sekules 2003). Filling these gaps in research would improve the ability of museums to make sound, informed decisions about how to serve their communities now and in the future.

To establish a contextual understanding for this study, it is first necessary to seek understanding of the basic tenets of museum education. In this literature review, I discussed how

learning occurs in the museum and enhanced the reader's understanding of the meanings and values that visitors attach to their experiences in the museum. I also included case studies that investigate programs designed to entertain and educate young adult audiences at Denver Museum of Art and the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum to further establish the gap in the literature. Even though both case studies are primarily focused on developing audiences instead of assessing educational programming or building sustainable relationships with young adults, they inform my research and provide a comparison for this study.

In addition to museum education literature, I also included literature regarding what it means to build a culture of philanthropy and the latest scholarship on the topic of the Millennial Generation. The distinctive traits attributed to this generation separate them from older generations and define how they interact and what they value. Understanding how Millennials communicate, learn, and consider philanthropy, sharpened the lens through which I assessed the Avant-Garde program, as this generation constitutes the age demographic that the museum is attempting to reach through this specific program. Finally, the theoretical framework is included at the end of the literature review, and it defines the core theories and concepts through which I conducted my research.

Though the gap in the literature regarding the engagement and education of young adults in the museum setting is too large for one study to fill, I provided through my research a thorough description of an established style of programming for young adults that is currently found at many museums across the country and offered an in-depth analysis of its educational components and engagement activities based in educational theory and an understanding of the needs and values of the Millennial Generation, which is the specific demographic that needs to be engaged at museums across the nation. Even though my findings may not be applicable to all

museums, the recommendations I offer with regard to how to facilitate such a program and how to educate and engage the next generation of donors should be transferable to other institutions.

Museum Education Literature

The scholarship on museum education is extensive and varied. Because the museum is considered a non-traditional learning environment, much research has been initiated because of the need to explain or prove the value of museums in their role as active constituents of the educational fabric and cultural landscape. Most of the studies that focused on this topic were quantitative until the final decades of the 20th century (Xanthoudaki, Tickle, & Sekules, 2003). The reasons for the shift to qualitative inquiry include a combination of intrinsic educational concerns about engagement, motivation, and sustaining involvement and extrinsic concerns such as accountability, accessibility, and advocacy (Xanthoudaki et al., 2003). Xanthoudaki, Tickle, and Sekules (2003) explained that a growing awareness of the deeply personal and individualistic nature of aesthetic experiences resulted in a search for understanding about the meanings associated with these encounters, their value to the individual, and the process involved in bringing about this kind of experience. Leading researchers in the field such as Falk (1998, 2009), Falk and Dierking (2000, 2013), Hein (1995) and Hooper-Greenhill (2000, 2007) tackled this topic through their scholarship on the visitor experience and the nature of learning in the museum. The literature these scholars produced has significantly contributed to the greater understanding of why individuals choose to visit museums and how they learn in the museum setting. Their work is included in this literature review because it is important for me as a researcher to understand what motivates individuals to come to museums and how learning

occurs within this unique setting to accurately assess an educational program for young adults and to understand the values and meanings that members attach to their experiences.

Learning in the Museum

The educational role of museums is ambiguous because of the nature of the museum experience and the range of ways in which museum education can be conceptualized. There is no single view of what it means to educate or learn in a museum setting. Hooper-Greenhill (2007) explained that individuals understand the words *learning* and *education* in very different ways, depending on their experience of educational systems and of learning and teaching styles. Because these systems and styles vary and are based on different theories, they may lead to diverse perceptions of the processes, outcomes, and purposes of education and learning. Learning in the museum, however, has some factors that distinguish it from learning in a traditional classroom setting. It is informal, often requires physical activity and is without a prescribed timetable for learning or curriculum (Hooper-Greenhill, 2007). According to Hooper-Greenhill (2007), learning in museums is more open-ended, more unpredictable, more individually directed, and more susceptible to multiple diverse responses than formal education.

Falk and Dierking (2000/2013) explained how learning in the museum occurs through their Contextual Model of Learning. They argue that learning in the museum is an organic, integrated experience that happens in the real world and is situated within a series of contexts and is not an abstract experience that can be isolated. They approach learning from an evolutionary perspective. It is a product of millions of years of development, "an adaptation that permits an ongoing dialogue between the whole individual and the physical and sociocultural world he or she inhabits" (Falk & Dierking, 2000, p. 10).

The Contextual Model of Learning involves three overlapping contexts: the personal, the sociocultural, and the physical. None of the three contexts is ever stable or constant because learning is ephemeral. According to Falk and Dierking (2000/2013), learning can be viewed as the never-ending interaction and integration of these three contexts over time in order to make meaning.
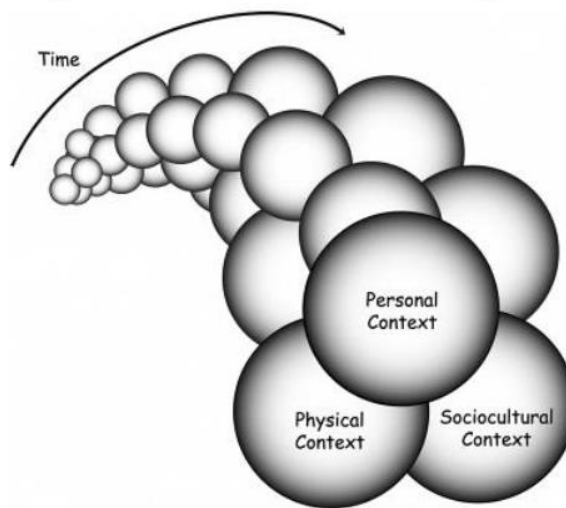
Figure 1. Contextual Model of Learning. Reprinted from *The Museum Experience Revisited* (p. 26), by J. H. Falk and L. D. Dierking, 2013, Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press. Copyright [2013] by Left Coast Press, Inc.

Furthermore, Falk and Dierking (2000/2013) argued that much of what people know is constructed through free-choice learning experience. Free-choice learning occurs during visits to the museum as well as during other activities such as watching television or listening to the radio. This type of learning is personally motivated, with a considerable amount of choice as to where, when, and what to learn. Museum learners, with the exception of school tour groups, self-select to participate in the educational opportunities offered. In other words, they choose freely to

visit the museum during their leisure time. The motivation for this type of learning is thought to be far more personal than the motivation for learning in a traditional setting (Falk & Dierking, 2000/2013; Hooper-Greenhill, 2007; Packer, 2006).

Packer (2006) explored some of the characteristics of free-choice, leisure learning for fun, the conditions under which it is likely to occur, and the reasons visitors value it. She explained that most people visit parks, museums, and other similar venues to experience learning, or to learn for fun, because they value and enjoy the process of learning itself. Packer (2006) suggested that learning for fun encompasses a mixture of discovery, exploration, mental stimulation, and excitement, stating: "Although most visitors do not come with a deliberate intention to learn, they do seek, or are unconsciously drawn into, an experience that incorporates learning" (p. 343). She further explained that visitors identify four conditions that together are conducive to learning for fun: a sense of discovery or fascination, the multisensory nature of the experience, the appearance of effortless learning, and the availability of choice. Packer concluded that visitors value learning for fun because it is a potentially transformative experience.

Falk (2009) takes this idea a step further and asserts that people choose to experience a museum and engage in leisure learning because they view it as an opportunity to expand their understanding of themselves and their world. Furthermore, today's society seeks experiences that build and support identity-related needs. They prefer to engage in leisure activities that affirm who they are. He explained, "We engage in leisure experiences that promise to make us happier, better partners or parents, or more knowledgeable and competent individuals. We seek experiences that nourish and rejuvenate the spirit and generally make us feel more fulfilled" (p.

41). At its most basic level, learning is about self-affirmation (Falk, 2009; Falk & Dierking, 2000/2013).

Understanding the theories of Falk (2009), Falk and Dierking (2000/2013), Packer (2006) and Hooper-Greenhill (2007) colored the lenses through which I assessed the Avant-Garde program at LACMA. Without comprehending how learning occurs in the museum setting and why it is enriching for visitors, I would not have been able to accurately describe or evaluate the educational programs offered to Avant-Garde members. This literature contextualized my case and deepened my understanding of how the individuals within the case see the museum, benefit from its programs and learn in this unique setting.

Meaningful Museum Experiences

What does it mean to have a meaningful museum experience? Henry (2010) explained, "For many museum visitors, it is an experience of insight or emotion that is at the heart of our experiences, what is frequently referred to as an aesthetic experience" (p.18). This type of experience is often a pleasurable and desirable; it is an experience that gives life worth and meaning. Aesthetic experiences are not limited to viewing art, though I will only discuss experiences within the art museum in this literature review.

Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson (1990) identified four major dimensions of aesthetic experience, which are communication, intellect, perception, and emotion. They argued that the quality of the aesthetic experience relates directly to the viewer's ability to engage in a meaningful dialogue with the work of art according to the above four dimensions. The extent and nature of the aesthetic experience is determined by the degree of overlap between the viewer's skills, the artwork's specificities, and the artist's intentions (Csikszentmihalyi & Robinson, 1990).

Aesthetic experiences lead to aesthetic understandings of work of arts that the viewer can then share with others. Such experiences bring a sense of pleasure and give meaning to our lives. Henry argued, "The aesthetic experience is ultimately and intrinsically connected to finding personal meaning in art, visual culture, and contemporary life" (p.42). "By their very nature, museums are environments designed to increase the potential for visitors to have meaningful and potentially transformative experiences with works of art" (Henry, 2010, p.43).

Meaningful museum experiences also occur when the needs of the individual are satisfied on a personal level. Satisfaction is commonly used as a measure to judge how well a museum program meets or surpasses customer expectation, yet visitor satisfaction is an ambiguous, abstract concept because satisfaction varies from person to person (Falk, 2009). Falk (2009) suggest that understanding the identity-related needs that museum visitors seek to fulfill through their experiences helps identify what motivates individuals to visit museums in the first place. After their experience, the meanings attached to their visit are shaped by these expectations or the feeling of fulfillment related to these identity-related roles. The five categories identified by Falk (2009) are explorer, facilitator, experience seeker, professional or hobbyist, and recharger. Falk (2009) explained that explorers seek an intellectually challenging place that has the potential of satisfying curiosity and interest. Facilitators seek an educational place where one's family and/or friends could enjoy themselves and learn new things. Experience seekers desire an exemplary experience, to see something new. Professionals or hobbyists see the museum as a place to further specific intellectual needs. Rechargers see the museum as a place to escape and be intellectually and spiritually rejuvenated (Falk, 2009). Museum visitors may satisfy one or more of the five identity-related roles during a museum, and the feelings and meanings that they attach to their experience directly relate to the satisfaction they feel.

Hood (1983) argues that the six major criteria by which individuals judge leisure experiences include being with people or social interaction, doing something worthwhile, having a challenge of new experiences, feeling comfortable and at ease in one's surroundings, having an opportunity to learn, and participating actively. Falk's (2009) categories reiterate many of the concepts that Hood determined are motivations to visit museums. Packer and Ballantyne (2002) investigate the relationship between museum visitor motivation and learning in their study that was designed to measure a range of motivational factors and learning indicators across six educational leisure sites in Queensland, Australia. They presented comparative results from three sites: a museum, an art gallery and an aquarium. Their study reveals five categories of visitor motivation, which are learning and discovery, passive enjoyment, restoration, social interaction, and self-fulfillment. The overarching ideas that are revealed through Packer and Ballantyne's study are closely related to Falk's (2009) categories.

Understanding the aesthetic experience and the scholarship that defines how meaningful museum experiences occur helped me comprehend and accurately assess whether or not the Avant-Garde program is providing meaningful experiences for it members. Though Falk's (2009) research pertains specifically to the museum visitor, I considered that satisfying the same identity-related needs could also be at play when members of a program are applying personal meaning to their experiences and assessing the value of those experiences. Fulfilling these roles could even be more important to members because they have invested financially in the program by joining. In this study, I applied Falk's (2009) categories to find out what meanings young adults attach to their museum experiences and to understand whether or not they value the knowledge that they acquire through their participation.

Case Studies of Young Adult Programs

In the field of museum education, the majority of case studies focus on a single program designed to serve a specific subset of the population. Since every museum is different and their approach to education and engagement is unique to their institution, often the findings are not easily transferable to other museums. However, I included two case studies that review programs specifically designed to engage young adults at the Denver Art Museum (DAM) and the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum (Gardner) in this review because of the creative programming that they developed to engage nearly the same demographic that I am studying at LACMA. Both museums use similar strategies and modes of thinking when crafting their programming including multiple entry points for learning and educational offerings that are customizable. They also consider the importance of being social for this specific demographic, so they created a social environment for their programs with food, drinks and music.

Denver Art Museum. Like many museums across the country, the Denver Art Museum identified young adults as an underserved audience, and they wanted to rectify this through the creation of programming designed specifically to engage this age demographic. With a three-year grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, DAM was able to not only create and implement new programming but also expand current programs to engage adults between the ages of 19 and 35 (Randi Korn & Associates, 2011). The programming was developed around two concepts: Easy Moments of Creativity and Unexpected Content, which they define as programs that have a limited amount of structure and an easy entry point with no fee for participation or expertise required (Randi Korn & Associates, 2011). They created an entirely new look to indicate that the new programs were "anything but business as usual" (Randi Korn

& Associates, 2011, p. 12) to attract young adults. After the incubator phase of the program, they realized that the co-created experiences, social environments, and self-directed learning experiences offered to young adults spoke to a wider range of people than the targeted population, which they attributed to the prevalence of social media and how it has changed the behaviors and expectations for a much broader group. As a result, DAM now considers style not age as a more clearly defined way to categorize their targeted audience.

The findings from DAM's study that I considered when reviewing the Avant-Garde program related to the ways in which the young adults in this study preferred to engage with the museum. What I found to be surprising in their findings was that the participants surveyed still preferred rich, meaningful object-based content, which indicates that they do value the aesthetic experience in addition to the social, dynamic programming that was created to meet their needs. I questioned whether or not the Avant-Garde members would value this aspect of the programming as well. I also considered the importance of creating social environments with customizable learning experiences to engage this specific demographic, because this style of programming was very successful at DAM. The value of having an online presence for the program became very apparent in DAM's findings, which I also considered in my study. Perhaps the Avant-Garde program could improve engagement with the members through this tool? DAM also created interactive content online, because they recognized that young audiences are accustom to going online for information and socializing. Furthermore, their online programming serves as a continuum from the experiences at the museum with multiple entry points, which elevates the online experience from a supporting role and creates a sense of community.

Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. The Wallace Foundation, a grant-making organization that supports education, conducted a study at four art institutions in the late 2000s with the intent of cultivating the next generation of patrons. For the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, the challenge was reaching young adults between the ages of 18 and 35. The program studied was called Gardener After Hours. The participants in the study were staff, attendees and volunteers, and interviews, observations and survey were conducted. When designing the program, the staff at the Gardner Museum focused on its particular mission and the space constraints of their building, which made the finding less transferable. The activities that were part of program included gallery games, informal discussions about a work of art, gallery talks, live music, and group sketching with the museum's permanent collection as the focus of all activities. By offering many types of learning activities, visitors were able to choose what to do with their time at the museum. There was no pressure to engage and free-choice learning was employed. The evening could simply be a social event if one preferred, but educational activities were also provided.

According to the case study, Gardner After Hours achieved its objectives, which were to build a popular evening program that attracted young adult visitors who not only had a good time, but also engaged with art. In addition, this program also increased general membership at the museum. The ideas communicated through the study were that market research is crucial to the development and execution of programming that targets a specific audience and that creating discussion about art set within the context of a fun, social event encourages learning without pressure. This type of learning experience also resulted in the breakdown of the perception that art institutions are "snobby" and only for individuals who are already informed about art.

The Gardner's study was attendance driven. The desired outcome was to attract and to engage the young adult population of Boston. The most valuable idea that I gleaned from this study was that the mission is critical to the programming. Programs that develop from a mission statement thrive because they provide the audience an opportunity to develop a deeper connection with the institution. When studying the Avant-Garde program at LACMA, this influenced the way I looked at the program and considered its content.

Philanthropy Literature

Culture is a set of shared values, attitudes, goals, and practices that characterize an institution or organization (Merriam-Webster, 2017). Philanthropy is an altruistic concern for human welfare and advancement, usually manifested by donations of money, property, or work to an institution of learning for a socially useful purpose (Dictionary.com, 2014). A culture of philanthropy refers to a set of organizational values and practices that support and nurture fund development within a nonprofit organization. It is more than raising money; it is a way of thinking, an understanding, and a behavior that promotes the civic mission of the organization and prioritizes relationship building with donors over transactional giving.

The literature in this section is narrow in focus but pertinent to my research, since I am interested in understanding the ways in which an educational program can inspire future philanthropy and strengthen relationships between the members of the program and the museum. To contextualize my case and explain what building a culture of philanthropy means, I included two important articles by Axelrad (2015) and Auerbach (2014) that describe necessary steps to take when building a culture of philanthropy at a non-profit organization.

In her article "Culture of Philanthropy: Why You Need It; 6 Ways to Get It," Axelrad (2015), a frontline fundraiser with 30 years of experience, provides six ways to shift a nonprofit culture toward one of philanthropy within an organization. Her recommendations convey the very essence of philanthropy and the organizational modification that must occur in order to communicate the mission effectively and engage actively with donors. First, Axelrad (2015) recommended that the members of the organization articulate philanthropy's role in advancing the mission and values to all parties involved. She explained, "The more you help all staff understand that development enables the organization to sustain, strengthen, and expand its service, the more cooperation and ownership you'll encourage" (para. 1). Second, she suggested that, when building a culture of philanthropy, the top of the organization must lead, and it should be clear that donors are valued participants in the mission and that all staff play an equal role in this partnership. Third, she recommended that the staff create opportunities for donors to engage in development, such as assisting with the identification of prospects, cultivating relationships, soliciting gifts, and contributing to the thanking and stewardship aspect of fundraising. In addition to involvement, she advised that the organization keep everyone informed, including staff, volunteers, and donors. She makes it clear that philanthropy happens because needs are successfully addressed by the entire organization, not just development staff. She also suggested that the organization make customer service its top priority. "We know from research that the single biggest driver of donor loyalty is the service they receive. Every contact with donors must contribute toward the goal of building satisfaction, commitment and trust" (Axelrad, 2015, para. 1). In her final point, Axelrad recommended that the organization incorporate an attitude of gratitude into the culture. She explained,

The importance of this shift towards a gratitude culture is that it takes you away from the mercenary 'all we care about is your money' perception and shifts you to a critically important 'we care about you' culture. . . . If you want your donors to stay uplifted by their philanthropy you've got to practice gratitude continually, as a way of life. (Axelrad, 2015, para. 1)

In addition to Axelrad's article, I also reviewed an article by Anna Auerbach, Vice President of the Moonridge Group, which is an organization focused on catalyzing philanthropy. While Axelrad's recommendations are primarily centered on building a culture of philanthropy within an organization, Auerbach's article offers recommendations for building a culture of philanthropy within a community, and she explains in detail the steps she took to do so at a nonprofit organization in Las Vegas. Auerbach (2014) believes that everything begins with engagement and recommended that nonprofits first develop opportunities for fulfilling engagement for donors, such as leadership roles and structured volunteer opportunities for individuals and groups. This stance aligns with Axelrad's recommendation for donor engagement, but Auerbach focuses on engaging fundraising activities specifically. Second, she explained that she thinks philanthropy is fundamentally personal, so nonprofits should create opportunities for donors to share their personal pathways to giving and tell their stories to inspire others to give. Auerbach also advised nonprofits to ensure that they are equipped to accept and steward contributions effectively to build a culture of philanthropy. If the systems are not in place to process and acknowledge gifts accurately and in a timely manner, it can be very challenging to develop relationships and to demonstrate the culture of gratitude that Axelrad (2015) suggested in her article. Finally, Auerbach emphasized that it is critical for nonprofits to

reach the Millennial Generation directly by launching young philanthropy groups that focus on volunteering, personal experience, and professional development.

From Axelrad's and Auerbach's recommendations, it is evident that to build a culture of philanthropy, museums must focus on forging sustainable, mutually beneficial relationships with members, volunteers, staff, and donors. Also, the mission and values of the organization must be clearly communicated to all parties involved. Engagement opportunities, membership groups, and educational programs provide a foundation for relationship building. Patron programs, specifically, can be fertile ground for developing and deepening ties because their members are already engaged and giving above what is required for a regular museum membership. This type of program is set up like a traditional membership program except the members are called patrons, a term used to distinguish a higher level of giving. Patron members receive exclusive benefits for their contribution, like access to special museum events and the curatorial staff and prominent recognition for their giving. Unfortunately, like membership, giving through patron programs can be very transactional, which means the donor gives to receive benefits. It is the responsibility of the development staff to grow these relationships through education and engagement so that their transactional gifts become transformative gifts. When a transformational gift is given, the donor, the organization, and the community it serves are changed by the gift. This kind of gift reflects a deepening commitment in relation to the cause, and it involves more than just money. There is often an action component in which the donor is directly interacting with the cause in tangible ways (Christ, 2013). According to Christ (2013), it is only through transformational gifts that true philanthropy occurs.

The literature in this section influenced my recommendations for Avant-Garde program in terms of how they can strengthen the relationships between the members and the museum to

ultimately build a culture of philanthropy through the education and engagement of young adults.

Without understanding what it means to build a culture of philanthropy, it would have been

challenging to assess whether or not the program was in fact doing so. As I conducted my

research I considered Axelrad's and Auerbach's recommendations and assessed whether or not

LACMA as a whole was implementing these strategies. Acknowledging that the culture of

philanthropy needs to extend far beyond the Avant-Garde program in order for the museum to be

successful at development, I primarily focused my efforts of understanding if philanthropy was

even part of the equation for this specific group and how the museum could create this kind of

culture and engage with young adults in a meaningful way.

Millennial Generation Literature

Each generation represents distinct values, attitudes and behaviors that are shared

amongst members of a generational cohort. Such values and attitudes stem from formative life

events that individuals of the same generation experience at key developmental points in their

lives. According to Kowske, Rasch, and Wiley (2010), these values, attitudes, and personality

traits define and differentiate one generation from another. The significance of generational

membership as an individual difference stems from the concept of social identity, or the

knowledge that one belongs to a particular generational category, which communicates

emotional or value-laden significance (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Through social identity, people

can classify themselves and others; social identity also provides a mechanism to make sense of

social and organizational environments. According to Joshi, Dencker, Franz, and Martochhio

(2010), some of the most complex challenges facing contemporary organizations often stem

from generational differences, a concept that has brought into focus the critical importance of understanding generations and generational differences in organizations.

As the focus of my research is understanding and evaluating how the Avant-Garde program at LACMA is educating and engaging young adults, it is important to include literature that explains the generational identity of the Millennials, the generational cohort that constitutes the majority of the young adults who participate in this program. Millennials are distinctly different from past generations in terms of the way that they learn, communicate, and assess value. This section of the literature review will touch on recent studies that describe the Millennial Generation and explain how they learn, their relationship to philanthropy, and how to communicate with them.

Traits of the Millennial Generation

The Millennial Generation grew up in the shadows of the 9/11 attacks, the Iraq War, the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, historic presidential elections, and many other significant occurrences. These events influenced the formation of the traits, attitudes, and values that are associated with this generational cohort. The Millennials also grew up in a time of economic prosperity, and they are accustomed to being indulged as children of affluent Baby Boomer parents (McGlynn, 2005). During their childhood, many were highly sheltered and scheduled with doting parents who were deeply involved in every aspect of their lives. Perhaps as a result of this close connection, most Millennials get along with their parents and share their parents' values, even in adulthood (McGlynn, 2005; Reilly, 2012). Now ranging in age from 20 to 35, Millennials are forging a distinctive path into adulthood. According to the Pew Research Center (2014), they are relatively unattached to organized religion and politics, burdened by debt,

distrustful of people, linked by social media, in no rush to marry, and optimistic about the future. They are also America's most racially diverse generation and the most educated generation in history (Pew Research Center, 2014; U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 2014).

The Millennial Generation makes up roughly 25% of the U.S. population (Fromm, Lindell, & Decker, 2011). Their habits and preferences in communication and personal interaction are significantly different from those of preceding generations, which is why so much attention has been devoted to them in terms of research (Fromm, Lindell, & Decker, 2011). According to Gerhardt (2016), the Millennials embody an age-based generational identity that has grown through strong formative influences, including parental styles that allowed them a voice in family decisions, nurtured their egos and self-esteem, and encouraged cooperation and team-oriented behavior. Howe and Strauss (2000) identified seven key traits of the Millennials. The first trait is special, meaning that from babyhood to high school, older generations instilled in the Millennials the sense that they are collectively vital to the nation and to their parents' sense of purpose. They are also described as confident because they possess high levels of trust and optimism, and they are quick to boast about their generation's potential and power. Sheltered is another key trait of the Millennials. Having grown up during the most sweeping safety movement in American history because of Columbine, they were very protected by their parents during childhood. Because of changes in the classroom and the rise in academic standards, the Millennials developed the traits of being team-oriented, pressured and achieving. In the classroom the teachers focused on group learning, so they developed strong team instincts and tight peer bonds. They were pushed to study hard, avoid personal risks and to take advantage of the collective opportunities offered to them. They are the most educated generation in history because of the pressure and encouragement from their parents. The final trait that Strauss and

Howe use to describe the Millennials is conventional, because they are more comfortable with their parents' values than any other generation in living memory.

Additional traits that are considered strengths of this generation include goal orientation, positive attitudes, a collaborative learning style, and multitasking (McGlynn, 2005). As students, the Millennials were expected to excel, and their parents, for the most part, had the financial means for tutors or coaches when needed (McGlynn, 2005). They are also known for being confident, self-expressive, optimistic, and liberal (Fromm et al., 2011; U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 2014). They are fiercely independent, open to change, and communicative (Skiba & Barton, 2006; U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 2014). Their sense of autonomy derives from being active information seekers and creators of information and knowledge (Reilly, 2012; Skiba & Barton, 2006). Because the Millennials are the first generation to grow up with Internet at their fingertips, they know how to find information about the things that interest them independently, and they can be very selective in how they spend their time and with whom they invest. Millennials like customization, and they want to have options (Skiba & Barton 2006; U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 2014). They rely on recommendations from their peers and friends more than experts, a trait that is related to their being active information seekers and believing that their voice is as important as anyone else's (Barton, Fromm, & Egan, 2012; Fromm, Lindell, & Decker, 2011; U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 2014). They have strong views, and they are not afraid to express them even if doing so is to the detriment of your brand or organization (Skiba & Barton, 2006; U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 2014).

Communicating with Millennials

Communication is key to engaging Millennials. They value openness and communicate constantly through social-media channels including Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat, and Tumblr (Fromm et al., 2011; Skiba & Barton, 2006; U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 2014). They utilize social media to participate in the causes they care about, and they expect meaningful and relevant communication from organizations (U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 2014). Their perception of the world is in real time, so they expect fast processing of information from others. Their connection with technology has completely changed their relationship with almost everything in their lives (Barton et al., 2010; U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 2014).

It is recommended that organizations market to Millennials through social media because this generation expects an engaging participatory conversation online (Fromm et al., 2011). What used to be one-way communication, with brands advertising their services, is now a 24-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week multifaceted dialogue between the brand and the customer, and it is important to this generation that the content brands generate is engaging. Tapping into the Millennial Generation as its members begin their adult lives is important for brands and organizations that would like to establish lifelong relationship with this age group (U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 2014). An affiliation with a cause or brand is much more important to the Millennials than any previous generation, so the pitch has to be effective and identifiable (Fromm et al., 2011).

Rozan (2014), Director of Audience Engagement at the Worcester Art Museum, suggested that young adults want to participate, be involved, and have discussion. He argued that having a vibrant online presence gives museums the ability to engage audiences day and night, which could prove to be very beneficial with the Millennial generation. According to Rozan, the

audience development conversation in museums has centered on advocating for a new contemporary adult audience, but the programming has not changed to meet the needs of these new adults. The argument on behalf of this burgeoning audience is not only to invite young adults to the museum but to engage them with a quality visit or experience. Rozan suggested that museum professionals look at their institutions as places for the community to gather and be social. Dobrzynski (2010) supported his argument in her article in the *The Wall Street Journal*. She explained,

> Many young directors see museums as modern-day 'town squares,' social places where members of the community may gather, drawn by art, perhaps, for conversation or music or whatever. They believe that future museum-goers won't be satisfied by simply looking at art, but rather prefer to participate in it or interact with it. (para. 6)

Rozan (2014) and Dobrzynski (2010) both believe that young adults have moved away from sitting and listening, or walking quietly and looking contemplatively at art and sculpture. They want to be active, loud, and visibly engaged with the things that interest them, and their spending habits are highly customized and extremely social.

Educating the Millennials

Over the past decade, interest in how different generational cohorts interact and work together grew exponentially as the Millennial Generation entered the classroom. According to Gernhardt (2016), a search of *Educational Source Complete* shows a sevenfold increase in academic articles focusing on generational differences published from 2000 to 2013 (283 articles) when compared to those published from 1990 to 1999 (39 articles). Scholarship in the field of learning and pedagogy suggests that the internally complex set of traits identified as

Millennial Generation characteristics calls for a variety of nuanced methods of teaching that

cater to this specific age group (Buttner, 2004; Conklin, 2012; Gernhardt, 2016; Prensky, 2001a,

2001b; Proserpio & Gioia, 2007; Skiba & Barton, 2006). As learners, members of the Millennial

Generation are distinctly different from the previous generations. Their focus on understanding,

constructing knowledge using discovery methods, and active engagement are all directly related

to their upbringing in the information age (Skiba & Barton, 2006). Their impact on the classroom

and teaching has been extreme because they are the first true "digital natives," which means that

they have been familiar with computers and the Internet from an early age (Prensky, 2001a).

Prensky (2001b) explained that they have a very different blend of cognitive skills and suggests

that their brains are most likely physiologically different from members of previous generations

because they developed hypertext minds from being raised with computers. They are also

socialized in a way that is vastly different from their parents. It is estimated that during

childhood, Millennials spent over 10,000 hours playing video games, exchanged over 200,000

emails and instant messages, talked on digital cell phones for over 10,000 hours, and spent

20,000 hours watching TV but, at the very most, 5,000 hours reading books before going to

college (Prensky, 2001b). They are often accused of having short attention spans, but this is not

the case when they are learning something that is of interest to them. Prensky (2001b) explained,

"As a result of their experiences, Digital Natives crave interactivity—an immediate response to

their each and every action" (p. 4). The traditional classroom setting provides very little of this

type of interactivity, so teachers have shifted their approach in the classroom because of the need

to engage Millennials in a way that best serves them. As Millennials are enmeshed in an

interactive culture, teachers must consider dialog online through blogs, chat rooms, and even

social media as an active component of their lessons.

Millennials also prefer a more collaborative approach to learning (Gernhardt, 2016). The teaching style of a lecturer on stage bestowing knowledge on his pupils does not work for this generation. They thrive in a classroom that is conducive to active conversation. Gernhardt (2016) argued that the role of the teacher has shifted from expert lecturer to designer of learning methods and environments. Buttner (2004) and Conklin (2012) attributed this shift in the classroom setting to the Millennial's strong need to be heard as well as recognized and included in the process of learning, which are considered character traits of this generational cohort. This movement in pedagogy represents a paradigm shift from a focus on teaching to a focus on learning (Wilson, 2004). To be successful in the classroom, Millennials need interaction and involvement, both largely social dynamics, as part of their experience because they see learning as a social activity (Proserpio & Gioia, 2007; Skiba & Barton, 2006). Furthermore, Millennial students assess the credibility of instructors based upon their sociability in the classroom in addition to traditional concerns with competence and character, which remain important (Gernhardt, 2016). This generational cohort expects a close relationship with their supervisors or instructors and frequent feedback (Gursory, Maier, & Chi, 2008; Martin, 2005; Reilly, 2012).

Even though moving the focus in the classroom from teaching to learning seems to be a positive change in pedagogy, one key aspect of learning has diminished significantly as a result of this paradigm shift is reflection. Prensky (2001b) expressed his concerns regarding this critical part of learning in his article "Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants Part 2: Do They Really Think Differently?" He questioned how teachers will include reflection and critical thinking in our "twitch-speed world" (p.5) because there seems to be less and less time and opportunity for these activities. He considered this shift to be one of the most interesting challenges and opportunities in teaching Digital Natives. Reflection is a critical part of the learning process for all students. It

is what enables us to generalize as we create "mental models" (Prensky, 2001b, p.5) from our experience. Over 100 years ago, John Dewey (1910) discussed this concept and its significance in his book *How We Think.* He identified several models of thought, including belief, imagination, and stream of consciousness, but the mode he was most interested in was reflection. Rodgers (2002) summarized and explained Dewey's thoughts on reflection and its significance. She argued that, according to Dewey,

> Reflection is the meaning-making process that moves a learner from one experience into the next with deeper understanding of its relationships with and connections to other experiences and ideas. It is the thread that makes continuity of learning possible, and ensures the progress of the individual and, ultimately, society. (Rodgers, 2002, p. 845)

It is a "systematic, rigorous, disciplined way of thinking" (Rodgers, 2002, p.845) rooted in scientific inquiry. She also identified that it needs to happen in interaction with others and requires "attitudes that value the personal and intellectual growth of oneself and others" (p. 845).

One of the ways that educators can address the challenge of incorporating reflection into their practice is by taking students outside of the classroom to educational places such as museums. Museum educators and theorists have established that, when visiting art museums, viewers can make meaning of their experiences through interactions with works of art. One of the common arguments used to substantiate the value of the educational experiences that museums offer is that art viewing promotes critical thinking and reflection. In fact, many museums assert that one of the goals of their educational programs is precisely to foster critical thinking in students (Herz, 2007). When visiting a museum, students are asked to construct and discover knowledge for themselves. Teachers invite them to observe their surroundings, ask questions, infer meaning, search for alternative explanations, form conclusions, offer evidence,

and continually reflect on their understanding (Hubard, 2011). Museums are a great resource for educators and individuals as reflection and critical thinking can be considered the most essential piece of what makes us human as well as learners (Rodgers, 2002).

Millennials and Philanthropy

The Millennial Generation is predicted to inherit a great deal of wealth over the next 50 years, with recent estimates ranging anywhere from $41 trillion to $136 trillion in financial and non-financial assets (Community Foundation R&D Incubator, 2010). This large transfer of wealth, in addition to the assets that will be passed to them through pre-bequest transfers and the amount of new wealth being created by the Millennial Generation, has led some observers to predict a new "golden age of philanthropy" (Goldseker & Moody, 2013, p.4; Havens & Schervish, 1999, p.13). Therefore, it is important for non-profit organizations to understand the Millennial Generation and their distinctive differences to set the stage for this new generation of philanthropists.

Emerging trends in philanthropy, in combination with a unique generation whose approach to the world appears distinctly different from that of previous generations, will undoubtedly change the way non-profit agencies handle their business in years to come. As the Millennial Generation begins to consider their own philanthropy at a much younger age than their parents or grandparents, it is imperative that organizations consider making changes now to capture their attention (Hamilton, 2004; Lerner, 2011). The literature available on this topic highlighted that the face of philanthropy is changing as Millennials bring new energy and ideas to the table. There is little research on their impact on philanthropy, however, which reflects a lack of understanding as to how this generation's traits, opinions, and behaviors are changing the

field (Lerner, 2011). Development professionals know that donors across all generations want to make a difference when they give and want to know that their investment is well spent. Often they desire to build a connection to the leadership of the organization, and they want to be thanked and treated with respect. Development is all about building relationships, no matter what age group you are considering. What we are learning about the Millennials is that their value of impact, desire to know how their gift is spent, and interest in engaging with the organizations they give to is significantly stronger than past generations for various reasons, which will be discussed in the following section.

The defining qualities of Millennials that influence their philanthropy are their desire to make a difference, their familiarity with crowd-sourced philanthropy and cause branding, and their yearning for immediate feedback (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002). Millennials are global citizens, often quite connected to what is happening in other parts of the world. Because of the Internet, social networking sites such as Facebook, the growth of study-abroad programs, and the ethnic diversity within this generation, its members are closely attached to the world and want to make it a better place (Davis, 2012; Stone, 2009). King (2016) described Millennials in his article about faith and philanthropy as "multicultural, more socially tolerant than other generational cohorts and internationalist in outlook" (p. 2). Additionally, scholars label Millennials as creative and entrepreneurial because they feel the freedom to change the way things are done (King, 2016). They are realistic and pragmatic, yet very optimistic. Some scholars have labeled Millennials with rather negative characteristics such as narcissism or being overly self-involved, yet they began volunteering and giving back as part of their curriculum in their early education and have a history of volunteerism in their communities and beyond (King, 2016; Stone, 2009). Michael Brown, co-founder and CEO of City Year, a non-profit organization

that places young mentors in urban schools, explained that community service is part of this generation's DNA (Stone, 2009). "It's part of this generation to care about something larger than themselves . . . It's no longer about keeping up with the Joneses. It's about helping the Joneses" (Stone, 2009, para. 3). In support of his statement, surveys show that individuals born from 1982 to 2000 are the most civic-minded individuals since the children of the 1930s and 1940s (Stone, 2009). Furthermore, Baranyi (2011) and Davis (2012) point out that Millennials have volunteered more than any generation in American history.

One of the most defining traits of the Millennial Generation as it relates to philanthropy is that its members keenly believe their work should mean more than just a paycheck (King, 2016). They are eager to give their life to something and genuinely want to make a difference, and they are willing to put aside some of their own advancement to improve society (King, 2016; Lerner, 2011; Stone, 2009). This notion most likely motivates their philanthropic decisions and could be reflected in the fact that they tend to give globally instead of to the communities where they grew up (Lerner, 2011). "The passion over this generation, however, is undeniable," argued King (2016, p.3) in his article about faith and philanthropy. He explained, "Millennials prefer issues to institutions, people over organizations" (p. 7). They often choose to test out an organization first as a volunteer alongside a peer before making a financial contribution (King, 2016). Like previous generations, the Millennials value transparency, authenticity, and community at non-profits; the difference is that they actively insist upon these characteristics when giving to an organization (King, 2016; Lerner, 2011). Lerner (2011), King (2016), Goldseker and Moody (2013), and Stone (2009) all discuss the fact that Millennials do not want to send money and forget about it. They explain that, for many, giving without significant, hands-on engagement feels like a hollow investment to them, with little assurance of impact. Millennials want to

develop close relationships with the organizations or causes they support, and they want to listen and offer their own professional or personal talents, all in order to solve problems together (King, 2016; Stone, 2009). They believe that collaborating with peers makes them all better donors and extends their impact. They want to give the full range of their assets: treasure, time, talents, and ties (Goldseker & Moody, 2013; King, 2016). Their network is considered one of their greatest assets, and Millennials see their advocacy through their networks as a gift. This type of online, social-networking grassroots activism is somewhat unique to this generation and should be acknowledged by organizations as a benefit of their engagement.

In addition to what scholars say about the way Millennials give and the traits that impact their philanthropy, I also have included literature that discusses the way in which Millennials prefer to communicate with non-profit organizations. Studies show that Millennials prefer to learn about top charities through organizational websites, and they are shrewd judges of what a website communicates about the legitimacy and quality of an organization (Baranyi, 2011; Davis, 2012; Goldseker & Moody, 2013). The literature regarding communication and engagement of Millennials does not offer a suggestion regarding the most effective way to communicate or engage with them. Rather, the research points toward a multileveled approach, which includes direct mailing, websites, social networking, mainstream media, and even text messaging (Baranyi, 2011). According to Davis (2012), social media should be used for stewardship with Millennials and staying in touch with young donors, but it in no way replaces one-on-one visits or in-person connections.

In summation, it is important to consider the following facts about the Millennial Generation when considering their engagement with philanthropy. First, Millennials are more geographically mobile than ever and have global connections, which could result in less

community-based philanthropy and increase philanthropy to organizations outside of the United States (Lerner, 2011). Second, they expect transparency from the organizations they support and demand assessment of results. Organizations dependent on their support will need to adapt to these expectations in order to survive and thrive (Lerner, 2011). Third, this generation desires meaning in their jobs and philanthropic activities, so mission-centered fundraising will be critical to engaging with this group. Fourth, the Millennials are technologically advanced, and they will expect organizations to be actively involved on social media with highly accessible websites. Using a multi-channel approach to fundraising is the best way to engage with this generation. Finally, as much as philanthropy is changing, there remains constancy in values. The Millennials support causes that they believe in rather than those from which they derive personal benefit or tangible reciprocity (Goldseker & Moody, 2013). This generation is broadening the definition of philanthropy not only through their financial contributions but also their contributions of time, ties, and talent.

The Millennial Generation is powerful and may be the group that restores the purpose of non-profits by insisting that these organizations become mission centered and impact driven. Nonprofit organizations need to start using diversified fundraising strategies now to bring these individuals in as donors, volunteers, board members, and more. Fundraising professionals need to be ready to meet the Millennials where they are in order to build lifelong relationships with them. Much attention has been given to the engagement of Millennials because of their future buying power and unique social behaviors. Technology has played a significant role in their development and their interactions with each other and the world. This generation does not want to wait around for the rest of the world to catch up with them. They expect organizations to communicate on their terms. The branding of events and educational experiences offered must be

precise and congruent with this generation's concerns and interests. The events hosted should be informal in setting and encourage dialog among participants to create an environment that is enjoyable and conducive to their learning traits.

The knowledge I have gained from this literature regarding the Millennial Generation allowed me to assess the Avant-Garde program strategically because I now have an understanding of the learning patterns and traits of this generational cohort and how they prefer to be engaged by non-profit institutions. Also, the marketing strategies and learning behaviors discussed helped me decipher whether the educational programming offered by the Avant-Garde matches what the literature says is needed to attract and build relationships with this generational cohort. By developing a deeper understanding of the Millennial Generation and what makes them inherently different from previous generations, I was able to understand the perspectives of the members who participated in my study, and I could analyze my findings through a lens that is attuned to the needs and desires of this generational cohort.

Theoretical Framework

Educational theory consists of two major components: the theory of learning and the theory of knowledge. Our beliefs about the nature of knowledge and how people learn profoundly influence our approach to education. The theoretical frameworks in education that guided my study are Deweyan pragmatism (Dewey, 1938, 1916/1966), constructivism as it relates to learning in the museum (Hein, 1995), experiential learning theory (Kolb, 1984) and andragogy, a foundational theory in adult education (Knowles, 1980). Understanding the philosophical underpinnings upon which adult education was constructed that later influenced

museum educational theory assisted me in my assessment the educational programs for the Avant-Garde at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

Pragmatism

In the field of education, it is generally expected that educational research should generate knowledge that is relevant for the day-to-day practice of educators. Educational researchers do not simply want to know how learning occurs; they want to gain knowledge from their research that can inform their actions and activities. According to Biesta and Burbules (2003), "Educational research . . . is not so much research about education as it is research for education" (p. 1). Pragmatism deals with questions of knowledge and the acquisition of knowledge within the framework of a philosophy that takes action as its most basic category, which is especially pertinent to educational research because of its practical angle (Biesta & Burbules, 2003). What young adults values in terms of knowledge, how they learn, and what meanings they attach to their experiences are questions that I intend to answer through qualitative inquiry, which is why pragmatism is one of the core theories through which I conducted my research.

Pragmatism is an American school of philosophy founded by C. S. Peirce and William James. It is marked by its rejection of the dualistic epistemology and metaphysics of philosophy, accepting a naturalistic approach and viewing knowledge as arising from experience (Campbell, 2007). From an ontological perspective, pragmatists assert that there is a single reality and that all individuals have their own unique interpretations of that reality (Mertens, 2015). Mertens (2015) explained, "Rather than treating incommensurability as an all-or-nothing barrier between mutual understanding, pragmatists treat issues of intersubjectivity as a key element of social life"

(p.36). With regard to pragmatist axiology, contemporary researchers working within this paradigm view the ethical goal of research as to gain knowledge in the pursuit of desired ends. The epistemological stance of a pragmatist is that relationships in research are determined by what the research deems as appropriate to that particular study (Mertens, 2015). Rather than positioning oneself as a distant observer or as a socially and historically contextualized researcher, the pragmatist is free to study what interests and is of value to him or her. Pragmatists claim that the usefulness, workability, and practicality of ideas, policies, and proposals are the criteria upon which merit is based. Pragmatism's philosophical underpinnings stress the priority of experience over set principles and action over doctrine. Ideas borrow meaning from experience and truths from substantiation; therefore, ideas are fundamentally instruments. Pragmatism is rooted in common sense and dedicated to the transformation of culture (Campbell, 2007; Mertens, 2015).

Deweyan Pragmatism and Experiential Learning

Pragmatism is adult education's intellectual core, and John Dewey, the pragmatist philosopher and educator, is considered the father of adult education (Finger & Asun, 2001). The central focus of Dewey's philosophical interests throughout his career was the theory of knowledge, which is traditionally referred to as epistemology. His philosophy on education is anthropological in nature, built on the specific learning capacities of human beings (Finger & Asun, 2001). According to Finger and Asun (2001), Dewey's most original contribution to the philosophical discussion was what he called the human capacity of plasticity, meaning the dual ability to learn from experience and to build on this learning, which further increases the ability to learn. Through plasticity, Dewey revealed his educational optimism, illustrating that the entire

developmental process of learning has no limits. His non-dualistic view is that there is no split between theory and practice, spirit and reality, reason and practice. He believed that learning is always part of a larger anthropological growth process.

Dewey (1916/1966) also conceptualized experiential learning that was later developed by Kolb into the theory of experiential learning. Kolb (1984) defined learning as "the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience"(p. 41). Dewey (1916/1966) and Kolb (1984) described this type of learning as having four main elements that operate in a continuous cycle. Dewey's elements were action, experience, observation and reflection that Kolb further developed and identified as concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. Kolb (1984) explained that concrete experiences are the basis for observations and reflections. These reflections are assimilated and condensed into abstract concepts from which new implications for action can be drawn. These implications can be actively tested and serve as guides in creating new experiences.

Chapman, McPhee and Proudman (1995) further defined experiential learning by providing a list of characteristics that should be present in order for an activity to be considered as experiential. First, there must be a balance between the experiential activities and the underlying content or theory. Second, the instructor must create a safe space for learners to work through their own process of self-discovery. Third, the learning activities must be personally relevant and enriching and allow for the learner to make connections between the learning they are doing and the world. Fourth, the learner should be able to reflect on their own learning and gain insight into themselves and their interactions with the world. Fifth, the learners should be fully immersed in the experience and feel safe to explore themselves and to analyze or even alter

their own values. Finally, the learning experience should occur outside of the learners perceived comfort zones. This does not refer just to physical environment, but also to the social environment.

Another significant aspect of Dewey's philosophy is that he considered education to be the theory of life (Monk, 2013). Education, in his view, was about providing tools for individual growth, to live and contribute to society. In *Democracy and Education* (1916/1966), Dewey criticized traditional educational practices as teaching by pouring in information and learning by passive absorption. Dewey interpreted learning as a social process with the educator as facilitator. He reinforced that learning depends upon the quality of an experience, which is experimental and involves interaction with past experiences, with the present situation, and between people and their natural and social environments. He believed that learning is social in nature (Monk, 2013). According to Dewey (1938, 1916/1966) knowledge results from life experiences. He explained,

> We always live at the time we live and not some other time, and only by extracting at each present time the full meaning of each present experience are we prepared for doing the same thing in the future. This is the only preparation which in the long run amounts to anything. (Dewey, 1938, p. 51)

The Constructivist Museum

Like Dewey, Hein (1995) believed that knowledge is constructed in the mind of the learner and that learners do not simply add new facts to what is known but instead constantly reorganize and create both understanding and the ability to learn as they interact with the world. He applied constructivist theory to learning in the museum, arguing that the viewer constructs

personal knowledge from an exhibit and that the process of gaining knowledge is itself a constructive act (Hein, 1995). For museums, the constructivist approach suggests that museum professionals need to focus on the visitor, not the content of the museum. Hein concludes, "By considering both the epistemological basis for our organization of exhibitions and the psychological basis for our theory of learning, we can develop museums that can respond to the dispositions of our visitors and maximize the potential for learning" (Hein, 1995, p. 6).

Dewey's (1938, 1916/1966) philosophy and Hein's (1995) constructivist approach emphasize the production of knowledge and share the belief that the knowledge that people have is related to their lived experiences and their social and cultural context. They also agree that the acquisition of knowledge and learning is about constructing meaning as opposed to passive reception and that the process of developing new knowledge is affected by previously acquired knowledge. Dewey thought of museums as important spaces for learning and wrote about them in his later years. In Hein's (2004) article about Dewey and museum education, Hein outlined some of the direct references that Dewey made to education in museums. "Dewey consistently described the ideal school as an institution that includes libraries and museums in an organic whole in which life-experiences and specialized-experiences such as reading and museum visits are unified" (Hein, 2004, p. 418). Dewey was critical of traditional museums. Hein (2004) also noted, that for Dewey, "the ideal museum would reflect life experiences outside of the school or museum and suggested that therein lay the challenge for museums today" (p. 419).

Another significant commonality between Dewey's philosophy and museum learning is the combination of mental processing and physical interaction. Learning in the museum cannot occur strictly through interaction in the galleries with a work of art. It requires reflection on the experience. Dewey believed that educational experiences are active and that the value of those

experiences derives from the mental process of interpretation and development of meaning in the experience (Monk, 2013). Dewey's concepts of interaction and continuity of experience based on experimentation with the natural and social environment are important for learning in museums, especially given their experiential nature. Monk (2013) suggested that future analysis of individual museum projects through a Deweyan lens could offer further insight into how learning can be expanded. With better integration of adult education theory and museum education theory, museums can become more useful for educators and researchers alike who are interested in providing quality lifelong learning experiences for all.

Adult Educational Theory: Andragogy

Knowles's (1980) theory of andragogy consists of a set of assumptions about how adults learn. He originally defined andragogy as "the art and science of helping adults learn" (p.43) and later developed it into a model of assumptions about learners to be used alongside the pedagogical model of assumptions. Knowles's five assumptions developed into identifiable characteristics of adult learners that remain defining terms in the field of adult education today (Baumgartner, Lee, Birden, & Flowers, 2003).

Knowles's (1980) first assumption was that adult learners move from "being dependent personalities toward being . . . self-directed" (pp. 44–45). They may be independent and self-directed in other areas of their life, but in an educational setting they initially desire to be taught because of former school experiences. He suggested that it is the teacher's responsibility to encourage and nurture this movement from dependent to self-directed. Second, Knowles assumed, "As people grow and develop they accumulate an increasing reservoir of experience that becomes an increasingly rich resource for learning for themselves and for others" (p. 44).

This theory coincided with Dewey's (1938, 1916/1966) and Hein's (1995) philosophies. His third assumption was that the timing of learning activities is related to developmental tasks (Knowles, 1980). In other words, educators should plan activities that are relevant and of interest to the learner. Fourth, Knowles stated that adult learning is problem centered rather than subject centered. He explained, "Learners see education as a process of developing increased competence to achieve their full potential in life. They want to be able to apply whatever knowledge and skill they gain today to living more effectively tomorrow" (p. 44). His final assumption about adult learners was that adults are internally rather than externally motivated to learn. This assumption aligns with Falk's (2009) theory related to meeting identity-related needs through learning. Adults choose to engage in leisure learning because they view it as an opportunity to expand their understanding of themselves and their world. Falk (2009) explained that we seek experiences that nourish and rejuvenate the spirit and largely make us feel more satisfied.

Knowles's assumptions about adult learners not only coincide with Falk's theory about meeting identity-related needs through a museum experience, but also blend with Skiba and Barton's (2006) theory on how Millennials learn and Falk and Dierking's (2000, 2009) contextual model of learning. By combining Knowles's assumptions with the philosophical perspectives of Hein (1995) and Dewey (1938, 1916/1966) and the understanding of who the Millennials are as learners and how the museum experience is interpreted by the visitor, I was able to examine LACMA's Avant-Garde program with a greater understanding of how its young adult participants learn and what values or meanings they attach to their experiences.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

As I designed and refined the methodology for this study, I began to reflect on how the body of literature and my experience as a young adult involved in the arts would inform and shape this study. My interest lies in understanding how the Avant-Garde program at LACMA is engaging and educating its members. Based on both personal and professional experiences in museums, my knowledge of art education practices in a museum setting, and my relationship to and understanding of fundraising, I have been struck by the variety of ways in which museums are engaging with young adults. What would I learn if I gave members the opportunity to reflect on what they are learning? A gap in the literature indicated that this type of program has not been assessed primarily for its educational merit. The way members experience this type of program and the meanings and values that they attach to their experiences, once shared, could change the way that museums engage and educate young adults and potentially foster future philanthropy for these organizations. Understanding how young adults prefer to be cultivated and establishing a link between education and cultivation could be the key that unlocks the door and allows for a sustainable future for museums.

Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to understand the ways in which the Avant-Garde program at LACMA is educating and engaging its young adult members. I also hoped to uncover what meanings and values its members attach to their experiences with the program. Moreover, I

wanted to know how LACMA is planting the seeds for future philanthropy by educating the

Avant-Garde members about the needs of the museum and developing committed relationships

with members through this program. The research questions that guided my study are as follows.

1.   What are young adults learning through their participation in this program?

2.   What meanings do young adults attach to their museum experiences?

3.   How can an educational program inspire future philanthropy and strengthen

relationships between the members of the program and the museum?

Theoretical Assumptions

The perspective that the researcher brings to a qualitative study is part of the context for

the findings. The researcher makes the observations, asks the interview questions, takes the field

notes, and interprets the responses. Therefore, developing appropriate self-awareness can be an

asset to both fieldwork and analysis. Often researchers elect to write about a topic that is deeply

personal, a topic that they care about. To ensure quality, the researcher must examine his or her

own preconceived notions, which influence what he or she attends to and how he or she makes

sense of it (Charmaz, 2006). Most likely, the researcher knows no other subject better than him-

or herself, but identifying what we take for granted in connection with our research can be

challenging.

Writing from a reflexive point of view can strengthen the research and address personal

bias that may arise. According to Patton (2002/2014), being reflexive involves self-

understanding and self-questioning. He wrote, "To be reflexive, then, is to undertake ongoing

examination of *what I know* and *how I know it*" (Patton, 2002, p. 64). I have given a lot of

consideration to this notion; especially since I am connected to the organization I plan to study,

have past experience working in other museums, serve as a member of the development team at LACMA, and fall within the age bracket that I am studying.

Research Design

To explore my research questions, I conducted a descriptive case study of the Avant-Garde program at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA). Case study is a methodological approach that involves the in-depth exploration of a specific bounded system, utilizing multiple forms of data collection to gather information on how the case operates or functions (Stake, 1995). Furthermore, a descriptive case study provides rich, thick description of the phenomenon under study, offers a complete report of the findings of the research, illustrates the complexities of the situation, and presents a wide variety of sources and viewpoints with the understanding that many factors contribute to understanding the phenomenon (Merriam, 1998/2009).

I chose descriptive case study for my research design because my desire was to construct a holistic view of the Avant-Garde program at LACMA that was context sensitive, meaning a thorough portrayal of the program and how it functions. My case study is in the vein of Merriam's (1998/2009) work. Her research on case study application in education from a qualitative researcher's perspective offers an accessible and practical understanding of the strategy behind case study research, and it most closely aligns with my research interests. According to Merriam (1998/2009), descriptive case studies are useful in presenting basic information about an area of education where little research has been conducted. She explained, "Innovative programs and practices are often the focus of descriptive case studies in education. Such studies often form a database for future comparison and theory building" (Merriam, 1998,

p. 38). The power and promise of a descriptive case study lies in its potential for mining abstract

interpretations of data and theory development. The main goal of the descriptive case study is to

assess a sample in detail and in depth, based on an articulation of a descriptive theory developed

through questioning (Merriam, 1998/2009). Through the thorough investigation of this specific

program at LACMA, I was able to form a clearer understanding of the essence of this type of

learning experience and translate what young adults need museums to offer to encourage them to

get involved and to build relationships between the museum and the individuals within this

specific demographic.

Selection of the Site

It can be argued that for some types of qualitative research, case selection is not a matter

for which principles can be laid down, since cases are simply given aspects of the research

questions. However, Stake (1994) suggested that if qualitative research requires that a case be

chosen, then nothing is more important than making a proper selection of the case. He

recommended when selecting a case, "The first criterion should be to maximize what we can

learn" (Stake, 1995, p. 4). Miles and Huberman (1994), who established six attributes to consider

when selecting a case, also suggested that the researcher consider what can be learned from the

case. They also recommended that the case selected be relevant to the research questions and that

the researcher considers the likelihood of being able to generate rich information on the

phenomena being studied. Since time and access is almost always limited, Stake (1995) and

Miles and Huberman (1994) both recommended that the researcher select a case that is easy to

get to and hospitable to the researcher's inquiry. If the plan for sampling is not feasible then it is

not the best selection. Miles and Huberman (1994) also advised that the researcher consider

whether or not the sample will be able to enhance the generalizability of the findings and produce believable descriptions, and they recommended the researcher to question whether or not the sampling strategy is ethical. Does the selection permit informed consent where this is required? What are the benefits and risks associated with the selection?

I took into consideration the recommendations from Stake (1995) and Miles and Huberman (1994) when selecting my case. First I considered my research questions and where I could maximize what I might learn. To understand how a museum program can educate and engage the Millennial Generation specifically, I needed to only look at programs for young adults that served a specific age bracket within the population. In other words, I narrowed my site selection by eliminating programs at museums that did not explicitly state a defined age range for participation in their literature. I also eliminated programs that had an age bracket that did not match 21 to 40. I did not think it would be beneficial to study a program that was more inclusive because it would be relatively difficult to determine which members fell within the Millennial Generation or to exclude certain members from participating based on their age. By requiring an established age bracket that matched a specific age range, I eliminated issues that could arise during the study and was able to focus my study to a greater degree.

Through preliminary research during my comprehensive exams, I discovered that many of the programs that currently exist for young adults focus more on providing a space for members to network than on providing educational opportunities, so the latter became my second criterion. Of the 25 programs that I reviewed, I identified only six museum programs for young adults that had significant educational components. For obvious reasons, I could not select a young adult program that did not offer educational opportunities. I would not be able to answer my research questions without the appropriate programming in place.

The third criterion that I established was accessibility. Unfortunately, it can be very challenging to gain insider access and study a program within an organization. The closer the researcher is to the site, the easier it becomes to learn about the program and collect data. I considered lack of accessibility an additional barrier when I was thinking about studying a New York museum's program. Not only would it be challenging to arrange for extended visits to this location, but also art museums are often not willing to share confidential information regarding fundraising practices and donor related information. Studying a program at a museum that I work for with would provide the most accessibility to participants as well as the program. It would also allow for me to closely monitor ethical considerations, because I could easily reach participants and follow up with them regarding consent, since I have full access to the database and an intimate connection to the organization and the team that manages the program.

The fourth criterion that I established to narrow my case selection was influence. I understand that this criterion could be considered subjective because it is challenging to determine which museums influence other museums. However, from seven years of experience in the field it is clear to me that certain museums are well respected for their innovative programming, academic scholarship, and advancement of resources. Some of the museums that I consider to be the major players in the museum world and that have established educational programs for young adults between the ages of 21 and 40 are the Museum of Modern Art, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, and the Whitney Museum of American Art. These organizations have deeply influenced how other museums across the country structure their programs, display exhibitions, and educate and engage their audiences. I wanted the program that I selected to study to be part of a museum that is considered an influential institution—a museum recognized

by its peers as being one of the great museums in the country—because the impact of my research would be far more significant and the description more believable.

The final criterion that I established when selecting my case was transferability. For my findings to be applicable to other museums, I realized that I needed to select a program outside of New York City, because it has the most robust art scene in the United States. Any museum program in New York has greater access to artists' studios, galleries, collections, art fairs, and other museums because of the proximity and number of artists and art activities in the area. A program for young adults based in New York could have an event every week and never repeat an experience. I considered how challenging it might be for a museum seeking a program for young adult engagement outside of New York to replicate that of a New York program. Therefore, I chose to study a program in a major metropolis with a healthy art scene but not the most robust scene of all, so my findings could be more readily transferable to other museums across the country.

The museum program that best met all of the established criteria was the Avant-Garde program at LACMA. The museum's website states that the,

> Avant-Garde is a membership group for young professionals, collectors, and art supporters interested in exploring LACMA and L.A.'s dynamic art world. Members enjoy access to behind-the-scenes and after-hours programs at LACMA and around the L.A. art community. Exclusive events throughout the year include curator-led tours, studio and collection visits, introductions to special projects at LACMA, curator-led outings to art venues throughout the city, social events at the museum, and more. An education as well as a social group, Avant-Garde offers incomparable insights into collecting and connoisseurship and social gatherings with like-minded peers. (Museum

Associates, 2016a)

Because of my new role within the museum as a major gift officer, I had unlimited access to the educational programs offered, all historical and current documentation about the program, its members, and the staff that manages the program. Because the art scene in Los Angeles still emerging and is comparable to developing art scenes in other places, the findings of this study could be applied elsewhere. I also consider LACMA to be one of the most influential museums in the country because of its dynamic and innovative programming, academic scholarship, and advancement of resources. The Avant-Garde program has a defined age requirement of 21 to 40 and a plethora of educational opportunities for its members. From my initial review of programs across the country during my comprehensive exams, I determined that the Avant-Garde program at LACMA was one of the largest and most active programs for young adults outside of New York. I learned then from Shelby Ulisse, who was an assistant in development at LACMA, that the program had around 150 members and hosted six to eight events annually (S. Ulisse, personal communication, September 11, 2014). In our correspondence, she stated,

> The goal of the group is to introduce members to everything happening at LACMA and in the greater Los Angeles art scene. Half of the events take place on-site at LACMA and half are off-site, where members can learn about local Los Angeles galleries, private art collections, designers, and more. This program offers a unique networking opportunity for young professionals, which is becoming more relevant in our current economy and offered an entry point for members interested in becoming patrons (S. Ulisse, personal communication, September 11, 2014).

Ulisse clearly stated in our communication the goal of the program, which also directly aligned with my research interest, which is "To move donors up and out of Avant-Garde into higher

Annual Giving levels and Major Giving" (S. Ulisse, personal communication, September 11, 2014). Like many of its New York contemporaries, LACMA considers the Avant-Garde membership program a philanthropic initiative. It uses unique, intimate educational opportunities to engage young adults as well as social activities such as cocktail parties. I see the Avant-Garde program as a leading example in the field and therefore a worthwhile program to study.

Participant Selection

Once the general problem has been identified and the site selected, the task becomes selecting the sample. The researcher needs to consider who to observe, when to observe, what to observe, and where to observe (Merriam, 1998/2009). I selected a purposeful samplings of the members based on criteria that I considered the most information rich and included a purposeful random sampling of members through observation and a survey for the purpose of triangulation. The two basic types of sampling are probability and nonprobability sampling. Probability sampling, of which simple random sampling is the most familiar example, allows the researcher to generalize the results of a study from a sample of a specific population (Merriam, 1998/2009). As generalization in the statistical sense is usually not the goal of qualitative studies, nonprobabilistic sampling is by and large the method of choice (Merriam, 1998/2009). According to Merriam (1998/2009), the most common form of nonprobabilistic sampling is called purposeful sampling, and it is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight. Therefore, the researcher must select a sample from which the most can be learned. Patton (1990) argued,

> The logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases for
> study in-depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal

about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research, thus the term purposeful

sampling (Patton, 1990, p. 169).

Some scholars differentiate among types of purposeful sampling strategies (Goetz &

LeCompte, 1984; Merriam, 1998/2009; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 1990/2014).

According to Merriam (1998/2009) a few of the more common types are typical, unique,

maximum variation, convenience, and snowball samplings. For my study, I used maximum

variation sampling to capture and describe central themes of the case that cut across different

criterion-based samples from within the case. Glaser and Strauss (1967) were the first to identify

maximum variation sampling in their text on grounded theory. They explained that a grounded

theory would be more conceptually dense and potentially more useful if the sampling was

collected from widely varying instances of the phenomenon. Patton (2002) further explained that

this kind of strategy for purposeful sampling "aims at capturing and describing the central

themes that cut across a great deal of variation" (p.234-235). He goes on to say that in a small

sample, a great deal of heterogeneity can be a problem because individual cases can be so

different, but through maximum variation this apparent weakness can be turned into a strength

considering the logic that "any common patterns that emerge from great variation are of

particular interests and value in capturing the core experiences and the central, shared

dimensions of a setting or phenomenon" (p.235). Through this type of sampling, I was able to

study a few individuals from each type of sample within the case, describe the uniqueness of

each sample, and look for common themes across the case. Any common patterns or themes that

emerged during analysis were of particular value and interest because my goal was to capture the

core experiences and central, shared dimensions of the Avant-Garde program at LACMA. By

using this sampling technique, I was able to understand how the Avant-Garde program is seen

and understood among different people associated with the program at different levels of engagement, in different settings, and at different times. I selected each sample based on specific criteria to maximize the diversity relevant to the research questions.

Purposeful Criterion-based Samplings

   The first three samples were selected for the purpose of formal interviews. The distinctive set of criteria I established for each group afforded me the ability to capture the most variation possible through interviews. Patton (2002/2014) explained that the logic of this type of sampling is to review and study all cases that meet predetermined criterion of importance and to reveal to the researcher the cases that are likely to be information rich. This type of sampling may also reveal major system weaknesses that become targets of opportunity for program or system improvements.

   The first purposeful, criterion-based sample was of staff members at LACMA. Each participant in the sample had to be a current member of the staff that engages in the planning and management of the Avant-Garde program. They also had to be familiar with the program's history and its members. Only two of the eight staff members on the Annual Giving team met this established criterion. I considered this sample critical to the case, because without it I would not be able to describe and understand the structure of the program, its history, or the learning objectives set by the museum. According to official internal documentation regarding the role of the staff, they are responsible for executing group programs, cultivating and stewarding group members, and growing the group from year to year. Further, they are expected to work collaboratively as a team with membership and development officers to encourage and enable group members to support the museum at the highest level possible. Their responsibilities

include the following:

- Organizing all aspects of the programs for the group

- Soliciting new members and developing relationships with current members

- Actively working to grow the group through strong programming and outreach activities

- Managing membership dues and renewals

- Compiling and tracking group budgets, monitoring expenses and revenues

- Assisting with coordination of all group activities and records, including RSVPs for events and database management for donors

- Managing all messaging and communication with members, including announcements and invitations

- Working collaboratively to facilitate increasing levels of engagement and support

(LACMA, internal document, July 2014)

The second purposeful, criterion-based sample I selected included participants who were current members of the Avant-Garde program that served in the role of co-chair for the group. The participants from this sampling were also critical to my case because they served in leadership roles and were actively involved in planning the program and advocating for it. There are only two co-chairs for the group a term, and both agreed to participate in this study. The document that lays out staff and volunteer co-chair guidelines, roles, and responsibilities for the Avant-Garde stated that the co-chair is the group's "primary ambassador" helping to recruit and retain members and grow the group (LACMA, July 2014). During the co-chair's tenure, he or she acts as an important liaison between group members and curatorial and development staff

who administer the program. The co-chair is invited and appointed by the LACMA development staff after a thoughtful selection process coordinated between development staff and current Avant-Garde co-chairs (LACMA, July 2014). The document also stated,

> Individuals who have shown a particular inclination towards volunteer leadership, have supported the group through dues and attendance as well as other in-kind contributions (such as hosting an event for the group), and consistently and actively brought new members into the group will be given special consideration. (LACMA, internal document, July 2014)

The responsibilities of the co-chair are clearly defined as follows:

- Actively soliciting new members, and encouraging current members to renew;

- Welcoming new members;

- Attending a majority of the group's annual events, and ensuring at least one chair is present at each event;

- Helping current members understand other ways to remain involved at LACMA after participating in Avant-Garde;

- Encouraging others to solicit new members;

- Understanding and acting in accordance with the museum's high standards of professionalism;

- Supporting collection and program mandates as outlined by museum staff;

- Being an informed voice capable of fostering, building, and sustaining relationships between the group, LACMA, and the public;

- Working collaboratively in open communication with members, curators, and development staff at LACMA;

- Offering constructive feedback aimed at making programmatic improvements that might lead to greater growth potential for the group.

The third sample I selected for my case was chosen differently, though the participants did meet established criteria like in the other samples. This sampling included members of the Avant-Garde who currently serve as ambassadors for the program. There are eight ambassadors, each of whom serves a one-year term. Their role is more loosely defined than that of the co-chairs. LACMA internal documentation stated that the role of an ambassador is to offer feedback and suggestions for improving the group and growing the membership, recruiting new members, assisting with welcoming new members, and facilitating relationships between members (LACMA, internal document, n.d.).

In addition to established criterion, this sample was selected through snowball sampling, which occurs when the researcher asks a key informant who knows a lot about the case to connect the researcher to other individuals whom the informant thinks would be information-rich participants (Merriam, 1998/2009; Patton, 2002/2014). The staff member who ran the ambassador meetings and appeared to be the closest to the group became my key informant. On my behalf, she reached out to the ambassadors whom she thought would be the most knowledgeable about the program and willing to participate in the study. After gauging their interest, she passed along the contact information of the individuals who were willing to participate. I only interviewed two participants for this sample because I thought it would be most beneficial to have equally sized samples for my three determined categories. Lincoln and Guba (1985) write,

> In purposeful sampling the size of the sample is determined by information considerations. If the purpose is to maximize information, the sampling is terminated

when no new information is forthcoming from new sampled units; thus redundancy is the

primary criterion. (p. 202)

After interviewing two ambassadors, I considered this portion of my study to be at the point of

saturation; therefore, I did not make any further selections.

Purposeful Random Sampling

To add credibility to my research, I used purposeful random sampling to select participants

for the observation I conducted of three Avant-Garde programs and for the online qualitative

survey that was distributed after each observation. A purposeful random sampling occurs when

the researcher collects information from participants within the case that self-select to participate

at random (Patton, 2002/2014). In my case, these participants all met certain established criteria.

They were all active members of the Avant-Garde group who chose to attend one of the three

programs that I observed. All of the members who attended the programs that I observed were

asked to complete the online survey. Twenty-two of the 82 members who received the survey

responded to it. The questions in the survey were the same for every participant. This purposeful

random sampling of members was not for generalizations but to provide a sample of the larger

group of Avant-Garde members. According to Patton (2002), "the purpose of a small random

sample is credibility, representativeness" (p.241), and it reduces suspicion about why certain

cases were selected for study. However, small random samples do not permit statistical

generalization and cannot stand on their own. Sampling in three different ways strengthened the

data collected about the Avant-Garde program and offered a variety of points of view associated

with the case.

Collecting and Generating Data

Qualitative data consist of direct quotations from people about their experiences, opinions, knowledge, and feelings and can be obtained through interviews; "detailed descriptions of people's activities, behaviors, actions" recorded in observations; and "excerpts, quotations, or entire passages" extracted from various types of documents (Patton, 1990, p. 10). Therefore, data collection is about asking, watching, and reviewing (Merriam, 1998/2009). Interviews are the most common form of data collection in qualitative studies in education, according to Merriam. In case study research, observations are also an important tool for collecting data but considered highly subjective. I outline the procedures that I followed to collect data and the methods that I used in the following section.

Documentation

Documents can be understood as an umbrella term in qualitative research to refer to a wide range of written, visual, and physical material relevant to the study at hand (Merriam, 1998/2009). This term includes any communication that relates to the case. According to Merriam, interviews and observations are two data collection methods designed to gather data that specifically addresses the research questions, but documents are usually produced for reasons other than the research at hand and can support the building of the case itself. She explained, "Documents are, in fact, a ready-made source of data easily accessible to the imaginative and resourceful investigator" (p. 112). They form a paper trail when your study is at the program level and can reveal things about the program such as "things that have taken place before the evaluation began" and "things that cannot be observed" (Merriam, 1998, p. 114). The documents gathered should include but are not limited to "all routine records and budget records,

organizational rules, regulations, memoranda, charts, and any other official or unofficial

documents generated by or for the program that cannot be observed" (Patton, 1990, p. 233).

These types of resources not only provide valuable information that assist the researcher in

building the case, but they can also stimulate thinking about the important questions that need to

be answered through the interviews and observations.

The three major types of documents that are available to the researcher for analysis

include personal documents, public records, and physical material. As LACMA is a public

institution, most of the documentation that I collected could be considered public, although it is

not readily available to individuals outside of the museum. All of the documentation about the

Avant-Garde is located on the museum's shared network drive, which I could access easily once

I became an employee. I used the documents that I found to build and contextualize the case. I

collected documentation before moving forward with interviews, observations, or surveys. The

types of documents that I collected included but are not limited to event calendars, renewal

letters, budgets, mission statements for the program and the voluntary leadership positions, a

former survey, administrative documents, and invitations. These documents helped me

understand the program and its views of the members before I began engaging with participants.

Interviews

Interviewing is a necessary part of qualitative inquiry when the researcher is interested in

finding out how people interpret the world around them. Patton (1990) explained,

We interview people to find out from them those things we cannot directly observe. . . .

We cannot observe feelings, thoughts, and intentions. We cannot observe how people

have organized the world and the meanings they attach to what goes on in the world. We

have to ask people questions about things. (p. 196)

For my study, I chose to conduct six recorded, formal interviews that were approximately 45

minutes each. I interviewed each participant once, and most of the interviews were conducted in

my office at LACMA. As stated in the participant selection section, I interviewed two staff

members, two Avant-Garde co-chairs and two Avant-Garde ambassadors. I created a list of

formal interview questions in the form of an interview guide (see Appendix C and F). The staff

interview guides were slightly different in wording from the member participant interview

guides. I provided each participant with a copy of the questions via email before we met and then

used the interview questions provided as a guide during the formal interviews. I wanted the

participants to speak freely and to feel comfortable commenting and asking questions when

necessary, so I allowed for flexibility instead of strictly following the script. However, I did ask

every question on the guide to each participant, but sometimes the order of the questions shifted

since the interviews were conversational. On occasion I also asked additional questions off script

for clarification as well. I recorded each interview using my iPhone and transferred the files to

my personal computer following the interviews. Each participant signed a consent form (see

Appendix A and D) before interviewing and received a letter from me explaining the process

prior to our meeting (see Appendix B and E).

These six qualitative, formal interviews were the primary source of data in this study. I

chose this type of data generation because the qualitative interview offered a portal of discovery

into how the Avant-Garde program was structured, what values and meanings deeply invested

participants associated with their experiences, and whether or not philanthropic giving was an

acknowledged part of the program in the view of staff and the voluntary leaders. Interviewing

even a small sample of individuals revealed similarities and differences in meanings held by the

participants. The interview transcripts revealed the experiences, opinions, feelings, and

knowledge shared by the members and the staff who administer this group.

Observations

Like interviews, observations are a primary source of data in qualitative research and can

be distinguished from interviews in two ways: observations take place in the natural field setting

instead of a designated location, and the data from an observation represents a firsthand

encounter with the phenomenon of interest rather than the secondhand account of the world

obtained in an interview (Merriam, 1998/2009). When combined with document analysis and

interviewing, observation allows for a holistic interpretation of the phenomenon being

investigated. The relationship between the observer and observed can vary depending on the

level of engagement with participants and whether or not the researcher conceals his or her

identity. I chose to take the stance of observer as participant during my study, which means I did

not conceal my identity. The members knew that I was gathering information and received a

consent letter with the option to opt out of the study prior to each observation (see Appendix G).

My participation in the group was secondary to my role as information gatherer. I took field

notes during the observation as well as photographs on my iPhone.

I observed three educational programs offered by the Avant-Garde. The first program

was a curator-led walkthrough of an exhibition titled *Robert Mapplethorpe: The Perfect Medium.*

It was held on LACMA's campus in the Broad Contemporary Art Building and lasted a total of

34 minutes. Thirty-nine Avant-Garde members attended this program. The second observation I

conducted was at the artist Ry Rocklen's studio in Los Angeles. This observation lasted 60

minutes and 39 members attended. He presented on his work with one of the curators from the contemporary art department and showed the group his creative process. The final observation I conducted took place in downtown Los Angeles at four art galleries. This observation lasted a total of two hours, and 54 members attended the program. This type of program is called a gallery tour. It was led by one of LACMA's curators of prints and drawings.

In the field notes, I began to form my own perceptions of the program and a comprehensive view of the setting. I was able to see how the members of the group interacted with each other and with the curators in three different types of educational settings. I was able to capture a description of each setting, including the people and the activities that took place. I also gathered direct quotations from the curators and members of the group. When I expanded my field notes, I included observer comments. Through my observations, I was able to gain a sense of whether or not the group was engaged in dialog or listening to the presentation. The number of attendees, the length of time the members stayed, and their physical and mental involvement also informed my case.

Surveys

The final tool that I used to collect data for my study was a qualitative survey (see Appendix I). Surveys are typically used in quantitative studies that largely aim at describing numerical distributions of variables in the population. However, there is also a qualitative type of survey that investigates variation in population (Jensen, 2010, p. 2). Jensen (2010) explains, "The qualitative type of survey does not aim at establishing frequencies, means or other parameters but at determining the *diversity* of some topic of interest within a given population. This type of survey does not count the number of people with the same characteristic (value of variable) but it

establishes the meaningful variation (relevant dimensions and values) within that population"
(p.2). Fink (2003) recommended using qualitative survey analysis for the exploration of
meanings and experiences, which directly aligns with my research interest.

The survey in this study was distributed after each observation. The staff member in
charge of the program sent a link via email to the members who attended, requesting that they
complete an anonymous survey about their experience. The survey asked the same questions
each time, with a total of 13 questions formatted in various ways including multiple-choice, fill-
in-the-blank, and ranking questions. It was sent to 82 Avant-Garde members, and 22 responded. I
generated the survey through Survey Monkey and piloted it with a staff member at LACMA. The
results of the survey became supporting documentary material for my observations and
interview-based findings of the study.

Through interviewing a varied assortment of participants and staff, observing three
programs, surveying the participants after each observation, and reviewing documents associated
with the Avant-Garde program, I was able to accomplish triangulation, which gives credence to
the interpretation of my data and gains assertion with regard to the commonalities that are
revealed. Triangulation strengthens the reliability as well as internal validity of the case and
allows for the findings to be more comprehensive, especially if the researcher is using multiple
methods of data collection (Merriam, 1998/2009). Triangulation occurred throughout the study
as I moved between methods of inquiry.

Data Analysis Methods

The process of making sense out of data is called data analysis, which involves
consolidating, reducing, and interpreting what participants have said and what the researcher has

seen and read. It is the process of making meaning. Merriam (1998/2009) described data analysis as highly intuitive; the learning is in the doing. She further explained that data analysis is a complex process involving back-and-forth movement between description and interpretation, between abstract concepts and bits of data, between deductive and inductive reasoning. The understandings discovered through this process become the findings, which can be in the form of themes, categories, or descriptive accounts that cut across the data or explain the data.

At its most basic level, data analysis provides a descriptive account, conveying the meaning the researcher has derived from studying the phenomenon. The level of analysis beyond basic description involves constructing categories or themes to capture a recurring pattern that cuts across the case and become apparent through the comparison of different units of data. These units are then sorted into groupings based on their commonalities. The categories should describe yet also interpret the data and should reflect the purpose of the research and answer the research questions. The third and final level of analysis involves making inferences or generating theory. Merriam (1998) explained, "Thinking about the data—*theorizing*—is a step toward developing a theory that explains some aspect of educational practice and allows a researcher to draw inferences about future activity" (p. 188).

The levels of data analysis inherent in case study include construction of categories or themes, naming the categories and sub-categories, and developing systems for placing the data into categories. The process of data analysis leads to thinking and theorizing about the data that provides the richly interpretive narrative and becomes the heart of the case. Merriam (1998/2009) advised that when the researcher begins the more intensive phase of data analysis in case study, he or she should bring together all of the raw data and organize it, so it becomes a case record that is easily retrievable.

I used an inductive approach to allow for research findings to emerge from the frequent, dominant, or significant themes about the education and engagement of young adults inherent in my raw data. My research questions were at the forefront of my thinking as I engaged with my data. Through inductive analysis, I was able to condense it into a summary format, discover the themes that emerged from comparing the raw data, and then answer my research questions. According to Patton (2002), inductive analysis begins with specific observations and builds towards general patterns: "Categories or dimensions of analysis emerge from open-ended observations as the inquirer comes to understand patterns that exist in the phenomenon being investigated" (pp. 55–56). The researcher does not presume what the patterns will be but allows for the patterns to materialize from the data. I found the inductive approach more straightforward than some of the other traditional approaches, and it allowed for me to make discoveries, which is in line with my Deweyan pragmatist paradigm.

As I conducted a case study, conveying an understanding of the case was the principal consideration in analyzing my data. Attention to data management was also very important because I had so many sources of raw data. I began by gathering all of my raw data and building a case report so that my data was easily accessible. Then I analyzed the data using the coding method for the six interviews I conducted. Coding means categorizing segments of data with a short name that simultaneously summarizes and accounts for each piece of data. According to Charmaz (2006), "Your codes show how you select, separate, and sort data to begin an analytic accounting of them" (p. 43). I used color coding first to categorize my data. Each color represented a different research question; I then added one additional color to highlight information that was important but did not necessarily pertain to a particular question. After highlighting the transcripts, I cut them apart and separated the color-coded segments of raw data

into piles. Then I went through the piles and added short name codes to distinguish among the segments that were color-coded the same. The color codes addressed initial categories related to the questions, and the short name codes addressed more focused categories. Next, I reviewed the materials and clustered the themes into assertions (categorical statements drawn from the data). According to Stake (1995), "assertions are a form of generalization that are drawn from understandings" (p. 9). The assertions or emerging themes became the headings for subsequent chapters of analysis.

Once I sorted through the interviews, I began reviewing my observations, which were designed to answer only the first research question regarding what young adults were learning and the structure of the program. The observations also helped me describe the case. The other research questions could not be answered through observation because I did not interact with any participants during this portion of my research. I also used the documents collected in building the description of the case and in answering the first question. I used short name coding for my observations, but color coding was not necessary.

Finally, I began analyzing the qualitative surveys, which were designed with all three research questions in mind. The database I used sorted the answers to each question, so I could view all of the answers to the same question at one time. It also generated graphs and provided a summary of the findings. Through cross-examining and coding all of the different units within the case, I was able to develop themes. Once I had generated these themes, I answered my research questions and considered recommendations to improve the program.

Evaluating Data Quality and Establishing Trustworthiness

Validity and reliability are concerns that can be approached through careful attention to a study's conceptualization, the way in which the data was collected, analyzed, and interpreted, and the way in which the findings are presented (Merriam, 1998/2009). Both external and internal validity must be considered when evaluating the quality of the data. To enhance the internal validity of this study, I triangulated my data sources using a survey, interviews, document analysis, and observations as my data-collection methods. I also continuously checked my data with one of the staff members who manages the Avant-Garde program and who participated in the study. I observed the program three times throughout the course of my study and addressed my bias at the outset even to the extent of informing participants of my role within the museum. I did not involve all participants in all phases of my research, but the staff members who participated were heavily involved throughout my study. To enhance external validity, I provided a thick, rich description of the case. I observed a variety of Avant-Garde programs to maximize the diversity of my samples and used purposeful criterion-based, snowball and random sampling to select participants.

Reliability is the extent to which there is consistency in the findings. According to Merriam, reliability is enhanced by the researcher explaining the assumptions and theory underlying in the study, by triangulating data, and by leaving an "audit trail" that describes in detail how the study was conducted and how the findings were derived from the data (p. 218). To address reliability, I triangulated my data and left a paper trail describing how I conducted my study and derived my findings.

I established trustworthiness for this study through piloting my data-collection instruments, which included formal interviews, a survey, and observations. The purpose of

piloting is to test the adequacy of the research instruments, to assess whether the research protocol is realistic and workable, to identify logistical problems that might occur using proposed methods, and to train the researcher in as many elements of the research process as possible (Chenail, 2011). It is important to make sure that the questions that the researcher intends to ask are understood and do not cause any kind of discomfort for the participant. It is also beneficial to find out how long it takes to complete the interview or survey in real time, as the researcher formally states the amount of time a participant will be expected to contribute in the consent forms. Piloting an observation helps the researcher work through her perspective as an observer and allows her to confirm that the observation protocol includes all of the factors that need to be incorporated into her thought process while observing. The timing is not as important for this instrument if the researcher does not plan to engage with others while observing (Chenail, 2011).

To pilot my formal interviews, I chose two members of the development staff at LACMA who are familiar with the Avant-Garde program and its members and fall within the demographic I intend to study (young adults between the ages of 21 and 40 who are interested in art). These individuals also manage patron programs at the museum and help with the Avant-Garde events when needed. Their understanding of the program was, at the time, more in-depth than my own, as I chose not to involve myself with the program until I began the study to protect me from bias. I piloted the staff interview guide and the member interview guide, and after each pilot test I refined the questions slightly to address inconsistencies and to clarify certain aspects of my inquiry. I realized through testing the interview guides that I needed to consider my influence on the interviewee very carefully when administering this part of the study. Before piloting, I had not considered the possibility of member participants feeling pressured to answer a certain way when asked about financial contributions or their desire to give because of my role

within the museum as a Major Gift Officer. I also had not considered that they might be reluctant to share their negative feelings about the Avant-Garde program because of my apparent collegial relationship with the staff that manages it. I was reminded of my subjectivity through piloting the interviews and that I must remember to present myself as impartially as possible to capture the most honest and forthright answers from the participants. By softening the language of a few of the questions about financial contributions and by identifying first and foremost as a doctoral student, I think I was able to address these concerns more fully during my actual study.

Through piloting an observation of a curator-led walkthrough of an exhibition, I was able to reconsider how I was looking at and thinking about observing an educational program. As the focus of my study is not solely on the educational content of the program, but also on the engagement of its participants, I was able to test to what extent I wanted to participate in the observation during the pilot observation. I chose to be a non-participating observer when testing the instrument, which meant that I had no interactions with the attendees. I observed from a far corner of the room behind the attendees. I concluded from this exercise that mingling with the group and being close to the speaker during the presentation could only advance my understanding of what was being taught and how others within the group are engaging with the material. I had only conducted a few observations during my coursework as a graduate student prior to testing this instrument, so it was beneficial for me as a researcher to practice observation before beginning my study.

My greatest concern with the survey was that I needed to confirm that the questions were adequate and easy to understand. I was not familiar with Survey Monkey prior to building the survey for this study, so I needed to test it out to see if there were any logistical problems. As with the interview pilots, I thought it would be most advantageous to ask a staff member who

knew about the program, fell within the age demographic, and was familiar with the Avant-Garde members to take the survey. Because I intentionally had not participated in Avant-Garde programs in advance of the study to protect against bias, I thought that a staff member with considerable knowledge about the program and its members would be the best participant to assist me with refining the questions. I wanted the survey to be easy for participants to answer in a short amount of time, yet thorough enough to extract the data that I needed to answer my research questions. The staff member who took the survey proposed changes that were minimal (for example, word choice), and it was helpful to know that the tool worked and that the questions were not too cumbersome.

In addition to piloting the data-collection instruments, I also asked the Vice President for Development and the Senior Vice President for Development and Audience Strategy at LACMA to review the instruments as well as the consent forms and my research protocol. It was very important to have their approval before beginning my research. They offered very few comments regarding the plans for the study, and both officially approved it before I began my research.

Limitations and Advantages of the Study

Case study permits inquiry into issues in great depth with careful attention to detail, context, and nuance; however, it has limitations, like any other method of inquiry. Even though case study provides a thick, rich description and analysis of a phenomenon, it may include too much information for others to read and use it. Guba and Lincoln (1981) note additional limitations. For example, the oversimplifying or exaggerating of a situation may lead the reader to erroneous conclusions about the actual state of affairs. Furthermore, readers may think of the case study as the whole when, in fact, it is a "slice of life" (p. 377). Case studies are limited by

the integrity and sensitivity of the investigator as he or she is the primary instrument of data collection and analysis. Though the researcher's closeness to the case can be seen as an advantage, it can also be a disadvantage if proper training is not available to the researcher, who is then left to rely on his or her instincts and abilities. Further limitations involve validity and reliability, which I addressed in the previous section.

Building a case study using qualitative methods led to a deeper understanding of the essence of educational programming for young adults, the meanings that young adults attach to their experiences, and what is required to engage this specific subset of the population. My intention was to build a strong case, which could further strengthen the program at LACMA and provide findings that may assist other museums in engaging, educating and cultivating this subset of the population. If I had selected to use quantitative research methods, the findings would be based on attendance records and repeat visitors instead of on the personal views of staff, voluntary leadership, and the members. The voices of the participants would not have been heard, and I would not have been able to answer my research questions. Another advantage of using qualitative inquiry is the fact that it provides an opportunity for the researcher to approach the subject without removing herself or her personal background from the study. Considering my closeness to the topic and the demographic, I would not be able to conduct this study if I could not be fully immersed in it.

I consider the greatest disadvantage of my study its scope. The review of one museum program cannot be generalized to explain what is happening at museums across the nation. I would like to offer a statistical analysis of what is being done to engage young adults in museums across the nation, but it would take an agency like the American Alliance of Museums

to conduct a study of such scale. I will only be able to explain my findings, which could be very specific to this particular museum and to Los Angeles.

Benefits and Risks of Participation

The benefits of this study are numerous, and I did not see any associated risk for participants. For the museum, the benefit is a deeper understanding of the program and the audience that it serves. For the participants, the benefits include potentially new programming that meets their needs and interests and an opportunity to learn about the organization. For other museums interested in establishing a program for young adults, this in-depth analysis of the Avant-Garde program can provide a template for programming. To my knowledge, this study is the first of its kind to look deeply into a museum's educational practice of this specific type of non-traditional programming and to collect the perspective of participants and related professionals to understand what young adults value in terms of knowledge gained through educational programs and what meanings they attach to these experiences. I hoped to also discover through this study whether education and involvement with a program can translate into philanthropic interests and a sense of responsibility and whether an educational program can truly assist in the development of meaningful relationships between museums and the Millennial Generation.

As the need for private funding grows at museums across the nation, institutions will be looking for ways to engage a new generation of patrons. With the lack of current young adult participation and an aging audience, the issue of nurturing new relationships to sustain institutions such as museums will move from a concern to a demand. Through my scholarship, I

hope to contribute to the applied understanding of how to educate and engage this very important demographic and build relationships for the future.

Reflection is an essential part of personal and professional growth. It is also a fundamental quality of education. Participation in this project may add to the personal and professional development of participants by allowing them to reflect on their relationship with the museum and on their personal value of that relationship. Some participants were asked to reflect on past museum experiences, which may be personally enriching for them.

Reflection on a museum program may have a strong impact on the direction of the program when shared. Even the educational goals and outcomes of the program may change as a result. Participant reflection with regard to the stakeholders interviewed may encourage philanthropy or spur new program ideas. Organizations like the American Alliance of Museums ask institutions to reflect on and access their programming time and time again. This cycle of processing allows institutions to service their communities better. A benefit associated with participation in this study is the fact that participants will be presented with an opportunity to contribute to the much-needed research on the best methods for educating and engaging young adults in a museum setting (an important outcome for young adults and museum professionals).

Risks associated with participation in this study were minimal. Interviewees were asked to share useful information, which may benefit their museum and other museums outside of their purview. Data was not labeled with any individual identifiable information. The results of participation in this project are confidential and will not be released unless required by law. Categorizing participants by their affiliation instead of their name ensures that they cannot be identified and provides more clarity in the interpretation of the data than pseudonyms would. I digitally recorded the interviews and observations and restricted them to my doctoral committee

and myself. The digital files will be stored on my personal home computer or an external drive and will be destroyed five years after the completion of my study.

Subjectivity Statement

I have spent the past seven years working as a fundraising professional for museums. My primary responsibility in this role is to build relationships with individuals to secure financial contributions in support of the museum for the current year and the future. I am charged with advancing the museum's mission and fundraising plan through identifying potential donors, cultivating relationships, soliciting for gifts, and stewarding donors once a gift is promised. I am constantly thinking about strengthening ties between donors and the museum. My success as a fundraiser is dependent upon my ability to connect with individuals and to educate them about the needs of the museum.

My interest in building a culture of philanthropy through the education and engagement of young adults is directly related to my career objectives. As a fundraiser, I am always thinking about the future of the organization and moving donors through the cycle of giving. I must not only consider growing the donor pool but also replacing funding when donors leave the organization. Planting the seeds for future funding by building relationships with younger generations is an essential part of my development strategy to ensure the present and future financial stability of the organization that I work for. My motivation for this study is directly connected to my career objectives. I cannot separate my professional relationship from my research. They are intimately connected.

In October of 2015, I was hired by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art to serve on the development team as a major gift officer. My position within the organization afforded me

insider access, which allowed for a more rigorous and thorough depiction of the Avant-Garde program at LACMA. Even though I was a new staff member when I began my research, I knew the development team administering the program very well, which was unavoidable because we work closely. However, I chose not to attend any of the Avant-Garde programs or meet any of the members until I began the research to avoid any bias. My lack of involvement allowed me to begin thinking about the program solely from the understandings of the participants without unintentionally inserting my own experiences and biases into their assertions and viewpoints.

In addition to my closeness to the museum and the obvious link between my career objectives and this study, I also must consider my subjectivity as a young adult. I acknowledge that my personal thoughts and feelings as part of this age demographic may have influenced my perception of the program. However, I think overall my closeness in age to the participants allowed for a more intimate depiction of the case, because I could relate to them on a personal level.

I am deeply invested in LACMA as an employee, fundraiser, and community member. I fully acknowledge that my career objectives motivated my research, and my role within the museum and my own experience as a young adult illuminated my inquiry. I am passionate about this topic and was keen to know the impacts of the Avant-Garde program, so I could better position it to serve its purpose, which is to build relationships with the next generation of patrons. I am also motivated by my desire to share my findings with other museums and help structure programs across the country to engage the Millennial Generation. Although I could not remove my personal bias from my research completely, I can help my readers know me better and recognize my presence for themselves by explaining my subjectivities.

CHAPTER 4

THE AVANT-GARDE

In this chapter I establish the case through a description of the Avant-Garde program. I collected information about the members, the structure of the program, its history and the educational opportunities provided through documentation, interviews, observations and a survey. I chose to introduce the case through a field note from one of the observations I conducted to give the reader the most precise and rich depiction of the program. This observation occurred at an artist's studio. The artist featured was Ry Rocklen who is a Los Angeles native born in 1978. Rocklen attended the California Institute of the Arts, and after two years of study, transferred to the University of California, Los Angeles, where he completed his bachelor's degree in fine arts in 2001. In 2004, he was admitted to the University of Southern California's Master of Fine Arts program, from which he graduated in 2006. Rocklen is best known for his sculptures made of cast-off objects that he collects from streets, dumps, and thrift stores and adapts and assembles to create readymade sculptures. His sculptures reflect a reverence for the Duchampian sculptural tradition and, at the same time, a rebellion against art historical constraints (Whitney Museum of American Art [Whitney Museum], 2008). They are charged with an "eccentric delicacy" (para. 1). "Rocklen strategically capitalizes on the viewer's mental and emotional associations, as Robert Rauschenberg did for his Combines, by selecting objects as much for their cultural connotations as their form" (Whitney Museum, 2008, para. 1) The Whitney Museum of American Art's website describes his work as follows:

At times employing a wry sense of humor to balance his stringent editing techniques,

Rocklen treats manufactured items, like toys, food packaging, furniture remnants, and

construction materials, with a spontaneity he traces back to his youth and the

development of the creative process through pretend play. (Whitney Museum, 2008,

para.1)

Figure 2. Second to None by Ry Rocklen, 2011

In the Studio with Ry Rocklen

It is 10:00 AM on a Saturday morning, and I am fighting traffic to head east to not be late for the Avant-Garde program at Ry Rocklen's studio. I park on a desolate street outside of several rundown warehouses with chain-link fences surrounding them. I see a few nice cars parked, but no one is around. I begin to question if I am at the right place. Being on a street in Los Angeles during the daytime with no people around can be startling because the city is always bustling. I am not familiar with the neighborhood, but I feel certain that I have the right address. I check the invitation again and the calendar reminder on my phone. This has to be the place. It's a gorgeous sunny morning in April. It is brisk enough for a sweater and jeans. The sun is shining bright as always.

I climb out of my black Mini Cooper and walk around the corner, checking all of the building numbers as I go. I decide to pull up the address again on Google Maps just to make sure that I am heading in the right direction. As I turn the corner, I see an opening in the chain-link fence surrounding the building. I enter through a large metal gate with barbed wire over the top. Then I see the smiling face of one of the LACMA staff members who is waiting to greet guests at the entrance. She and another colleague show me into the space. It's dark and dingy, without much light overhead. It's an old warehouse building that has been converted into artists' studios. The floors are concrete, and the walls are made of slats of beat-up wood painted white. Everything is very dusty. I walk in through the door to the left, and a few Avant-Garde members, Ry Rocklen, and Rita Gonzalez, Curator and Acting Head of Contemporary Art at LACMA, greet me.

The space is very small. Rita is standing in the front with Ry beside his vintage record player and vinyl collection. It's set up like a living room, with Ry's sculptural furniture made of

trophy parts all around. There is a sofa, a chair, and a record player stand made of trophies. He

has set up a nice table of refreshments for the group, including almonds, dates, strawberries, and

sparkling water, all in Trader Joe's packaging. The room is white with concrete floors painted

gray. A rug with geometric patterns in gray, blue, and faded pink covers most of the floor. The

furniture is heavy, as it is made of trophy parts. The couch cushions are bronze leather with

silver piping, and the small pillows on the back of the couch are silver with bronze piping around

the edges. The chair does not have a cushion. You sit on a stone slab like what you find at the

base of a trophy but its very large. I decide to sit in the chair as there are only a few seats. I need

to make sure that I am positioned to write and observe closely. It's cold and hard to the touch.

The armrests are made of marble and very low. The chair itself is a rather tall seat and is too

wide. The back is too short to lean back in it. It is very uncomfortable but an interesting piece of

art.

Ry's work is on the walls surrounding us, including a collection of his t-shirts that he cast

in ceramic, transforming them into works of art. There is also a large sculpture that looks like a

bent ladder in the corner of the room. Before the program begins, I explain to Rita that I am

observing, and she encourages me to share my plan with Ry. I shake his hand, introduce myself,

and explain my project. He is tickled by the fact that I am observing him. Ry has wild, curly,

blondish-brown hair and a slightly unkempt beard. He is dressed in a button-down shirt and

khaki pants but appears slightly disheveled. He is warm and friendly with a very casual

disposition.

At 11:11 AM Rita Gonzalez welcomes everyone and introduces Ry Rocklen to the group.

The members gather around him. Ry and Rita begin to talk with each other about the space. This

has been Ry's studio since 2007. Rita talks about his career as an artist. He has had shows in

New York and internationally. She says that he is "approaching sculpture through engagement with found objects." Members of the group are still coming in the door. Most of the members are standing because there is minimal seating. The group is very focused on Rita and Ry. No one has his or her cell phone out at the moment. Rita explains that Ry is planning for an exhibition right now, so the group is receiving a "sneak preview in terms of his thought process." Ry begins talking to the group, and Rita steps back into the corner. He considers his work "Neo Dada California Funk," he explains. More members slowly trickle into the room. One member brings a small black dog with a collar that jingles. Ry continues to talk about his work, and he asks the group to "pay attention to the labor that goes into his work." He mentions "becoming familiar with trophy parts," and the group laughs. He says, "You can make anything out of trophy parts." He explains that he began making furniture for a gallery, and it became a huge production. By 11:19 AM members are still trickling in, and Ry thanks them for coming as they enter.

Everyone is casually dressed. Some people are even wearing what appears to be workout clothing. The lady with the black dog is wearing slouchy green pants, and the dog is leashed. He continues to jingle his collar while Ry is sharing with the group. Ry invites everyone to turn around and look at the wall behind the sofa. On this wall are examples of items from his wardrobe cast in porcelain. He created these works in 2014, so they are rather new. He tells the group that he almost always works with found objects. "We have an instinctual relationship with found objects," says Ry. "I became a found object, so I decided to treat it as such and cast my whole wardrobe." He uses slips and molds to create these objects. "There are no hands in these works. The work on the wall is like a self-portrait that is flattened on the wall . . . ," but it is

sculpture, too. Ry shares with us that he is planning to extend the wardrobe series for his upcoming exhibition. Each work literally looks like a folded up shirt on the wall. You can even see the wrinkles. They appear to be rather fragile and light. One of the three shirts is gray with red stripes, one is a pale pink t-shirt with a white design, and the last is a yellow collared shirt with thin blue and red stripes.

The room is tight because a lot of people are standing in the space. Someone is coughing in the background. Everyone is listening attentively to Ry. The dog's collar is still jingling on occasion as he scratches himself. Another couple enters the room, but everyone remains very still. There are 39 members present now. Ry is very animated as he talks to the group about his work. He uses hand gestures and has a lot of facial expression. He appears to be enjoying the group. He asks us to turn to the other wall, where there is a vase made of what appears to be Styrofoam. He explains the vase and his method. He uses decals and glazes them onto the flat surface. He says that a woman in Georgia makes the decals for him. Everyone is smiling and laughing as he explains his process.

A few of the members appear to be on their phones now. I notice a lot more fidgeting. A girl on the couch beside me is on her phone. Someone begins to cough again. Ry continues to talk about his work without noticing that some people are distracted. Rita interjects again to discuss the title of the work. They turn to face each other. He nods and agrees verbally with what she is saying. Many people are smiling as he shares with the group his reverence for art. He mentions the self-centered nature of our shared social media experience and its irreverence. I see more people fidgeting, and I can hear one person digging through her purse. Rita talks about the ingenuity of Ry's work in terms of efficiency. "He does a lot with little," she says to the

group. I begin to wonder if they are noticing that the group is less engaged now. Shouldn't we move on to the next room? Sometimes pace is very important when engaging with a group.

By 11:42 AM we move to the back of the studio, where Ry's kilns and molds are kept. Everyone is chattering now and engaging with Ry. In order to get there, we have to walk through what appears to be a living space. He has musical instruments and a couch. There is a lot of clutter in the room, and it is dark and hard to see. Everyone gathers in the back room where there is a bit of natural light. This room is very dusty and small. There are shelves that hold some of his molds against the wall. There are bars over the windows, and the ceiling insulation can be seen. The walls are white, and the floor is concrete painted red. He has large rectangular fluorescent overhead lights. There are things everywhere—boards against the walls and molds on every shelf. It is very cramped in the space, so I cannot get close to Ry or sit anywhere. There are no chairs in this space. I stay in the back to make room for all of the members.

Ry begins to explain his process. Everyone stops talking and listens intently. They circle around him. He is showing the slips that he uses and the molds. He holds up certain molds and invites members to ask questions. The members continue to laugh as Ry cracks jokes. Everyone seems to be very entertained by Ry's banter. I think they are enjoying this experience. One member asks Ry about his kiln, and the group continues to listen.

At 11:55 AM, Ry asks if we should break. Everyone moves back into the first space. He sees a sculpture that he did not talk about that he wants to share. The members seem less focused in this room. The dog is also scratching again, so you can hear his collar jingling. Conversations break out among participants. Everyone is moving around to see different pieces while he is

talking. We then move into the final space as a group. It is out the door and down the

hallway. Chatter breaks out among group members as we move along. Some people are holding back to check out works in the first space again. The final space is a big room with several large windows covered in bars. The windows are open, so we can hear trucks moving down the street. The floors are concrete and very dusty, but the space is more airy. There are tables everywhere and large shelving units that go up to the ceiling against the wall. This is the largest room in Ry's studio. You can tell that this was a warehouse or a factory building by the remaining beams. He has a computer desk set up in this room as well, and some big found objects like a trashcan and lockers. The walls are white, and so are the tables. There are large fluorescent lights in the space and the piping is exposed again. I think this space is much more appealing. The light is better, and there is more room for the group.

The members are listening to Ry speak as they walk around and view the work. He does not want us to take pictures of his new stuff. He refers to his wife often as his "sweetheart." He talks about his trajectory as an artist, where he is going in his work. He points out found objects: an LA trashcan and some lockers. Everyone walks up to take a closer look. He has created molds of a dollar bill and curled them, so they fit within the holes of the metal trashcan. He calls this work Labor of Love. *He explains his new work to the group. I can hear a few people mumbling in the background. Most of the members are still focusing on Ry and his work. I can hear the birds and cars outside. The smell of men's cologne is in the air. At 12:15 PM, Rita ends the program. She thanks Ry, and everyone claps. He offers to sign posters for members of the group. I can hear kids skateboarding outside. Some of the members break into small groups and begin conversations.*

Figure 3. Ry Rocklen's studio
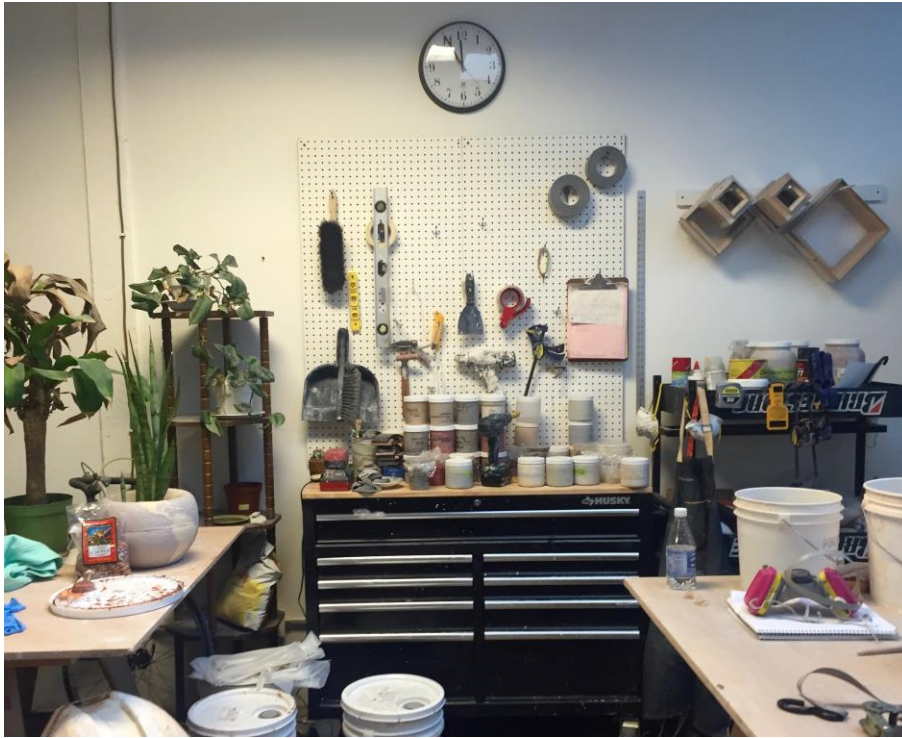
Figure 4. Ry Rocklen's studio

Figure 5. Ry Rocklen's studio

A Description of the Program

Avant-Garde is a membership group for young professionals, collectors, and art supporters between the ages of 21 and 40 who are interested in exploring LACMA and L.A.'s dynamic art world (Museum Associates, 2016a). Members give a thousand dollars annually to join the group, and the benefits they receive for their contribution include behind-the-scenes access and after-hours programs throughout the year such as curator-led tours, studio and collection visits, introductions to special projects at LACMA, curator-led outings to art venues throughout the city, social events at the museum, and more. (See Appendix J for additional benefits.) The Avant-Garde program offers the most diverse programming of the 15 patrons' groups at LACMA. According to the staff interviewed, the members of the Avant-Garde are offered a variety of programs as a "sample platter" so that when it is time to graduate from the group and move up to the next level of giving, they have been exposed to the different types of programs offered by the museum and can join the group that offers the type of programming that aligns with their interest. "It's a unique mix that has been carefully crafted," explained one of the staff members involved. The Avant-Garde offers between eight and ten programs each year, in addition to regular educational opportunities such as lectures and exhibition tours open to general members at LACMA.

The Avant-Garde is the only patrons' group at LACMA with a specific age range tied to membership. You must be between the ages of 21 and 40 to join. It currently has 135 memberships, but that number is constantly in flux. Memberships are counted in units at LACMA, which means each membership may service up to two individuals. According to the staff, the attrition rate for this group is nearly 50%, so there is a constant churn of members leaving and new members joining. They attribute this to the members' stage of life, because most

are beginning their careers and moving around for their jobs. They are also starting families and settling down, which makes attending evening and weekend events more challenging. The demographics of the Avant-Garde largely reflect that of the donor population at LACMA, which is predominately White despite the museum's efforts to promote ethnic and racial diversity through its educational programs and outreach. However, there are a few members of the Avant-Garde that identify as Asian, African-American, Latino or Armenian including two of the participants in this study.

The number of members who can attend each program varies due to the capacity of each space. For example, studio and collection visits are generally smaller, with up to 40 members allowed, but curator-led walkthroughs of an exhibition can accommodate 50 to 70 guests and sometimes more, depending on the exhibition. Smaller events operate under a first-come, first-serve policy, and members have to respond quickly before the available spots fill up. After many of the offsite Avant-Garde programs, LACMA staff members coordinate with the co-chairs of the program to offer no-host gatherings at a restaurant or bar, so Avant-Garde members have an opportunity to socialize. "No-host" means that the members pay for themselves; therefore, these events do not add to the museum's program budget. This kind of event is designed to facilitate relationship building between members, which is an important aspect of the program. The LACMA website proclaims that the Avant-Garde provides its members with an education as well as a social group, offering "incomparable insights into collecting and connoisseurship and social gatherings with like-minded peers" (Museum Associates, 2016a).

The History of the Program

The Avant-Garde program was formed as a subset of the Curator's Circle, formerly known as the President's Circle, which is a patron-level support group for the museum that

receives premier access to museum programs and unique and exclusive events throughout the

year. According to the staff interviewed, the Avant-Garde became its own group about 10 years

ago under the leadership of a few friends who were members of the President's Circle. One of

the staff members I interviewed described it as a "fluid" group that was by invitation only in the

beginning. "You kind of had to know someone to even know that it existed," she explained.

When asked about the group's mission, neither staff member was exactly sure of what its

original mission was, but both mentioned that the young members involved then wanted to

connect to other young people who were interested in supporting the arts. Even though it is not

clearly defined in the program literature, I learned through these interviews with staff that the

mission of the Avant-Garde program today is to "engage young philanthropists interested in

supporting the arts," to offer a "space to connect" to their peers and "learning opportunities" in

the Los Angeles art community and LACMA, and to "engage them as future supporters of the

museum."

The programming for the Avant-Garde has changed over the years based upon feedback

from its members and transitions in leadership and staffing. From the interviews conducted with

two staff members who have been at LACMA for different lengths of time, I assert that the

program has gone through many changes with regard to its structure and the overall balance of

the social and educational aspects of its programming. The staff member who has been involved

for six years said that she felt the educational content of the program was "low" when she

arrived. At that time, the group hosted events at fashion boutiques that did not seem to connect to

LACMA's mission. She further explained,

> I really started pushing to bring them on campus more and to do things that were
>
> specifically designed to connect them either to LA's art scene, sort of a way to enable

LACMA to be a portal for them to feel connected with the art world generally, and things on campus so that they would get more of a sense of what was going on at LACMA. She described the current programming as multifaceted. It is designed to give young patrons "an introduction to LACMA and to the arts and to the things that LACMA is connected with, again supporting the community."

The other staff member whom I interviewed has been at LACMA for two years. When asked about changes regarding the programming, she shared with me that she started a few social events for the Avant-Garde after learning from conversations with members that they desired this type of program. She explained that she considers their engagement with the museum to be both social and philanthropic: "The two are one and the same for them." One program she added is called a happy hour. For this program, the reception is a little longer, so the members have time to mix and mingle prior to viewing an exhibition together. In other words, the educational component is shorter than the social component, and a curator is still involved but only to introduce the exhibition. The staff encourages members to bring their friends as guests to this kind of program, so it has become a prospecting event for the group. In other words, it serves as an event to grow membership and introduce non-members to LACMA. This staff member has also extended the programming by including other young patrons' groups outside of LACMA. She sees the happy hour events as opportunities to grow membership for LACMA and to spread awareness about its programs in the community. She also has added an annual holiday party to give the members another opportunity to socialize on LACMA's campus. This event is ticketed and is a dance party for young adults.

Social Media

Throughout the course of the interviews I conducted the Avant-Garde's lack of engagement on social media was mentioned multiple times. Though the staff has a plan to elevate its presence and has even drafted a presentation about it, not much has been do thus far. One of the chairs commented when asked if the museum is assessable to young adults, "I think LACMA needs to beef up on their social media. It's a problem, actually." She goes on to explain that the Avant-Garde has a Facebook page, but it is not very active. The other chair recommended that the Avant-Garde have its own Instagram account, so photos of parties and events can be shared with hash tags. "We have to have higher online visibility," she explained.

After reviewing the internal documents, conducting interviews, searching for Avant-Garde hash tags on social media and reviewing the post by the LACMA on Instagram and the Avant-Garde Facebook page, I discovered that there is very little interaction with young adults in this realm. The literature I reviewed about Millennials specifically encourages organizations to consider connecting with young adults through all channels, especially social media and the Internet, because this type of interaction resonates with them (Fromm et al., 2011; U. S. Chamber of Commerce, 2014). From these findings I conclude that LACMA could do a much better job of engaging young adults on social media, which may influence participation as well as bring in new members who are connected to the current members through their networks.

Why Join?

In a 2014 survey conducted by LACMA members were asked why they joined the Avant-Garde program. I think it beneficial to include this information in the description of the program, because it explains what factors are at play when young adults get involved. The data collected

from 23 members indicated that there were many reasons why young adults join the Avant-Garde program in 2014. Through my research, I wanted to deepen my understanding of this topic, so during the interviews I asked the co-chairs and the ambassadors the same question. The themes that emerged from the 2014 survey resurfaced in the interviews I conducted. Understanding why young adults join the program provided a pathway to discovering the meanings and values that members attach to their experiences. I also asked the staff members I interviewed why they think members join because I thought it would be beneficial to know whether their assumptions matched the answers of the members. If not, then perhaps they should consider altering the program to meet the needs of the members instead of assuming the reasoning behind their participation. I compared the answers given by current members, the staff, and the 2014 survey to determine the following categories that emerged from my raw data.

Learning about Art and Collecting

The most obvious reason young adults consider joining the Avant-Garde is to learn about art and collecting; however, it is not the only factor that motivates members to sign up and continue participating. In the 2014 survey, 17 of the 23 members who answered the question mentioned wanting to learn about art or collecting in their reason for joining. Both staff members I interviewed mentioned an interest in art as a reason for joining, but neither staff member thought this was the primary motivation. One staff member said:

> I think there are a lot of different factors at play when people join. And there are
>
> definitely some members who have kind of recently discovered the art world or recently
>
> developed an interest in it, and so they're just starting kind of their journey in the art
>
> world and they thought that this would be a great opportunity to kind of dip their toe in

and have a great introduction . . . They want to be able to have access to artists and visit a

studio and see private collectors' homes and come to LACMA after hours and see an

exhibition first before anyone else.

The other staff member brought my attention to the fact that members could get more for less at

other organizations, but the "art overlay and the learning" is not the same at other institutions,

which is one reason young adults join Avant-Garde. Neither the ambassadors nor the chairs

mentioned an education in art or collecting as the primary reason they joined the group, maybe

because it is understood or perhaps it is not as important to the members as one might think.

Peer Group

The second factor in joining that emerged from the data was a desire to have a peer group

of like-minded individuals interested in the arts. In the 2014 survey, 4 of the 23 members who

responded mentioned that having a peer group motivated them to join the Avant-Garde. The staff

members, chairs, and ambassadors I interviewed all indicated that having a peer group is a

driving factor for most members. One of the staff members I interviewed mentioned it first. She

said, "I think that they are looking for a peer group. A lot of times people say that their friends

don't appreciate art, and so they are looking for people with common interests." The other staff

member said, "I see people joining when they move to L.A. from New York, or I see people

joining if they have friends in the group or if they want to meet new people, so it's in the mix."

Both chairs plainly stated that they joined to meet people in Los Angeles with "shared interests."

One of the ambassadors also confirmed that meeting people in her age group with similar

interests was one of the reasons she joined the group. She explained why this is important to her

in the following statement:

I wanted to meet other people in my age group that had similar interests just because I go
to a ton of art openings at galleries and I know so many people in that scene and then it
doesn't really cross over to LACMA interestingly enough and so I definitely wanted to I
think more of my peers in that a lot of people that go to these art openings actually just go
for the event and don't actually go to buy art. And so I wanted to sort of meet more like
collectors, like young collectors, just people in sort of a different demographic.

Exclusivity and the Brand

The staff members at LACMA also considered the exclusivity and the brand of LACMA
as motivation for joining the Avant-Garde. These two things go hand in hand because if the
brand is not strong, then the exclusivity does not matter as much. One staff member explained
the brand of LACMA as having a certain "cachet," which comes with being sophisticated in the
arts. She thinks that being affiliated with LACMA is attractive because it's a "cool organization."
She described the brand of LACMA as having a "sexiness" about it. She explained that the
director, Michael Govan, is always bringing celebrities to campus, and he is "carefully crafting
the museum into being the place that has buzz overlaid with a more traditional museum
mission." She thinks that is what makes LACMA, LACMA. The other staff member mentioned
the exclusivity of the program but did not focus on the cachet of the brand. She said that she
definitely thinks that the Avant-Garde members want to have access to something that not
everyone has access to, especially with the price point at a thousand dollars to join. She does not
think, however, that the brand of LACMA is quite at the same level as any of the New York
institutions.

The chairs and the ambassadors did not mention exclusivity or the brand as a reason to join the group, but the respondents to the 2014 survey did mention both as motivating factors. One member even referred to Michael Govan specifically as a reason why he or she joined. Eight of the twenty-three members surveyed in 2014 mentioned the brand of LACMA or the exclusive programming as their reason for joining, so it is definitely in the mix despite the fact that the chairs and ambassadors of the program did not consider it.

Supporting the Organization

One of the staff members I interviewed said that she thought supporting the arts was part of the equation as to why young adults join but not necessarily a driving factor, although I did find out that one of the ambassadors joined for this reason. When asked, "Why did you join?" she said,

> As I've gotten older I've tried to find ways to become more involved and active in my community and art history, and the museum was something I've always been interested in. So I decided to kind of seek it out to see if LACMA had a young professionals program.

I also found that 4 of the 23 members surveyed in 2014 also mentioned supporting the arts and the museum as their reason for joining. Even though it appears to not be an initial driving factor for most members, the staff hopes that after exposure to the museum and the program it will rise to a level of importance for all members.

Motivating Factors for Participation

After gathering the data from my interviews regarding why members join and comparing it to the results of the 2014 survey, I decided to ask members through the survey a similar question that allowed for the participant to rank from one to seven the factors that motivate him or her to attend Avant-Garde programs. I used similar themes to the ones stated above (see Appendix I). What I learned from their responses is that of the 22 members who participated in the survey, six members ranked attending because of a friend in first place. One of the ambassadors that I interviewed gave this same reason for joining the group. Four members ranked involvement because of the organizations reputation as their primary motivation for participating, yet only two members each ranked learning about art or an interest in collecting art as their primary motivation for participating. However, all of rankings across the board were rather fairly distributed, which means that one motivating factors is not a great deal stronger than the others.

The Educational Opportunities for Members

LACMA operates on a fiscal year calendar like most non-profit organizations; therefore, programming usually takes place in the fall and spring with a break during the summer months. Members receive nine to ten programs a year, which includes a few museum-wide patron programs like opening receptions for exhibitions and the panel discussion about collecting that occurred during the spring of 2016 (see Appendix J). Of the programs designed specifically for the Avant-Garde, five or the seven programs offered to members the year of my study were educational. The Avant-Garde typically offers one artist's studio visit, one private collection visit, two curator-led walkthroughs of exhibitions and one gallery tour each year. I chose to

observe the studio visit with Ry Rocklen, the curator-led walkthrough of the Robert

Mapplethorpe exhibition and the gallery tour in downtown Los Angeles to get a sense of how the

programs were structured and to understand better the learning opportunities provided. It is

important to note that LACMA curators direct all of the educational programs for the Avant-

Garde. They are involved at the ground level when the calendar is created because they have the

connections to the artists and the knowledge of the exhibitions. In the following sections, I

describe the different educational programs offered by the Avant-Garde based on the data that I

gathered from my observations, interviews with staff, and review of the program's documents. In

each case, the curator is the primary educator.

Artist's Studio Visits

Visits to an artist's studio not only provide an in-depth look at a particular artist's

practice, but also can encourage members to think about collecting from a different angle. An

important benefit of this program is the access that members receive to important emerging

artists in the Los Angeles community; often, these artists have work priced in a range that is

affordable for a young collector. Frequently, the museum has acquired work by the same artist

through one of its acquisition groups, which means that the artist has a close connection with the

museum and the curator leading the program. Studio visits also present an opportunity for the

members to hear from artists directly. Understanding the practice, the purpose, and the meaning

behind a work of art helps members understand the value of a place like LACMA and why its

mission is so important.

In the Studio with Ry Rocklen. The artist's studio visit that I observed was with Ry Rocklen, a contemporary Los Angeles artist who creates "readymade" sculptures from found or discarded objects. The runtime of this studio visit was approximately one hour, and 39 members attended the program. Rita Gonzalez, curator and acting head of the contemporary art department at LACMA, led the discussion. As with collection visits, the space is very intimate, and the learning is informal and experiential in nature. I included a full description of this studio visit as an introduction to the Avant-Garde program because I think this type of learning experience is unique and depicts the rich educational opportunities the program provides. To learn first-hand from an artist about his or her work in an intimate space where work is being created with a small group of fellow art lovers is like going backstage to meet one of your favorite bands before they give you a solo performance. It is exhilarating for art lovers and scholars alike. Through this educational opportunity, members not only learned about art, but they also learned how objects are made, the life story of an artist in their community, and perhaps even about collecting, to a certain degree. The observation illuminated the kind of learning that can occur when a group is given special access.

Curator-Led Walkthroughs

During curator-led walkthroughs of exhibitions, Avant-Garde members receive a detailed explanation of a special exhibition at LACMA. The curator who organized the exhibition leads the tour and provides a "deep dive" into his or her curatorial practice, highlighting certain works within the exhibition and often sharing anecdotal information about how the exhibition was formed. This type of program is the most traditional educational opportunity offered. It is considered by educational standards a formal learning opportunity because of its format. The

curator bestows his or her knowledge upon the group, in a traditional style of programming. This event does not result in a lot of dialog during the curator's presentation; instead, it consists of a more formal explanation of the exhibition without interruption. Tours of this style are the most common form of educational programming at museums. They provide a guided experience of an exhibition led by an expert. They offer members insider information with regard to the selection of works, the reason for the exhibition, and the thought that goes into the actual curation of the show. For the Avant-Garde, the curator-led walkthroughs are usually of contemporary exhibitions because the members have expressed to staff that contemporary art is what is of interest to them. The runtime of a walkthrough is between 30 and 40 minutes, with time designated for questions at the end of the tour. One component of the programming is a cocktail reception prior to viewing the exhibition, which presents an opportunity for the group to socialize and connect with each other before viewing the work.

A Walkthrough of *"Robert Mapplethorpe: The Perfect Medium".* The walkthrough that I observed was of *Robert Mapplethorpe: The Perfect Medium*, with Britt Salvesen, curator and head of the Wallis Annenberg Photography department at LACMA. Thirty-nine Avant-Garde members attended this program, and the tour lasted approximately 34 minutes. The Avant-Garde had a wine reception prior to viewing the exhibition, in the first-floor atrium of the Broad Contemporary Art building at LACMA. Everyone was dressed in business attire for this event, perhaps because it was an evening event at the museum. The reception lasted about 30 minutes, and then the group was invited to join the curator on the second floor of the building for a tour of the exhibition.

The tour began with introductions that led into the curator explaining how the exhibition was organized as well as the themes displayed in the first gallery that run throughout the show. This exhibition was coordinated between two museums, LACMA and the Getty Museum, so it was interesting to hear how objects were selected for each show and how the themes evolved from the selections made. The exhibition explored Mapplethorpe's work from his early drawings, collage, sculpture, and Polaroid photography to materials from his archive, rare color photographs, and a few rare video works. It was displayed, for the most part, in chronological order and filled five large galleries in the contemporary art building on campus. Mapplethorpe's work has always been considered rather controversial, because his subject of choice was gay culture in the 1970s and 1980s. At the time when he was making art, this subject was very taboo. He was also the first photographer to capture the African-American male nude in a full frontal position and the first artist to display erotic images of sex acts between male partners. Mapplethorpe was part of this culture, and he wanted to share it with the world through his images. The exhibition was titled *Robert Mapplethorpe: The Perfect Medium* because he sought what he called "perfection in form" in everything from sexual fetishism to the contours of flower petals (Museum Associates, 2016b, para. 2).

Through the walkthrough, Britt presented an in-depth portrait of the artist, explaining his process, his history, his schooling, and the relationships that influenced his work. The group spent approximately 6 to 10 minutes in each gallery, so she only had time to speak in general terms about the work and the artist. She focused on a few pieces in each gallery to contextualize the artist's story. It seems that the learning objective for this type of programming is a traditional education in art. Through the curator's detailed explanation of the exhibition, members left knowing more about Robert Mapplethorpe, his life, his practice, and his work.

Collection Visits

Collection visits are very different from curator-led walkthroughs. The format of this type of program is non-traditional and can be rather informational. The curator leads the program and is in dialog with the collector. He or she typically begins the program by introducing the collector and asking questions about how he or she began collecting and why he or she collects; the curator may also encourage the collector to tell a few stories about pieces purchased. Group members are always welcome to ask questions at any point during the dialog, and typically they ask many questions. During this type of program, the curator is often prepared to speak about a few works within the collection specifically and invites the collector to join in the conversation as well.

Collection visits provide an opportunity for members to learn about art and about collecting. According to the staff at LACMA, many of the members of the Avant-Garde aspire to collect art, and they gain knowledge from learning about how others began and how they go about purchasing works of art. It presents a unique opportunity to gain insider access into the world of art collecting that most people do not stumble into. This kind of access cannot be provided through any other type of program or institution; it is a unique, experiential opportunity that only museums can provide because of their relationship with collectors. The staff also explained in the interviews that the collectors visited by the Avant-Garde are considered emerging collectors, which means that they have not been collecting for a long time or at a high price point. Typically, contemporary art is the focus of this type of collection because its price point can be lower and because of it accessibility. By featuring this kind of collector, the program can provide insight into collecting in a price range that a young adult could reach in the near future, which is encouraging for the members. One of the staff members I interviewed

described one of the other learning objectives of this program as "behavior modeling." In other words, she believes that the collectors selected are LACMA supporters; therefore, the program tangentially promotes the idea of giving back. Unfortunately, I was not able to observe a collection visit for my study because this type of programming was not offered in the spring, but I have been to many collection visits with other groups at LACMA in my role there, so I understand how they are formatted and the benefits of this kind of experience.

Gallery Tours

Gallery tours provide another learning opportunity for Avant-Garde members who desire an education in collecting as well as knowledge of art. Through this type of experience, members learn about many different artists in one day, receive intimate exposure to the gallery scene in their community, and learn about collecting and potential resources to support that practice. As with the other programs offered to the Avant-Garde, a curator at LACMA guides the gallery tour, and his or her specialization determines the focus of the tour. This type of learning experience expands members' knowledge of the artists represented in their community, typically from various disciplines and places. It is not uncommon to see work from as many as 10 different artists during a tour, and often the galleries selected to visit have works of art featured at a price point that a young collector can afford.

This type of learning experience also provides an opportunity for members to experience the gallery scene in Los Angeles with an educated, well-respected guide who typically has a relationship with all of the galleries featured. The connections between members and gallerists can be built through introductions made during the tour, which can be a valuable asset to members who are interested in collecting art. Los Angeles is a huge city with a burgeoning art

market, so it is very helpful for the museum to shepherd these relationships and connections, especially with young collectors. It can be challenging to figure out where to purchase works of art because there are so many galleries popping up all over the city. Curators have the expertise and the knowledge. They know what is happening in the art world and can direct individuals to the galleries that have work within an emerging collector's price range. Museum curators often have strong ties to certain galleries because they buy work for the museum's collection. Other times, galleries give works to the museums, so their association is considered mutually beneficial. In a sense, LACMA is providing a roadmap for members of the Avant-Garde through gallery tours, so they can eventually begin exploring the art world on their own. "LACMA is part of the community broadly," explained one of the staff members I interviewed. Through this type of program, members can "develop a fluency in the art world in a way that will enable them to feel empowered to go on their own next time because it can be intimidating. . . . It's kind of giving them the ability to feel like they can access various parts" [of the art world].

I think this type of knowledge is a tangible benefit of the programming that can affect the member's personal life. For a member interested in collecting, this is quite possibly the most valuable educational component of the programming.

Gallery Tour in Downtown Los Angeles. The gallery tour that I observed took place in downtown Los Angeles on a Saturday morning. We visited three established galleries and saw work from several artists in each space. The running time of this program was approximately two hours, and 54 members attended. We began at the Cirrus Gallery, then explored Ghebaly Gallery, and ended with Night Gallery. Leslie Jones, the curator of prints and drawings at LACMA, led the tour. Like the artist's studio visit, the members were casually dressed for the

tour. The tour began with an introduction to the Cirrus Gallery and its director, Jean Milant. He talked about the history of his gallery and the work currently on display. Then he introduced the artist whose work was featured, Brice Bischoff. The artist explained his work but not in-depth like at a studio visit. Shortly thereafter, the director invited the group into the "back of house", which is the area where the galleries store all of their work. There, two more artists represented by the gallery greeted us. The works that they shared with us were works on paper, especially pulled for our group. Each artist only had a few minutes to talk about his or her work before we moved on to the next gallery. Leslie explained to the group that the purpose of this tour was to introduce the Avant-Garde members to works on paper as they are a great entry point to collecting art because of the price.

At the next gallery, the director, Francois Ghebaly, greeted us before we entered the space. Ghebaly Gallery is much larger in size than Cirrus and has multiple exhibitions going on within its gallery space at the same time. The director introduced us to work in the first three galleries by contemporary artists Joel Kyack and Marius Bercea. Both had individual solo shows within the space. Neither artist was present. The director talked with the group about the artist's process and the subject of the work in each show. Kyack's exhibition was of sculptures and Bercea's exhibition was of paintings. The director spoke briefly about each artist before taking us into the third space, which was the gallery's back of house. Works on paper by various artists that Ghebaly represents were displayed in this area. He pulled these works out specifically for our group because the tour was supposed to feature works on paper. He and Leslie spoke briefly about the artists in the room. Their dialog was no longer than five minutes.

The final gallery that the group visited was the Night Gallery. Its directors, Rachel LaBine and William Hathaway, greeted us upon arrival. They had two separate solo exhibitions

on display of paintings by Paul Heyer and Marisa Takal. We learned about each artist and his or her practice. Like the other gallery directors, LaBine and Hathaway invited the group into their back of house space to see works on paper by artists they represent that are currently not on view but priced more affordably for a young collector.

Through this learning experience, members were exposed to three galleries, more than 10 artists, and works on paper that were reasonably affordable. The curator provided information about all three subjects and introduced the members to gallery directors in each location. Even though the galleries made a special effort to pull works on paper from their storage for the group, the visits could have been more effective if the galleries had displayed works on paper in the regular gallery space. The downtown art district is an emerging area of Los Angeles, and many artists and galleries are moving there because the spaces are larger and the rent is less expensive. It can be challenging to navigate that part of the city, so it was helpful for the members to have a guide. The curator selected this area to explore because it is new, and the galleries we visited have works of art at a more reasonable price point than the galleries in Beverly Hills, Culver City, or Hollywood. However, there was somewhat of a disconnect between what was shown and the expertise of the curator, since works on paper were not featured in any of the exhibitions currently on display. The program was still very successful at educating and engaging the members of the group.

Figure 6. Ghebaly Gallery
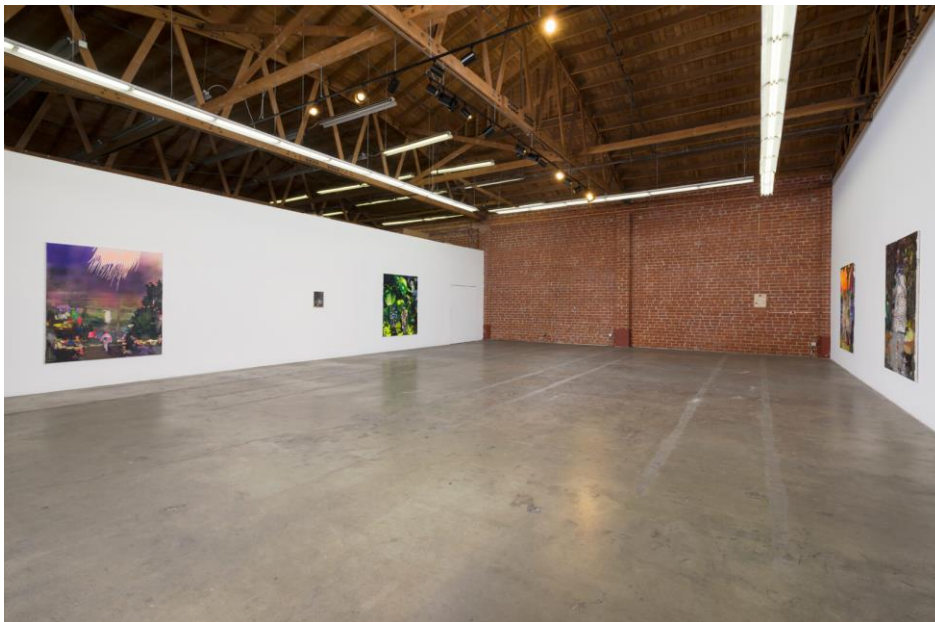
Figure 7. Ghebaly Gallery with work by Marius Bercea

Figure 8. Night Gallery

Figure 9. Cirrus Gallery with work by Brice Bischoff

CHAPTER 5

LEARNING THROUGH EXPERIENCES

In its simplest form, experiential learning means learning from experience or learning by doing. Kolb (1984) defined experiential learning as "the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience."(p. 41). "Experiential education first immerses learners in an experience and then encourages reflection about the experience to develop new skills, new attitudes, or new ways of thinking" (Lewis & Williams, 1994, p.5). This method of educating allows for skills, knowledge and experiences to be acquired outside of a traditional classroom setting. Therefore, museum programs are in position for this type of learning to occur. Wurdinger (2005) explained how experiential learning is aligned with the constructivist theory of learning in that the "outcomes of the learning process are varied and often unpredictable" and "learners play a critical role in assessing their own learning" (p. 69). This is particularly true of the experiential learning that occurs through the Avant-Garde program, which is why I asked the participants to assess their own learning in this study. In this chapter I address *Research Question 1: "What are young adults learning through their participation in this program?"* and explain why variety in programming is important and the type of educational setting that is preferred by this specific age demographic.

The Learning Objectives

The Avant-Garde program does not have defined learning objectives for each program, but it is clear that different learning objectives are accomplished through the various styles of

programs. All of the programs are considered experiential learning opportunities, whether formal or informal because they all involve having an interaction with a work of art and learning about it in a non-traditional setting. An experiential learning opportunities occur when an individual is actively engaged in posing questions, investigating, being curious, solving problems, being creative, and constructing meaning. Reflection on learning during and after the experience is an integral component of the learning process as well. This reflection leads to analysis, critical thinking, and synthesis. Learners are engaged intellectually, emotionally, socially, and/or physically.

The Avant-Garde programs are all experiential learning opportunities designed to increase members' knowledge of art, whether on the museum's campus or offsite. One of the staff members described the learning objectives as a "multifaceted program that is really designed to give the members an introduction to LACMA and to the arts and to things that LACMA is connected with, again supporting the community." Therefore, the learning objectives are threefold and facilitate learning opportunities at LACMA regarding exhibitions and collections, learning opportunities within the art community that surrounds the museum (such as gallery tours), and learning opportunities outside of the museum that connect back to LACMA (such as visiting an artist's studio or a private collection).

Through curator-led walkthroughs, the Avant-Garde program satisfies the first learning objective, which is to educate the group about the museum and works of art within the museum. The format of this program is traditional and is considered the most common form of art education in the museum setting. It is essentially a guided tour of an exhibition with an expert. The curator usually begins by explaining how the exhibition was created and why the museum selected to present it, which is often connected to the mission of the institution. Sometimes he or

she will share with the group why certain works within the exhibition were selected or how the museum worked with another institution to create the exhibition if it was a collaborative project. Then the curator shares information about the artist, explaining his or her significance to a particular movement or period in art. After this general overview, the curator then leads the group through the galleries focusing on certain objects that tell the story of the artist's life while explaining the significance of the each individual piece. Through this type of program, the members learn about the internal workings of the museum such as how curators create exhibitions. They also learn about the history of art as well as the history of a particular artist and why he or she is important to the art historical cannon. Finally, they learn about individual works of art within the exhibition and why they are precious or important.

Through gallery tours the Avant-Garde program satisfies the second learning objective, which is to teach members about art in the community. This type of program explores the art galleries in Los Angeles guided by a curator. Essentially, it provides a road map of the gallery scene for members interested in collecting and also a personal introduction to the gallery director or staff at the gallery. The members not only learn about art and artists, but they also learn who the different art dealers are within the gallery scene in their community and the artists that they represent. This type of educational program provides a pathway for collecting, because it teaches members where art can be purchased and introduces them to types of work that are available at different price points. They also learn about contemporary art that is being created in Los Angeles that is affordable, and sometimes the galleries invite the artist showing his or her work to meet the group and share personal thoughts or feelings about the exhibition.

The third learning objective for the Avant-Garde is learning about opportunities outside of LACMA that connect back to the museum directly. The objective is satisfied through visiting

artist's studios and private collections. In other words, these visits occur in private homes or

artist's spaces, and they connect back to the museum because the collector is a patron of the

museum or the artist is represented in the museum's collection. Through this type of

programming, the Avant-Garde members learn about collecting in addition to learning about an

artist and his or her specific practice or a collection of work assembled by a museum patron.

During studio visits members learn about the process of making art and the artist's background.

They have the opportunity to connect on a personal level, which can be very enriching. During

collection visits, members learn about the collector, why he or she chose to purchase a certain

body of work and the process behind building a collection. They also learn about the artists

featured within the collection. Like the studio visits, this type of educational program provides an

opportunity for the member to connect personally with the collector and ask questions.

All four types of educational programming discussed provide an opportunity for

members to think critically, pose questions, construct meaning and reflect on their experiences

with works of art. They not only provide an education in art and collecting but also an

understanding of the Los Angeles art community, the galleries that sell work with it, the artists

who live in the city and the collectors who are currently purchasing work to support the arts and

to enrich their own lives.

The Importance of Variety in Programming

During my interviews with staff and the members of the Avant-Garde, I asked questions

about whether they considered formal or informal learning opportunities best suited for this

group because my research on this subset of the population led me to believe that formal learning

experiences at the museum such as curator-led walkthroughs would not be as interesting or as

successful at engaging young adults today as more informal learning opportunities. According to

Skiba and Barton (2006), young adults today are distinctly different from the previous

generations as learners, and meeting their needs has changed the way that teachers interact in the

classroom with students. The former teaching style of one lecturer on stage bestowing

knowledge does not work for this generation; instead, young adults learn best when there is

active dialog (Gernhardt, 2016). The Millennial Generation also wants learning experiences that

are rich and tailored to meet their needs, and they see learning as a social activity that should be

interactive and engaging (Proserpio & Gioia, 2007; Skiba & Barton, 2006).

One of the ambassadors I interviewed confirmed my thoughts regarding how this

generation wants to be engaged. When I asked her, "What kind of educational programs do you

think best engage young adults?" she said, "We don't want to be lectured to. . . . I personally fall

asleep at a lecture. . . . Who wants to be back in school?" Still, she ended by saying, "The

walkthroughs are great," referring to the program that constitutes a more formal learning

experience and is the most traditional style of programming offered. The other members

interviewed also mentioned that curatorial-led walkthroughs best engaged the members, so

perhaps a 30 to 40 minute tour is informal enough to be an effective way to teach young adults in

a museum setting. One staff members interviewed admitted that the LACMA staff does

intentionally make the curator-led walkthroughs for the Avant-Garde shorter than for the

traditional patrons' groups because the social component that comes after is important to the

group and the members' attention span is shorter.

Through the interviews and surveys responses I confirmed that variety is important to this

group, and they want to be social and learn from their experiences at the same time, which

supports what the literature said about Millennials (Proserpio & Gioia, 2007; Skiba & Barton,

2006). One of the chairs explained why she thinks a mix of programming is good for the group:

"I think like you don't want to push content too hard. You want to allow people to participate at

their leisure." She further explained that some of the members care about the content, but for

others socializing is the most important part. She thinks it is important to have variety so the

program satisfies everyone involved. She believes that it is important that the programs "leave it

up to the members' discretion" and allow the customization of their own experience, which also

is in line with what the scholarship said about Millennials (Skiba & Barton 2006; U.S. Chamber

of Commerce, 2014). One of the ambassadors I interviewed added to this consideration by

explaining that variety in programming actually helps members stay engaged with the museum.

She said, "With today's world and everyone having ADD from technology, you do have to keep

people sort of engaged."

The Preferred Setting

In the 2014 survey that was given to members of the program by a former LACMA staff

member the participants were asked, "What types of events do you enjoy?" with the option to

check all that applied but did not request an explanation of their selection or comments. Curator-

led walkthroughs of temporary exhibitions, studio visits, and collection visits were the top three

answers given and were nearly equal. All three types of events scored far above the purely social

offerings. To further develop an understanding the kinds of educational programs that young

adults find the most enriching, I asked the Avant-Garde members to select which program they

found to be the most engaging in my survey, and then I asked them to explain why they felt this

way.

What I learned was that, of the 18 members who answered this question, eight found the artist's studio visits to be the most engaging, and six considered private collection visits to be the most engaging. Group tours of local galleries and curator-led walkthroughs of current exhibitions were tied, with only two votes each. Thirteen of the 22 members who completed the survey explained why they found the program that they selected the most engaging, and there responses aligned with the characteristics outlined in the literature regarding the educational environments preferred by this generation, which are interactive, social environments that are intimate and relaxed (Gernhardt, 2016; Proserpio & Gioia, 2007; Skiba & Barton, 2006).

One of the members who selected artist studio visits explained, "Hearing from the artist about their process and taking us all into a new setting which puts us all on a level playing field is extremely engaging and interesting." Another member said that the artist's studio visits are "usually more interactive events and provide a lot of different stimuli to discuss." This member added that seeing what is in the studio and being able to contextualize the materials is what draws the visitor in more. For private collection visits, one member said that he or she found this setting to be "more intimate" and, therefore, more engaging. This type of program is also described as "social" and more "relaxed" than the other programs. Private collection visits allow members to see art in the confines of a collector's home, and many of the members who selected this type of program find the setting to be the most engaging part of this type of experience because they have an opportunity to learn about art, collecting, and often see great architecture as well. One member said, "The architecture and the layout of the house is as interesting to me as the art inside and around it."

From the data I collected, I conclude that the Avant-Garde members prefer variety in programming and to learn in a setting that is intimate, social and relaxed. The members find

artist's studio visits and private collection visits to be the most enriching because this type of

setting is provided. Furthermore, variety is programming is important to them, because they want

to be able to curate their own museum experience. They also prefer a collaborative approach to

learning and an environment that is conducive to active conversation, which is most prominent in

private collection and studio visits.

CHAPTER 6

MEANING-MAKING AND THE VALUE OF KNOWLEDGE

Those who assess the public benefit of museums have always placed the focus on these institutions' contribution to community lifelong learning, and there has been an increased pressure on museums to demonstrate their effectiveness in this regard in recent years. According to Packer (2008), even the most broadly defined learning outcomes may not be enough to explain the value and benefits of a museum experience. In attempt to understand and explain the social worth of museums, researchers are now looking beyond their undeniable educational value to a range of other beneficial outcomes for visitors. Packer (2008) explained that this shift is due, in part, to "changes in the emphases museums place on different aspects of their role, from a focus on collecting, preserving and exhibiting objects, and educating the public, to understanding and meeting visitors' multiple needs" (p. 33). When measuring the value of a museum experience, many lenses are now considered, including learning outcomes, satisfaction, and meaning-making. While all three of these lenses are important, meaning-making is perhaps the toughest to measure. Yet it is, quite possibly, the one that best begins to assess the deepest impact of museums in the lives of individuals. Falk and Dierking (1992) suggested that "museums are excellent environments for meaningful learning because they offer rich, multi-sensory experiences." (p. 114). Physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual elements are all at play during a museum visit. Being attentive to all these elements is crucial when the desired outcome is to provide an enriching experience for the visitor. In this chapter, I address *Research Question 2:*

"What meanings do young adults attach to their museum experiences?" and *"Do they value the knowledge that they acquire through this program?"*

Satisfying Identity-Related Needs

As discussed in-depth in the literature review, Falk (2009) identified five identity-related needs that motivate individuals to visit museums, and the meanings that these individuals attach to their experiences are shaped by the feeling of fulfillment related to these identity-related roles: explorer, facilitator, experience seeker, professional or hobbyist, and recharger. According to Falk (2009), most visitors describe a successful museum visit as one that allowed them to enact the identities—the roles, traits, and attitudes—associated with one or more of these categories.

Though Falk's research pertains specifically to the museum visitor, I considered that satisfying the same identity-related needs could be considered when members of a program are assessing the value of their experience and applying personal meaning. Perhaps satisfying these roles could be even more important to members because they have invested in the organization by making a gift in order to participate in the program. I decided to use Falk's categories to address my second research question, which is whether or not the members of the program are having what they consider a meaningful experience through their participation in the Avant-Garde. In my interviews with the chairs and the ambassadors of the program, I asked about each role and whether or not the program helped them personally satisfy it. I followed an interview guide, (see Appendix C) so the questions would be very similar for each participant. The only question that was slightly altered during the interviews was about satisfying the facilitator role, because I did not think that bringing the family to the museum was applicable to this group. After learning from the research that the Millennial generation sees learning as a social activity

that should be engaging and interactive, I positioned satisfying the facilitator role as having dialog with friends during the program and being social instead of using the original question. Following each question, I requested an explanation.

The chairs and ambassadors of the program all confirmed that they are seeking to fulfill all five identity-related needs mentioned above by answering "yes" to each question. Unfortunately, I did not obtain a substantial amount of information with regard to how the program exactly satisfies the identity-related roles or if one is more important than the other. I confirmed by altering the facilitator question that learning in an informal, social environment is very important to the members, and I have included a few of the responses that explain why. One of the chairs explained that she enjoys conversation with other members about the works of art. She explained, "You can have conversations about what you are looking at . . . . it's fun to have a dialog." One of the ambassadors explained that she studied art history and wanted to have a career in museums but realized that she needed to go in another direction for financial reasons. She explained, "I'm about learning but then also helping other people learn. . . . I can facilitate both of those things [through the program]." From these answers, I concluded that the members I interviewed value the social aspect of the program and learning in an informal setting, and all of the identity-related needs of each member interviewed are being met through their participation. Therefore, the members who are serving the group in a leadership capacity find their experiences with the program meaningful and personally satisfying.

To explore this concept further, I invited the members who participated in the survey to mark the identity-related needs that they seek to satisfy through their participation in the Avant-Garde program (See Appendix I). Their responses were in congruence with the interview participants in that all of the identity-related roles are fulfilled by participation in the program.

Recharger and experience seeker held the top positions and were tied with 13 participants marking each category. The other three roles— professional, explorer, and facilitator— each had 12 participants mark the category, so the identity-related needs were almost equally marked across the board.

To examine further how the identity-related roles are met, I asked members in the next question to explain how participation in the program fulfills their identity-related needs. Thirteen of the 22 participants answered this question, and the majority of the individuals who answered had marked more than one identity-related role in the previous question, which means that they are fulfilling multiple identity-related roles through their involvement. Only one negative case emerged in which the member said that the program does not fulfill his or her need, which was to be intellectually challenged.

A few of the underlying themes that emerged from the answers members gave about why they joined the group reappeared in the responses to this question. Those themes are that young adults join and participate in the Avant-Garde program to fulfill a desire to learn about art, to find a peer group of like-minded art supporters, and for the exemplary experiences and insider access. A new theme emerged when I asked members to explain how participation in the program fulfills their identity-related needs, which was that some members are satisfying a need to be recharged and rejuvenated through their participation in the program. They see the Avant-Garde program as an "outlet" or "a break from the usual." The identity-related role that these individuals seek to fulfill through this program is recharger. It is important to note that 13 of the 22 members who answered the survey marked recharger as one of the identity-related roles fulfilled by the program, which is a majority. One of the members who selected recharger (along with facilitator and experience seeker) said,

I enjoy going to LACMA, and Avant-Garde helps keep me connected in a more regular way. I love art but don't always make the time to see it, so Avant-Garde gives me more of a structure to do so, and one in which I get to meet like-minded people who enjoy art. I like to bring friends and socialize with them as well as the Avant-Garde members I know, meet new people and take a break from my normal day-to-day.

Several themes are present in this answer. This member obviously seeks to learn about art and connect with a peer group of like-minded individuals. He or she values the social part of the experience, and sees it as an escape from his or her normal day-to-day life. Another member said, "It takes me out of my routine and keeps me current with the art community in LA. I enjoy learning about the artists and also want to learn more about collecting." In this response, one can see a desire to learn about art as well as an interest in learning about the art community in LA specifically and about collecting. This member is also seeking to escape from routine and to fulfill his or her desire to recharge through participation.

Though Falk (2009) separates professionals and explorers into two different roles that visitors seek to fulfill during their museum experiences, I see them as one and the same. Both are seeking to know more, whether because they desire to be challenged or because learning benefits them professionally or on a personal level. The essence of both roles is based on the desire to learn. All of the participants who marked explorer also marked professional as an identity-related role that they seek to fulfill through their experiences with the Avant-Garde. A few of the participants who marked professional and explorer explained that the Avant-Garde keeps them involved in the art community. For example, one member said, "I like to see as much art as possible and with my busy schedule it's difficult to have set events. The Avant-Garde is a nice way to motivate me to go." Another member said, "I love contemporary art, collect, and spend a

ton of time researching and learning outside of my professional life. Avant-Garde allows me to spend time doing more looking and gives me access to openings and the occasional studio visit." Another member who marked recharger, professional, experience seeker, facilitator, and explorer explained that this program provides friendships and a network outside of his or her regular life and job. He or she went on to say, "I also like that I'm being exposed to new things by attending planned tours and events," and explained that the program makes LACMA feel more accessible.

From the responses to the survey and the answers I received from members in leadership positions during the interviews, I conclude that all the identity-related needs are of nearly equal importance to young adults. Furthermore, the Avant-Garde program is successfully meeting these identity-related needs through its programming by providing a place for young adults to connect with like-minded peers and to learn and experience new things either for pleasure or for the advancement of their careers. It is also a place to recharge and escape from their normal routines. Therefore, the Avant-Garde is creating meaningful experiences for its members through the programs offered, and members are satisfying their identity-related needs through their participation.

Meaningful Educational Programs

As the identity-related needs of members are being met across the board, I decided to investigate further the meanings that young adults attach to their experience with the Avant-Garde program by asking members directly in my survey which program they find the most meaningful and why (See Appendix I). Out of the 22 members that answered the survey questions, 20 answered this question, and their responses revealed that private collection tours were the most meaningful, yet the artist's studio visits and curator-led walkthroughs were tied in

second place and not far behind in ranking. Only one person answered that the group gallery tours were the most meaningful experience.

Fifteen of the 22 members who responded to the survey answered the second part of the question, which requested that they explain why the program they selected is the most meaningful program to them. What I learned from the members who did respond is that knowledge acquired through these different learning experiences is what is meaningful to the members. Those who ranked private collection visits as the most meaningful experience said, "You learn about various artists and not just one. . . . And I am interested in collecting, too," and that it was interesting to see art in someone's home. One member said that collection visits are meaningful because you have an opportunity to meet a collector, and you can image the possibilities of collecting for yourself.

With regard to curator-led walkthroughs, one member explained why this experience is meaningful to him or her as "I enjoy learning why the curator chose particular pieces and hearing tidbits about the artist and pieces." Another member said, "I find the curator-led walkthroughs the most educational." One member said that this type of experience is meaningful because of what he or she realized after the experience. This member said the curator-led walkthroughs "made me realize how much I miss when I visit the museum on my own."

The members who selected the artist's studio visits as the most meaningful program gave the most thoughtful responses as to why they selected this type of program. In their responses, you see that the members valued the knowledge that they acquired through their participation in the program. One member said, "You get to see the artist at work and learn more about how they do what they do and how their work comes to be made. . . . It's interesting to learn about the process that goes into creation." Another member also mentioned how meaningful it is to see the

artist's practice and what he or she is currently working on, which is different from seeing the finished product in a museum or gallery setting. Another member said, "This is where art comes from . . . and it is always satisfying for me to be able to understand more about the context." One member even uses the term "value," saying, "You get insight of the artist's practice. What can be more valuable in this field?"

From the survey and interviews, I conclude that the learning opportunities and experiences offered by the Avant-Garde program are meaningful because they satisfy the identity-related needs of the members and provide knowledge that members value. Having a variety of educational programs is important to this group, and participants value the knowledge acquired through different learning opportunities. They also appreciate learning in an informal setting, so they can socialize with one another because many of the members are looking for a peer group of like-minded arts enthusiasts when they join.

CHAPTER 7

BUILDING A CULTURE OF PHILANTHROPY

To investigate whether or not the Avant-Garde program was successfully building a culture of philanthropy, I began by asking the participants that I interviewed and surveyed pointed questions pertaining to their personal relationship with the museum, the growth of that relationship, how the message of philanthropy is communicated through the program, and whether or not their involvement has inspired them to make a gift in addition to their membership or to consider giving in the future. Even though this particular demographic most likely does not have additional funds to give away at this point, the literature stated that it is imperative that organizations meet the Millennials where they are now and treat them as donors to plant the seeds for future philanthropy (Goldseker & Moody, 2013). Furthermore, to build a culture of philanthropy, the mission and the message of philanthropy must be communicated through programming, so members can begin to understand the needs of the organization and how it serves the community. Ideally, if these two factors are incorporated into the program, the dedication of the members and their affinity for the organization will increase. Then—and only then—will their relationships transition from transactional giving to transformational giving. In this chapter I address *Research Question 3*: "*How can an educational program inspire future philanthropy and strengthen relationships between the members of the program and the museum?*"

Educating About Philanthropy

As the Avant-Garde program is set up as a membership group with benefits, I began by asking the stakeholders that I interviewed if educating the group about the needs of the museum was part of the program. The answers I received would lead any researcher to believe that the mission of the organization is evident to members. Once I investigated further, I realized that this was not necessarily the case. Both staff members expressed interest in further integrating the topic of philanthropy in the programming and admitted that it was not as apparent as one might think. One staff member explained that renewal letters and acknowledgments after a gift is made communicate the message of philanthropy and the mission of the organization. She also will occasionally talk about philanthropy in her welcoming remarks before a program but only briefly. She added,

> I feel like with most of the events, the goal is to highlight the curator and the works and
> that speaks for itself in describing the value of what the museum can bring to you . . . I
> think it can be more integrated, but it is part of the program.

When I asked the other staff member whether educating the group about the needs of the museum was part of the program, she began her answer with the words "not enough." She then went on to explain that there are a lot of competing needs and priorities at the museum, and she believes that the museum can grow the giving from this group depending on how it asks and what it asks for. She continued, "The philanthropy messaging could be better. I am aware of that and I just haven't quite figured it out . . . I mean getting them to upgrade is part of it." While upgrading is definitely important, my question was not about that aspect of giving, which is very transactional. My question was about communicating the message of philanthropy, which is what the museum does for the community and the ways in which members can contribute to the cause.

From my interviews with the staff, I deduced that they are open to communicating this message and more deeply integrating it into the programming, although they are not really sure how to do so.

When I posed the same question to the members who are in leadership roles, I learned that their involvement is very transactional. One chair said,

Well it is all about fundraising for the museum . . . It's like a good deal has to work both ways. So, like the museum wants the money, and we want our entertainment. So, that is why you have to provide values for the members, because if you're not giving them value then they are not going to renew their membership.

One of the ambassadors said that the needs of the museum are mentioned "every now and again," but it's not "in your face," which she considers to be a good thing. She went on to explain that this is a very "self-absorbed group," always concerned with what they get. Then she confessed that she is not really sure how helpful this group would be in terms of giving and explained, "It's definitely not top of mind" for these individuals. The other ambassador said that, in her role, she understands the needs of the museum and the importance of fundraising because there is often discussion about how important it is to expand membership, whether through growing the Avant-Garde or getting more people involved in the council groups. Even though the volunteers seem to understand that fundraising is part of what they do in their leadership roles, none of the members that I interviewed understood what was meant by "communicating the message of philanthropy." Additionally, some of these individuals made it clear to me that they did not think it was appropriate or necessary to talk about philanthropy with this group for various reasons, such as age, interest, and the nature of their relationship to the museum.

To explore further whether or not the message of philanthropy was being communicated to members of the Avant-Garde, I included a question in the survey that asked members directly if they had learned about the ways in which they can support the museum through their involvement with the Avant-Garde program. Then I asked each participant to share what he or she had learned. Out of the 22 members who participated in the survey, 11 answered this question. Of these 11, only four members indicated that they had learned about the ways in which they can support the museum through their participation. Those who explained further said that they had learned about other groups at LACMA, such as councils that they could join, but no one mentioned anything related to the mission or purpose of the museum or the needs of the museum.

The answers from the survey question and the responses from the interviewees indicated that only a transactional type of giving has been discussed with these members and that the message of philanthropy is not currently communicated through the program or, quite possibly, that the members simply do not understand what is meant by "philanthropy." Regardless of whether it is about a lack of understanding or a lack of communication, it is apparent that the message of philanthropy and the mission of the museum are not clearly communicated. To build a culture of philanthropy with the group, the mission of the organization and the good work that LACMA does in the community needs to be shared; if it is not, it will be very challenging to move these donors into a different frame of mind with regard to their giving.

Mission-Centered Programs

After learning that the message of philanthropy was not being directly communicated to the members of the Avant-Garde, I began to consider ways in which the group could incorporate

programs that directly tied to the mission of the museum or at least programs that further

engaged members by encouraging them to give in addition to their annual membership dues. To

explore this topic, I posed the question "What do you think is the best way to relay the message

of philanthropy?" in my interviews to define clearly how members prefer to learn about

philanthropy. What I discovered is that they are interested in learning about the good work that

LACMA is doing in the community and also the plans for the new building, which is a major

capital campaign project currently underway. Some even suggested that we add a program for

the Avant-Garde members covering the campaign like what has been done for upper-level

patrons' groups in the format of the director speaking to the group about the new building plan

followed by a reception.

Both staff members indicated that they had already considered a program like this but

only very abstractly. One of the staff members said, "I think we are going to need to ramp that

type of program up as we move through the capital campaign, and I don't think that lower-level

people should be held back from that." Even the chairs and ambassadors said that they thought

knowing about the programs at LACMA, including the building campaign, is important. One of

the chairs said,

> You're supporting the museum. A thousand dollars is real money, and I think it would be
>
> nice to know where the museum is. There is a lot of media and press about the museum . .
>
> . . Everyone is aware of the new building . . . but it would be nice to know our role in that
>
> and to receive more information.

The other chair said, "Experience and insight" are key in creating a partnership with individuals.

"The more information the better." I also learned by posing this question that some of the

members may even be interested in volunteer opportunities. One of the ambassadors used words

like "get involved," "see the results," and "help out" in her answer. She explained, "I think that kind of stuff would be cool, to actually see the results of where the money goes," which directly aligns with what the literature said with regard to what the Millennials value and look for in their relationships with non-profits (Goldseker & Moody, 2013; King, 2016; Lerner, 2011; Stone, 2009).

We also discussed potentially adding a program that is a fundraiser to get members more deeply engaged. I explained to the interview participants that other museums have an acquisition component incorporated in their young adult programming each year. One example is the Museum of Modern Art in New York. This type of program provides an opportunity for members to have conversations with the curatorial staff, and it deepens their investment in the museum because they are contributing to the purchase of a work of art for the permanent collection. This kind of program provides a great stepping-stone for members who are interested in becoming more deeply engaged with the museum as a whole (C.Schafer, personal communication, September 15, 2014). Both staff members seemed interested in this idea but were admittedly concerned about adding another fundraiser to LACMA's schedule. One of the staff members said that she was already considering the addition of a fundraising component as part of the Avant-Garde holiday party, which is a ticketed event. A curator could select an inexpensive acquisition for the group to purchase for LACMA's permanent collection each year, and the funds could be raised through the holiday party and an additional solicitation by mail if needed. If the work of art came from one of the artists' studios that they visited that year, the acquisition would tie back to the group's experience through the program, which might be more interesting for the members. This kind of event could clearly communicate the message of philanthropy and the mission of the museum and allow for the members to build relationships

with staff outside of the development department, increasing members' engagement with the institution as a whole. When I asked the chairs and ambassadors the same question, I received a resounding yes across the board. All of the volunteers said that they would like to engage with the museum in this way.

In conclusion, I think Avant-Garde members are not only open to a program showcasing philanthropy, but that they would welcome it. They want to learn about the good work that the museum is doing in the community and how they can help. They are also interested in the new building project and would like to be in the know with regard to the museum's plans for the future. Since "buy in" from Millennials is critical for the future, why not communicate the message of philanthropy now, so they feel as though they are partnering with the organization and can speak to its good work in the community? If the message of philanthropy is never discussed, even subtly, it will be very challenging to transition these individuals from transactional donors to philanthropic donors, if they even stick around. Their relationship with the museum must move beyond a discussion of benefits and upgrades to see the true value of their involvement and to understand why giving back is important. Millennials need to feel connected to the cause, so museums should share their stories and center their programming around the mission of the organization. By incorporating the message of philanthropy into programming, the museum will be able to develop deeper ties with young adult members, thereby increasing affinity and likelihood of contributing at a later time when they have funds to give. Generosity is what we are attempting to cultivate by educating members about the needs of the museum, which is a way of living and a practice that must be nurtured (King, 2016). It can also deepen as individuals advance their relationship with an organization and provide personal fulfillment and purpose to their lives (Smith & Davidson, 2014). Incorporating impact messaging

about how gifts through membership support the museum and to what extent the museum is contributing to the community—as well as providing opportunities for young adults to get involved—could change the culture of this group without applied pressure in terms of making a contribution. From the responses to my questions, it is apparent that this message, if communicated now, is quietly shared. Educating the members about the needs of the museum could deepen their tie to the organization and help them understand the value that the museum brings to the community, which should be a point of pride for individuals who join as members of an organization.

Inspiring a Desire to Give Back

Even though the members of the Avant-Garde whom I interviewed seemed interested in programs that discuss philanthropy and would perhaps consider an additional gift for the purchase of an acquisition, most of the members in leadership roles clearly stated at some point in their interview that they do not want to be asked to give in addition to what they are already committing to the museum through their membership. I learned from the staff that these members are already asked to give additional support through an annual fund solicitation, but none of the volunteers in a leadership role even recalled receiving this type of solicitation. One can infer from their lack of knowledge regarding this additional ask that it is either not clearly communicated to the members or they choose to ignore it. One of the ambassadors said, in response to this question,

> I think the understanding is that you're welcome to give more money, and the museum would appreciate it. You can get even more bang for your buck by joining a council, but it's not something that they send which I am glad about.

She goes on to say that she thinks it is a very fine line with development, and the museum needs to consider the fact that the Avant-Garde group is already paying a substantial sum of money for their membership. They know that they are always welcome to give more. She explained, "If I were to get emails about asking for more, [if] it started becoming an expressed thing, that would turn me off." The other ambassador explained, when asked about additional solicitations outside of membership, that she feels like the big thing is to have more people join the Avant-Garde, which she considers to be more effective than additional solicitations of members who have already joined.

In part, I agree with the ambassadors regarding additional solicitations. Perhaps asking for the annual fund is not appropriate for this group, and some of the members may be giving at their maximum capacity considering their age and stage of life. Requesting gifts that further connect the members to the mission of the museum, where they can see their impact, would be more beneficial than an annual fund solicitation. The transactional relationship that is apparent for even the members in leadership roles, however, speaks to a difficult path ahead as the museum tries to build a culture of philanthropy with this group. One of the chairs even described giving without receiving personal benefits as "trading down." She thinks that the museum has to provide benefits to donors in order to attract and retain them. Giving to LACMA, in her opinion, is all about getting something for your gift like access, knowledge, or a peer group, and she is not the only one who feels that way.

When I asked the staff members, they both said that they felt that Avant-Garde members do have a desire to give back; it just may not be a driving factor for everyone who engages. Both staff members said that, over time, they believe that the members' engagement with LACMA

through the program could develop into a deeper connection to the museum that is philanthropic in nature. One staff member said,

> My sense is that they all really believe in what the museum is doing whatever that understanding is. We don't talk about philanthropy as much as we should; we're starting to talk about it more. I think we are looking for the right ways to talk about it. But the institution as a whole I think is still kind of learning how to address impact with its donor base, so it will happen in parallel with that as it gets more sophisticated, I think.

The other staff member explained that many of the members of the Avant-Garde grew up in Los Angeles and have been coming to the museum since they were kids. She said, "LACMA has a special place in their heart," and expressed that she thinks their connection will deepen over time.

To deepen the discussion of giving back and confirm whether or not the staff's assumption regarding giving was true, I decided to ask members directly (in both the interviews and the survey) if their involvement with the program inspires them to give to LACMA in addition to their membership. I received different degrees of confirmation. Some of the volunteers gave a resounding "yes," while others seemed more hesitant. One of the chairs said, "No. I mean, I think that like in the future if I had a disposable budget for donations it would definitely come up on my top donation." Then she explained that, if she did give, she would want to know exactly what her contribution was being used for, which aligns with what the research says about the Millennial Generation as donors. One of the ambassadors is already giving on top of her membership. When asked about giving back, she emphatically stated, "Yes! I don't know how much more I could love LACMA since it's like my childhood museum." The other

ambassador said that she is inspired to be part of the program, which is why she gives, and then explained that, if she had disposable income, she would definitely give more to the museum.

For the survey question, I took it a step further by asking the participants to explain why they gave and how much. Out of the 13 members who answered this question, only three have given additional gifts for their membership in a council or the film club. Many of the members answered "not at this time" but indicated that, in the future, when they have disposable income, they might consider it. I followed with the question "If you have not made a gift in addition to your membership, has the Avant-Garde program inspired you to consider making a gift in the future?" Nine out of 15 members responded "yes" to this question, and three said that they would consider it.

Judging from the answers to the survey questions and the responses from the interviewees, one can presume that the program is, at the very least, inspiring members to consider giving in addition to membership down the road if not currently, which is important. If the program educated its members on philanthropy and provided additional opportunities to engage with the museum more deeply, such as a fundraiser for acquisitions or volunteer opportunities, perhaps members would focus less on the benefits. Members may not know what to give or understand the mission, but at least they are willing to consider supporting the museum in addition to their membership gift, which is encouraging.

Relationship Building Through a Program

As my study is not a longitudinal study over many years, it is impossible to determine whether or not the Avant-Garde program at LACMA is actually building long-term relationships between the museum and the members of this group. I did collect data during my interviews with

regard to the topic of relationship building because I think it is critically important for this program to act as a conduit for philanthropy. Understanding whether members are feeling more connected to the museum through this program and if they will continue to grow in their membership is a way to assess if relationship building is actually happening without tracking it through the years.

I began to investigate this topic by asking the chairs, ambassadors, and staff if they think that the Avant-Garde program is effectively building relationships between the museum and members and if they think that people are feeling connected to LACMA through their membership. What I learned is that the participants do believe that this program is building relationships with the museum despite the fact that this age group is hard to engage with because they are at a very busy time of life. One of the staff members said that she considers relationship building to be LACMA's "biggest challenge" because this group is so busy, and often members do not attend every program. She explained,

> I think if people are willing to stick it through and kind of maintain engagement and stay in the group and make a point to come to the events this is definitely a worthwhile and successful relationship builder for LACMA. But if that's not happening it's challenging, which is why this group has such high attrition.

The other staff member said that she was not sure what percentage of the group would stick around, but she felt that the ones that do would have very strong ties to the museum because of their involvement with the program. The ambassadors and chairs all felt that the program is building relationships with the members, yet they expressed the same concerns about how busy this demographic is, which makes it hard for them to commit.

Following this discussion, I asked those serving in leadership roles about their personal relationships with the museum and whether or not that relationship has changed as a result of their involvement with the Avant-Garde. All of the participants indicated that their involvement with the program had strengthened their ties to the museum. One chair explained, "I go more consistently because of that Avant-Garde programming . . . . Because I've been to the exhibition, I'm able to genuinely express to other people that it was amazing and they should go." Through this statement we learn that the chair feels more confident in sharing about programming with others and engaging with the museum because of her involvement with the Avant-Garde, which demonstrates growth in her relationship with the institution. The other chair said, "I mean, my whole relationship is to Avant-Garde really," which I interpreted to mean that she had a very strong tie with the Avant-Garde but has not explored the museum outside of the program.

In the final question regarding relationship building, I asked the members in leadership roles if they would consider moving to another group at LACMA once they had aged out of the Avant-Garde group. From my interviews with the staff members, I learned that this is one of the greatest challenges of the group. There is no other group at LACMA with programming like the Avant-Garde, so when members age out they often do not move on to another group; it can even be a touchy subject if staff members attempt to move them along. Much to my surprise, all of the members in leadership roles said that they would consider moving up when it was time to do so, and all seemed to have a genuine interest in serving in a leadership role at LACMA someday. One of the chairs even suggested that LACMA create a junior board to engage with young donors to deepen involvement.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

Revisiting the Research Questions

Through qualitative research, this case study described the Avant-Garde program at
LACMA and explored the ways in which young adults are engaged and educated in addition to
identifying how an educational program can inspire future philanthropy and strengthen
relationships between the members and the museum. The educational programs offered provide
experiential learning opportunities that are enriching and enjoyable and that encourage reflection
from which new skills, new attitudes, or new ways of thinking can emerge (Lewis & Williams,
1994). The Avant-Garde is teaching young adults about art at the museum and in the community
in addition to providing encounters with artists, collectors, dealers, and curators. Members are
satisfying the identity-related needs categorized by Falk (2009) through their experiences, and
they value what they are learning in addition to the peer group that is provided and insider access
to the museum. Furthermore, the members' relationships with the museum are strengthening
through their involvement even though many of the participants do not understand the impact
that the museum has on the community. Through this study, I set out to answer the following
questions:

1. What are young adults learning through their participation in this program?

2. What meanings do young adults attach to their museum experiences?

3. How can an educational program inspire future philanthropy and strengthen
   relationships between the members of the program and the museum?

In the following section, I explain my findings, make recommendations to strengthen the Avant-Garde program and for other museums who are interested in creating a program or revamping a current program to engage this demographic. I also describe the implications of the study and offer recommendations for further research.

Review of the Findings

In Chapter 4, I described the program to the best of my ability using the data I gathered from observation, documentation, interviews and a survey. I defined the demographics of the group, the structure of the program, the program's history and its educational components. I discovered that members join and continue to participate for a multitude of reasons not limited to learning about art and collecting. They also value the community that the Avant-Garde provides of like-minded peers interested in the arts, the exclusive access to museum and art world events and their association with the LACMA brand. When I asked specifically what motivates their participation, most members indicated that they participate because of their friends, which reemphasizes the value that Millennials place on their friend network and being social (Barton, Fromm, & Egan, 2012; Fromm, Lindell, & Decker, 2011; U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 2014). Very few members mentioned supporting the organization as a reason for their involvement, although this could change if the staff strengthens the culture of philanthropy by implementing new programming, impact messaging and opportunities to deepen engagement through volunteering.

In Chapter 5, I explored what young adults are learning through their participation in the program, and I explained why variety in programming is important and described the type of educational setting that is preferred by this specific age demographic. I discovered that the

members are learning through various types of programs that are tied to specific learning

objectives not limited to a traditional education in art within the museum setting. The Avant-

Garde program is multifaceted and designed to facilitate learning opportunities at LACMA,

within the art community, and outside of the museum that directly connect back to the museum.

Not only are members learning about art, but they are also exploring the Los Angeles gallery

scene, visiting with artists in their studios, learning about the actual process of making art,

hearing from private collectors about how they formed their collections and why they chose

certain objects, and learning from curatorial staff about museum exhibitions including but not

limited to detailed information about the artists featured in each show. The different types of

programs provided are all forms of experiential learning, which is considered the most suitable

type of learning for this specific demographic. According to the study conducted by Goldseker

and Moody (2013) the Millennial Generation considers experiential learning the most powerful

and consequential tool for evolving their understandings of philanthropy. They not only learn

from these experiences, but they are also motivated by them. The literature reviewed also

suggested that Millennials prefer a more collaborative approach to learning and that they want to

be heard, recognized, and included in the process of learning (Buttner, 2004; Conklin, 2012;

Gernhart, 2016). The Avant-Garde program is uniquely positioned to provide this type of casual,

educational setting that is conducive to dialog with peers, which satisfies the needs of the

members. Furthermore, the variety in programming is also important to this age group because

they prefer tailored learning experiences that can be customized to meet individualized needs.

In Chapter 6, I explored the meanings and values that members attach to their

experiences at the museum through the Avant-Garde program. I learned that the program is

satisfying all of the identity-related needs of the members who participated in the study, and the

need to be spiritually rejuvenated or recharged is the most prevalent need that members are seeking to fulfill. Satisfying museum experiences provide benefits for the members beyond the experience itself, benefits that affect their ongoing well-being when they leave the museum and return to their everyday lives. The educational programs offered by the Avant-Garde are not only satisfying the identity-related roles, but they are also fostering social interaction and encouraging discovery. The members value the knowledge that they acquire through the program, and that knowledge is what makes the program so meaningful to them.

In Chapter 7, I investigated the ways in which the Avant-Garde program is building a culture of philanthropy through the education and engagement of its members. What I learned through my research is that only a transactional type of giving has been discussed with the members, and soliciting them for annual fund contributions is not an effective way to encourage them to give more. The message of philanthropy is not currently communicated through the program or, quite possibly, the members simply do not understand what is meant by philanthropy. To deepen the engagement of the Avant-Garde members, this needs to improve and be worked into the messaging about the program as well as its content. Even though the actual conversation about giving was a rather touchy subject for some of the members, all of the participants seemed open to learning about the museum's programs and how it is serving the community as well as the new building campaign. Furthermore, both staff members, when asked about improving the program, mentioned that the philanthropic messaging could be stronger and were open to weaving that messaging more deeply into the program.

Since this study was not longitudinal, it was impossible to determine accurately whether the Avant-Garde program is building sustainable, long-term relationships with its members. However, I learned from the members interviewed that their relationships with the museum have

deepened through their involvement, and they fully intend to continue supporting the group and to move into the next level patron group when they age out of this program. Therefore, the program is strengthen relationships between the museum and members in leadership roles within the group, but without further investigation I cannot say to what extent it is strengthen relationships with all of the members of the group.

Recommendations for Strengthening the Program

From this investigation of the Avant-Garde program at LACMA, I conclude that the educational programs offered to members can build a culture of philanthropy if the members value the knowledge they acquire through the program and feel connected to the museum. The educational components are meeting the needs of the Millennial learners and providing meaningful opportunities to engage with the museum and to learn about the art. Furthermore, the program is building relationships for the museum, but it could accomplish this goal to a greater degree if the culture of philanthropy was strengthened.

The few recommendations that I offer to improve the Avant-Garde program relate to relationship building and philanthropy. First and foremost, to build a culture of philanthropy it is important for the staff to take a donor-centered approach with the members of this program, which means focusing on meeting the needs of the generation it serves. Second, the mission of the museum needs to be out front and communicated through the Avant-Garde programming, so that members have an understanding of the bigger picture and the impact of their giving. Offering substantial volunteer opportunities that align with the mission would also deepen the members' engagement with the museum and help solidify their commitment. Finally, ramping up the group's social media presence would increase engagement with this group because it is a

significant part of their generational culture and how they prefer to communicate. It would also

provide a space for members to connect with each other and the museum as well as a place for

members to tell their stories and share the successes and the needs of the museum with their

networks.

Taking a Donor-Centered Approach

To cultivate this group successfully and further strengthen their relationships with the

museum, it is important to understand the factors that motivate them to get involved in the first

place and to consider these factors when implementing a donor-centered approach to

engagement. This study revealed that most members join the Avant-Garde and are motivated to

stay involved for the following reasons. They take pleasure in learning about art and how to

collect it. They desire a peer group of like-minded individuals interested in art. They enjoy the

exclusive access to the museum and art world events, and they value the LACMA brand. Very

few considered supporting the organization as a motivating factor for joining or staying involved,

which indicates that the museum in not taking a donor-centered approach if the members do not

even see themselves as donors.

In the literature review, Axelrad (2016) offered a few recommendations to establish a

donor-centered approach that I think are applicable to the Avant-Garde program. First, she

suggested offering engagement opportunities that enable individuals to share their interests and

creative pursuits, network with others, and show off their skills are all important variables to

consider when engaging with Millennials. They are motivated by continual learning, so offering

programs that allow them to develop new interests and build skills will help the museum build

relationships with them (Axelrad, 2016). They also want to be considered partners, so the staff

needs to ask them for advice and feedback (Axelrad, 2016; Davis, 2012; Goldseker & Moody,

2013). Furthermore, the Millennials need to be incentivized now to encourage future giving, so

thanking them promptly and showing the impact of their philanthropy will deepen their

connection to the museum. By taking note of Axelrad's recommendations, perhaps the Avant-

Garde members will begin to consider supporting the organization as a reason for joining and

feel motivated to stay involved because of the good work that LACMA is doing in the

community.

Focus on the Mission

Through conducting this study, it became apparent that the members of the Avant-Garde

are not well versed in the mission of the museum or its civic responsibility, but all who

participated in this study were interested in learning more about the role that the museum plays

in the community and how they can help. Since the Millennial Generation literature emphatically

stated that members of this generation support causes that they believe in, positioning the

mission out front in the programming and the literature for this group would assist the museum

in building and potentially strengthening the museum's relationship with members and could

eventually foster patronage (Davis, 2012; King, 2016; Lancaster & Stillman, 2002; Stone, 2009).

Incorporating programming that focuses on the mission of the museum such as opportunities to

see school programs in action or offering a program focused on the new building campaign could

further engage this demographic and create a feeling of partnership.

The Millennials want to be in the know and feel as though they are connecting with the

organization (King, 2016; Stone, 2009). Therefore, the Avant-Garde members' relationships with

the museum must move beyond the benefits and the discussion of upgrading for them to see the

true value of their involvement and understand why giving back is important. Incorporating the message of philanthropy into the programming will deepen their understanding and strengthen their tie to the museum, thereby increasing affinity and the likelihood of contributions in the future. In addition, incorporating stories of impact—such as how their gifts through membership support the museum and to what extent the museum is contributing to the community—could change the culture of this group without applied pressure to make a contribution. From the responses of the participants, it became evident that the message of philanthropy and the mission of the museum, if communicated now, is quietly shared. Educating the members about the needs of the museum could foster future gifts and help the members understand the value that the museum brings to the community, which should be a point of pride for all donors.

Volunteering Strengthens Ties

Everything begins with engagement, and there are very few opportunities other than attending programs that allow for the members of the Avant-Garde to become more deeply involved with LACMA. Millennials want to know that they are aligning themselves with a larger mission when they give to an organization. They genuinely want to feel connected, and giving time is one of the ways they can fulfill this need. Studies show that individuals who volunteer are more likely to donate, and the Millennial Generation is more prone to this type of behavior than any other generation in history (Davis, 2012; King, 2016; Stone, 2009). Davis (2012) explained that in 2010 alone, 11.6 million Millennials dedicated 1.2 billion hours of service to communities across the country. She advised that fundraising staff take notice and spend more time with younger volunteers to cultivate long-term donor relationships.

The literature reviewed about the Millennials and philanthropy, as well as Auerbach (2014) and Axelrad's (2015; 2016) guidelines regarding building a culture of philanthropy, suggested that presenting opportunities for members to volunteer could potentially deepen their relationship with an organization. Furthermore, in the interviews with Avant-Garde members, some participants expressed an interest in becoming more deeply engaged through volunteering. Goldseker & Moody (2013) stated in their study,

> The next generation of donors, more than the previous generations, seek out, and learn from meaningful, hands-on engagement in their philanthropy. They are eager for experiences that can help them become more strategic philanthropists. They want to be proactive, to build new skills, and to develop greater leadership capacities. They are not only willing but also enthusiastic about learning new and non-traditional ways of creating change in today's fast-paced and evolving world. (p. 64)

If given opportunities for volunteering, even if those opportunities are outside of the Avant-Garde program, members will feel more personally fulfilled through their engagement and more deeply connected to the museum and its mission. Perhaps LACMA could offer opportunities for members to engage with some of the educational programs at the museum or support an event such as a fundraiser? Another way might be to establish a junior board or committees that can actively go out and build membership for the Avant-Garde. Volunteer opportunities that give members responsibility and authority and that have a purpose and a goal are the most beneficial types and will be the most rewarding for members. Regardless, any volunteer opportunity that allows Millennials to engage more deeply with the organization would assist the museum in strengthening relationships with this demographic and in building a culture of philanthropy.

It Pays to Be Social

In the post–digital revolution world, everyone has access to information, which has fundamentally changed communication. The networked nature of the Millennial Generation has been noted in all of the research on this generational cohort. They are considered the Facebook generation, the generation that thinks of "friends" as the extended network they connect with daily around the country, not just the people they hang out with in person (Barton, Fromm, & Egen, 2012; Howe & Strauss, 2000; Pew Research Center, 2010). They share their own experiences, encourage others to give and volunteer, and recommend causes or organizations through their networks. When they find an organization that they believe in, they consider it "good philanthropic practice" to share that information and encourage others to join in, which is why having an established social media presence and communicating through multiple channels is very important if the goal is to deepen a museum's connection with the Millennials (Goldseker & Moody, 2013, p. 54).

While building the case for the Avant-Garde, I learned that this program is lacking in terms of its presence online and in its communication through social media channels. I learned from internal documents and staff interviews that the staff has developed a plan to elevate the Avant-Garde's online presence, but not much has been done thus far. The Avant-Garde has a Facebook page that is not very active, and the group is rarely featured in LACMA's museum wide post. The literature I reviewed about Millennials specifically encouraged organizations to consider connecting with young adults through all channels, especially social media and the internet, because this type of interaction resonates with them (Fromm et al., 2011; U. S. Chamber of Commerce, 2014). Furthermore, social media is now considered a primary tool for communicating with patrons, and its presence has drastically changed the way patrons engage

with organizations and also how they gather and process information (Davis, 2012; Dixon & Keyes, 2013). Activities such as volunteering and promoting the organization through social media are no longer considered bottom-tier engagement; instead, they are valued equally to financial contributions at some institutions. Engagement at any level is beneficial to the museum, and ensuring that the messaging on the website and through social media is clear, concise, and welcoming is important, especially for young adults.

Social media is about sharing content, but it is also about relationship building. It is important to view social media as a two-way conversation: providing content and involving the audience. The website should include the mission statement, how donations are used or impact is made, volunteer opportunities, videos and pictures, and the events calendar. Social media should provide a place to connect with individuals in the group as well as the museum at large. The Millennials are very tech savvy; they know how to utilize and understand technology more than any other generation. Tapping into their intuitive knowledge by offering opportunities to use it on behalf of your cause could strengthen their relationship with the museum and bring in new potential members through their network.

Recommendations for Museums

Successful museum programs provide opportunities for people to construct connections between the museum experience and their lives and allow for the personalization of information presented. They also satisfy the identity-related needs that the individual seeks to fulfill when entering the museum and provide learning opportunities that are personally enriching and enjoyable for all. As other museums consider creating programs to engage the Millennial Generation, it is imperative that they consider the ways in which this generation prefers to be

engaged and educated so that the offerings meet the needs of this specific demographic. Presenting a variety of educational opportunities in settings that are conducive to dialog allow for the Millennials to customize their experience and engage in a deep and meaningful way with the museum and others.

To build a culture of philanthropy through this type of program, I advise that the staff administering the program take a donor-centered approach with the members, which I also recommended to strengthen the Avant-Garde program. Also the mission of the museum should be considered when creating the program and its educational content and in the communication strategies for the members, so they have an understanding of the bigger picture and the impact of their giving. To capture the attention and interest of the Millennial Generation, I also suggest that museums create volunteer opportunities that align with the mission and an engaging and dynamic online presence through their website and through social media.

Implications of the Study and Recommendations for Future Research

This case study provides a thorough description of an established style of educational programming for young adults that is currently found at many museums across the country. It offers an in-depth analysis of the program's educational components and engagement activities grounded in educational theory and an understanding of the needs and values of the Millennial Generation, which is the specific demographic that the museum is intending to reach. Even though my findings may not be applicable to all museums, the template created through this case can be used by other museums to facilitate such a program and to explain how to educate and engage the next generation of patrons.

To my knowledge, this study is the first of its kind to thoroughly investigate this type of program, and it is also the first study to evaluate the educational components of a program designed to build relationships developed by a development department. I acknowledge that the review of one museum program cannot be generalized to explain how museums across the nation are engaging and educating young adults nor can best practices be determined due to the scope of my research. However, I consider the template created through this case study a significant contribution to the field of museum education and to the field of development, because this type of program has not been reviewed or assessed before.

To further understand the value of this specific type of educational program and whether or not it is truly fostering future patronage for the museum, it would be beneficial to conduct a longitudinal study of the Avant-Garde program at LACMA to see if indeed the members are engaging more deeply with the museum overtime and becoming patrons of the institution. It would also significantly add to the research on this topic if multiple cases at different museums were studied together and compared over time. Then and only then could the research clearly define best practices in museum education with regard to engaging and educating the Millennial Generation.

Additionally, this study was the first study, to my knowledge, to investigate how education can encourage philanthropy and the intimate relationship between these two important variables. The findings demonstrate that this connection needs to be further explored, as education and philanthropy are intimately connected in the museum setting. Further research in the field of museum education as its relates to philanthropy could improve the programming offered at museums for patrons across the nation, encourage more collaboration between the membership and development departments at museums, and increase the education department's

visibility within the museum and outside of the museum with patrons, which could potentially increase the funding for educational programs.

This study also proves that one of the identity-related needs that members fulfill through their participation in this program is rejuvenation and restoration. Packer (2008) argued that the concept of the museum as a restorative environment, which enables visitors to relax and recover from the stresses of life, is worthy of further research attention. I concur with her recommendation. Packer (2008) and Rodgers (2002) both highlight the importance of restoration as an outcome of the museum visit, and Prensky (2001b) expressed his concern for the lack of critical thinking and reflection due to shifts in the classroom to satisfy Millennial learners. Deepening our understanding of how the museum can satisfy this identity-related need for visitors and members could further enrich the museum experience for individuals and deepen their relationships with the museum.

The most enduring organizations understand that to bring in and sustain donor investments you need to build relationships. It is not a transactional process; it is a transformational progression. Through the education and engagement of members, experiential-learning programs like the Avant-Garde can build relationships for the museum and create a culture of philanthropy if the messaging is right and the members are taking an active role in their engagement. If the Avant-Garde program at LACMA continues to provide vibrant educational programs and it incorporates ways for members to get involved that are meaningful and enriching, this program will be better able to build a culture of philanthropy successfully and deepen the ties between the museum and the young adult members of this group. Building a culture of philanthropy through this program could eventually secure the financial future of the

museum. Investing in the next generation of donors should be a significant part of the institutional plan for every museum, because they are the future.

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APPENDIX A

MEMBER CONSENT FORM

**Building a Culture of Philanthropy Through the Education and
Engagement of Young Adults at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art**

Researcher's Statement
I am asking you to take part in a research study. Before you decide to participate in this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. This form is designed to give you information about the study. Please take the time to read the following information carefully, and ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information. When all your questions have been answered, you can decide if you want to be in the study or not. This process is called "informed consent." A copy of this form will be given to you.

Principal Investigator: Dr. Carole Henry
           Professor Emeritus of Art
           Art Education
           Lamar Dodd School of Art
           ckhenry@uga.edu
           706-783-5490

Co-Investigator: Caroline Maddox
           Graduate Student in Art
           Art Education
           Lamar Dodd School of Art
           ccm@uga.edu
           478-542-1119

Purpose of the Study

Since the 1990s, many museums have committed resources to growing and diversifying their audiences through outreach efforts and by offering of a variety of programs designed to engage different groups within the population. As a result, most museums today have much larger audiences than they had fifty years ago, but their growth in number has not necessarily coincided with the diversification of their audience. The narrow socio-demographic group that continues to be the largest most engaged and philanthropic subset of the museum's audience consists of individuals who identify as middle to upper class Caucasians over the age of 50. Their contributions provide a significant amount of the financial support needed for programming, education, and acquisition of works of art; therefore, museum are reliant upon this group for the funding needed to continue to operate.

As the donor population continues to age and the need for financial support grows, museums are becoming increasingly concerned about the absence of participation from young adults in their communities. Without patrons, there will be no funding for educational programming in the future. Without programming, the museum cannot fulfill its mission, which is to educate. If the next generation does not develop an affinity for museums and an understanding of the important societal role that they play in creating cultural consciousness and preserving heritage, they may choose not to financially support these institutions which could lead to many museums closing.

In response to this growing concern, museums across the nation have developed new programs for young adults, because they recognize that "buy in" from the next generation is mandatory for the future health and vitality of their organization. Researchers in education have not explored this type of programming specifically designed to meet the needs of young adults, perhaps because it originated from the membership department at most museums instead of the education department. For this reason, I am conducting a descriptive case study at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art to identify and explain the ways in which their program for young adults called the Avant-Garde is educating and engaging its members. Through interviews, observations, surveys and collecting materials, I plan to develop an understanding of the program and its effectiveness. I intend to find out what young adults are learning through this type of program and if members are benefiting from the educational opportunities provided. I would like to understand the meanings and values that young adults attach to their museum experiences and explore the role that educational programming plays in facilitating the growth of relationships for the museum.

Study Procedures
If you agree to participate, I ask that you contribute to this study by allowing me to conduct a formal 45-minute interview. During the interview, you will be asked personal questions relating to your interest in the program, your relationship with the museum, and what you have learned through your experiences.
Risks and discomfort
I do not see any foreseeable risk or discomforts associated with this study.

Benefits
Participants in this study will receive no direct benefit from their involvement, but they will have the satisfaction of knowing that they are assisting in the development of scholarship that may transform the way in which museums engage their generation and the ones that follow. The research findings could also potentially assist in securing the financial future of other museums by providing a path to which others may follow to engage their next generation of patrons. This study will contribute to the scholarship is the areas of art education, museum education and development.

Audio/Video Recording
Audio recordings will be used during the interview process. After the study is completed, the original audio will be destroyed, and the recordings will be archived in the form of transcripts.

Please provide initials below if you agree to have this interview audio recorded. You may still participate in this study even if you are not willing to have the interview recorded.

_____I am willing to have this interview recorded.

_____I do not want to have this interview recorded.

Privacy/Confidentiality
I intend to use pseudonyms for my interview participants to protect the participant's privacy and maintain confidentiality. The individually identifiable data collected will be used by the researcher to develop and analyze the program. It will be stored on my personal USB device, cell phone recording app and my home computer. The project's research records may be reviewed by departments at the University of Georgia responsible for regulatory and research oversight. The researcher will not release identifiable results of the study to anyone other than individuals working on the project without your written consent unless required by law.

Taking part is voluntary
Your involvement in the study is voluntary, and you may choose not to participate or to stop at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

If you decide to stop or withdraw from the study, the information/data collected from or about you up to the point of your withdrawal will be kept as part of the study and may continue to be analyzed.

If you have questions
The main researcher conducting this study is Dr. Carole Henry, a professor emeritus and Caroline Maddox, a graduate student at the University of Georgia. Please ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact Dr. Carole Henry at ckhenry@uga.edu or at 706-783-5490 or Caroline Maddox at ccm@uga.edu or at 478-542-1119. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a research participant in this study, you may contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) Chairperson at 706.542.3199 or irb@uga.edu.

Research Subject's Consent to Participate in Research:
To voluntarily agree to take part in this study, you must sign on the line below. Your signature below indicates that you have read or had read to you this entire consent form, and have had all of your questions answered.

_____   _____   _____
Name of Researcher   Signature   Date

_____   _____   _____
Name of Participant   Signature   Date

Please sign both copies, keep one and return one to the researcher.

APPENDIX B

MEMBER RECRUITMENT LETTER

Dear (Member of Avant-Garde),

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my study at the University of Georgia titled Building a Culture of Philanthropy Through the Education and Engagement of Young Adults at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

Through a descriptive case study, I will investigate the ways in which the Avant-Garde engages and educates its members to build relationships for the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Through interviews, observations, surveys, and the collection of materials, I hope to develop an understanding of the program and its effectiveness in terms of educating, engaging, and building relationships with LACMA's young adult members. The research questions that I seek to answer through this interview are as follows:

1. What meanings do young adults attach to their museum experiences?

2. Do young adults value the knowledge that they acquire through this program?

3. Does the programming fulfill the identity related needs that a participant seeks to satisfy through their museum experiences?

4. Does the program stress the importance of philanthropy for the future of the museum and encourage its members to consider patronage?

I ask that you contribute to this study by allowing me to conduct a formal 45-minute interview. During the interview, you will be asked personal questions relating to your interest in the program, your relationship with the museum, and what you have learned through your experiences at the museum.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to withdraw your participation at any time should you become uncomfortable with it. All information will be confidential, and pseudonyms will be used in the transcription from the interview. I will delete or destroy the audio file at the completion of the project.

The main researcher conducting this study is Dr. Carole Henry, a professor emeritus of art education, and Caroline Maddox, a graduate student at the University of Georgia. If you have questions later, you may contact Dr. Carole Henry at ckhenry@uga.edu or at 706-783-5490 or Caroline Maddox at ccm@uga.edu or at 478-542-1119. If you have any questions or concerns

regarding your rights as a research participant in this study, you may contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) Chairperson at 706-542-3199 or irb@uga.edu.

I hope you will enjoy this opportunity to share your experiences and viewpoints with us. Thank you very much for assisting me with my research through your participation.

APPENDIX C

MEMBER INTERVIEW GUIDE

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my study titled Building a Culture of Philanthropy Through the Education and Engagement of Young Adults at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Since the 1990s, many museums have committed resources to growing and diversifying their audiences through outreach efforts and by offering of a variety of programs designed to engage different groups within the population. As a result, museums today have much larger audiences than they had 50 years ago, but their growth in number has not necessarily coincided with the diversification of their audience. The narrow socio-demographic group that continues to be the largest, most engaged, and philanthropic subset of the museum's audience consists of individuals who identify as middle to upper class Caucasians over the age of 50. Their contributions provide a significant amount of the financial support needed for programming, education, acquisitions; therefore, museum are reliant upon them for the funding needed to continue to operate.

As museum supporters continue to age and the need for financial support grows, museums are becoming increasingly concerned about the absence of participation from young adults in their communities. Without patrons, there will be no funding for educational programming in the future. Without programming, the museum cannot fulfill its mission, which is to educate. If the next generation does not develop an affinity for museums and an understanding of the important societal role that they play in creating cultural consciousness and preserving heritage, they may choose not to financially support these institutions which could lead to many museums closing.

In response to this growing concern, museums across the nation have developed new programs for young adults, because they recognize that "buy in" from the next generation is mandatory for the future health and vitality of their organization. Researchers in education have not explored this type of programming specifically designed to meet the needs of young adults, perhaps because it originated out of membership instead of the education department at most museums. For this reason, I am conducting a descriptive case study at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art to identify and explain the ways in which their program for young adults called the Avant-Garde is educating and engaging its members. Through interviews, observations, surveys and collecting materials, I plan to develop an understanding of the program and its effectiveness. I intend to find out what young adults are learning through this type of program and if members are benefiting from the educational opportunities provided. I would like to understand the meanings and values that young adults attach to their museum experiences and explore the role that educational programming plays in facilitating the growth of relationships for the museum.

I believe that the style of educational programs and the messaging of those who run the program can significantly impact whether or not the program is successful at engaging the audience it intends to reach. Museum relationships begin with positive museum experience and the

fulfillment of identity-related needs through those experiences. My study will be useful to museums who struggle to connect with young audiences, because it will explore and describe the programming offered at the LACMA for this underserved subset of the population and reveal the ways in which the Avant-Garde educates and enriches the lives of the young adults who join. I ask that you contribute to this study by answering a series of questions relating to your interest in the Avant-Garde, your relationship with the museum, and what you have learned through the experiences provided by this program. This interview will be recorded. Before we begin the interview, I would like to remind you that the information you share during the interview will be kept confidential as explained in the consent form. I will not use your name or any other identifying information about you that might allow someone to figure out who you are. Feel free to skip any questions you do not want to answer, and at any time you may end the interview. I anticipate that the interview will take approximately 45 minutes. Though I will be asking you questions, if at any time you have questions throughout the interview, please feel free to ask. Do you have any questions before we begin?

Interview Question 1:
What interests you about the art museum?

1. Why do you visit the museum and with whom?
2. Do you attend programs offered by LACMA? If so, what kind?

Interview Question 2:
Explain your involvement with the Avant-Garde.

1. Why did you join?
2. Why did you decide to take a leadership role with this group?
3. Explain your role as you understand it within the group.
4. What is the purpose of your role?
5. What do you see as the greatest personal benefit of your involvement?

Interview Question 3:
What barriers do you think are keeping young adults from participating in museum activities nationwide?

1. Studies show that your demographic is the least invested in museums currently. Do you agree with this statement? If so, why do you think it is true?
2. What other leisure activities do you believe museums are competing with?

Interview Question 4:
From your perspective, how can we make the museum more accessible to young adults?

1. Do you think LACMA is reaching the young adult population in Los Angeles through the Avant-Garde program?
2. Do you think the Avant-Garde is building relationships for the museum?
3. Are there any aspects of the programming that you think could be improved? If so, please explain why.

Interview Question 5:
What kind of educational programs do you think best engage young adults?
    1. Do you think informal learning opportunities and experiences serve this audience best? If so, please explain why. An example would be a cocktail hour with an opportunity to view an exhibition independently.
    2. Do you think that young adults enjoy formal learning opportunities such as lectures? Please elaborate why or why not.
    3. From your perspective, is it important to have a variety of programs? Please explain your answer.
    4. Do you think it is essential to offer individualized and unique experiences with art objects to encourage the participation of young adults? Please explain.

Interview Question 6:
Is educating members about the needs of the museum part of the Avant-Garde program?

    1. Is philanthropy a discussion topic at any of the Avant-Garde programs that you have experienced?
    2. Are members ever asked to contribute more than their membership dues?
    3. Do you receive information about giving?
    4. What do you think is the best way to relay the message of philanthropy to this group?
    5. In your leadership role, do you encourage others to give?

Interview Question 7:
Researchers say that there are five identity-related needs that can be met through a museum experience. The meanings that visitors attach to their experiences are shaped by expectations or the feeling of fulfillment related to these specific identity-related roles. Please identify if your participation in the Avant-Garde program satisfies one or many of your identity-related needs.

    1. Through your participation in the Avant-Garde program you are intellectually challenged? Do you feel intellectually stimulated by the programming?
    2. Are able to enjoy the museum with your family and friends either during Avant-Garde programs or on separate trips to the museum through your involvement? Explain.
    3. Are you fulfilling a personal desire to see something new through this program? Are you offered an exemplary experience that you find personally satisfying?
    4. Through the program you are able to fulfill specific intellectual needs?
    5. Do you see the program as a place to escape and be intellectually and spiritually rejuvenated? Why or why not?

Interview Question 8:
Joining the Avant-Garde has a cost, and benefits are offered to its members in exchange for the membership fees. What do you think members value most about this program?

    1. Do you think they value their relationship with LACMA staff? Why or why not?
    2. Do you think they value the knowledge acquired through the programming? Explain.
    3. Do you think the relationships made with their peers through the program are valued?

4. What do you value from this program?

Interview Question 9:
How has your relationship with LACMA changed through your involvement with the Avant-Garde?

1. Does this program inspire you to give? Please explain why or why not.
2. Do you feel closer to LACMA as a result of your involvement with the Avant-Garde? If so, explain in what ways.
3. If asked, would you consider taking a leadership role such as a trustee position at LACMA in the future?
4. Do you think you will move to the next level of giving once you are no longer within the age range to be a member of the Avant-Garde?

Wrap-Up: Thank you for sharing your thoughts and experiences with me. I really appreciate your insight and the time you spent with me today. Is there anything you would like to ask that we have not covered? If I have any follow-up questions later, may I contact you again?

APPENDIX D

STAFF CONSENT FORM

**Building a Culture of Philanthropy Through the Education and
Engagement of Young Adults at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art**

Researcher's Statement
I am asking you to take part in a research study. Before you decide to participate in this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. This form is designed to give you the information about the study, so you can decide whether to be in the study or not. Please take the time to read the following information carefully. Please ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information. When all your questions have been answered, you can decide if you want to be in the study or not. This process is called "informed consent." A copy of this form will be given to you.

Principal Investigator:	Dr. Carole Henry
	Professor Emeritus of Art
	Art Education
	Art Education- Lamar Dodd School of Art
	ckhenry@uga.edu
	706-783-5490
Co-Investigator:	Caroline Maddox
	Graduate Student in Art Education
	ccm@uga.edu
	478-542-1119

Purpose of the Study

Since the 1990s, many museums have committed resources to growing and diversifying their audiences through outreach efforts and by offering of a variety of programs designed to engage different groups within the population. As a result, museums today have much larger audiences than they had fifty years ago, but their growth in number has not necessarily coincided with the diversification of their audience. The narrow socio-demographic group that continues to be the largest, most engaged, and philanthropic subset of the museum's audience consists of individuals who identify as middle to upper class Caucasians over the age of 50. Their contributions provide a significant amount of the financial support needed for programming, education, acquisitions; therefore, museum are reliant upon them for the funding needed to continue to operate.

As museum supporters continue to age and the need for financial support grows, museums are becoming increasingly concerned about the absence of participation from young adults in their

communities. Without patrons, there will be no funding for educational programming in the future. Without programming, the museum cannot fulfill its mission, which is to educate. If the next generation does not develop an affinity for museums and an understanding of the important societal role that they play in creating cultural consciousness and preserving heritage, they may choose not to financially support these institutions, which could lead to many museums closing. In response to this growing concern, museums across the nation have developed new programs for young adults, because they recognize that "buy in" from the next generation is mandatory for the future health and vitality of their organization. Researchers in education have not explored this type of programming specifically designed to meet the needs of young adults, perhaps because it originated out of membership instead of the education department at most museums. For this reason, I am conducting a descriptive case study at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art to identify and explain the ways in which their program for young adults called the Avant-Garde is educating and engaging its members. Through interviews, observations, surveys, and collecting materials, I plan to develop an understanding of the program and its effectiveness. I intend to find out what young adults are learning through this type of program and if members are benefiting from the educational opportunities provided. I would like to understand the meanings and values that young adults attach to their museum experiences and explore the role that educational programming plays in facilitating the growth of relationships for the museum.

Study Procedures
If you agree to participate, I ask that you contribute to this study by allowing me to conduct a formal 45-minute interview. During the interview, you will be asked questions about the history of the program, how it developed, its educational initiatives, and any outcomes that have been realized since its inception.

Risks and discomfort
I do not see any foreseeable risk or discomforts associated with this study.

Benefits
Participants in this study will receive no direct benefit from their involvement, but they will have the satisfaction of knowing that they are assisting in the development of scholarship that may transform the way in which museums engage their generation and the ones that follow. The research findings could also potentially assist in securing the financial future of other museums by providing a path to which others may follow to engage their next generation of patrons. This study will contribute to the scholarship is the areas of art education, museum education and development.

Audio/Video Recording
Audio recordings will be used during the interview process. After the study is completed, the original audio will be destroyed, and the recordings will be archived in the form of transcripts.

Please provide initials below if you agree to have this interview audio recorded or not. You may still participate in this study even if you are not willing to have the interview recorded.

       _____I do not want to have this interview recorded.
       _____I am willing to have this interview recorded.

Privacy/Confidentiality

I intend to use pseudonyms for my interview participants to protect the participant's privacy and maintain confidentiality. The individually identifiable data collected will be used by the researcher to develop and analyze the program. It will be stored on my personal USB device, cell phone recording app, and my home computer. The project's research records may be reviewed by departments at the University of Georgia responsible for regulatory and research oversight. The researcher will not release identifiable results of the study to anyone other than individuals working on the project without your written consent unless required by law.

Taking part is voluntary

Your involvement in the study is voluntary, and you may choose not to participate or to stop at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

If you decide to stop or withdraw from the study, the information/data collected from or about you up to the point of your withdrawal will be kept as part of the study and may continue to be analyzed.

If you have questions

The main researcher conducting this study is Dr. Carole Henry, a professor emeritus, and Caroline Maddox, a graduate student at the University of Georgia. Please ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact Dr. Carole Henry at ckhenry@uga.edu or at 706-783-5490 or Caroline Maddox at ccm@uga.edu or at 478-542-1119. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a research participant in this study, you may contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) Chairperson at 706.542.3199 or irb@uga.edu.

Research Subject's Consent to Participate in Research:

To voluntarily agree to take part in this study, you must sign on the line below. Your signature below indicates that you have read or had read to you this entire consent form, and have had all of your questions answered.

_____   _____   _____
Name of Researcher   Signature   Date

_____   _____   _____
Name of Participant   Signature   Date

Please sign both copies, keep one and return one to the researcher.

APPENDIX E

STAFF RECRUITMENT LETTER

Dear (Staff Member),
Thank you for agreeing to participate in my study at the University of Georgia titled Building a Culture of Philanthropy Through the Education and Engagement of Young Adults at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

Through a descriptive case study, I will investigate the ways in which the Avant-Garde program engages and educates its members to build relationships for the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Through interviews, observations, surveys, and the collection of materials, I hope to develop an understanding of the program and its effectiveness in terms of educating, engaging and building relationships with LACMA's young adult members. The research questions that I seek to answer through this interview are as follows:

1. What kinds of educational experiences are offered to young adults through the Avant-Garde program at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art?
2. What are the learning objectives of this program?
3. How is the program structured?
4. Does the program stress the importance of philanthropy for the future of the museum and encourage its members to consider patronage?

I ask that you contribute to this study by allowing me to conduct a formal 45-minute interview. During the interview, you will be asked to explain the program, its design, and the learning objectives.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to withdraw your participation at any time should you become uncomfortable with it. All information will be confidential, and pseudonyms will be used in the transcription from the interview. I will delete or destroy the audio-file at the completion of the project.

The main researcher conducting this study is Dr. Carole Henry, a professor emeritus of art education, and Caroline Maddox, a graduate student at the University of Georgia. If you have questions later, you may contact Dr. Carole Henry at ckhenry@uga.edu or at 706-783-5490 or Caroline Maddox at ccm@uga.edu or at 478-542-1119. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a research participant in this study, you may contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) Chairperson at 706-542-3199 or irb@uga.edu.

I hope you will enjoy this opportunity to share your experiences and viewpoints with us. Thank you very much for assisting me with my research through your participation.

APPENDIX F

STAFF INTERVIEW GUIDE

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my study titled Building a Culture of Philanthropy Through the Education and Engagement of Young Adults at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Since the 1990s, many museums have committed resources to growing and diversifying their audiences through outreach efforts and by offering of a variety of programs designed to engage different groups within the population. As a result, museums today have much larger audiences than they had fifty years ago, but their growth in number has not necessarily coincided with the diversification of their audience. The narrow socio-demographic group that continues to be the largest, most engaged, and philanthropic subset of the museum's audience consists of individuals who identify as middle to upper class Caucasians over the age of 50. Their contributions provide a significant amount of the financial support needed for programming, education, acquisitions; therefore, museum are reliant upon them for the funding needed to continue to operate.

As museum supporters continue to age and the need for financial support grows, museums are becoming increasingly concerned about the absence of participation from young adults in their communities. Without patrons, there will be no funding for educational programming in the future. Without programming, the museum cannot fulfill its mission, which is to educate. If the next generation does not develop an affinity for museums and an understanding of the important societal role that they play in creating cultural consciousness and preserving heritage, they may choose not to financially support these institutions which could lead to many museums closing.

In response to this growing concern, museums across the nation have developed new programs for young adults, because they recognize that "buy in" from the next generation is mandatory for the future health and vitality of their organization. Researchers in education have not explored this type of programming specifically designed to meet the needs of young adults, perhaps because it originated out of membership instead of the education department at most museums. For this reason, I am conducting a descriptive case study at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art to identify and explain the ways in which their program for young adults called the Avant-Garde is educating and engaging its members. Through interviews, observations, surveys and collecting materials, I plan to develop an understanding of the program and its effectiveness. I intend to find out what young adults are learning through this type of program and if members are benefiting from the educational opportunities provided. I would like to understand the meanings and values that young adults attach to their museum experiences and explore the role that educational programming plays in facilitating the growth of relationships for the museum.

I believe that the style of educational programs and the messaging of those who run the program can significantly impact whether or not the program is successful at engaging the audience it intends to reach. Museum relationships begin with positive museum experiences and the

fulfillment of identity-related needs through those experiences. My study will be useful to museums who struggle to connect with young audiences because it will explore and describe the programming offered at the LACMA for this underserved subset of the population and reveal the ways in which the Avant-Garde educates and enriches the lives of the young adults who join. I ask that you contribute to this study by answering a series of questions regarding the learning objectives of the Avant-Garde program. I would like for you to explain the program and its design. I would like for you to tell me what you know about its history and how the program has changed over time to accommodate the needs of its members. Finally, I want to know what the overall objective is of this program. This interview will be recorded. Before we begin the interview, I would like to remind you that the information you share during the interview will be kept confidential as explained in the consent form. I will not use your name or any other identifying information about you that might allow someone to figure out who you are. Feel free to skip any questions you do not want to answer, and at any time you may end the interview. I anticipate that the interview will take approximately 45 minutes. Though I will be asking you questions, if at any time you have questions throughout the interview, please feel free to ask. Do you have any questions before we begin?

Interview Question 1:
Please describe the Avant-Garde program at LACMA.
    1. How is the program structured?
    2. What are the benefits of joining?
    3. What kinds of educational opportunities are offered to its members?
    4. Do the programs vary in style and learning objectives? Please explain.

Interview Question 2:
Please share what you know about the history of the Avant-Garde program.
    1. Why was it founded?
    2. Please explain the program's mission. Has it changed over time?
    3. Has the staff changed the programs or the format of certain events to meet the needs of the members? If so, what changes were made and why?
    4. Has membership grown over the years? Please explain why it has or has not.

Interview Question 3:
Why do you think young adults join the Avant-Garde?
    1. Do you think most individuals join to learn about art? If so, what factors allow you to infer that this is a reason for joining?
    2. Do you think young adults join to network? Why or why not? Explain the social aspects of the program.
    3. Do you think members are interested in or have a desire to support LACMA? If so, what factors allow you to infer that members have a philanthropic interest?
    4. Do you think the exclusivity of the program could be a reason that some people choose to join? Please explain why you agree or disagree with this statement.
    5. Do you think there is one motivating factor that is greater than the others? If so, please explain why.

Interview Question 4:
What kind of educational programs do you think best engage young adults?
    1. Do you think informal learning opportunities and experiences serve this audience best? If so, please explain why. An example would be a cocktail hour with an opportunity to view an exhibition independently.
    2. Do you think that young adults enjoy formal learning opportunities such as lectures? Please elaborate why or why not.
    3. From your perspective, is it important to have a variety of programs that seek to accomplish different learning objectives? Please explain your answer.
    4. Do you think it is essential to offer individualized and unique experiences with art objects to encourage the participation of young adults? Please explain.

Interview Question 5:
What kinds of educational opportunities that are offered are unique learning experiences that can only happen through involvement with the Avant-Garde specifically?

Interview Question 6:
Is educating this group about the needs of the museum part of the programming?
    1. Is philanthropy a discussion topic at any of the Avant-Garde programs?
    2. Are members ever asked to contribute more than their membership dues?
    3. Do they receive information about giving?
    4. Would you consider adding a program about giving? Why or why not?
    5. What do you think is the best way to relay the message of philanthropy to this group?

Interview Question 7:
From your perspective, how can we make the museum more accessible to this subset of the population?
    1. Do you think LACMA is reaching the young adult population in Los Angeles?
    2. Do you think the Avant-Garde is building relationships for the museum?
    3. Are there any aspects of the programming that you think could be improved? Explain.

Interview Question 8:
Joining the Avant-Garde has a cost, and benefits are offered to its members in exchange for the membership fees. What do think members value most about this program?
    1. Do you think they value their relationship with LACMA staff? Why or why not?
    2. Do you think they value the knowledge acquired through the programming? Explain.
    3. Do you think the relationships made with their peers through the program are valued?

Wrap-Up: Thank you for sharing your thoughts and experiences with me. I really appreciate your insight and the time you spent with me today. Is there anything you would like to ask that we have not covered? If I have any follow-up questions later, may I contact you?

APPENDIX G

CONSENT LETTER

(Observation and Survey Participants)

Dear Avant-Garde member,

I am a graduate student under the direction of a professor in the area of Art Education at the University of Georgia. I invite you to participate in a doctoral study titled Building a Culture of Philanthropy Through the Education and Engagement of Young Adults at Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Through a descriptive case study, I will investigate the ways in which the Avant-Garde program at LACMA engages and educates its members to build relationships for the museum. Through interviews, observations, surveys and a collection of materials about the program, I hope to develop an understanding of the program and its effectiveness in terms of educating, engaging and building relationships with the young adults.

Your participation will involve being observed during an Avant-Garde event and answering questions through an online survey after the event. The event itself should take about two hours, and the survey should take less than 10 minutes. During the program, I will observe participants and take field notes and photographs with my Iphone to support my notes. The photos taken during the event will be used only as raw data to support my field notes during analysis.

Your involvement in the study is voluntary, and you may choose not to participate or to stop at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you choose to not participate, I ask that you inform me and leave once the observation period begins. If you decide to stop or withdraw from the study, the information/data collected from my observation or about you up to the point of your withdrawal will be kept as part of the study and may continue to be analyzed.

If you choose to participate in the survey online the data collected will be kept confidential and your identity will be protected through anonymity, but Internet communication can be insecure. Therefore, I cannot promise that I will be able to protect confidentiality during the transmission of the survey to the host. The researcher will use the individually identifiable data collected to analyze the program. It will be stored a USB device and my home computer. The project's research records may be reviewed by departments at the University of Georgia responsible for regulatory and research oversight. The researcher will not release identifiable results of the study to anyone other than individuals working on the project without your written consent unless required by law. The results of the research study may be published, but your name or any identifying information will not be used. In fact, the published results will be presented in summary form only.

The findings from this project may provide information on the education and engagement of young adults. There are no known risks or discomforts associated with this research. If you have any questions about this research project, please feel free to call me at 478-542-1119 or send an

e-mail to ccm@uga.edu. You may also contact Dr. Carole Henry at 706-783-5490 or email her at ckhenry@uga.edu. Questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant should be directed to The Chairperson, University of Georgia Institutional Review Board, 629 Boyd GSRC, Athens, Georgia 30602; telephone (706) 542-3199; email address irb@uga.edu.

By receiving this letter and attending the program, you are agreeing to participate in the above described research project. Thank you for your consideration! Please keep this letter for your records.

Sincerely,

Caroline Maddox

APPENDIX H

OBSERVATION PROTOCOL

Questions to Guide My Observation

1. How is the program structured?

2. How many individuals are in the room?

3. Do they appear to be in conversation?

4. Are they listening to the speaker/presenter? Do they seem engaged?

5. Does the program offer a formal or informal learning opportunity?

6. Describe the environment.

7. Is there a vibe in the room?

8. Does it appear that the members present know each another?

9. How long did the group stay?

10. Did the participants enjoy the refreshments?

11. How many participants took handouts or brochures about the museum?

APPENDIX I

SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. How often do you attend LACMA Avant-Garde programs?

- This is my first time attending an Avant-Garde program.
- I attend 2 to 3 Avant-Garde programs each year.
- I attend 4 to 6 Avant-Garde programs each year.
- I attend every Avant-Garde program offered each year.

2. Researchers in the field of Museum Education believe that individuals are motivated to visit museums because they desire to satisfy one of the following identity-related needs. Their fulfillment after their experience is directly connected to whether or not their personal need was met. Please mark which if any identity-related needs you seek to satisfy through your participation in the Avant-Garde program. You may check all that apply.

- I participate in the program because I desire to be intellectually challenged.
- I participate in the program because I enjoy learning in a casual environment that is social with my friends.
- I participate in the program because I am looking for an exemplary experience. I desire to see and learn about something new.
- I participate in the program because it allows me to further a specific intellectual need that relates to my career or a hobby.
- I participate in the program because I am looking to escape my regular routine and be intellectually and spiritually rejuvenated.

3. Please explain how your participation in the Avant-Garde program fulfills this need for you.

4. Excluding the purely social activities of the Avant-Garde such as happy hours and the holiday party, which type of learning experience has been most meaningful to you?

- Artist's studio visits
- Curator-led walkthroughs of current LACMA exhibitions
- Group tours of local art galleries
- Private collection visits

5. Please explain why you find the program you selected most meaningful.

6. Which style of programming do you find to be the most engaging?

- Artist's studio visits
- Curator-led walkthroughs of current LACMA exhibitions
- Group tours of local art galleries
- Private collection visits

7. Why do you find the program that you selected most engaging?

8. On a scale of 1 to 7, with 7 being strongest, please rank what motivates you to attend Avant-Garde programs. Each number can only be used for one answer. In other words, you cannot rank two motivating factors with the same number.

- I enjoy the social aspect of the program.
- I want to network with people in my age group.
- I enjoy meeting people who share a common interest with me.
- I want to learn about art.
- I am interested in collecting art.
- I want to be involved with this organization because of its reputation.
- I was invited by a friend or current member.

9. Would you change anything about tonight's program? If so, what would it be?

10. Has your involvement with the Avant-Garde program inspired you to make an additional gift to LACMA outside of your membership? If so, please explain why you gave, how much, and for what purpose.

11. If you have not made a gift in addition to your membership, has the Avant-Garde program inspired you to consider making a gift in the future?

12. Have you learned about the ways in which you can support the museum through your involvement with the Avant-Garde program? If so, please share what you have learned.

13. Please share any additional comments regarding your experiences with the Avant-Garde program in the space below.

APPENDIX J

AVANT-GARDE
MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Invitations to six to eight exclusive Avant-Garde events per year
- Access to LACMA Travel programs, including art fair credentials for select fairs
- Two LACMA passes to share with family and friends. Enjoy a day of free admission to all museum galleries with these passes, including select specially ticketed exhibitions.
- Four general admission passes to share with family and friends
- One complimentary exhibition catalogue per year, selected by LACMA
- Annual recognition of your generous support in *Insider*, LACMA's magazine for donors

Additional Member Benefits
- One year of free admission for two to LACMA's permanent collection and all specially ticketed exhibitions, as well as reciprocal admission privileges at 24 museums nationwide
- Member Previews of select exhibitions
- Invitations for two to LACMA's popular Art 101 classes
- Opportunity to join LACMA's Acquisitions Groups and Art Councils, which provide unique experiences related to specific curatorial departments (dues support art acquisitions and programming)
- Subscription to Patron News biweekly e-newsletter
- Calendar of events mailed monthly
- Subscription to *Insider*, LACMA's magazine for donors
- Discounts on more than 300 films, concerts, lectures, and classes at LACMA
- 10% discount at the LACMA Store (20% off on Member Shopping Days)
- 10% discount on dinner at Ray's after 6 p.m. (excludes alcohol, tax, and gratuity)
- Opportunity to join Film Club
- Opportunity to purchase an annual parking pass ($70)

APPENDIX K

FY16 AVANT-GARDE CALENDAR

Wednesday, September 9 LACMA | Resnick Pavilion 7–9:30 p.m.	OPENING RECEPTION *Frank Gehry*
Thursday, October 1 Brentwood 7 p.m.	COLLECTION VISIT Join LACMA patrons Teddy and Emily Greenspan for a private collection visit and reception at their home.
Tuesday, October 27 LACMA | Resnick Pavilion 7 p.m.	CURATOR-LED WALKTHROUGH Stephanie Barron, Senior Curator and Department Head of Modern Art, will lead a walk-through of *Frank Gehry*.
Tuesday, December 15 LACMA | BCAM 8 p.m.	HOLIDAY PARTY Celebrate the holidays with an Avant-Garde member-only party featuring a private *Rain Room* experience.

Thursday, January 21 LACMA | Art of the Americas Building 7 p.m.	AVANT-GARDE HAPPY HOUR Invite your friends, grab a drink, mingle with your fellow members and join Christine Y. Kim, associate curator of the Contemporary Art department, for an introduction to *Diana Thater: The Sympathetic Imagination*.
Thursday, March 31 LACMA | Resnick Pavilion 7 p.m.	CURATOR-LED WALKTHROUGH Join Britt Salvesen, curator and head of the Wallis Annenberg Photography department, for a walkthrough of *Robert Mapplethorpe: The Perfect Medium* and *Physical: Sex and the Body in the 1980s*
Wednesday, April 6 LACMA | BCAM 7–9:30 p.m.	OPENING RECEPTION *Reigning Men: Fashion in Menswear, 1715–2015*
Saturday, April 30 Los Angeles 11 a.m.	STUDIO VISIT Rita Gonzalez, curator and acting head of the Contemporary Art department, will lead a studio visit with artist Ry Rocklen
Saturday, May 21 Downtown Los Angeles 11 a.m.	GALLERY TOUR Leslie Jones, curator of the Prints and Drawings department, will lead a tour of galleries in the downtown Los Angeles arts district.