

2020

## Museum Educators' Processes for Creating Inclusive Curricula on American Slavery

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# Walden University

College of Education

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Dawn Chitty

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2020

Abstract

Museum Educators' Processes for Creating Inclusive Curricula on American Slavery

by

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MS, Kaplan University, 2010

BS, College of Charleston, 2008

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

November 2020

## Abstract

To close a gap in the literature, this study sought to develop a deeper understanding of the processes museum educators use to create inclusive curricula on American slavery. The research design was a qualitative, descriptive, multicase study using data collected from a purposefully selected sample of museum educators, along the Eastern Seaboard region of the United States, who had previously created inclusive curricula on slavery. Null's radical curriculum theory formed the conceptual framework for this study. Individual interviews of 11 museum educators were recorded, transcribed, and coded in two cycles, using in vivo and pattern coding methods. Additionally, examples of curricula developed by participants were pattern-coded and analyzed. The study was guided by two research questions on (a) curricula creation processes and (b) participants' beliefs and assumptions about curricula on American slavery. The findings indicate (a) a range of curricula development processes that consider the successes, failures, and challenges of creating a similar type of curriculum in the past and that (b) participants consider learning about slavery to be essential to understanding race relations and issues in today's society. It is critically important to society that museum educators talk openly about difficult topics and develop curricula on them. Curricula on slavery can help stakeholders understand the connection between the historical context of slavery in America and its influence today, thereby promoting social justice and building stronger communities.

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## Dedication

For my grandmother, Bertha Jefferson. My drive to be better began with you. And for history's silenced millions.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Museums are one of the most trusted sources of information; workers have an obligation to provide the public with relevant information and to ensure that the stories told there allow people of all backgrounds to feel included in the nation's history (Bunch, 2017). Some museum workers have neglected to accurately interpret the lives of Blacks in the 19th century and have failed to tell the complete history of slavery in America (Gallas & DeWolf Perry, 2015). Some museum workers have taken steps to provide inclusive curricula on American slavery, but this development is not yet a consistent visitor experience (Grim, 2015). This study focuses on the experiences of museum educators in creating curricula on American slavery.

The work of museum educators to openly talk about difficult topics and to develop curricula on them is a critically important contribution to society that will encourage diversity and inclusion, which in turn creates positive social change (Cairns, 2016). Grim et al. (2017) argued that slavery has been at the center of race relations throughout American history, and engaging learners in the history and legacy of slavery is a significant step in understanding and grappling with its contemporary racial issues. This study has the potential to contribute to knowledge in the museum profession and encourage inclusive practices in curricula creation. The results may lead to positive social change by helping all stakeholders understand the interconnectivity of the historical context of slavery in America and its influence today, promoting social justice causes, and building stronger communities.

Chapter 1 serves as an introduction to the study. This chapter will cover the following topics: the background, problem statement, purpose, research questions, conceptual framework, the nature of the study, definitions, assumptions, scope and delimitations, limitations, and significance.

### **Background**

In this study, I sought to develop a deeper understanding of the processes that museum educators use to create inclusive curricula on American slavery. In 1992, the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) published the landmark report, *Excellence and Equity: Education and the Policy Dimension of Museums*. In this report, the AAM issued a call to make museums more inclusive in order to fulfill their positions as vital institutions in service to society (AAM, 1992). The report stated that the educational role of museums could help to nurture a humane citizenry equipped to address challenges plaguing society today (AAM, 1992).

Some museum educators have neglected to accurately interpret the lives of Blacks in the 19th century or to provide a historically accurate interpretation of slavery in America (Gallas & DeWolf Perry, 2015). According to Gallas and DeWolf Perry (2015), inclusive curriculum models the use of slave narratives and individual experiences of enslaved people and those connected to the institution of slavery. Observations by some museum educators indicate a gap in practice between existing curriculum and research-based recommendations on inclusive curriculum (Forbes Bright, Alderman, & Butler, 2018; J. Williams, personal communication, May 18, 2020). There is a gap in the

literature on the processes used by museum educators in creating inclusive curricula on American slavery (Cairns, 2016; Grim et al., 2017; Taylor, 2017).

In researching 79 museums where former slaveholding plantations existed, Small (2015) discovered that most museum educators either marginalized or symbolically annihilated slavery in their interpretations and educational resources. For example, Small (2015) wrote that at the Antebellum Plantation in Georgia, slavery is marginalized during a tour because it is either mentioned only in passing or not at all, and the lives of slaves are minimized in comparison to the lives of plantation owners. Seymour (2015) noted research on history museums connected to the five Founding Fathers, that interpretation of slavery at the sites lacked nuance and complexity, and that by making little to no mention of slaves in the curriculum or interpretation, museum workers marginalized the lives of enslaved individuals and families living on the properties. Seymour shared an example of the interpretation of a slave at Mount Vernon, William Lee, who served as George Washington's valet. Seymour explained that the first-person interpretation presented life on Mount Vernon for slaves as better in comparison to elsewhere and used the narrative of William Lee to valorize George Washington instead of connecting visitors to an enslaved person's life.

This study is needed because slavery is at the center of race relations in American history, and engaging learners in the history and legacy of slavery is a critical step in understanding and grappling with contemporary U.S. racial issues (Grim et al., 2017). Addressing slavery in museums has the potential to bring historically divided groups

together, address racial divisions, and promote social justice (Benjamin & Alderman, 2018).

Research supports that societal issues stemming from race today are a product of slavery and racial divides introduced during the colonial era in North America (Kendi, 2016; Kawashima, 2017). After Bacon's Rebellion in 1676, the ruling class in the Virginia colony felt it necessary to introduce hereditary slavery based on race and the establishment of democracy among White males regardless of their economic status (Kawashima, 2017). The simultaneous system of freedom among Whites and enslavement among people of African ancestry was called the American Paradox and continued until 1865 with the passage of the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment, ending slavery in the United States (Kawashima, 2017).

Understanding slavery in America and its racially based foundations are essential to understanding issues in the present day (Grim et al., 2017). This study has the potential to contribute to knowledge in the museum profession by developing inclusive practice in curricula creation. The results of this study are expected to lead to positive social change by helping all stakeholders understand the interconnectivity of the historical context of slavery in America and its influence today, promote social justice causes, and build stronger communities.

### **Problem Statement**

The problem in the Eastern Seaboard region of the United States is that it is not known how museum educators create inclusive curricula on the topic of slavery in America (Cairns, 2016; Rose, 2016). Inclusion will continue to be an important

consideration for museum workers because demographic projections for the year 2050 indicate that over 50% of the United States population will consist of people of color (American Alliance of Museums, 2018). Similarly, research from the U.S. Department of Education (2016) on the state of racial diversity in the educator workforce showed that by 2024, people of color would make up 56% of the k-12<sup>th</sup> grade student population. Incorporating an inclusive view of American slavery in curricula is vital because slavery has profoundly influenced the modern concept of race and race relations in the United States (Oliver, 2016). Confronting the historical legacy of slavery in curricula and its connection to current day racial issues is essential to bridging racial and cultural gaps in communities (Loewen, 2017). According to Loewen (2017), to change systemic inequalities stemming from race, curricula should include a dialogue on slavery and assumptions about the institution that connects to current issues related to race. Educators at museums should incorporate an inclusive view of American slavery in the curricula they create, which means exposing learners to a complete picture of the experiences of enslaved individuals and those connected to the institution of slavery, such as slave owners and traders (Gallas & DeWolf Perry, 2015).

According to Coleman (2018), people of color represent 23% of the total population of the United States, but less than 9% of total museum visitors. Providing content of direct personal interest to underrepresented populations can influence visitor demographics (Falk & Dierking, 2016). Falk and Dierking (2016) give an example of the influence on visitor demographics at the Minnesota History Center, where museum educators presented an exhibit and curricular materials on the Black experience in



Minnesota and experienced a growth in visitorship from 1% to 10% amongst people of color. The research-based literature cited above indicates that curricula should incorporate an inclusive view of the American slavery experience. Current research evidences a gap in the literature regarding the processes of museum educators in creating inclusive curricula on American slavery (Cairns, 2016; Grim et al., 2017; Taylor, 2017). For example, Benjamin and Alderman (2018) noticed an inequality in how the museum educators at the Destrehan Plantation in Louisiana present the lives of enslaved individuals in contrast to the plantation owners.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this qualitative, descriptive, multicase study was to develop a deeper understanding of what processes museum educators use to create inclusive curricula on American slavery at institutions in the Eastern Seaboard. Increased understanding of the curricula creation process will support learning opportunities for museum educators in developing an inclusive curriculum on American slavery (Cairns, 2016).

Research that gives demographic information includes a variety of descriptive terms, including *minorities* and *people of color*. Using people of color instead of minorities reflects the shifting diversity in the United States; minorities does not adequately describe these populations. Throughout this study, people of color will be used to represent non-Whites or persons of African, Latino/Hispanic, Native American, Asian, or Pacific Islander ancestry (Alvarez, Liang, & Neville, 2016).

## **Research Questions**

This study was based on two research questions: a central research question and a related research question:

Central Research Question: What processes do museum educators use to create inclusive curricula on the topic of American slavery?

Related Research Question: What assumptions and beliefs do museum educators have about inclusive curricula on American slavery?

## **Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework for this study was based on Null's (2016) radical curriculum theory (RCT), one aspect of Null's five-model curriculum theory. According to Null (2016), RCT promotes sweeping changes and emphasizes transformational learning to encourage equality and inclusion. Those who adopt the radical view see curricula work from the perspective of race, class, and gender analysis, and seek to understand how curricula can contribute to social inequalities. Null proposed that curricula can shape the way students think, not just by what curricula include but by what information they omit. The experiences of museum educators in creating an inclusive curriculum about American slavery connect to the radical theory notion that educators can use examples of inequalities from the past to highlight issues that remain prevalent today (Null, 2016).

The RCT is an excellent lens through which to analyze museum educators' developing inclusive curricula on difficult topics such as slavery. The research questions focused on museum educators because they develop curricula. This framework will

provide a foundation for identifying the strengths and weaknesses in museum educators' curriculum development processes. In this study, I used a researcher-designed interview protocol to conduct interviews to address the central and related research questions. Participants' responses were specific to the processes of developing curricula on slavery and to their assumptions and beliefs about inclusive curricula on American slavery. The data gathered from the interview questions will help address how museum educators create inclusive curricula. Chapter 2 includes a detailed explanation of the RCT and how current researchers have applied the theory in education.

### **Nature of the Study**

This qualitative, descriptive, multicase study investigated multiple cases in their real-life contexts to provide an understanding of emerging concepts that help explain the process of developing inclusive curricula (Yin, 2016). Eleven educators from institutions on the Eastern Seaboard who have created curricula on American slavery were selected to participate. They were purposefully selected based on the type of museum where they worked, their position in the museum, and their involvement in the curricula creation process. Data from the participant interviews and analysis of curriculum examples were coded and analyzed for themes, and then, to increase the validity of the study, were compared to information from the current literature (Yin, 2016). Chapter 3 includes a detailed explanation of the in vivo and pattern coding methods used to code the collected data.

## Definitions

*Diversity:* Diversity refers to the ways that people or groups differ (American Alliance of Museums, 2018).

*Ethnicity:* Ethnicity is a social identity that refers to a person's cultural identity, nationality, and ancestry (Gans, 2017; Gaudreau & Lesage, 2016).

*Enslavement:* The action of making an individual a slave (Lenski & Cameron, 2018).

*Equity:* Equality is the fair treatment of all members of a community (American Alliance of Museums, 2018).

*Full incorporation:* Full incorporation requires museums to devote at least equal attention to slavery and the lives of enslaved people as they do to the lifestyles of elite Whites or free people. Significant personalizing information about more than one or two enslaved individuals is provided (Small, 2018).

*Inclusion:* Inclusion refers to the effort to ensure that diverse individuals and or groups are included and or valued (American Alliance of Museums, 2018)

*Inclusive curriculum:* A curriculum approach that aims to improve access to and participation in the education of diverse demographics of people (Stone, 2016).

*Marginalization:* Marginalization occurs through the trivialization of slavery and enslaved individuals through mechanisms, phrasing, and images that minimalize and distort their experiences. Slavery is mentioned in passing during a tour, in leaflets or videos in ways that may be literal, trivializing, or dismissive (Small, 2018).

*Museum educator:* Museum educator refers to an individual who provides instruction and provides administration of education in non-formal education spaces and institutions like museums (Johnson, Huber, Cutler, Bingmann, & Grove, 2017).

*People of color:* A term used to refer to persons of African, Latino/Hispanic, Native American, Asian, or Pacific Islander (Alvarez et al., 2016).

*Race:* Refers to physical or genetic characteristics, such as skin, hair, and eye color (Golding, 2016).

*Relative incorporation:* Relative incorporation is the explicit and relatively detailed acknowledgment of slavery and enslaved individuals. Information and details about slavery and enslaved individuals are provided in systematic ways in site literature, placards, signs, and interpretive tours (Small, 2018).

*Slave:* An individual held as property under involuntary servitude (Waldman, 2015).

*Symbolic annihilation:* Symbolic Annihilation means to ignore the institution and experience of slavery altogether or treat them in a perfunctory way. Slavery and enslaved are either wholly absent or where mention of them is negligible formalistic and fleeting or superficial. Enslaved individuals are presented condescendingly or offensively, or with little to no respect. A passing mention is made of enslaved individuals, and knowledge about slaves is organized at museums in ways that demean them (Small, 2018).

### **Assumptions**

This descriptive, multicase study was based on two assumptions. First, I assumed that participants find value in creating an inclusive curriculum. This assumption is

important because the purpose of this study was to describe the processes museum educators use in developing an inclusive curriculum on American slavery. Second, I assumed that participants would respond truthfully in the interviews. Truthful responses are critical to the trustworthiness of qualitative research (Yin, 2016).

### **Scope and Delimitations**

The scope of this qualitative, descriptive, multicase study was the curricula development processes of museum educators in creating an inclusive curriculum on the topic of American slavery. Factors that narrowed the study's focus included the participants, the time of year the research was conducted, and resources. Participants were selected from educators at museums on the Eastern Seaboard that covered American slavery. They had to have experience in developing an inclusive curriculum on American slavery. Museum administrators and any other noneducator personnel involved in curriculum development were included because museums were small and there was no dedicated educator on staff. This study was conducted from August 2019 to July 2020. On the Eastern Seaboard, tourism spikes in March through July and may determine the availability of museum educators to participate in a research study. Findings from the study may help museum educators both locally and nationally create inclusive curricula on the topic of American slavery.

Additionally, findings may also help school district educators in the development of inclusive curricula on slavery. Providing rich descriptions of research settings, participants, data collection, and analysis procedures and findings will assist audiences in making comparisons to another context for transferability (Yin, 2016). While the study

will target the inclusive curriculum creation process of museum educators, the discussion of curriculum development may be transferable to other context areas where educators create curriculum on diverse topics.

### **Limitations**

This study was subject to two limitations. The first limitation was the purposeful selection of participants based on museum type and location. According to Yin (2016), the purposive selection of participants is suitable in instances where relevant and plentiful data is collected. Purposive selection was appropriate for this case study because experienced educators were needed. Yin (2016) cautioned that purposive selection could limit the number of sources that could offer contrary evidence. Thus, to limit bias, the researcher deliberately selected participants who might provide contrary evidence. According to Ravitch and Carl, 10 to 12 participants is adequate for case study research to yield rich data and ensure that data analysis from multiple sources is manageable (2016).

The second limitation was related to the potential for bias. There was potential for bias because I was responsible for all data collection and analysis, and as a descendant of slaves, I have a personal tie to slavery in America and a need to honor their contributions. Therefore, I sought to separate my opinion from the study and remain professional in the collection and analysis of the data. Furthermore, I used triangulation when comparing emerging themes across all data sources, such as the interviews and document analysis of curriculum materials (Yin, 2016).

## Significance

Visiting museums can be a powerful experience because they are sites of exhibition and preservation and are considered one of the most trusted sources of information (Seymour, 2015). Museum workers are under increasing pressures to provide an authentic history of enslavement; at the same time, they are compelled to make museum institutions more socially valuable by inspiring change in terms of diversity and inclusion (American Alliance of Museums, 2018; Inwood, Alderman & Williams, 2015). The local settings will benefit from this study because insight into the inclusive curricula creation process can help museum educators develop a historically accurate curriculum on American slavery. The focus on inclusion in the curriculum will fill a gap in the literature on the processes of creating curricula on American slavery (Ellis, 2015; Gallas & DeWolf Perry, 2015; Taylor, 2017).

Engaging in discussions about slavery is problematic for some people; for learners this difficult and traumatic history can instigate negative responses, making some uncomfortable or confrontational (Rose, 2016). It is essential that museum educators develop and teach curricula around slavery to explain American society today, to promote inclusion and diversity, and thus create positive social change (Berlin, 2016). Grim et al. (2017) argued that slavery is at the center of race relations throughout American history, and engaging learners in the history and legacy of slavery is a critical step in understanding and grappling with modern U.S. racial issues. This study has the potential to contribute to knowledge in the museum profession by developing inclusive practice in curricula creation. The results may lead to positive social change by helping



all stakeholders understand the interconnectivity of the historical context of slavery in America and its influence today, promote social justice causes, and build stronger communities.

### **Summary**

Chapter 1 introduced this study; the Background provided support for exploration of the problem on the Eastern Seaboard, where it is not known how museum educators create inclusive curricula on the topic of slavery in America. The purpose of this qualitative, descriptive, multicase study was to develop an understanding of the processes that museum educators on the Eastern Seaboard use to create inclusive curricula on slavery in America. A deeper understanding would address the gap noted in the literature.

In Chapter 1, I framed the rationale for choosing the problem, defined terms relevant to contextualizing the study; explained the significance of the problem; and identified two research questions designed to describe the experiences, assumptions, and beliefs of museum educators in creating curricula on American slavery. Chapter 2 will include (a) an explanation of the RCT and how researchers have applied the theory in education and (b) a literature review on curriculum development on American slavery.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

It is not known how museum educators create inclusive curricula on the topic of American slavery. Presenting a balanced and accurate history of slavery in curricula is necessary for understanding current societal issues and building a future with fewer social inequalities and more tolerance (Araujo, 2015). While the inclusive movement supports a balanced interpretation of slavery in museum curricula, it is noted in the literature that some institutions routinely marginalize slavery in comparison to the emphasis they place on slaveholders (Forbes Bright, 2018; Zalut, 2018). According to Jones (2016), museum curricula on slavery can make a significant contribution to the views that students develop about the topic of American slavery. Engaging learners in the history and legacy of slavery serves as a critical step in understanding and grappling with modern U.S. racial issues (Grim et al., 2017).

Therefore, the purpose of conducting this qualitative, descriptive, multicase study was to develop a deeper understanding of the processes that museum educators use to develop inclusive curricula on American slavery in the Eastern Seaboard. Chapter 2 includes the following: a description of the literature search strategy and the conceptual framework; a review of the literature museum education and inclusive curricula on American slavery; the themes that emerged from the review.

### **Literature Search Strategy**

To identify prospective, peer-reviewed articles (as well as books and grey literature), the following electronic databases—Google Scholar, Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), SAGE Journals, Taylor and Francis Online, and ProQuest

Central—were searched for the years 2015–2020 using the following keywords: *slavery-inclusion, curriculum-inclusion, museum-slavery-inclusion, slavery-Washington, D.C.-museums, qualitative approach-research, curriculum development, radical curriculum theory* and, *radical curriculum theory-social studies education*. Abstracts were used to judge an article's relevancy to the research questions. The reference lists of the selected articles were searched for additional articles.

### **Conceptual Framework**

Null's (2016) RCT serves as the conceptual framework for this study. According to Null (2016), radical curriculum theorists "seek to understand how curriculum and curricula creation contribute to social inequalities" (p. 93). The central research question about the processes of museum educators in creating inclusive curricula about American slavery connects to the radical theory notion in that educators can use examples of inequalities from the past to teach about issues that are prevalent today (Null, 2016). Those adopting the radical view see curricula work from the perspective of race, class, and gender analysis (Null, 2016). According to Apple (2004), a leading radical curriculum theorist, the assumptions, attitudes, and beliefs of educators' influence curricula content and can contribute to the curriculum being exclusive. Apple's (2004) book, *Ideology and Curriculum* articulated that the interpretation of American history in the curriculum is vulnerable to the exclusion of demographics of people such as Black.

According to Apple (2011), curricula content is related to the ideas and culture of society and can shape students' perceptions of themselves and the world. History curricula that are exclusive espouse a hegemonic view of society, promote a

misrepresented idea of the nation's history, and contribute to inequalities (Apple, 2014). Apple's (2004) ideas about the influence of personal beliefs and assumptions on curricula development are connected to the related research asking what assumptions and beliefs museum educators have about the value of inclusive curricula.

### **Literature Review Related to Key Concepts and Variable**

In this literature review, current research is discussed relating to the process museum educators use to develop an inclusive curriculum on American slavery in three sections. The first section includes an analysis of research related to curriculum practices in museums. The second section consists of an analysis of research related to curricula on slavery in America. The third section includes an analysis of research related to inclusive practice in museums.

### **Curriculum Practices in Museums**

This section will include a highlight of the history of curriculum practices in museums, information about collaboration between schools and museums in curriculum practices as well as how the museum curriculum differs from what schools offer. According to Alexander, Alexander, and Decker (2017), museums are institutions in the service of society and its development, which acquires, conserves, researches, and communicates the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for education and enjoyment. The idea of museums as institutions of public learning and enjoyment was a phenomenon encouraged by John Cotton Dana, the founder of the Newark Museum in 1909 (Alexander et al., 2017). Dana supported an inclusive philosophy that encouraged making museums institutions that were visited by the public

and school children versus just scholars and the elite (Alexander et al., 2017). Talboys (2016) spoke about the educational role of museums describing them as an informative means of strong national, cultural and collective memories, where people can explore, interact, contemplate, be inspired by, learn about, and enjoy their own and the cultural heritage of others.

In the late 1960s through the 1980s, the role of a museum educator, a specialist trained to further the public's understanding of the natural, cultural, and historical collections and mission of a museum, began to gain popularity (Johnson et al., 2017). In the 1990s, museum workers began to shift from using the traditional classroom approach to educating to learning through experience and encouraging inquiry (Johnson et al., 2017). Talboys (2016) identified that education is the primary aim of most museum missions, and learning involves inquiry and self-construction of knowledge because of the dual purpose of these institutions to collect and display artifacts. In recent years, the 2000s, the use of the term "museum education," has been replaced by some with the term "museum learning," to denote that the focus is on the visitor's learning rather than museum staff educating (Andre et al., 2017; King & Lord, 2015).

Curricula trends, practices, and policies in traditional schools influence curriculum development in museums (Johnson et al., 2017). The outside influence can be viewed as negatively affecting curricula due to the fact that museum educators felt pressure to create curriculum-aligned programs to manage resources and connect with schools (Blankenberg, 2015). In 2002, the No Child Left Behind Act required states to test students rigorously between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade, and school districts emphasized

classroom learning to prepare students for standardized tests (Johnson et al., 2017; U.S. Department of Education, 2010). Under mandates of the No Child Left Behind Act, standardized testing was the primary measure of academic performance and improvement, and states were accountable for the failure of their students (McGuinn, 2016). The Common Core Curriculum Standards are an attempt to implement a national education standard in Language Arts and Math (Coburn, Hill, & Spillane, 2016). The Common Core Curriculum Standards, which have been adopted by many states, emphasize skills-based learning and inquiry, which is complementary to museum content (Ng-He, 2015; Talboys, 2016). In contrast to the No Child Left Behind Act, the Common Core Curriculum Standards offer guidelines to help determine what skills students should learn and when (Coburn et al., 2016).

Currently, curricula development in museums emphasizes contextual learning or learning that connects to the real world (Kristinsdottir, 2017). Marcus, Stoddard, and Woodward (2017) believed that museum resources and content could complement the school curriculum. Museum resources and content that complement school curriculum can be viewed as a positive aspect that motivates learning about topics beyond the classroom (Johnson, 2015). Furthermore, learning in museums offers an opportunity to study the past through artifacts, exhibits, and historical sites that augment school curricula (Marcus et al., 2017). Curriculum development in museums is centered on artifacts, exhibits, and historic sites and can challenge students' understanding of the past through engaging them in discussions and critical analysis of slavery (Rose, 2016). Falk and Dierking (2018) found that in recent years museum workers are collaborating with

schools through curriculum development or professional development. Before recent school-museum collaborations, the curriculum was developed in-house at museums with very little to no participation from school districts or teachers, and museum workers have very little to no input in curricula developed for schools (King & Lord, 2015).

The process of curriculum development in museums has changed in the early 2000s and has become more of a collaborative effort between museum educators and schoolteachers (King & Lord, 2015). Beer (2016) stated that schools offer curricula built on organized topics and activities and follow a logical sequence of instruction facilitated by an educator. Museum workers present exhibits that can be experienced without overt instruction and curriculum materials that may not be facilitated by the museum educator but another teacher (Beer, 2016; Weinland & Bennett, 2016). As a field always in flux, changes in the processes of creating a curriculum is an essential aspect to research. The changes in curriculum practices in museums can be understood within the broader context of an evolving museum environment in which the trend is to expand community connections (Franco, 2016).

### **Curriculum on Slavery**

This section will include current research that is related to curricula on the topic of American slavery. Historian, Ira Berlin (2016) said its association with race compounds the difficulty of teaching about American slavery, but it is essential to understanding American society and coming to terms with a difficult shared past. Moreover, engaging in discussions about slavery can instigate negative responses from learners making some uncomfortable or confrontational (Rose, 2016). According to

Apple (2011), the content in curricula is related to the ideals and culture of society and can shape students' perceptions of themselves and the world. Curricula can shape what students come to know and understand about the past and present (Brown & Brown, 2015). Failing to include an inclusive history of American slavery in curricula implies that American slavery is unimportant and interferes with student's full understanding of the nation's past (Ellis, 2015; Gallas & DeWolf Perry, 2015; Loewen, 2018).

King (2017) argued that starting with the 1961 California law mandating the teaching of Black history, school districts all over the United States started developing initiatives on Black history in the U.S. history curriculum. With the influence of the 1961 California legislation, New York, New Jersey, and Illinois established an Amistad commission and emphasized curricula explaining how the African slave trade and enslavement in the United States connect to contemporary issues associated with Blacks and race (King, 2017). The requirements of the Common Core Standards justify making the teaching of slavery more inclusive because of mandates on learning fewer topics with a more in-depth focus and encouraging critical analysis (Loewen, 2016).

King and Woodson (2017) described the treatment of slavery in curricula as conservative with the portrayal of the institution of slavery as a controversial but necessary economic measure or as mainly a southern problem. Furthermore, in the telling of the history of slavery, the experiences of enslaved individuals are treated as a secondary feature in comparison to the personal experiences of slaveholders (Araujo, 2015; Benjamin & Alderman, 2018). The controversial McGraw-Hill textbook used in Houston, Texas schools, is an example of the conservative teaching of American slavery



in U.S. history curricula (Fernandez & Hauser, 2015). The textbook describes the transatlantic slave trade as the immigration of "millions of workers from Africa to the southern United States to work on agricultural plantations" (King & Woodson, 2017, p. 4).

The Merriam-Webster's online dictionary (2019) defines immigration as the act of traveling into a country for permanent residence there. The description found in the McGraw-Hill textbook conflicts with the aspect of forced migration that defined the transatlantic slave trade (Waldman, 2015). The example description of American slavery in the McGraw-Hill textbook noted above is what Apple (2004) argued, is a side effect of the personal beliefs of educators influencing curriculum content. Apple (2014) asserted that even if not overtly taught, the transmission of beliefs and societal norms could be learned in curricula. Resources like the McGraw-Hill textbook can create the incorrect impression that enslaved Africans came to the colonies voluntarily, generate false notions about slavery, and marginalize a traumatic event (Modlin et al., 2018).

American slavery in history curriculum interconnects with historical race relations in the United States (Berlin, 2016; Jay & Lyerly, 2016; Winant, 2016). Grim et al. (2017) argued that slavery is at the center of race relations throughout American history, and engaging learners in the history and legacy of slavery is a critical step in understanding and grappling with modern U.S. racial issues. The connection between American slavery and race grew in the 17<sup>th</sup> century because Africans had notable differences in appearance than European persons, and skin color became associated with slave status to a degree (Sarich & Miele, 2018; Smith, 2015). Bacon's Rebellion in 1676 spurred the elite class in

the Virginia colony to differentiate freedoms between persons of African and European descent (Kawashima, 2017; Tatum, 2017). Laws creating inherited racial slavery in the colonies relegated coerced labor to individuals identified by African descent, and the number of Africans imported to the United States as slaves rose dramatically in the mid-1600s (Buck, 2017; Reich, 2017).

Grim (2015) believed that museums are a trusted resource in the teaching of American slavery. As mentioned in the previous section of this Literature Review, a collaboration between museums and schools has included curriculum development from both institutions (Johnson et al., 2017). However, Small (2018) noted in the research of museums interpreting American slavery, that most sites either marginalized or symbolically annihilated slavery in their educational resources. The importance of the interpretation of slavery curriculum created by museum workers may grow as more attention is paid to how the topic is treated and increasing pressure from schools for more historical resources (Hanna et al., 2015; Inwood et al., 2015; Oliver, 2016).

### **Inclusive Practice in Museums**

This section will include literature related to inclusivity in museums and highlight the historic efforts to promote inclusion in curricula resources. Inclusion is considered a significant core value of the AAM, which issued a challenge in 1992 to make museums more inclusive in order to be of social and vital service to communities (AAM, 1992). During her keynote address at the AAM conference in 2016, Dr. Johnetta Cole became the catalyst for a revival of the inclusion initiative when she mentioned it is an urgent issue that speaks to the relevancy of museum institutions (Cole, 2016). Inclusion is also a

focal point of the 2016-20 strategic plan released by the AAM and push for museum workers to consider leadership, access, advocacy, and global thinking in developing an inclusive initiative (AAM, 2016).

As a part of the effort to promote inclusive practice in museums, the AAM released a report in (2018) that highlighted the historical efforts of the organization. It provided definitions for inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility. Robinson (2017) linked racism, both explicit and furtive, to exclusive behavior and shared that the practice of presenting a single view excludes other perspectives and is visible in museum exhibits, programs, and curriculum resources. Bunch (2017) mentioned that Museum workers have an obligation to provide the public with complete and relevant information to ensure the stories told in institutions allow people of all backgrounds to feel included in the nation's history.

The work of museum educators to openly talk about difficult topics and to develop curricula around them is a critically important contribution to society because it encourages inclusion to create positive social change (Cairns, 2016; Grim et al., 2017). Ng, Ware, and Greenberg (2017) noted that the recent emphasis on inclusion would encourage museum workers to analyze their work and transform museums into spaces that represent diverse historical viewpoints. Former First Lady Michelle Obama raised the concern of museums as inclusive spaces when she said: "There are so many kids in this country who look at places like museums and concert halls and other cultural centers and they think to themselves, well, that's not a place for me, for someone who looks like me, for someone who comes from my neighborhood" (Obama, 2015, para 6). As trusted

scholarly institutions, by adopting inclusion, museum workers can initiate inclusive practices in society and build stronger communities (Coleman, 2018).

The significant value of museums is not just of benefit to communities but also in strengthening public education (Washington & Hindley, 2017). The findings of recent studies have shown that the topic of American slavery does not offer a complete narrative of slavery and perpetuates negative images and myths about enslaved individuals in curricula provided by many schools and museums (Eargle, 2016; Forbes Bright et al., 2016). For curricula on American slavery to be considered inclusive, it must also include a historical view from the perspective of an enslaved individual, as well as the complexity of the legal, moral and social ramifications of the slave institution (Finkleman, 2016; Kros, 2017; Potter, 2016). According to Spalding (2016), it is important that curriculum presented by museums on the topic of American slavery is scrutinized as much as that presented by schools for its attention to complexity, and historical accuracy so that the curricula do not contribute to a misunderstanding of the past.

### **Summary and Conclusions**

Chapter 2 included a review of the literature related to the curriculum practices in museums, curriculum on slavery, and inclusion practices in museums. The chapter included a description of the literature search strategy used to collect current peer-reviewed research. The conceptual framework includes the connection between Null's presentation of the RCT to the processes of creating inclusive curricula on American slavery. The literature review included an analysis and synthesis of current research

related to the process of creating inclusive curricula on slavery seen through three concepts: curriculum practices in museums, curriculum on slavery, and inclusion practices in museums.

Several themes emerged from this literature review. One theme is that curriculum practices in museums follow the demands and trends adopted by school districts. Another major theme is that although school curriculum supports the teaching of slavery, many institutions neglect to accurately and comprehensively interpret the lives of enslaved individuals. The research included in the literature review highlighted the inadequacies of current curricula on American slavery, misrepresentation of enslaved individuals, and lack of perspective in viewpoint in comparison to slaveholder. Another theme is that because of the current inclusion trend; museum workers are seeking to reform their prior treatment of enslaved people by reevaluating viewpoint and curriculum resources available to the public.

This study addresses a research gap concerning the process of museum educators in creating inclusive curricula on American slavery. A qualitative, descriptive, multicase study is an appropriate methodology because a deeper understanding of the curricula development process will support future curricula creation on the topic of American slavery. Chapter 3 describes the research method, researcher's role in the study, trustworthiness, and ethical procedures.

### Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this qualitative, descriptive, multicase study was to develop a deeper understanding of what processes museum educators use to develop inclusive curricula on American slavery on the Eastern Seaboard. To accomplish this purpose, a description of the processes that museum educators in the Eastern Seaboard use to develop inclusive curricula on slavery was needed. An examination of museum educators' assumptions and beliefs about inclusive curricula on American slavery was included.

Chapter 3 is about the research method used for this study. The chapter covers the following topics: the research design and rationale for the study with an explanation for the selection of a multicase design and its applicability to the research; an explanation of participant selection, instrumentation, and the procedures followed for recruitment, participation, and data collection; a plan for data analysis; a discussion of the trustworthiness for this type of qualitative research; and ethical procedures.

#### **Research Design and Rationale**

The research questions for this study are related to the research literature on inclusive curriculum development on slavery. The research questions were:

Central Research Question: What processes do museum educators use to create inclusive curricula on the topic of American slavery?

Related Research Question: What assumptions and beliefs do museum educators have about inclusive curricula on American slavery?

A qualitative approach was used for this study in order to understand the phenomenon in its natural setting in ways that reflect the perspectives, opinions, or experiences of participants (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). The phenomenon of inclusive curricula development is well-suited to a qualitative approach because museum educators are likely to apply assumptions and beliefs to the curricula creation process. The methodological pursuit of understanding the ways that people view, approach, and experience specific phenomenon is a central aspect of qualitative research (Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

A descriptive, multicase study was the specific design used in this study. Yin (2016) defined a case study as an inquiry that examines a case (or multiple cases) in depth, in its real-world context, when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clear. This type of study was chosen because each participant represented a unique museum site with sufficient differences between them. It is an effective way to understand the differences and similarities among multiple cases (Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

A descriptive, multicase study yields a description of the phenomenon under study (Yin, 2016). A multiple descriptive case study is appropriate for this study because the purpose is to develop a deeper understanding of the processes of museum educators in creating inclusive curricula on American slavery. In order to accomplish this purpose, a description of the processes that museum educators use to develop inclusive curricula on American slavery will be needed. For this study, emergent themes for the inclusive curricula creation process on American slavery would be presented in a multiple descriptive case study for museum educators at seven sites.

### **Role of the Researcher**

For this qualitative, descriptive, multicase study, there was one researcher responsible for the collection, analysis, and interpretation of all data. Therefore, the potential for researcher bias exists. Ravitch and Carl (2016) stated that bias exists in all types of research, including qualitative studies. Researchers should make deliberate methodological choices to acknowledge, account for, and approach researcher bias (Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

My experiences in museum education and my ancestral connection to slavery represent a potential bias. I currently work in a museum institution as the lead educator, developing curricula materials about Blacks before and during the American Civil War. In this role, I both teach about American slavery and create curricula on the topic routinely. I believe that creating inclusive curricula on American slavery is valuable and important. My beliefs about the value of creating inclusive curricula on American slavery are a potential bias. Although the number of museums on the Eastern Seaboard that teach and provide curricula resources on slavery is plentiful, the network of educators who create these educational materials is small in comparison. I will likely have a working familiarity with some of the participants in this study through professional interactions; however, I exercise no supervisory authority over the participants.

As a Black American, I have several direct ancestors who were enslaved in the United States. Loewen (2016) stated that learning about slavery has a transformative influence on bridging racial divides that are a result of the slave institution. I learned about an ancestor's service in the Union Army during the Civil War to provide a pathway



to freedom for his enslaved child. The experience of learning about my ancestor through genealogy changed my outlook on the experiences of enslaved individuals in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. I began to realize how little I learned about slavery in America as a school student and in museums, and the assumption formed that Blacks were not a crucial part of American history. My background knowledge and ancestral connection to slavery supports my understanding of the institution and influences my belief that the topic is essential for diverse individuals to learn.

To ensure the trustworthiness of this study, research sites were selected where I am not employed nor have had a working relationship in the past. Although, I have had some work-related encounters with museum educators who will likely participate, I do not hold a supervisory role over them or their curricula development work. Maintaining a reflective journal of researcher experiences and monitoring perceptions and biases is one strategy that will be employed to improve the trustworthiness of this study. These strategies are discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

### **Methodology**

This methodology section of Chapter 3 will include the participant selection criteria identifying a target population, the instrumentation for data collection and procedures for recruitment and data collection. Additionally, this section will include the data analysis plan detailing the connection of data to specific research questions, a procedure for coding, data analysis, and data management.

## **Participant Selection**

Participants for this multiple descriptive case study will be purposefully selected from a target population of educators at museums in the eastern seaboard region. The target population of museum educators will be purposefully selected from seven museums on the Eastern Seaboard that thematically cover the topic of American slavery. Additionally, purposeful sampling will be used to gather participants based on their involvement in the curricula creation process. According to Yin (2016), the "purpose of selecting the specific instances is to have those that yield the most relevant and plentiful data" (p. 83). Purposeful sampling provides context-rich accounts of a situation that tend to deliberately address the research question over random probability sampling (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Because the purpose of this study is to develop a deeper understanding of the inclusive curricula creation process at museums on the topic of slavery, a participant population that would yield the richest information is needed to answer the research questions.

Potential participants, therefore, will be purposefully selected based on the following inclusion criteria: (a) participants work at a museum that thematically covers the topic of slavery and (b) participants have created a curriculum on the topic of American slavery for a museum. In total, 11 participants from seven different sites were included in this study. Eleven was an adequate number for the case study research to yield rich data and to ensure that data analysis from multiple sources is manageable (Yin, 2016). Individual interviews and document analysis of curricula examples will be used to develop a deeper understanding of the curriculum creation process. Before interviews

take place, an initial email communication will be sent to the director of each museum to gain permission in the form of a letter of cooperation to conduct the research at their site and utilize curricula examples in the study. After a letter of cooperation is obtained from each museum director, potential participants will be contacted by email at each museum site. The contact information from potential participants will be obtained either from the museum site's public website or from the director after obtaining the letter of cooperation. The initial email communication or letter of invitation to potential participants will include, as an attachment, the consent form. Participants consenting to partake in the study may communicate their consent to the researcher with a reply email stating "I consent," as instructed in the consent form. The consent form will contain the criteria for participation, the study background information, procedures, interview questions, voluntary nature of the study, risk and benefits, information about payment and gifts, privacy, and researcher and Walden University representative contact information. Interviews are expected to take between 45 and 60 minutes each and will take place at each museum site in a quiet place selected by the participant.

### **Instrumentation**

The data collecting instruments for this study include an interview protocol and document analysis form. The data collection instruments listed above are researcher designed and align with the research questions.

To conduct the individual, face-to-face interviews, an interview protocol was used to generate participant responses specific to the research questions for this study. The interview protocol can be found in Appendix A and includes a list of the questions that

are explored in the interview. Each question in the interview protocol is linked to the relevant research question for this study. For this study, individual interviews will be recorded using a digital audio recording device. Olson (2016) warned that researchers relying on memory and or written notes who are taken during an interview might be selective in recalling key concepts, which can lead to bias. Following recommendations from Olson (2016) and Saldana (2016) to avoid bias and ensure accurate analysis of data, interviews will be audio-recorded, transcribed, and coded. The interview protocol was provided to two colleagues in the museum field to gain feedback that the interview protocol addressed the research questions. All colleagues providing feedback felt the questions sufficiently address the research questions and are open-ended to encourage rich dialogue.

Examples of inclusive curricula on American slavery will be analyzed using the document analysis form found in Appendix B. The document analysis form is researcher designed. Research by Small (2015), which detailed a scale on the inclusion of American slavery at museums, influenced the development of the document analysis form. Small's (2015) study on the interpretation of slavery at historical museums resulted in a scale on the inclusion of slavery as relative incorporation, marginalization, and symbolic annihilation. Additionally, other scholars such as Brooks (2015) and Gallas and DeWolf Perry (2015) have shared that inclusive curriculum on American slavery uses language that directs attention to the individuality of the enslaved over their status as property. Incorporating the use of narratives from enslaved individuals, using names, and referring

to specific stories or events rather than a listing of the general experiences of slaves in a region are both methods that exemplify inclusive language (Rose, 2016).

The 22 questions for the individual interviews are developed to engage participants in a rich dialogue regarding their process in creating an inclusive curriculum on American slavery. The questions were also developed to gauge what opinions and beliefs participants have about inclusive curricula on American slavery. The questions asked of participants cover their processes in developing inclusive curricula on American slavery, their role in curriculum development, and their opinions and beliefs about inclusive curriculum on American slavery. The document analysis form will be used to analyze inclusive curriculum examples of American slavery.

Participants will have created the curricula that will be analyzed. Because the interview protocol and document analysis form specifically relate to the research questions, they will sufficiently address the problem of this study. Furthermore, the interview protocol and document analysis will address the purpose of the study to develop a deeper understanding of the process museum educators take in developing inclusive curricula on American slavery.

### **Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection**

Selected museums on the Eastern Seaboard that thematically cover the topic of American slavery will be emailed information about the study to the attention of the directors of each institution. Contact information for the directors can be obtained from the public website of each museum. A letter of cooperation or approval for doctoral research at the museum was obtained by email. The letter of cooperation sought approval

to conduct research on the site and to use curricula materials in the study and is included in Appendix C of this document. After obtaining a list of suitable candidates who have met the criteria of having developed curricula on the topic of American slavery, invitations and consent forms were sent by email. If participants are interested in taking part in this study, they will be asked to reply by email using the term "I consent." Follow up questions about the study can be addressed by email before the interview.

Interviews were held at each museum site in a quiet space for the convenience of participants. Interview locations will be arranged at the time of scheduling and will happen at the participants' museums in either an available conference room, library, or space designated by the participant. There are no anticipated risks to participants in this study other than those encountered in day-to-day life. Participation in this study is voluntary, and participants may discontinue the interview or participation in the study at any time without repercussions of any kind. Interviews will be audio recorded for accurate transcription. Written notes will be taken during the interviews, by the researcher, to clarify participant responses when needed. Each interview recording will be transcribed and sent to the participants for review of accuracy. Participants will be expected to communicate via email any discrepancies or inaccuracies in the recording transcription. Using a document analysis form, data will be collected from an analysis of related curricula produced by each museum educator. Permission to use the curricular materials will be obtained with the initial email communication that will be sent to the directors of each museum. Materials will be collected and analyzed before interviewing participants. Each consenting participant will be contacted by phone or email after

consent is obtained, to schedule an individual interview date, time, and location. Contact information for participants will be obtained either from the public website of each museum site or from the directors when a letter of cooperation is emailed to the researcher.

### **Data Analysis Plan**

For this study, a descriptive multicase study analysis was conducted using qualitative methods. ATLAS.ti software will be used to manage and analyze the collected data. ATLAS.ti software is suitable for working with a variety of different media and has features that can assist with coding different types of data. Data to be collected include audio recordings of individual interviews and curricula examples. Data coding will follow a two-cycle coding process recommended by Saldana (2016). The first cycle of coding used the in vivo coding method to identify participant perspectives and actions. The in vivo coding method is a form of qualitative analysis that places emphasis on the actual in vivo spoken words of participants to make meaning of data collected from interviews (Saldana, 2016). The in vivo coding method requires assigning a label to a section of data, using a word or short phrase taken from an interview (Saldana, 2016). The in vivo coding method will be used to code data from participant interviews and curriculum examples. The pattern coding method will be utilized to group data into a smaller number of categories and themes for the second cycle of coding. According to Miles et al. (2014), the pattern coding method is suitable for developing themes from data. The pattern coding method will be utilized to code data collected from participant interviews and curriculum examples. Key findings will be analyzed in relation to the

central and second research questions. Findings will also be interpreted in relation to the conceptual framework and the literature review for this study.

### **Trustworthiness**

Yin (2016) wrote some qualities of a trustworthy qualitative study: the transparency of research procedures, rigor or methodic-ness of methods, and adherence to evidence. The trustworthiness of a study is a crucial component of qualitative research design (Ratvich & Carl, 2016). The trustworthiness of this study is reinforced through the use of specific strategies that increase the credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability of this research, which are explained below.

Credibility can be defined as the researcher's ability to establish the truthfulness or authenticity of the research findings (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Triangulation will be used as a strategy to establish credibility in this study. Data triangulation will be used in comparing emerging themes from qualitative coding across all data sources. Member checking will also be used to obtain feedback from participants in order to reduce the misinterpretation of their self-reported curriculum development processes (Yin, 2016). To increase credibility, prolonged engagement in data collection will be used by scheduling at least two days per site to provide enough time to collect data from all sources.

Transferability is defined as the degree to which the research study can be transferred to broader contexts (Yin, 2016). Ravitch and Carl (2016) explained that having detailed descriptions of data and context for audiences to make comparisons to other contexts is a strategy for achieving transferability in a study. For this study, rich



descriptions of the research settings, the participants, the data collection and analysis process, and the findings will be provided. Sites that are typical of museums on the Eastern Seaboard will be chosen to increase the transferability of this study.

Dependability is defined as the extent to which the research findings are consistent and can be replicated (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Triangulation, as described above, is also a means by which the researcher can enhance dependability in a study (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). In this study, data triangulation will be used to compare themes across different data sources, such as the interviews and document analysis, to enhance dependability. The recommendation from Ravitch and Carl (2016) to provide sufficient information on the steps of the research process enabling future reference to specific aspects of the study, will also be used to enhance dependability. Maintaining a reflective research journal will assist in keeping a record of the research process and personal reflections.

Conformability refers to the concept of objectivity and how research findings are supported by the data collected (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Yin (2016) explained the importance of confronting researcher biases and assumptions. In this study, triangulation, as defined above, as well as utilizing the strategy of reflexivity, helped to achieve conformability in this study. Reflexivity means reflecting on researcher biases and assumptions and can be achieved by maintaining a reflective journal related to all steps and processes of the study (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). A reflective researcher journal was maintained throughout the study to record the research process and personal reflections.

### **Ethical Procedures**

Ethical procedures are essential to establish during the development of this research study. To ensure an ethical study, an application was submitted to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Walden University to conduct this study. Data can only be collected once approval has been obtained from the IRB. The application to the IRB included the following procedures: the purpose of the study, promises and reciprocity, risk assessment, confidentiality, informed consent, data access and ownership, the mental health of participants, advice about ethical matters related to this study, data collection boundaries, and ethical versus legal conduct. Once approval was granted from the IRB, Walden University issued an approval number for this study: 08-16-19-055-7052.

This study involved conducting individual interviews with educators at museums located throughout the Eastern Seaboard and analyzing curriculum samples developed by participants. Before seeking consent from potential participants in this study, approval from the directors of museum sites will be needed. Approval from the director or designee of a museum will be obtained by email in the form of a letter of cooperation. The letter of cooperation, which can be found in Appendix C, outlines consent for the study to take place at a museum site and for curricula materials to be analyzed. After a letter of cooperation is obtained from each museum site, potential participants will be emailed a letter of invitation and a consent form. Contact information from potential participants will be obtained from the public websites of each museum site or the directors when the information is not available on the websites.

The consent form outlines the criteria for involvement in the study is that potential participants need to have created curricula on the topic of American slavery. Participation in this study is voluntary, and participants may elect not to participate or withdraw at any time over the course of the study without repercussions of any kind. Participants will receive no monetary compensation or gifts in exchange for participation. There are no anticipated risks to participants in this study other than those encountered in day-to-day life. If participants are interested in taking part in this study, they will be asked to reply by email using the term "I consent," instructions of which are provided in the consent form. Once consent to participation is gained, the researcher will schedule an interview date, time, and location with each participant. Interviews will be audio recorded for accurate transcription. Written notes will be taken during the interviews to clarify participant responses when needed. Each interview recording will be transcribed and sent to the participants for review of accuracy. Participants will be expected to communicate via email any discrepancies or inaccuracies in the recording transcription.

All data that is collected for this study by computer will be stored in digital form on a secure computer accessible only to the researcher and password protected. All paper documents collected during this study will be stored in a secure file cabinet accessible only to the researcher. Any personal information collected from participants will be kept confidential and stored separate from interview data and curricula examples, in an encrypted digital file folder on a computer-accessible only to the researcher and password protected. All participant data will be collected, stored, and analyzed in a manner that maintains participant privacy and confidentiality, such as the use of secure storage and

pseudonyms for museum educators. Data collected from the analysis of curriculum materials will be collected, stored, and analyzed in a manner that protects the privacy of the museums such as pseudonyms for each institution. Only the researcher will have access to the data collected in this study, which will be stored on a secure hard drive offline.

In accordance with the requirements of Walden University, all data will be kept for a period of no less than 5 years. After that minimum, paper documents will be shredded and securely disposed. Data stored on a computer will be deleted from the main documents folder and trash folder and the computer securely erased to ensure data cannot be retrieved once deleted.

### **Summary**

This chapter included a description of the research method used for this study. A multiple descriptive case study design was selected, and the reasons for this selection were explained. Additionally, the role of the researcher and the background of the researcher as it relates to inclusive curricula on American slavery were presented. This chapter also included a methodology that encompassed a description of participant selection, instrumentation for data collection, and procedures for recruitment, participation, and data collection. A data analysis plan discussed issues of and strategies for achieving trustworthiness, credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Finally, the ethical procedures that guided the research were reviewed.

In Chapter 4, the results of this study are presented. Chapter 4 will also include a description of the research setting, data collection procedures, and data analysis. The

results of this study are analyzed in relation to the central and related research question, followed by a discussion of strategies utilized to increase trustworthiness during data collection.

## Chapter 4: Reflections and Conclusions

The purpose of this descriptive multicase study was to develop a deeper understanding of the processes museum educators use to create inclusive curricula on the topic of American slavery at institutions on the Eastern Seaboard. To accomplish this purpose, a description of the processes that museum educators use to develop inclusive curricula on American slavery was needed. Two research questions were developed:

Central Research Question: What processes do museum educators use to create inclusive curricula on the topic of American slavery?

Related Research Question: What assumptions and beliefs do museum educators have about inclusive curricula on American slavery?

This chapter includes the results of the study; a description of the setting, the demographics of the research participants, and how the data were collected. Also, a description of the data analysis procedures and a discussion on the trustworthiness as it relates to this qualitative study were included in this chapter. Finally, the chapter included an analysis of the results in relation to the central and related research questions.

### **Setting**

This study took place at seven sites on the Eastern Seaboard. These sites were chosen because they met the criteria of thematically covering the topic of slavery in America. Participants included museum educators at each site who had created curricula on American slavery. Pseudonyms are used in place of the actual names of participants.

Site A is in a city with a population of over 200,000 people. This site is a large museum with more than 20 full-time employees. American slavery is one of the themes

the museum covers. One museum educator, Tiffany, was interviewed at Site A. Tiffany has worked for five years at Site A and has 17 years of total work experience. Most of her previous experience before coming to work at Site A has been implementing or tailoring curricula that have already been created for her needs. Before working at Site A, Tiffany did not have the opportunity to develop curricula on American slavery. Tiffany is responsible for setting the educational priorities and vision for the education department at Site A and creates interpretive and classroom type curricula on slavery in America. Currently, most of her responsibilities are concerned with providing oversight for curricula development, but occasionally Tiffany creates and implements curricula materials.

Site B is in a rural area with a population of fewer than 50,000 people. This site is a smaller museum with fewer than 20 full-time employees. Only one museum educator, Susan, was interviewed at Site B. Susan has worked at Site B for five years but has a total of 12 years of experience. Susan leads all educational initiatives at Site B, which include curricula development. Susan has created interpretive curricula for Site B on American slavery. Her experience before coming to work at Site B has been primarily in developing interpretive curricula with some academic training in classroom curricula. Susan has worked at other museums that covered the topic of American slavery.

Site C is also in a rural area with a population of fewer than 50,000 people. This site is a large museum with over 30 full-time employees. Three museum educators were interviewed at this site, Marcus, Emily, and Francis. Marcus has worked at Site C for ten years and has ten years of experience. Marcus largely develops interpretive curricula for

Site C and themes and interpretive techniques that include American slavery. Emily has worked at Site C for 17 years and has 17 years of experience. Emily manages all digital learning initiatives at Site C, which include developing curricula on American slavery with teachers. Emily's experience in curricula development has mostly been cultivated at Site C. Francis has worked at Site C for eight years and has 18 years of experience. Francis manages all field trips and writes curricula for school programs at Site C. Francis, Marcus and Emily work collaboratively on some aspects of their work responsibilities, which are concerned with establishing interpretive themes and developing curricula materials.

Site D is in an urban area with a small population of fewer than 20,000 people. This site is a large museum that has more than 100 full-time employees. Three museum educators were interviewed at Site D, Mary, Gabe, and Tom. Mary has worked at Site D for 18 years and has 21 years of total experience. Mary is responsible for coordinating and developing curricula for teacher training. Mary's previous work experience before Site D did not include the topic of American slavery; however, she has some curricula development experience at other museums. Gabe has worked at Site D for 21 years and has 21 years of experience. Gabe is responsible for managing the development of curricula for teacher institutes as well as creating curricula for classroom use. Gabe and Mary work collaboratively together to develop curricula for teacher training workshops. Tom has worked at Site D for 11 years and has 20 years of experience. Tom has a wide array of responsibilities at Site D, some of which include managing the development of African American interpretive curricula. Tom's first experience with curricula on



American slavery comes from work at Site D. Because of Tom's work in building programs and resources on the Black experience; he works with Gabe and Mary on some aspects of teacher training that they develop.

Site E is just outside of an urban area with a population greater than 500,000. Site E is large, with more than 25 full-time employees. One museum educator was interviewed at this site, Audrey. Audrey has worked at Site E for six years and has 30 years of experience. Audrey is responsible for all K-12<sup>th</sup> grade and youth programs and has created both interpretive classroom curricula for programs at Site E. Audrey's extensive experience in curricula development was mostly with art museums, and Site E is her for work with curricula on American slavery.

Site F is also located in an urban area with a population greater than 500,000. Site F is a large museum with more than 150 full-time employees. One museum educator, Lisa, was interviewed at Site F. Lisa has worked ten years at Site F and has 15 years of experience. Lisa is responsible for developing programs and resources for audiences that include teachers and students in 3<sup>rd</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Lisa creates curricula materials on slavery for Site G and did not do so before coming to work at Site F.

The final site, Site G, is in an urban area with a population of more than 100,000 people. Site G is a medium-sized museum with fewer than 20 full-time employees. One museum educator, Elizabeth, was interviewed at Site G. Elizabeth has worked at Site G for three years and has ten years of experience. Elizabeth had curricula development experiences before coming to work at Site G; however, she did not work with curricula

on American Slavery. Elizabeth is responsible for all programs and curricula development at Site G.

All of the sites thematically cover the topic of slavery in either the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, or 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. There were no serious organizational conditions that would have influenced this study. Some museums had undergone or were in the midst of organizational changes, but the changes did not influence this study. Of the 11 participants, 20% were people of color, and 80% were female. Collectively, participants had worked an average of 11.4 years at their sites. The demographics of participants are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1

*Summary of Participant Demographics*

Names and letters included below are pseudonyms for participants and their sites.

Participant	Sites	Age range	Ethnicity	Gender	Years at site	Total years of work experience
Tiffany	A	35-44	White	Female	5	17
Susan	B	35-44	White	Female	5	12
Marcus	C	35-44	White	Male	10	10
Emily	C	35-44	White	Female	17	17
Francis	C	35-44	White	Female	8	18
Mary	D	35-44	White	Female	18	21
Gabe	D	35-44	White	Male	21	21
Tom	D	35-44	Black	Male	11	20
Audrey	E	65-74	White	Female	6	30
Lisa	F	35-44	Black	Female	10	15
Elizabeth	G	35-44	White	Female	3	10

**Data Collection**

For this multiple-case study, data was collected from two different sources, individual interviews, and a collection of curricula examples. Before contacting potential participants, a letter of intent was obtained from a director or official at each site. Once approval was obtained to proceed with data collection from Walden University's Institutional Review Board, I coordinated interview schedules with participants. Interviews were conducted on-site to accommodate participants' schedules. Interviews

occurred in participant offices, empty program space, or conference rooms. A summary table of interviews is included at the end of this section in table 2.

The first interview was conducted with Audrey at Site F on October 7, 2019. The interview took place in her office. On October 15, 2019, I conducted four interviews beginning with Susan at Site B, and then Marcus, Emily, and Francis at Site C. Susan's interview took place in a private meeting room. Marcus, Emily, and Francis interviews at Site B took place in an empty program space.

On October 17, 2019, three participants, Mary, Gabe, and Tom, were interviewed at Site D. Mary's interview took place in her office. Gabe's interview also took place in his private office. Tom's interview took place in a private conference room. Tiffany from Site A was interviewed on October 21, 2019, in her office. Elizabeth from Site G was interviewed on November 4, 2019, in a classroom space. Lisa from Site F was the last interview on December 9, 2019. Lisa's interview took place in a small meeting room.

For each interview, the guidelines are outlined in the interview protocol (Appendix A). In order to ensure accurate transcription of data, each interview was recorded. Following the on-site visits, interviews were transcribed and organized according to each interview question. Interviews were conducted from October 2, 2019, through December 9, 2019. Times range from 14 minutes to 1 hour, depending on the depth of answers provided by participants. Table 2 presents a summary of the interview data collection.

After each interview, participants were asked to provide or direct me to an example of curricula on American slavery they created. Curricula examples ranged

according to the type of curricula created by each participant. Curriculum types were interpretive or classroom. Documents included lesson plans, interpretive outlines, interpretive guidelines, tour checklist, program videos, training schedules, program brochures, reference lists, interpretive scripts, guidelines for language choices, training manuals, and education guides. In the data collection plan outlined in Chapter 3, the goal was to include 10 sites and a minimum of 10 participants in the data collection. However, letters of cooperation were returned from seven sites, with 11 people agreeing to participate. No unusual circumstances were encountered during the collection of interview data.

Table 2

*Summary of Interview Data*

Participant	Site	Date	Length of interview
Tiffany	A	10/21/2019	59:48
Susan	B	10/15/2019	20:48
Marcus	C	10/15/2019	23:47
Emily	C	10/15/2019	17:44
Francis	C	10/15/2019	38:03
Mary	D	10/17/2019	44:05
Gabe	D	10/17/2019	14:32
Tom	D	10/17/2019	1:09:26
Audrey	E	10/07/2019	40:05
Elizabeth	G	11/04/2019	28:03
Lisa	F	12/09/2019	36:10

**Data Analysis**

The first portion of the analysis involved examining the data for each source for each case. After data collection, interviews were transcribed, and the document analysis form was used on each piece of curricula provided by participants. Data coding was conducted over a two-cycle process recommended by Saldana (2016). The first cycle of coding used the in vivo coding method, which is a form of qualitative coding analysis that places emphasis on the actual spoken words of participants (Saldana, 2016). In the

second cycle of coding, the pattern coding method was used to group data into smaller categories and themes. The analysis is presented below.

### **Interview Data Analysis**

Interview data were analyzed in relation to each of the 22 interview questions. The coded data for each question were examined for similarities and differences in participant responses and synthesized to form categories and themes. A summary table of categories constructed for each interview question is presented at the end of this section in table 4.

The first three interview questions were demographic: 1) What is your age; 2) What is your ethnicity? And 3) What is your gender. The results of these questions were given in table 1. Of the 11 participants, ten were in the 35 – 45 age range, with one in the 65-74 age range. Nine participants described themselves as White while the remaining two described themselves as Black. Of the 11 participants, eight identified as female, and three identified as male.

The 4<sup>th</sup> interview question asked, "What is your role in curricula development at your current institution?"

All participants filled the role of creating either classroom curricula meant for use with teachers or students in a classroom environment or interpretive curricula intended to be used in interpretive programs or at the museum itself. While all the participants filled similar roles in curricula development at their respective institutions, they also had some distinct differences in their work. Four of the 11 participants worked only with developing interpretive curricula. Elizabeth (G), Francis (C), and Tiffany (A) worked to

create both interpretive and classroom curricula for their sites. Lisa (F), Gabe (D), and Mary (D), only develop classroom curricula for either use in teacher training or for teachers use with students. Francis (C), Lisa (F), and Audrey (E) work only on developing curricula for students in K-12<sup>th</sup> grade while all other participants develop for students and adults. Elizabeth (G) and Susan (B) work at smaller sites where the staff is not as large, so they are responsible for a great deal of curricula content development, and their positions are not as narrowly focused. All other participants work at much larger sites with a more significant number of educational staff, so their roles at their institutions are more focused on one job and more internal staff to collaborate.

The fourth and fifth interview questions are related to each other and asked, "What are your past experiences with developing curricula?" and "What are your past experiences with developing curricula on the topic of American Slavery?"

All participants had at least ten years of experience working in curricula development. The exact years of experiences, along with total years at their current institution, can be seen in Table 3, a summary of participant curricula development experience located at the end of this section. All participants, except for Emily (C), Gabe (D), and Marcus (C), reported that they had prior experience developing curricula before filling their roles at their current institutions.

Almost all participants reported that their work at their current sites was the first experience developing curricula on the topic of American slavery. Susan (B) had prior experience developing interpretive curricula at another site, which pairs well with her current role in developing interpretive curricula. Lisa (F) had previous experience



working with the topic of slavery at other museums but not in developing curricula before coming to Site F. Emily (C), Susan (B), and Elizabeth (G) all shared prior experiences working in formal schools as educators that they were able to translate to their current roles developing curricula on slavery. Susan (B) also taught in a K-12<sup>th</sup> grade classroom, and slavery in America was a part of the curriculum standards she adhered to in teaching. Although all participants had enough experience as educators to be considered mid-career professionals at 10 or more years, most 10 out of 11, had never developed curricula on American slavery before filling their current roles. Marcus (C), Francis (C), Mary (D) Tom (D), and Audrey (E), all shared that their prior experience developing curricula on other topics prepared them to work on curricula about slavery.

Table 3

*Summary of Participant Curricula Development Experience*

Participant	Site	Years at current site	Years of total experience
Tiffany	A	5	17
Susan	B	5	12
Marcus	C	10	10
Emily	C	17	17
Francis	C	8	18
Mary	D	18	21
Gabe	D	21	21
Tom	D	11	20
Audrey	E	6	30
Lisa	F	10	15
Elizabeth	G	3	10

The seventh and eighth questions asked, "How do you define inclusive curriculum?" and "How do you define inclusive curriculum on American Slavery?"

All participants responded to question seven, to define an inclusive curriculum, with very similar answers. Participants defined inclusive curriculum as something that should include multiple voices, narratives, and cultural perspectives that may conflict with one view. Tom (D) explicitly stated, "curriculum that is inclusive helps people to understand the full story through various viewpoints." Lisa (F) shared that "curriculum that allows students and teachers to see themselves reflected and they are able to think

about themselves as change agents." Elizabeth (G) emphasized the quality of inclusive curriculum incorporating voices of individuals not in positions of power.

To answer question eight, the majority of participants incorporated concepts they thought were missing from inclusive curricula on slavery, such as historical viewpoint and humanity. Participants defined inclusive curricula on slavery as personal interpretation that humanizes enslaved people with the inclusion of narratives, full names, and a view of the past from their perspective. Emily (C) stated, "not romanticized as it has been but with a focus from the perspectives of those who were enslaved. Curricula should emphasize their humanity as much as we know them." Tom (D) and Lisa (F) felt that an inclusive curriculum on slavery by definition should broaden peoples' understanding today about Blacks and race. Tom (D) shared that "curriculum that is inclusive of enslaved experiences should help people today understand America as others view it. It should help people today understand the differences and similarities of multiple viewpoints today." In contrast to most of the participants' responses, Gabe (D) felt that there is not a definition of inclusive slavery, "I feel like saying inclusive curricula on slavery narrows the topic of slavery."

With the ninth interview question, participants were asked, "What are some characteristics of inclusive curriculum on American Slavery?"

In contrast to the responses to questions seven and eight, answers to interview question nine were more varied. Tiffany (A), Emily (C), Gabe (D), and Elizabeth (G) all used terminology to say that inclusive curriculum should be multi-dimensional, and multi-perspective in incorporating enslaved people. Tiffany (A) also added in the term

agency, resistance and honesty by stating, "curriculum about slavery should not just include the slaveholder and what they did to enslaved people but methods of resistance from free abolitionist and enslaved people." Similar to Tiffany (A), Emily (C) also included the concept that curricula should be "honest about the horrors of the institution of slavery." Audrey (E) and Marcus (C) shared similar responses in that they look for a curriculum on slavery to have biographies, oral histories, and incorporate learning beyond the norm about enslaved people. Lisa (F) provided the most extensive list of characteristics amongst the participants by including, "regional scope, the interaction of enslaved people and free people, rural and urban area differentiation, different socio-economic classes of White people in the past, perspectives on gender, enslaved Native Americans." Francis (C), Tom (D), and Lisa (F) all list the characteristic that curriculum on slavery should include how it connects to the present. Lisa (F) stated, "Curriculum should look at the concepts that build out of slavery, like Whiteness and what it means to be an American." Tom (D) said that "I am fascinated by curricula that isolate Blacks in the past, curricula should not just show people as if they lived in a bubble but how their lives coalesced."

With the tenth interview, question participants were asked, "What assumptions or beliefs do you have about inclusive curricula on American Slavery?"

All participants' answers to interview question ten varied greatly because they incorporated personal perspectives on how learning about slavery influenced them in their daily or professional lives. Tiffany (A) shared that "slavery is a part of history we are terrible talking about. There is a learning crisis whereby people are taught and feel

comfortable with information different from the truth that we show." Similar to Tiffany's (A) view, Mary (D) mentioned that "slavery is one of the most important things we can be teaching about. There are a lot of misconceptions about the history of slavery because people are more familiar with the Romanticized version of history." Susan (B) also responded that she felt slavery was always something important to learn and that it should be included because people want a full glimpse of the past when visiting museums, and this includes enslaved persons.

Both Marcus (C) and Emily (C) mentioned their personal bias of having grown up with a romanticized version of the Antebellum period and how it inhibits their push to be more inclusive. Marcus (C) stated that "curricula are not very inclusive or in-depth today. Slavery was a human rights violation and atrocity. We need to recognize that culturally the economic success of the nation is based upon slavery and genocide of American Indian people." Tom (D) responded that "slavery influences how people act today. People have all of these preconceived and negative notions about blacks because of slavery." Lisa (F) shared her assumption based on her admitted bias "I tend to assume that everybody in some ways would always know slavery and owning people is a bad thing. I have experiences that show people don't always have as strong of an opinion on this as I do." Lisa (F) also shared a viewpoint with Tom (D) about slavery's connection to modern race relations when she stated, "There are a lot of misconceptions about slavery that equal it being taught in a very removed sort of way. I think that it cannot be separated from race and racism in America because of the way it was built up here."

The 11<sup>th</sup> interview question asked participants, "How important is it to you to see an inclusive view of slavery in curricula on the topic?"

All participants responded that it was very important to have an inclusive view of slavery in curricula on the topic. Some participants elaborated on their answers further. Tiffany (A) shared a quote that showed slavery and the incorrect telling of history creates distance between people today "We can't get right with each other until we get the history, right?" Gabe (D) stated that the story of enslaved people is a part of the enduring American story and "to exclude slavery would be to omit a significant portion of the population of people who lived at Site D." Tom (D) and Lisa (F) both shared that learning about slavery is essential to the way race is understood. Tom (D) stated that "there can be no true empathy and understanding for our identity because our identity is our shared history." Lisa (F) responded, "If you don't have a good understanding of slavery and a good understanding of that history that comes with it, it makes it hard for you to see also that racism and assumptions about blacks continue to fester in society."

The 12<sup>th</sup> interview question asked participants, "Have you made any specific efforts to address inclusion in your creation of curricula on the topic of American Slavery? Provide examples."

There were some commonalities amongst participants depending on what was important in their view of inclusion. Emily (C), Francis (C), and Audrey (E) all mentioned that they work with schools and teachers to seek out their perspective during the curricula development process or to meet school district inclusive goals. Tiffany (A), Susan (B), Gabe (D), Lisa (F), and Elizabeth (G), all listed incorporating multiple

perspectives from the past and the use of primary sources is one means in which they made an effort to address inclusion in their curricula creation. Tom's (D) statement about his efforts referenced observations he made from working with others whose personal opinion conflicted with primary sources, "show examples through interpretation despite personal opinion." Lisa (F) also noted that although she made efforts to address inclusion, "there always seems to be a dance between being as real as possible and making the experience of learning about slavery as comfortable as possible for others while not belittling the experiences of enslaved people." Susan (B), Emily (C), Mary (D), and Elizabeth (G) felt that an essential part of their efforts in curricula creation was consulting descendants of enslaved people or Blacks during the development process.

The 13<sup>th</sup> interview question asked participants, "What are some tools or methods you have used to address inclusion in your creation of curricula on the topic of American slavery?"

Many of the participants provided very similar responses to the 13<sup>th</sup> interview question. Incorporating voices, stories, or primary sources offering the perspective of enslaved people was a typical response. Being conscious of the historical viewpoint was another typical response. Susan (B) stated that "addressing enslaved people by names and providing this demographic information to interpreters was important." Mary (D) responded that looking for resources outside of her site was a helpful tool. Gabe (D) provided a unique tool by stating, "creating a brave space where we can have open and honest conversations is important. Add components to teacher curricula to address the present-day implications of teaching sensitive or controversial topics.

The 14<sup>th</sup> interview question asked participants, "What experiences with regards to museum practices have influenced your assumptions or beliefs about the value of curricula on American Slavery."

Several participants, Marcus (C), Emily (C), Gabe (D), and Audrey (E) all mentioned that they noticed the inclusion trend in museum scholarship and professional development. Susan (B), Tiffany (A), and Francis (C) both mentioned they had positive experiences teaching about slavery that have encouraged them, and the current inclusive trend inspires them. Audrey (E), and Gabe (D) felt that their experiences in museum practices had reinforced the need for being more inclusive.

Interview question 15, "How have your assumptions and beliefs about inclusive curricula on American slavery changed over time?"

Most participants with the exception of Francis (C) cited recent tragedies such as the shooting at the Mother Emanuel Church in Charleston, South Carolina in 2016 and the riot in Charlottesville, Virginia in 2017, influenced their views that more radical steps should be taken to ensure all students and teachers learn about slavery in the United States. Emily (C) examined her own bias more closely and stated, "I started to think about how I could do better at telling a more complete story." Gabe (D) became more intentional in ensuring curricula built in greater opportunities for controversial conversation because he believes only through confronting the ugliness of the past can help people bridge gaps. Tom (D) stated that he had some personal feelings and hesitation in his work, but he has developed a sense of pride in sharing the stories of enslaved people who overcame adversities.



Interview question 16, "Do you think educators currently develop inclusive curricula on American slavery? Why or Why Not"

Responses to interview question 16 fell into three categories of common answers. Tiffany (A), Susan (B), Emily (C), Mary (D), Gabe (D), and Elizabeth (G) felt that some institutions were moving toward broad inclusion in curricula on slavery even if they were there yet. Emily's (C) response was optimistic. She stated, "I think as a field we are trying to improve. I think some museums are doing a really good job. We are getting there, but we are not there yet." Gabe (D) stated that "there is intended and unintended omission. Some museums are at least working toward inclusion, and there are some working toward it but not willingly."

Some participants, such as Francis (C) and Lisa (F), did not feel comfortable registering a positive or negative response to question 16. Lisa (F) was aware of the inclusion trend and the number of conferences encouraging challenging and uncomfortable conversations on slavery, but she had not taken notice of the work of others due to her own work demands." Tom (D), Marcus (C), and Audrey (E) did not feel that educators were currently developing inclusive curricula on slavery. Audrey (E) felt that an educator's willingness to push boundaries might be related to institutional buy-in. Marcus's (C) response added that he thought more educators are working towards inclusion than they historically have been."

Tom (D) stated, "that although institutions release general inclusion statements and educators know what inclusion is, they still regurgitate the same sanitized version of history and choose a comfortable story versus the truth." Interestingly, Audrey (E), Mary

(D), and Francis (C) mentioned that while they were hopeful, inclusive changes, they recognized how unintentional exclusion could occur. For example, Audrey (E), Mary (D), and Francis (C) shared a conference that took place in the weeks before my interviews with them that invited educators at museums that worked with teachers on curricula and professional development focused on the topic of American slavery to share ideas and learn from each other. They reported that no Black educators were in attendance at this conference, which occurred in a location easily accessible to more than 300 museums. Mary (D) stated, "Clearly talking about slavery was important, but every person in the room was White. This says something about the state of museums." Mary (D) also stated, "there is clearly some work to be done there."

Interview question 17, "How would you describe your process of creating inclusive curricula on American slavery? What is your role in the curricula creation process?"

With all participants, the process started with a making a decision on learning goals based on audience and age and then researching available primary sources. Marcus (C) responded that your audience and their age would influence the approach, not necessarily the content." In choosing primary sources, participants Emily (C) and Mary (D) stated that some consideration should be given to the point of view of the source, who was the historical audience for the source, and what may be missing from the narrative. Emily (C) and Francis (C) also consider how the curricula will be delivered and by whom. The facilitator of the curricula may not have confidence in their ability to provide the lesson. Tom (D) and Lisa (F) shared that they keep in mind what type of story

they want to tell and continue with the truth in the delivery of the story. Elizabeth's (G) response was unique in that she added she first examines what has worked for her site in developing curricula in the past and what has not worked.

Interview question 18, "How do you integrate inclusive practices into your curricula development on American slavery?"

All participants responded with some form of research or use of primary sources to support the curricula. Tom (D) shared in his response, "primary sources make acceptance of the story easier for people who are not as comfortable hearing something that contradicts a previously held assumption. It also makes it easier to achieve buy-in from management." Tiffany (A), Marcus (C), Emily (C), and Gabe (D) also integrate inclusive practice into their curricula development with the addition of multiple historical perspectives. Mary (D) also stated she incorporates multiple perspectives; however, she vets her research and course of action through modern historians and feedback from stakeholders. Audrey (E) mentioned that creative presentation is something that is important to her to include during her development process. For Susan (B), preparing staff to be comfortable and knowledgeable in delivering her interpretive curricula was necessary, so her answer to question 18 was the inclusion of easily accessible resources and materials for staff to build their comfort level with the topic of slavery.

Interview question 19, "What are some challenges you have had in developing inclusive curricula about American slavery?"

Susan (B), Marcus (C), Tom (D), Lisa (F), and Elizabeth (G) mentioned discomfort with the topic as a significant challenge. Lisa (F) stated, "once you get pass

balancing the interpretation, pushback from users can be a significant hurdle." From Marcus's (C) perspective, "the museum field needs to overcome a lack of diversity because it will be a challenge looking at institutions that are supposed to be for everyone and the board and staff are composed of majority Whites." Gabe (D), Tom (D), and Audrey (E) mentioned buy-in from management or community stakeholders as a challenge. Emily (C) was the only participant to mention a lack of information on enslaved people outside of what Whites from the historical period have written as a significant challenge.

Interview question 20, "What are some factors that influence the success or failure of the curricula development process?"

For participants, resources both financially and figuratively, internal and external buy-in, and educational usability are factors that determine the success or failure of the curricula development process. Audrey (E) responded that "making sure the story you are telling is based in reality can only really be done with proper resources to support the story." Elizabeth (G) and Lisa (F) both mentioned it would be a failure to develop materials and curricula that teachers cannot use, and students do not resonate with the content or way it is taught. Tom (D) and Mary (D) both made statements that upper management has to make decisions to choose what will and will not be supported based on available funds, which can often mean resources do not get updated with new research.

Interview question 21, "What recommendations would you make to improve the inclusive curricula development process on the topic of American slavery?"

Participants responses shared that clarity on how the memory of slavery is shaped and taught, incorporate a diverse curricula development team, make resources for teachers and staff readily available to build confidence, be confident and clear in your goals in seeking buy-in, use different means of telling a story and do not underestimate the ability of people to take in a nuanced story. Gabe (D) and Tom (D) both recommended clarity with objectives and goals to achieve buy-in. Gabe (D) specifically recommended looking at the work of other institutions would help your curricula development process, "learn from other institutions as not to repeat their mistakes." Marcus (C) and Audrey (E) recommended being creative and considered non-traditional approaches to telling a story.

In the final interview, questions number 22, participants were asked, "Do you have anything to add?"

Mary (D), Gabe (D), Lisa (F), and Elizabeth (G) did not have anything further to add to their interviews. The other participants had various statements to support or summarize their interviews. Tiffany (A) reiterated the importance of providing resources to help grow the comfort level of staff in talking about a difficult topic like slavery. Susan's (B) statement was in agreeance with Tiffany (A), but she also mentioned the importance of being flexible and keeping your visitors in mind when planning curricula. Marcus (C) said, "museum staff has a lot to offer and learn, when teaching about slavery, it is best to approach it from a sense of justice and fairness." Emily (C) and Francis (C) both communicated their excitement for this study and how significant a contribution it

will make to the field of curricula development and museum studies, especially during this time.

Tom's (D) final statement communicated the influence of his work on his personal outlook by saying, "working here is the most I have told the story of my people who were enslaved. I feel like I am making America a better place sharing their story."

Audrey (E) shared, "We have made a lot of changes to the way the story of enslaved people is told at Site E. However, I still hear many guests who would rather hear narratives about the happy slave and benevolent slaveholder than the truth and that needs to change."

Table 4

*Summary of Categories Constructed from Interview Data Analysis*

Interview Questions	Categories
IQ1: What is your age	Average age 35-44
IQ2: What is your ethnicity?	Majority ethnicity White
IQ3: What is your gender?	Majority gender identity female
IQ4: What is your role in curricula development at your current institution?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop curricula resources for teachers</li> <li>• Develop learning experiences for teachers</li> <li>• Developing interpretive curricula for students and teachers</li> <li>• Developing curricula resources and learning for students k-12<sup>th</sup> grade</li> </ul>
IQ5: What are your past experiences with developing curricula?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• K-12<sup>th</sup> grade educator</li> <li>• Frontline interpreter or tour guide</li> <li>• Experience in education at other sites</li> <li>• Experience in higher education</li> <li>• Degree in education</li> </ul>

- Degree in museum studies
  - No past experience
- IQ6: What are your past experiences with developing curricula on American Slavery?
- No prior experience working with slavery
  - K-12<sup>th</sup> grade teacher
- IQ7: How do you define inclusive curricula?
- Multiple perspectives
  - Multi-Dimensional
  - Interpretation that includes everyone
  - Made to feel welcome
  - Full story
  - Multiple identity entry points
- IQ8: How do you define inclusive curricula on American Slavery?
- Voices from enslaved people
  - Acknowledgment of personhood or humanity
  - Names
  - Not romanticized
  - Multi-Dimensional
  - Multiple perspectives
  - Unvarnished truth
  - Help people to understand differences
- IQ9: What are some characteristics of inclusive curricula on American Slavery?
- Multi-Dimension stories
  - Stories of resistance and agency from enslaved people
  - Names
  - Acknowledgment of humanity in reference (enslaved for slave)
  - Effort to understand people beyond the norm
  - Honesty about the horrors of slavery
  - Defined terms
  - Connection to the present
  - Connection to race relations in the present
  - Oral histories
  - Regional scope
  - Interactions of enslaved people with others

- IQ10: What assumptions or beliefs do you have about inclusive curricula on American Slavery?
- Non- secular viewpoints on slavery (Native Americans, slavery in the North)
  - Lack of honesty and completeness
  - Should show a full view of the past
  - Not inclusive
  - Should emphasis it as a human rights violation
  - Acknowledgment of bias and influence on teacher practice
  - We have a long way to go
  - Optimistic of steps toward inclusion
  - Important for learning empathy
  - Best of intentions but unintentional skew of history
  - Important to race relations today
  - Important to good citizenship
  - Connection to race and gender issues
  - It's a matter of social justice to teach
- IQ11: How important is it to you to see an inclusive view of slavery in curricula on the topic?
- Very important
  - Important to healing racism and race issues
  - Great service to society
  - A part of telling the enduring American story
  - No understanding of the past without inclusiveness
  - Crucial to understanding racial dynamic today
  - Important to understanding the full story
- IQ12: Have you made any specific efforts to address inclusion in your creation on the topic?
- No separate programs based on themes
  - Interpretive focus on slavery
  - Inclusion of race dynamic of slavery
  - Inclusion of influence on modern race dynamic
  - Seek diverse perspectives
  - Provide equitable access to resources
  - New inclusive program development
  - Vetting concepts and resources



- Inclusion of Blacks in curricula development
  - Putting aside personal feelings for the truth
  - Intentional promotion of comfortable balance in interpretation
  - Self- critical
  - Assessment of bias
- IQ13: What are some tools or methods you have used to address inclusion in your creation of curricula on the topic of American Slavery?
- Multi-Perspectives
  - Diverse development staff
  - References
  - Primary Sources
- IQ14: What experiences with regards to museum practices have influenced your assumptions or beliefs about the value of curricula on American Slavery?
- Confidence working with diverse learners
  - Inspired by good work
  - Enhanced value
  - Moving forward but we are not there yet
  - Inspired by positive experiences
  - Confronting bias
  - Building empathy
  - Reinforced understanding of changing demographics
- IQ15: How have your assumptions and beliefs about inclusive curricula on American Slavery changed over time?
- Important to grow and build trust
  - Always believed it was important
  - Examined personal bias
  - Getting better at telling a complete story
  - Enhanced feelings of importance of topic
  - Better researcher
  - Enhanced need for diverse opinions
  - Intentional behavior
- IQ16: Do you think museum educators develop inclusive curricula on American Slavery? Why or Why Not?
- Generally, no
  - Depends on the institution
  - Limited
  - More working toward inclusion
  - Not prepared to speak about other institutions
  - Lack of diversity in the museum field is a hindrance

IQ17: How would you describe your process of creating inclusive curricula on American Slavery? What is your role in the curricula creation process?

- Unintended inclusion still happens
- Set learning goals
- Consider audience and their ages
- Research available primary sources
- Consider partners in education
- Consider how will the curricula be presented
- Consider what has already been done
- Consider challenges, failures, and success in the past

IQ18: How do you integrate inclusive practices into your curricula development on American Slavery?

- Multiple perspectives
- Diverse development team
- Training
- Partnerships
- Feedback and evaluation
- Creative presentation
- Resources

IQ19: What are some challenges you have had in developing inclusive curricula about American Slavery?

- Comfort and confidence talking about slavery
- People who do not want to change
- People who just want to do the bare minimum
- Lack of diversity among staff

IQ20: What are some factors that influence the success or failure of the curricula development process?

- Buy-In
- Financial resources
- Primary sources
- Keeping up with trends
- Diverse staff
- Connection to students
- Usefulness to teachers
- Leadership support

IQ21: What recommendations would you make to improve the inclusive curricula development process on the topic of American Slavery?

- Be clear on how the memory of slavery is perceived today
- Provide adequate sources to tell the full story
- Encourage social justice through conversation

- Incorporate a diverse team in developing curricula
- Be creative
- Incorporate diverse voices from the past
- Learn from others and consider precedent
- Do not be afraid to try
- Be nuanced and do not just stick with the normal story
- Push boundaries

IQ22: Did you have anything to add?

- Support for staff
  - Be flexible
  - Keep visitors needs in mind
  - Museum staff has a lot to learn
  - Museum staff have a lot to offer
  - Justice and fairness
  - This study is necessary
  - Making America a better place
  - Sharing enslaved people's stories
  - Still a lot of work to be done
- 

### **Curriculum Data Analysis**

The analysis of curricula content included a description of the purpose, structure, and use of each curriculum. The document analysis form in Appendix B was used in document analysis. Each participant was asked to provide at least one curricula piece that they had developed on the topic of American slavery. Collectively participants provided 15 curricula examples for analysis. Examples of inclusive curricula on slavery were analyzed using the document analysis form in Appendix B. Research by Small (2015), which detailed a scale on the inclusion of American slavery at museums, influenced the creation of the document analysis form. The scale details interpretation of slavery as relative incorporation, marginalization, and symbolic annihilation (Moody & Small, 2019). The terms are defined in the definitions section of this study.

Tiffany from Site A provided one curriculum example, WRSH (pseudonym), that represents interpretive curricula she has developed. The purpose of this curricula was to offer education guides working with school groups, visitors, and teachers a foundation for framing discussion on themes from Site A. One of the themes is slavery. WRSH includes a brief timeline of the institution of slavery in the United States, definitions of racism, tips for framing people in discussions, historical personalities for discussion, and tips for forming questions that encourage meaningful dialog. WRSH involves relative incorporation of slavery as defined by Moody and Small (2019). A detailed definition of slavery in the United States was provided explaining it as "chattel slavery: individuals were treated as complete property, to be bought and sold, give, and inherited, with descendants automatically enslaved; no personal freedoms or rights to decide the direction in life." The objectives outlined in WRSH are meant to help educators navigate teaching about slavery in an inclusive way. The curricula does not just include the names of enslaved people but individuals who are free, poor, or middle class. The diversity of historical personalities included in the curricula allows learners to understand a period from multiple viewpoints. Tiffany included in her interview the recommendation for sites that interpret slavery to make slavery inclusive in all programs and curriculums instead of providing separate learning experiences that visitors can opt-out of learning. The WRSH curriculum aligns with her recommendation.

Susan from Site B provided one curriculum example, BGRR (pseudonym), that represents the interpretive curricula she created. BGRR was created with the purpose of providing interpretive educators with the guidelines they need to interpret slavery

inclusively. The BGRR curricula include preferred interpretive language and terms, principles to consider, a tour guide rubric, and references of the background and sources for further study of enslaved people who lived at Site B. BGRR involves relative incorporation of slavery as defined by Moody and Small (2019).

Although the curricula are meant to help interpretive educators at Site B with the inclusive interpretation of slavery, there is no explicit definition of slavery included. Language use suggestions provide some idea of what the term means. For example, principles to consider include, "Please honor the humanity of the millions of people treated as chattel property by naming enslaved people whenever possible," or under alternatives for the slaveholder, "those who claimed people as property, those who held people in slavery." Enslaved individuals are represented extensively in this curriculum with detailed backgrounds and sources for information. Because the goal of this curricula was to make the overall interpretive curricula at Site B more inclusive of enslaved individuals the focus of BGRR was to provide more in-depth information about enslaved people and their interactions with free people living in the community around Site B. In her interview, Susan mentioned that there is plentiful information available about free people who lived in and around Site B, so their goal was to provide more information about enslaved people to make education more inclusive. The depth and quantity of information provided to show a diverse community in the past allow learners to understand history at Site B from multiple perspectives.

Marcus from Site C provided one curriculum example, GTSH (pseudonym), that represents interpretive curricula he developed. GTSH is curricula materials used to train

interpretive educators on inclusive language with regards to slavery. The curriculum piece includes suggestions for appropriate language, references to complexities of race and slavery, and references to the agency of enslaved persons. GTSH involves relative incorporation of slavery as defined by Moody and Small (2019). Like Susan's curriculum piece, Marcus's curriculum does not provide an explicit definition of slavery. There are enough associated references to slavery that a reader may be able to discern a definition. For example, the following statement is made in a section on the differences between slave versus enslaved, "an enslaved person (the word enslaved is an adjective) is someone who has the condition of slavery thrust upon them." The GTSH curriculum does not include a variety of perspectives from enslaved or free people, just one perspective from each category. The goal of this curriculum piece is to help interpretive educators include diverse perspectives in an inclusive way by helping them to address ways in which enslaved people have been explicitly marginalized. The curriculum GTSH is meant to prepare interpretive educators that provide tours of Site C to school groups, and visitors. This information will be provided to all visitors to Site C, not just specific groups who elect to learn about enslaved people.

Emily, at Site C, provided one curriculum example, APSM (pseudonym), that represents the curriculum she developed. APSM is a digital resource that allows people to search for and learn about people that lived on Site C. The resource is meant to focus on the lives of enslaved people at Site C but does include free people that worked on the property in the past and how they interacted with enslaved people. APSM includes relative incorporation of slavery as defined by Moody and Small (2019). No explicit

definition of slavery is given in this curriculum. A learner would have to use narratives provided on free and enslaved people to determine deference's in their legal status as enslaved or free or and educator would operate under the assumption that the learner would know the meaning of enslavement before using this curriculum. The curriculum features background information about the overseer, free craftsmen, slaveholders, and enslaved people providing a view of the past from multiple perspectives, which is in line with Emily's (C) recommendations for inclusive curriculum in her interview.

Francis at Site C provided two curricula examples, EXYP and FPTG (pseudonyms), as a representation of her development of curricula that are used in the classroom or with teacher training. EXYP is a curriculum piece designed with the goal of providing an exploration guide for young people of Site C. FPTG, is a curriculum piece meant to assist teachers with planning field trip experiences at Site C. Both EXYP and FPTG include relative incorporation of slavery as defined by Moody and Small (2019). EXYP offers a detailed definition of slavery, "slavery meant that one person could legally own another person. Slaves lacked basic rights and were forced to work." Enslaved individuals are extensively represented in the EXYP curriculum by full name and job description. A mentioned is made that the lives of free people and enslaved people differed because of a "violent and unfair system." However, no extensive details are provided to jobs or what those differences in living conditions and worked load looked like between enslaved and free at Site C beyond the statement "most slaves worked from sunrise to sunset six days a week." Since the goal of this curriculum was to provide an

exploration tool for young children, more details on specific people enslaved and free are provided elsewhere in Site C extensive educational holdings.

FPTG contains no definition of slavery. The curriculum, FPTG (pseudonym), is meant to act as a guide for educators planning field trip experiences to Site C. Although the field trip experiences listed do include a discussion of slavery, this is not clear from the descriptions in the curriculum piece. Francis mentioned in her interview that she did a critical assessment of the curriculum piece with the purpose of reprinting it and planned to re-write the curriculum to be more clear that field trip dialog would include a discussion of both enslaved and free people who lived at Site C. This particular curriculum piece does not include names or background information of who will be discussed on field trips; however, the description makes clear that learning about the past from multiple perspectives is an important part of the experience. As recommended by Moody and Small (2019), the curriculum indicates that all the programs are inclusive of slavery without an option to opt-out of learning about the lives of enslaved people.

Tom at Site D provided one example of a curriculum, ICCW (pseudonym), that represents the interpretive curriculum he developed on slavery. The purpose of ICCW is to provide learners with a view of a community through the viewpoint of an enslaved individual that lived near Site D. The curriculum is an outline of an interpretive performance that is performed by Tom of a historical personality, William (pseudonym). The outline has essential talking points and proposed interactions with other historical personalities portrayed by other interpretive educators. ICCW includes relative incorporation of slavery as defined by Moody and Small (2019). It does not include an



explicit definition of slavery. However, the implication of a definition of enslavement is implied through a description of the life of William and what he lacks in life by not being free. The curriculum ICCW was developed as a part of a larger initiative that shows the lives of diverse individuals who historically lived in a specific community, some of whom interacted with each other in the past. Although the curriculum is from the perspective of William, one enslaved individual, multiple perspectives are incorporated through people he interacted with during his time period. The ICCW curriculum is openly accessible to anyone who visits Site D without an extra cost, which is a recommendation of Moody and Small (2019) for a museum to be more inclusive of the topic of slavery.

Mary at Site D provided one example of a curriculum, RAMW (pseudonym), which represents classroom curricula she developed for teacher training. The purpose of RAMW is to provide an outline of the training that teachers will receive on teaching about race during a specific time period and slavery. RAMW includes segments of learning and a description of each segment and a link to resources used during teacher training. RAMW includes relative incorporation of slavery as defined by Moody and Small (2019). There is no explicit definition of slavery included in the curriculum provided. However, the implication in the first segment of the curriculum indicates that teachers will learn the definition with a focus on what makes the lives of enslaved people distinct. The curriculum reflects the inclusion of one enslaved person and one free person who taught enslaved and free people. The curriculum provides two diverse viewpoints of a time period and community. The RAMW curriculum was for a teacher workshop that was available for educators exclusively for a participation fee.

Gabe from Site D provided two curricula examples, ERCW and BAAH (pseudonyms), which represent the classroom curricula he created for training teachers. The purpose of the ERCW curriculum is to provide an outline of a teacher training program on race, equity, and slavery during a particular time period. ERCW provides multiple segments, descriptions of segments, and links to additional learning resources. Both ERCW and BAAH include relative incorporation as defined by Moody and Small (2019). ERCW curriculum does not include an explicit definition of slavery. The first segment listed in the curriculum consists of a discussion of the meaning of freedom and equality, which implies that slavery will be defined with teachers. The curriculum incorporates a diverse array of historical personalities for teachers to discuss, which include enslaved people, gentry, and free Blacks and Native Americans. The diverse historical perspectives incorporate inclusive practices shared by interview participants.

The BAAH curriculum is also an outline of a teacher workshop meant to teach about the lives of Blacks in a particular time period. It includes segments, segment descriptions, and links to resources. While slavery is not explicitly defined in the BAAH curriculum, the implication of discussion on freedom and equality in the first segments indicate it may be defined with teachers. Like the ERCW curriculum, BAAH includes diverse historical perspectives from enslaved people, free Blacks, and gentry, and or slaveholding individuals. Both the BAAH and ERCW curriculums are offered as teacher training exclusively to educators with a participant fee.

Audrey at Site E submitted two curricula examples, STLB and MGHT (pseudonyms), which represent interpretive curricula she developed. The purpose of

STLB is to provide the learner a viewpoint of daily life from the perspective of enslaved people who lived in the same community and were legally owned by the same person.

The curriculum is an interpretive tour outline of enslaved life provided by an interpretive educator. Slavery is defined in this curriculum as "enslaved people were individuals who were legally owned by another person, their lives and choices affecting their futures were made by who held them in enslavement." The curriculum provides further expounds upon the definition by including aspects of differences in the workload of enslaved individuals, the legal status of ownership following the mother, and repercussions for trying to run away to freedom. The names and duties of several enslaved individuals are included in the STLB curriculum, as well as how they interacted with free gentry and free craftsmen.

MGHT is an interpretive curriculum with the purpose of providing learners a perspective of life from the viewpoint of one individual. The curriculum is an outline that is meant to be performed by an interpretive educator in the first person. The objective of this curriculum is for the learner to understand the daily life of an enslaved individual, James (pseudonym), and his perspective of his legal owner, Andrew (pseudonym). Slavery is not explicitly defined in this curriculum. Some attention is given to explaining limitations in life that comes from being enslaved, such as lack of freedom over personal choices.

More priority in the interpretation is given to James's perception of Andrew rather than how James's perception was affected by choices Andrew made over his life. Both STLB and MGHT include relative incorporation of slavery as defined by Moody and Small (2019). However, both curricula are not freely accessible and are only available to

individuals or groups who pay extra for them. Moody and Small (2019) shared that separating program or curriculum on slavery allows visitors to opt-out of learning about enslaved people, does not promote the coalesced aspect of enslaved and free people's lives and encourages educators at the museum to disregard adding aspects of information on enslaved people into general programs and curricula.

Lisa at Site F provided two curricula examples, HANM and ALAM (pseudonyms), as a representation of classroom curricula. The purpose of HANM is to introduce the personal and emotional effect of the slave trade on through the perspective of an enslaved individual. It includes an introduction to the slave trade, a summation of the effects of expansion, and the fugitive slave act on the slave trade, discussion questions, primary sources, vocabulary, and document analysis tools. HANM focuses on the experiences of one enslaved individual, Sadie, who was sent to the market with a letter from her legal owner, placing her on the market for sale. The core of the curriculum is a primary source that is in Site F's collection, the letter that was sent to the market with Sadie.

The curriculum provides a definition of slavery, "a labor system...a state of bondage." The curriculum further expands the definition by adding, "What made slavery in the Americas distinct was the way it was racialized and industrialized." Although the curriculum is limited to the perspective of one enslaved individual, the depth to which other experiences are included as a related resource, as well as primary sources from the slaveholder and other gentry, make the curricula diverse in viewpoint. HANM is a curriculum with a broad purpose to provide insight into the Black experience in the

United States. It provides an excellent overview of the content of the exhibits, collection, and education at Site F, the themes of the curriculum include slavery. HANM does not provide an explicit definition of slavery. However, it provides some idea of the definition through other statements that contrast the station in life between enslavement as having choice over one's own circumstances to enslavement and having none.

Both ALAM and HANM both include relative incorporation as defined by Moody and Small (2019). They include diverse perspectives of enslaved individuals and people that coalesced through their lives. The curricula help learners to view the past through diverse points of view. Both curricula are accessible for educators and not educators digitally and in print by request from Site F.

Elizabeth from Site G provided one curriculum examples, HBCW (pseudonym), as a representation of classroom curricula she has developed. HBCW is a curriculum that was created with the purpose of helping students understand the efforts of abolitionists and how they defined freedom and equality. The curriculum includes a summarization of objectives, guidelines, and the activity, background information on four different abolitionists, a summary of the approaches of each abolitionist, and discussion questions. There is no explicit definition of slavery; however, the description of the objective of the curriculum implies that defining freedom and equality is a part of the goals. Multiple perspectives are presented in the curriculum, from free to enslaved individuals, and their viewpoints of slavery are compared as a part of the main activity of the curriculum. All perspectives presented in the curriculum are from the abolitionist point of view, so although they differ in their ideas on how to end slavery, no contesting viewpoints a

presented. Elizabeth stated that the curriculum HBCW is designed to be presented to students at Site G but can and have been adopted for use in the classroom outside of Site G. HBCW includes relative incorporation as defined by Moody and Small (2019). The curriculum is provided at a cost to students and includes admission to Site G.

Table 5

*Summary of Categories Constructed from the Curricula Analysis*

Participant (Site)	Curriculum Name (Pseudonym)	Categories
Tiffany (A)	WRSH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Included definition of slavery</li> <li>• Learning objectives relate to the inclusion of slavery</li> <li>• Enslaved people represented in curricula</li> <li>• Inclusion of multiple perspectives</li> <li>• Helps learners view past from diverse perspectives</li> <li>• Use of specific names of people and accomplishments</li> <li>• Inclusive curriculum is accessible to all through learning experience with an admission fee</li> </ul>
Susan (B)	BGRR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No explicit definition of slavery</li> <li>• Learning objectives relate to the inclusion of slavery</li> <li>• Enslaved people represented in curricula</li> <li>• Moderate inclusion of multiple perspectives</li> <li>• Helps learners view past from diverse perspectives</li> <li>• Use of specific names of people and accomplishments</li> <li>• Inclusive curriculum is accessible to all through learning experience with an admission fee</li> </ul>
Marcus (C)	GTSH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No explicit definition of slavery</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning objectives relate to the inclusion of slavery</li> <li>• Enslaved people not significantly represented in curricula</li> <li>• Moderate inclusion of multiple perspectives</li> <li>• Helps learners view past from diverse perspectives</li> <li>• Use of specific names of one enslaved person but no accomplishments</li> <li>• Inclusive curriculum is accessible to all through learning experience with an admission fee</li> </ul>
Emily (C)	APSM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No definition of slavery</li> <li>• Learning objectives relate to the inclusion of slavery</li> <li>• Enslaved people were significantly represented in curricula</li> <li>• Significant inclusion of multiple perspectives</li> <li>• Helps learners view past from diverse perspectives</li> <li>• Use of specific names of enslaved people and accomplishments</li> <li>• Inclusive curriculum is accessible to all through learning experience with no fee</li> </ul>
Francis (C)	EXYP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Included a detailed definition of slavery</li> <li>• Learning objectives relate to the inclusion of slavery</li> <li>• Enslaved people were significantly represented in curricula</li> <li>• Significant inclusion of multiple perspectives</li> <li>• Helps learners view past from diverse perspectives</li> <li>• Use of specific names of enslaved people and jobs, not accomplishments</li> <li>• Inclusive curriculum is accessible to all through learning experience with no admission fee</li> </ul>
	FTPG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Included a detailed definition of slavery</li> <li>• Learning objectives relate to the inclusion of slavery</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enslaved people were significantly represented in curricula</li> <li>• Significant inclusion of multiple perspectives not clear presented</li> <li>• Helps learners view past from diverse perspectives</li> <li>• No use of specific names of enslaved people or accomplishments listed however implied in a learning experience</li> <li>• Inclusive curriculum is accessible to all through learning experience with no admission fee</li> </ul>
Tom (D)	ICCW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No explicit definition of slavery</li> <li>• Learning objectives relate to the inclusion of slavery</li> <li>• Enslaved people were significantly represented in curricula</li> <li>• Moderate inclusion of multiple perspectives</li> <li>• Helps learners view past from diverse perspectives</li> <li>• Use specific names of enslaved people and their accomplishments</li> <li>• Inclusive curriculum is accessible to all learning experiences with an admission fee</li> </ul>
Mary (D)	RAMW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No explicit definition of slavery</li> <li>• Learning objectives relate to the inclusion of slavery</li> <li>• Enslaved people were represented in curriculum</li> <li>• Moderate inclusion of multiple perspectives</li> <li>• Helps learners view past from diverse perspectives</li> <li>• Use the specific name of an enslaved person and their accomplishments</li> <li>• Inclusive curriculum is accessible to educators for a participation fee</li> </ul>
Gabe (D)	ERCW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No explicit definition of slavery</li> <li>• Learning objectives relate to the inclusion of slavery</li> </ul>



- Enslaved people were represented in curriculum
  - Significant inclusion of multiple perspectives
  - Helps learners view past from diverse perspectives
  - Use specific names of enslaved people and their accomplishments
  - Inclusive curriculum is accessible to educators for a participant fee
- BAAH
- No explicit definition of slavery
  - Learning objectives relate to the inclusion of slavery
  - Enslaved people were represented in curriculum
  - Significant inclusion of multiple perspectives
  - Helps learners view past from diverse perspectives
  - Use specific names of enslaved people and their accomplishments
  - Inclusive curriculum is accessible to educators for a participant fee
- Audrey (E)      STLB
- No explicit definition of slavery
  - Learning objectives relate to the inclusion of slavery
  - Enslaved people were represented in curriculum
  - Significant inclusion of multiple perspectives
  - Helps learners view past from diverse perspectives
  - Use of specific names of enslaved people and their accomplishments
  - Inclusive curriculum is not accessible to all learning experiences without an additional fee.
- MGHT
- No explicit definition of slavery
  - Learning objectives marginally relate to the inclusion of slavery
  - Enslaved people were represented in curriculum
  - Marginal inclusion of multiple perspectives

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helps learners view past from diverse perspectives</li> <li>• Use of specific names of enslaved person and their accomplishments</li> <li>• Inclusive curriculum is accessible to all learners with an admission fee and additional fee</li> </ul>
Lisa (F)	HANM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No explicit definition of slavery</li> <li>• Learning objectives relate to the inclusion of slavery</li> <li>• Enslaved people were represented in curriculum</li> <li>• Inclusion of multiple perspectives</li> <li>• Helps learners view past from diverse perspectives</li> <li>• Use of specific name of enslaved person and their accomplishments</li> <li>• Inclusive curriculum is accessible to all learning experiences</li> </ul>
	ALAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No definition of slavery</li> <li>• Learning objectives relate to the inclusion of slavery</li> <li>• Enslaved people were represented in curriculum</li> <li>• Inclusion of multiple perspectives</li> <li>• Helps learners view past from diverse perspectives</li> <li>• Use of specific names of enslaved people and their accomplishments</li> <li>• Inclusive curriculum is accessible to all learning experiences.</li> </ul>
Elizabeth (G)	HBCW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No explicit definition of slavery</li> <li>• Learning objectives relate to the inclusion of slavery</li> <li>• Enslaved people were represented in curriculum</li> <li>• Inclusion of multiple perspectives</li> </ul>

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- Moderately helps learners view past from diverse perspectives
  - Use of specific names of enslaved people and their accomplishments
  - Inclusive curriculum is accessible to all learners with an admission fee
- 

## **Results**

The results of this section were presented in relation to the central and related research questions for this study. During data analysis, I constructed categories for each data source, including participant interviews and curriculum analysis. Based on patterns found in each data source, emergent themes were identified. These themes addressed specific aspects of the curriculum development processes and assumptions and beliefs educators have about inclusive curricula on slavery. Table 6 presents a summary of the results for the central and related research questions, followed by a discussion of findings.

Table 6

*Summary of Results*

Research Question	Key Findings
CRQ1: What processes do museum educators use to create inclusive curricula on the topic of American slavery?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set learning goals</li> <li>• Consider audience needs and ages</li> <li>• Research available primary sources</li> <li>• Consider partners in education</li> <li>• Plan how curricula will be presented</li> <li>• Consider what has already been done</li> <li>• Consider successes, failures, and challenges from other institutions or other projects</li> </ul>
RRQ: What assumptions and beliefs do museum educators have about inclusive curricula on American slavery?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of honesty and completeness</li> <li>• Lack of emphasis on the humanity of enslaved people</li> <li>• Little acknowledgment of bias and influence on teacher practice</li> <li>• Important to understanding race relations today</li> <li>• One-dimensional in scope and viewpoint</li> <li>• Optimism for change</li> </ul>

**Central Research Question**

The central research question was: What processes do museum educators use to create inclusive curricula on the topic of American slavery? The key findings for this question were that museum educators set learning goals for their curricula consider audience needs and ages, research available primary sources, consider partners in education, plan how the curricula will be presented, consider what has already been done

at their institution and elsewhere and consider the successes, failures, and challenges of similar projects. Interview data analysis supported these findings.

All educators reported beginning their project with some form of goal setting or objective planning before moving on to researching primary sources. While almost all participants reported considering their audience during curricula development, Marcus (C) and Elizabeth (G) said that consideration of audience and the age range helps to determine how the information would be presented and ranks highly in their development process. Primary sources were reported among participants as being very important for a variety of reasons. Audrey (E) stated that "primary sources determine what we can say about an individual from the past and help combat misinformation stemming from myths about historical figures. You can't say what you have no evidence to prove." Gabe (D), Mary (D), and Tom (D) shared that primary sources can help build support and ease the acceptance of difficult or contested information.

Susan (B) stated, "providing resources rather than requiring educators to dig for supporting documentation can help prepare interpretive educators and build their confidence by being knowledgeable about a topic." Lisa (F) stated that she considers how the curricula will be presented second to setting goals in her development processes. Audrey (E) also said she considers the presentation of the curricula in her planning; however, she stated she thinks of creative mechanisms for presentation over just printed or digitally delivered curricula. The curricula provided for analysis by participants included a variety of platforms for delivery, such as first-person performance, digital applications, interpretive programs or tours, and teacher workshops.

All participants communicated in their interviews that they consider their previous work or what has been done at their museum when developing new curricula. Only Elizabeth (G), Marcus (C), Mary (D), Susan (B), and Tom (D) reported that they research what other institutions have done for both inspirations and to learn what does and does not work. Other participants reported the time-consuming nature of their work as an impediment to real research on what outside museums have done. Although all participants reported it was necessary to learn from the challenges, successes, and failures of other projects both at their museums and from others, few participants reported sharing successes, and none reported sharing failures. Audrey (E), Francis (C), and Mary (D) reported attending a program meant to provide a platform for sharing work amongst organizations that specifically provided teacher training focused on the topic of slavery. However, they reported that the conference had no diversity amongst attendees. Marcus (C), Emily (C), Tom (D), Mary (D), Audrey (E), Lisa (F) and Elizabeth (G) all reported that there is a lack of diversity in the museum field and cited having a diverse perspective amongst the curricula developed team as highly important.

### **Related Research Question**

The related research question was: What assumptions and beliefs do museum educators have about inclusive curricula on American slavery? The key findings for this related research question were that participants find a substantial number of curricula on slavery lacks honesty and completeness, lack an emphasis on the humanity of enslaved people, and is primarily focused on slavery as a one-dimensional institution. Furthermore, the findings reflect that there is little reflection on educator's personal bias and the

influence that bias has on the curriculum they develop on slavery. Definitively, key findings reflect that there is optimism for change, and learning about slavery is vital to an understanding of race relations and issues in today's society.

These findings were supported by an analysis of interview data and curriculum examples. Interview data analysis indicated that participants reported that they assumed or believed inclusive curriculum should encourage empathy by emphasizing the humanity of enslaved people through the use of full names, and providing learners with as complete of a viewpoint of the period they lived in from their perspective as they can provide. In relation to this response, the majority of curricula examples provided emphasized providing a complete viewpoint of the past from the perspective of enslaved people. Interview data indicated that most participants shared curricula available lacks honesty and completeness and is one-dimensional in focus. Each participant responded in their interview that it was important for their curriculum to be supported by primary sources. Tom (D) stated, "clarity and truthfulness of scholarship increase the likelihood of buy-in from supporters but also curbs the level of disbelief that someone has facing information that contradicts a long-held belief."

In addition, participants also reported in their interviews that inclusive curricula on slavery are vital to building an understanding of race relations and issues prevalent in society today. The curricula analysis showed that nine of the 15 curricula examples included components that prompted learners to discuss the influence of the slave trade on racial identity and modern-day racial issues. Tom (D) and Lisa (F) reported that inclusive

curricula should have the characteristic of helping people to understand the nature of racism that grew out of the institution of slavery in America.

### **Evidence of Trustworthiness**

Trustworthiness in qualitative research studies is important because it ensures others can replicate the research findings. This section will include a discussion of the trustworthiness of this qualitative research through the four constructs that contribute to the rigor of this research: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

#### **Credibility**

Ravitch and Carl (2016) contend that qualitative research is credible when the findings of the study accurately represent the authenticity of the researched phenomenon. To ensure the credibility of this research, the strategies of data triangulation, member checking, and prolonged engagement in data collection were employed. Data triangulation was used in comparing emerging themes from qualitative coding across all data sources. Member checking was used to obtain feedback from participants in order to reduce the misinterpretation of their self-reported curricula development process. Additionally, prolonged engagement in data collection was used by scheduling at least two days per site to provide enough time to collect data from all sources.

#### **Transferability**

Yin (2016) defines transferability as the degree to which the research study can be applied to additional situations. Ravitch and Carl (2016) recommend having detailed descriptions of data and context for audiences to make comparisons to other contexts to achieve transferability. Rich descriptions were provided for each research site,



participants, data collection and analysis procedures, and the findings. Research sites that are typical of museums on the Eastern Seaboard were chosen.

### **Dependability**

Dependability is defined as the reliability of qualitative research and the extent to which it can be replicated (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Triangulation, as described above, was used to compare themes across different sources and participants. A reflective research journal was maintained to assist in keeping records of the research process.

### **Confirmability**

Conformability refers to the objectivity of qualitative research and how findings are supported by the data collected (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Yin (2016) recommends triangulation and reflexivity as strategies for achieving conformability. Triangulation was used to compare themes from data collected. Reflexivity means reflecting on researcher biases and assumptions (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). A reflective researcher journal was maintained throughout the study to record the research process and personal reflections.

### **Summary**

This chapter was about the results of this study. The chapter included a description of the research setting and participant demographics. The data collection procedures were presented, including how interview data, curricula example data were collected. A summary of data analysis showed how interview data and curricula example data was moved from coded categories to themes. Interview data were analyzed according to similar and different responses of participants to each question. Curricula examples were analyzed according to patterns according to document purpose, structure,

content, and use. Emergent themes and discrepant data across all data sources were presented. The results of the study were analyzed in relation to the related and central research questions. A discussion about the evidence of trustworthiness for this qualitative research related to four constructs of credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability, completed the chapter.

In Chapter 5, the discussion, conclusions, and recommendations for the study are presented. An interpretation of the findings is also included. Limitations for the study, recommendations for future research, and implications for social change are also discussed.

## Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to develop a deeper understanding of what processes museum educators on the Eastern Seaboard use to create inclusive curricula on American slavery. A descriptive multicase study was used to explain emerging concepts about the inclusive curricula development process. This study was conducted to address a gap in practice between existing curriculum and research-based recommendations on inclusive curriculum (Grim et al., 2017; Taylor 2017; Moody & Small, 2019). This research was also conducted to address a gap in the literature on the process that museum educators use to create inclusive curricula on American slavery (Cairns, 2016; Ellis, 2015; Taylor, 2017). This study could contribute to research on curriculum development processes on American slavery because the knowledge and experiences of museum educators are valuable to the ongoing development of such curricula.

The key findings of this study emerged from an analysis of interview data and curricula examples created by participants. Concerning curricula development processes, the key findings are that museum educators set learning goals for their curricula, consider audience needs and ages, research available primary sources, consider partners in education, plan how curricula will be presented, consider what has already been done at their institution and elsewhere, and consider the success, failures, and challenges of similar projects. Concerning assumptions and beliefs about curricula on American slavery, museum educators held the following:

- A substantial amount of curricula on the topic lacks honesty and completeness.

- Lacks an emphasis on the humanity of enslaved people.
- Is primarily focused on slavery as a one-dimensional institution.
- There is little reflection on educator's personal bias and the influence that bias has on the curriculum they develop on slavery.
- There is optimism for change.
- Learning about slavery is important to an understanding of race relations and issues in today's society.

### **Interpretation of the Findings**

The findings for this study were interpreted in relation to the literature review and the conceptual framework. The conceptual framework for this study is based on Null's (2016) RCT, an aspect of his five-model curriculum theory.

### **Central Research Question**

The central research question asked, What processes do museum educators use to create inclusive curricula on the topic of American slavery? The key findings for this research question were that museum educators; a) set learning goals for their curricula; b) consider audience needs and ages; c) research available primary sources; d) consider partners in education; e) plan how the curricula will be presented; f) consider what has already been done at their institution and elsewhere and g) consider success, failures, and challenges of similar projects. There is support for these findings in the research literature. While Ellis (2015), suggested that resources to support best practices in the development of curricula on American slavery is rare, some literature suggests support

for curriculum development. Wiles and Bondi (2015) discussed some key questions curriculum developers should consider in the creation process.

Curriculum developers should consider aspects the museum should accept responsibility for guiding. For example, museum educators should have an understanding of what guidelines their museum has on the interpretation of slavery, how it meets the institutional mission, and how to address the difficulty and importance of slavery interpretation with visitors (Grim, 2015). The above-named considerations agree with the findings to set goals for the curricula. Wiles and Bondi (2015) also cautioned curriculum developers to the most important need for the curricula. Is the curriculum meant to meet the needs of audiences or perpetuate a narrative (Wiles & Bondi, (2015)? The second finding was to consider the audiences' needs and ages. Most of the responses of participants of this study agree that the majority of their learner's desire inclusive curricula on slavery. Only one participant mentioned that most of the learners who visit her site do not wish to learn about slavery and respond negatively to the overall inclusion of the topic in curricula.

Rose (2016) related that museum educators face the challenge of sharing histories like slavery, with the public even when they are not prepared to learn about it or interested in the topic. Avoiding the topic of slavery and treating it reductively diminishes the influence it has on the nation's understanding of the past and race issues today (Loewen, 2018; King & Woodson, 2017; Araujo, 2015). Oliver (2016) contended that the use of primary sources in the form of narratives builds empathy as learners work through the human cost of slavery and mitigate some of the challenges of teaching the topic.

There are creative means of learning about enslaved people through primary sources such as military records from the Civil War and records through the Freedmen's Bureau, which can broaden learners' scope of understanding on the topic of slavery (Loewen, 2018).

The importance of educational partnerships, what has already been done, and learning from the successes, failures, and challenges of similar projects both internally and externally was reported by all participants of this study. Oliver (2016) encouraged educators to form groups composed of people grappling with the challenges of interpreting slavery in curricula. Since Ellis (2015) mentioned that resources to support best practices in the development of curricula on slavery are rare, it is even more critical that educators take advantage of opportunities to share their experiences creating inclusive curricula on the topic. Educators must have examples and tools to develop inclusive curricula on American slavery (Dewhurst & Hendrick, 2017).

### **Related Research Question**

The related research question asked, What assumptions and beliefs do museum educators have about inclusive curricula on American slavery? There is support for these findings in the research literature.

Ellis (2015) asserted that few museum staff embraces and dedicate the time, resources, and commitment required to teach slavery well. King and Woodson (2017) described the treatment of slavery in curricula as incomplete and misleading of the comprehensive nature of the institution, which is in agreeance with the assumptions and beliefs reported of the participants of this study. Comprehensive interpretation of American slavery in curricula would recognize the broad geographical scope in the

United States as well as the depth of enslavement beyond the traditional stories told of southern plantations (Gallas & DeWolf Perry, 2015). The multitude of curriculum on slavery focuses on the humanity of enslaved people as a secondary feature to slaveholders, policies, and narratives of loyal slaves (Araujo, 2015).

There was some research found on the reflection of personal bias in curricula development. Loewen (2018) surmised from research that educators negatively influence students learning of slavery by what they choose to include or misrepresent in curricula. Klein's (2017) study asserted that curricula development decisions made by educators are a matter of knowledge of the topic, beliefs, and bias. Klein's (2017) finding that curricula choices vary based on primary sources and acknowledgment of personal bias supports the findings of this study.

The research literature supports the finding that learning about slavery is vital to an understanding of race relations and issues in today's society. American slavery in historical curricula interconnects with a modern understanding of race and race relations in the United States (Berlin, 2016; Jay & Lyerly, 2016; Grim et.al.,2017). Sarich and Miele (2018) and Kendi (2016) presented the connection between race and slavery as intertwining concepts that grew out of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Moody and Small (2019) support the idea that the interpretation of slavery in curricula present widely romanticized and sanitized historical narratives. Research has shown that in recent years some museum educators have made efforts toward a more inclusive interpretation of slavery in curricula that supports the finding of optimism for change amongst participants of this study (Moody & Small, 2019). Rose (2016) shared that the movement to interpret difficult

histories like slavery is a positive sign that the larger society recognizes that the histories of the oppressed, and people of color matter.

### **Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework for this study was based on Null's (2016) RCT. According to Null (2016), Radical Curriculum theorists "seek to understand how curriculum and curricula creation contribute to social inequalities" (p 93). The central research question about the processes of museum educators in creating inclusive curricula about American slavery connects to the RCT notion that educators can use examples of inequalities from the past to teach about issues that are prevalent today (Null, 2016). Those adopting the RCT view see curricula work from the perspective of race, class, and gender analysis and seek to understand how curricula can contribute to social inequalities (Null, 2016).

The key findings for this study produced a list of processes for developing curricula from participants; set learning goals for curricula, consider audiences needs and ages, research available primary sources, consider partners in education, plan how curricula will be presented, consider what has already been done at your institution and elsewhere and consider the success, failures, and challenges of similar projects. Key findings for this study also showed museum educators had the following assumptions and beliefs about curricula on slavery; most curricula on the topic lacks honesty and completeness, lacks an emphasis on the humanity of enslaved people, is primarily focused on slavery as a one-dimensional institution, there is little reflection on educators' personal bias and the influence of that bias on curricula they create, there is optimism for



change and learning about slavery is important to an understanding of race relations and issues in today's society.

According to Apple (2004), a leading Radical Curriculum theorist, the interpretation of American history in curricula is vulnerable to the exclusion of demographics of people such as Blacks. Correspondingly, curricula that are exclusive and espouses a hegemonic view of society promote a misrepresented idea of the nation's history and contribute to inequalities (Apple, 2014). For this study, participants reported processes they felt would encourage the development of inclusive curricula. The assumptions and beliefs reported by participants were supported by Apple's (2004) assertion that the attitudes and beliefs of educators' influence curricula content and can contribute to the curriculum being either inclusive or exclusive.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The limitations that emerged for this multiple case study were related to the purposeful selection of participants. In this study, 11 cases were presented from seven sites. Participants were purposefully selected from museums on the Eastern Seaboard who thematically cover the topic of slavery. According to Yin (2016), the purposive selection of participants is suitable in instances where relevant and plentiful data is collected. Purposive selection was appropriate for this case study because the focus of this case study was to describe the processes of museum educators in developing inclusive curricula on American slavery, and therefore, participants would need to have done so to share experiences.

The second limitation of this study was that there was one single researcher who analyzed and interpreted all the data. Furthermore, as a descendant of enslaved people, I have a personal tie to slavery in America and for the contributions of enslaved individuals to be honored. Therefore, the possibility of researcher bias existed. However, specific strategies were used to minimize the potential for researcher bias. One of the strategies used was adopting a stance of neutrality by remaining loyal to the data. Another strategy that was used was reflexivity by recording reflections from researcher decisions during the collection and analysis of data in a researcher journal.

Also, using the strategy of member checks, participants were asked to review the interview transcripts for clarity and credibility. Five of seven participants responded to the request for a review of the interview transcripts and stated any changes or clarifications that were needed to interview data. Triangulation was used in comparing emerging themes from qualitative coding across all data sources such as the interview protocol and document analysis of curriculum materials, to negate bias (Yin, 2016). Therefore, the limitations of possible bias by analysis of data without openness to new conclusions related to assessments of interview data were eliminated.

### **Recommendations**

Recommendations for future research are based on the findings of this study. The first recommendation is that research and reporting into the curriculum development processes of museum educators, and their assumptions and beliefs about curricula on American slavery need expanding. Museum educators involved in this study demonstrated their interest in developing curricula on the topic and recognized

limitations related to time, resources, buy-in, and even bias. Additional research would allow for the incorporation of additional sites and participants. Further research may clarify how support from other museum educators can help mitigate challenges in developing curricula on slavery in America.

The second recommendation is that further research could include observation for interpretive type curricula instead of just an analysis of documents. Participants who provided curricula materials created for interpretation instead of classroom use shared outlines, guidelines, or components that depended on the interpretive educators. Observation of interpretive educators would give a more complete picture of the curricula for analysis.

### **Implications**

This study will contribute to positive social change in several ways that are related to individuals, families, museums, schools, and society. At the individual level, this study may contribute to positive social change by providing museum educators insight into the curriculum creation process from the perspective of those who have developed curricula on the topic. This study also contributes to positive social change in relation to families. Indirectly learners benefit from inclusive curricula on slavery that provides a comprehensive view of the past and shows that the perspectives of diverse people are essential. The results of this study could be used to inform parents of curriculum development strategies for home instruction as well. Families that are descendants of enslaved people could use the findings of this study to collaborate with

museum educators to provide primary sources that they might contribute toward curricula.

This study may contribute to positive social change for public school districts. The discussion of curriculum development may be transferable to other context areas where educators create curricula on diverse topics and to support professional practice. Finally, this study may contribute to positive social change for society because it advances knowledge about curricula development on sensitive topics like slavery serving to bridge communities. Understanding the interconnectivity of the historical context of slavery in America and its influence on racial issues today serves to promote social justice causes and build stronger communities.

### **Conclusion**

In this study, I explored the processes of museum educators in the creation of curricula on the topic of American slavery. The results of this study related to two research questions that addressed curricula development and the assumptions and beliefs of museum educators about curricula on slavery. The results of this study indicate museum educator's carryout development of curricula through several processes that include; setting goals, considering audience needs, ages, partners, the presentation of the curriculum, precedence, past success, failures or challenges, and the use of primary sources. The above-named findings are a synthesis of participants reported assumptions and beliefs about inclusive curricula on slavery; that it lacks honesty and completeness, lacks an emphasis on the humanity of enslaved people, is primarily focused on slavery as a one-dimensional institution, and there is little reflection on educators personal bias and

the influence that bias has on the curricula they develop on slavery. Definitively, results reflect that museum educators are optimistic for change and believe learning about slavery is important to an understanding of race relations and issues in today's society.

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## Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Date and Time of Interview

Location:

Participants:

Participant Position at Museum:

Introduction:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study titled "Museum Educators' Processes for Creating Inclusive Curricula on American Slavery." The Interview should take approximately 45 minutes. If at any time you wish to stop the interview, please feel free to let me know. At that time, if you would like to reschedule, I would be happy to accommodate you, or if you would like to terminate your involvement with the study, you are free to do so as well. Please remember that your confidentiality will be protected during the interview and in the transcript with the use of a pseudonym for you and a code in place of your museum's name. After the interview is transcribed, a draft of the transcript will be sent to you by email to check for accuracy.

The purpose of this study is to develop a deeper understanding of what processes museum educators use to develop inclusive curricula on American slavery. The findings may help curriculum developers in the future creation of curricula on the topic of American slavery. Do you have any questions before we begin the interview?

Interview Questions:

1. What is your age?

18-24 years old      25-34 years old      35-44 years old      45-54 years old

55-64 years old      65-74 years old      75 years or older

2. What is your ethnicity?

White or European American      Hispanic or Latino      Black or African American

Native American or American Indian      Asian/Pacific Islander      Other

3. What is your gender?

4. What is your role in curricula development at your current institution (RQ1)?

5. What are your past experiences with developing curricula (RQ1)?

6. What are your past experiences with developing curricula on the topic of American Slavery (RQ1)?

7. How do you define inclusive curricula (RQ1 & 2)?

8. How do you define inclusive curricula on American Slavery (RQ 1 & 2)?

9. What are some characteristics of inclusive curricula on American Slavery (RQ 1 & 2)?

10. What assumptions or beliefs do you have about inclusive curricula on American Slavery (RQ 2)?

11. How important is it to you to see an inclusive view of slavery in curricula on the topic (RQ 2)?

12. Have you made any specific efforts to address inclusion in your creation of curricula on the topic of American Slavery? Please provide examples (RQ 1 & 2).

13. What are some tools or methods you have used to address inclusion in your creation of curricula on the topic of American Slavery (RQ 1)?
14. What experiences with regards to museum practices have influenced your assumptions or beliefs about the value of curricula on American Slavery (RQ 2)?
15. How have your assumptions and beliefs about inclusive curricula on American Slavery changed over time (RQ 2)?
16. Do you think museum educators currently develop inclusive curricula on American Slavery? Why or Why Not (RQ 1 & 2)?
17. How would you describe your process of creating inclusive curricula on American Slavery? What is your role in the curricula creation process (RQ 1)?
18. How do you integrate inclusive practices into your curricula development on American Slavery (RQ 1)?
19. What are some challenges you have had in developing inclusive curricula about American Slavery (RQ 1)?
20. What are some factors that influence the success or failure of the curricula development process (RQ 1)?
21. What recommendations would you make to improve the inclusive curricula development process on the topic of American Slavery (RQ 1)?
22. Did you have anything to add?

## Appendix B: Document Analysis Form

Curriculum Title: \_\_\_\_\_

	Relative incorporation	Marginalization	Symbolic annihilation
How is slavery defined in the curriculum in relation to inclusivity (Small, 2015)? (R.Q. 1)			
What are the learning objectives in the curriculum that relate to inclusivity and American slavery? (RQ1)			
To what extent is slavery or enslaved individuals represented in the curriculum (Small, 2015)? (RQ1)			
Does the curriculum reflect inclusion of multiple perspectives related to the topic of American Slavery (Small, 2015; Banks, 2018)? Examples: Enslaved persons, slaveholders, traders. (RQ1)			
Does the curriculum help learners to view events, situations, and concepts from diverse perspectives and points of view (Banks, 2018)? (RQ1)			
How does the presentation of multiple perspectives incorporate inclusive practices and elements (Banks, 2018)? Examples: personal narratives, mention of specific names and accomplishments. (RQ1, RQ2)			

## Appendix C: Letter of Cooperation

Dawn Chitty



dawn.chitty@waldenu.edu

Date

Dear Dawn Chitty,

Based on my review of your research proposal, I give permission for you to conduct the study entitled Museum Educators' Processes for Creating Inclusive Curricula on American Slavery within the Insert Name of Community Partner. As part of this study, I authorize you to identify and contact potential participants, conduct individual interviews, and analyze curricula examples produced by staff members at this institution.

Individuals' participation will be voluntary and at their own discretion.

We understand that our organization's responsibilities include providing the researcher with a private space at the institution in order to conduct the individual interviews. We reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any time if our circumstances change.

I understand that the student will not be naming our organization in the doctoral project report that is published in ProQuest.

I confirm that I am authorized to approve research in this setting and that this plan complies with the organization's policies.

I understand that the data collected will remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone outside of the student's supervising faculty/staff without permission from the Walden University IRB.

Sincerely,

Authorized Official  
Contact Information