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# The Importance of Museums in a Home School Curriculum: a Closer Look at Three New Jersey Museums

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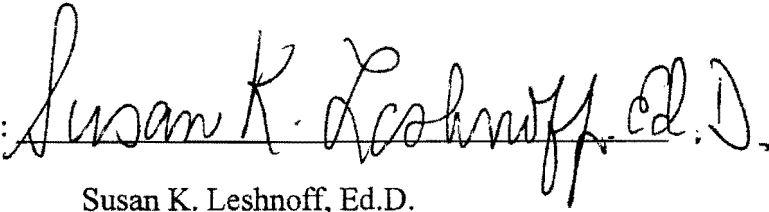
**THE IMPORTANCE OF MUSEUMS IN A  
HOME SCHOOL CURRICULUM**

**A CLOSER LOOK AT THREE NEW JERSEY MUSEUMS**

Written by:

Alexandra Longo

Approved by:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan K. Leshnoff, Ed.D." The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned over a horizontal line.

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Thesis Advisor

*A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts in Museum Professions  
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## **Abstract**

### **The Importance of Museums in a Home School Curriculum: A Closer Look at Three New Jersey Museums**

Alexandra G. Longo

This thesis seeks to assess the importance of museum education programs in a home school curriculum. Throughout this thesis, the history of home schooling in America is traced, addressing trends, demographics, laws and regulations, and major characteristics of the American home schooling population. This thesis also explores the home school experience and the educational efforts of museums, focusing on the importance of the integrated curriculum for both home and museum educators. The final section of this thesis introduces a case study of three specific home school programs at New Jersey museums. The museums used for this study were the Liberty Science Center in Jersey City, the Montclair Art Museum in Montclair, and the Maculloch Hall Historical Museum in Morristown. A multi-format questionnaire was distributed to home educators in attendance to determine the value of these museum programs with regard to fulfillment of educational and curricular requirements, social desires and other needs. The results of the questionnaire concluded that museums offer unique learning opportunities for home schoolers and are thus an important component of a home school curriculum.

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## *Introduction*

In recent years, many museums in the United States have begun to address the home schooling community on a large scale through the creation of museum-based home school programs. Museums of veritably every size and variety, from art museums to local historic houses to science centers, have begun to include home school programs in their educational repertoire. The institutions of both home education and museums have existed for centuries, with American home schooling practiced in colonial times and the roots of American museums beginning with the curiosity cabinets of sixteenth and seventeenth century Europe, yet it is only recently that these two institutions have joined forces.<sup>1</sup> Though the direct cause for this recent union has not been officially determined, there are two major factors that may have impacted the formation and growth of the relationship between museums and home schoolers: the increase in the educational mission of museums and the increase in America's home schooling population.

American museums have undergone a relatively recent shift of focus from collecting to educating, a shift which began in 1991 with the American Association of Museum's adoption of the report *Excellence and Equity: Education and the Public Dimension of Museums* as a policy statement. This report stated that museums should be educational institutions, and that "the missions of museums...should state unequivocally that there is an educational purpose in every museum activity."<sup>2</sup> As American museums have expanded their educational practices, the home schooling population has consistently increased. The most recent official national study of home schooling demographics, conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics in 2007,

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<sup>1</sup> To read more about the origins of museums, specifically concerning their roots in 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century curiosity cabinets, consult former art historian and curator Oliver Impey's 2011 work *The Origins of Museums The Cabinet of Curiosities in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Europe*.

<sup>2</sup> Ellen Cochran Hirzy, ed, *Excellence and Equity: Education and the Public Dimension of Museums*, American Association of Museums, Baltimore: Collins Lithographing, Inc., 1992, 3.

concluded that 1.5 million American children were being home schooled.<sup>3</sup> More recent studies, like that conducted by Brian D. Ray of the National Home Education Research Institute in 2010, have intimated that the home schooling population continues to grow, with Ray estimating the number of American home schooled students to be approximately 2.04 million.<sup>4</sup>

The home educators who implement this schooling come from different backgrounds and possess a variety of motivational factors and teaching techniques. Despite their differences, home educators are seeking supplementary experiences to enhance their children's education. With their educational and visitor-centered missions, museums have taken note of this important, unique, and expansive audience and have begun to create educational programs designed specifically for home schoolers. These programs address the needs and desires of home educators and home schooled children, by including unique supplementary learning opportunities like hands-on experiences, engagement with works of art and artifacts, the prospect of learning from museum educators in certain content areas, and an opportunity for socialization.

This thesis seeks to assess the importance of museum education programs in a home school curriculum. The first section of this thesis traces the history of home schooling in America and addressing trends, demographics, laws and regulations, and major characteristics of the home schooling population, through which the reader can better understand the needs and desires of America's home schoolers. The second part of this thesis focuses on the home school experience and the educational efforts of museums, focusing on the importance of the integrated curriculum for both home and museum educators. The final section of this thesis introduces three

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<sup>3</sup> "Issue Brief: 1.5 Million Homeschooled Students in the United States in 2007," National Center for Education Statistics: Institute of Education Sciences, last modified December 2008, accessed October 30, 2012, <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2009/2009030.pdf>, 1.

<sup>4</sup> Brian D. Ray, Ph.D., "2.04 Million Homeschool Students in the United States in 2010," last modified January 2011, National Home Education Research Institute, accessed November 1, 2012. <http://www.nheri.org/HomeschoolPopulationReport2010.pdf>, 1.

specific home school programs at New Jersey museums. In an effort to assess these programs, a multi-format questionnaire was distributed to all home educators in attendance. The specific objective of this questionnaire was to determine the value of museum programs for home educators with regard to fulfillment of educational and curricular requirements, social desires and other needs. The results of the questionnaire concluded that museums offer unique learning opportunities for home schoolers and are thus an important component of the home school curriculum.

## CHAPTER ONE: A HISTORY OF HOME SCHOOLING IN AMERICA

### *Early Home Schooling in America*

Home schooling in America has existed since the colonial era, but its nature and social meaning has shifted significantly over the years, often in response to changing historical climates and social values.<sup>5</sup> In the colonial period, pilgrims ventured to the New World to escape theology that was disparate to their beliefs. Once these individuals arrived in the colonies, they instructed their children in the home, teaching them to be godly and moral citizens and thus securing the future of their settlements.<sup>6</sup> Home education, though it began as a practice within nuclear families or small communities, became mandated by colonies in the 1640's, when laws were established and enforced the proper subjects and methods for teaching at home.<sup>7</sup> By the end of this century, mothers had taken on the primary moral and educational role in the family, teaching their children practical skills like housework and reading, which was typically limited to religious texts.<sup>8</sup>

As the American Revolution came and went, one of the major goals of education shifted from securing the future of the individual family to, as historian and educator Milton Gaither stated, a more national ideal of “forging a common American identity.”<sup>9</sup> This goal continued through the antebellum period, at which point free public education was instituted, mainly overseen by female teachers and aligning itself with Protestant and Christian ideals. This educational movement towards creating a common American identity and morality was known

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<sup>5</sup> Milton Gaither. *Homeschool: An American History* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008), 4.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.



as the common school movement.<sup>10</sup> In the antebellum period of the 1830's and 1840's, people already viewed religion, morality and knowledge as a related triumvirate. The common school movement was the first time these national ideals and goals were merged with public schools.<sup>11</sup> Though public education was introduced, many families still chose to educate their children in the home, due to moral, intellectual and logistical reasons.<sup>12</sup>

Following the Civil War and the onset of the Industrial Revolution, schools began to acknowledge the growing need to prepare children to survive in a newly industrial America. Jane Van Galen and Mary Anne Pitman, in their work on home schooling perspectives throughout history, stated that the traditional morality-based mission of the early American education system transformed at this time and schools became much more centralized and "dominated by pedagogy and teaching methods."<sup>13</sup> This new pedagogical and practical method of teaching, which focused on preparing students to compete in an industrial economy, had a long life span in the American educational system, beginning shortly after the Civil War and continuing through the early twentieth century.

In the twentieth century, public schools expanded in both number and size and became increasingly separated from domestic life.<sup>14</sup> Teachers were gaining more responsibility regarding the education and shaping of American students. Many parents embraced the increasing role and centralization of public education. They also embraced the expanding role of teachers in their children's lives and the subsequent lessening of parent-teacher communication. Gaither reported that by the year 1930, "the home had...ceded to the school most of the responsibility for formal

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<sup>10</sup> Jane Van Galen and Mary Anne Pitman, Ed. *Home Schooling: Political, Historical and Pedagogical Perspectives* (Norwood, New Jersey: Ablex Publishing Corp, 1991), 139.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 141.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 42-3.

<sup>13</sup> Van Galen and Pitman, Ed. *Homeschooling Perspectives*, 148.

<sup>14</sup> Gaither, *Homeschooling*, 67.

intellectual instruction,” though home schooling still occurred with a significant amount of Americans, mostly with frontier families, the wealthy, and fringe religious groups.<sup>15</sup>

### *The Birth of a Movement*

Though the practice of home schooling had existed since colonial times, historian Milton Gaither states that the modern home schooling movement officially began after World War II.<sup>16</sup> The movement emerged amidst increasing suburbanization and a rampant increase in mothers becoming, according to Gaither, “particularly enervated by school-related issues” and getting into frequent ideological conflicts with school officials.<sup>17</sup> There were other issues and individuals at play, all which had a significant impact on the birth and growth of the modern home schooling movement. Dr. Benjamin Spock was an important figure at the beginning of the burgeoning movement. Spock was a pediatrician and political activist who wrote many influential books on child-care, in which he postulated that parents and guardians should be less authoritative and disciplinary with their children. His first major work, *The Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care*, published in 1946, advocated a “child-centered” approach to raising and educating children.<sup>18</sup>

A number of parents and guardians embraced Spock’s approach. Conversely, as a reaction to Spock, parents and guardians advocating authoritarian child-rearing emerged and became vocal about their stance on child-rearing. Two divergent camps were thus set in place, one that consisted of parents and guardians who advocated Spock’s relaxed and free-form child-

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<sup>15</sup> Gaither, *Homeschooling*, 71, 74-5.

<sup>16</sup> Milton Gaither, “Homeschooling Research Notes,” Wordpress, accessed April 25, 2013, <http://gaither.wordpress.com/homeschool-an-american-history/>

<sup>17</sup> Gaither, *Homeschooling*, 89.

<sup>18</sup> Eric Pace, “Benjamin Spock, World’s Pediatrician, Dies at 94,” New York Times, March 17, 1998, accessed January 31, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/learning/general/onthisday/bday/0502.html>.

centered approach to education and one consisting of those who supported the opposite, a traditional authoritative and structured education.<sup>19</sup> These two camps have evolved over the years, all the while maintaining their original beliefs regarding child-rearing and education, and are active in the world of home schooling to this day.<sup>20</sup>

In addition to this, the Cold War, which struck fear and passion into the American public, had a significant effect on the country's school system. Soviet success in outer space caused American politicians to panic that the public education system was not effectively preparing children to compete with and combat the Soviet threat. This widespread worry resulted in a push for curricular reform, embracing a new national policy with an emphasis on mathematics and the sciences and a de-emphasis on language arts and social sciences in public schools. These initial curricular reform pushes only lasted a short time and did not take hold in the American education system.<sup>21</sup>

As a result of this short-lived burst of fervor for the increased study of mathematics and sciences, Van Galen and Pittman noted that there were dramatic “waves of social hope and disillusionment” among the American public, regarding both the future of the educational system and the country itself.<sup>22</sup> Both conservatives and liberals were advocating for home schooling at this time. The liberal advocates were often former activists from the 1960's, many of whom were living in commune-like settings and pushing for what Gaither referred to as a “back-to-the-land” education.<sup>23</sup> On the other side of the spectrum, the conservative advocates emphasized religious and moral teachings in the home.<sup>24</sup> Disillusionment and disappointment in the American

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<sup>19</sup> Eric Pace, “Benjamin Spock, World's Pediatrician, Dies at 94.”

<sup>20</sup> Gaither, *Homeschooling*, 90-2.

<sup>21</sup> Van Galen and Pitman, Ed. *Homeschooling Perspectives*, 154.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> Gaither, *Homeschooling*, 97-9.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 103-4.

educational system continued throughout the 1960's and 1970's. Dissatisfaction with public schools reached a head during these decades. Between the years of 1969 and 1978, there was an abundance of court cases between individuals and members of the public education system; more court cases of this kind occurred during this 9 year span than had occurred in the previous 50 years.<sup>25</sup>

### *Central Figures in the Home School Movement*

Several central figures assisted in the expansion of the home schooling movement, which strengthened in numbers and became a major trend in the 1970's.<sup>26</sup> The main crusader for the movement, often known as the father of home schooling, was John Holt. Holt, an educator himself, authored several works that highlighted the negative aspects and effects of public education. His first book, *How Children Fail*, published in 1964, drew many individuals toward the practice of home schooling. In this book, Holt examined classroom scenarios and interviewed children, concluding that public schools were a negative environment for learning and that home schooling was a superior alternative. Holt argued that schools focused too much on product and not enough on process; he believed that in a traditional classroom setting, "each task [wa]s an end in itself."<sup>27</sup> In Holt's opinion, schools also focused too much on a right versus wrong mentality. Holt believed this mentality caused children to adopt a powerful fear of making mistakes, which often inhibited them from constructively and effectively thinking.<sup>28</sup> Holt pushed for parents to remove their children from public schools and home school them; he believed that "people teaching their children at home consistently do a good job because they have the time –

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<sup>25</sup> Gaither, *Homeschooling*, 93.

<sup>26</sup> Milton Gaither, "Homeschooling Research Notes."

<sup>27</sup> John Holt. *How Children Fail: Revised Edition*, (New York: Merloyd Lawrence, Delta/Seymour Lawrence, 1964, 1982), 38.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 127.

and the desire – to know their children, their interests, [and] the signs by which they show and express their feelings.”<sup>29</sup>

There were several other home schooling pioneers who influenced the movement. Raymond and Dorothy Moore, evangelical Christians who advocated for religious and morality-based homeschooling, had a significant influence on religious home schoolers. Rousas J. Ruchdoony, a radical Calvinist conservative who founded Christian Reconstructivism, a theory that advocated relating all subjects to Christianity and God’s will, also had a sizeable impact on home educators with strong religious beliefs.<sup>30</sup> Though these figures influenced the Christian and conservative home schooling population significantly, Holt had the most influence across the home schooling community as a whole. This was because, in his earliest and most popular works, he remained open to a multitude of ideological perspectives, even though he subscribed to a liberal and atheistic worldview. His appeal was thus much broader than the other home schooling pioneers.<sup>31</sup>

### *Home Schoolers Divide: The Pedagogues and Ideologues*

As these home schooling advocates were influencing families across America, a large number of grassroots organizations were emerging. These organizations were based on the two opposing child-rearing ideologies that emerged in the late 1940’s following the publication of Spock’s *Book of Baby and Child Care*.<sup>32</sup> As the modern home schooling movement took hold,

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<sup>29</sup> John Holt. *How Children Fail: Revised Edition*, 36.

<sup>30</sup> Gaither, *Homeschooling*.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 127.

<sup>32</sup> Eric Pace, “Benjamin Spock, World’s Pediatrician, Dies at 94,” *New York Times*, March 17, 1998, accessed January 31, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/learning/general/onthisday/bday/0502.html>.

partly due to the influence of Holt, the Moores, and Ruchdoony, these two ideologies took the form of two distinct groups, deemed the pedagogues and ideologues.<sup>33</sup>

The ideologues were characterized by religious (often Christian) beliefs, highly structured learning, and God or morality-based instruction. Conversely, pedagogues were non-religious, preferred unstructured learning, and tended to practice rational and secular, science-centered instruction (often referred to as “earth-based” instruction). There are many ways to contrast these groups, but Gaither believes that their differences boil down to one major question about children and humanity: are children independent pedagogical beings or are they subjects of parental authority that need careful molding?<sup>34</sup> Not only are ideologues’ and pedagogues’ motivations for home schooling intrinsically different, but the way in which the two groups organize themselves is disparate as well. Ideologue support groups, networks, and organizations were exclusive, structured and hierarchical while pedagogue groups and organizations were inclusive, democratic and less structured.

The Christian Liberty Academy (CLA), founded in 1968, served as the main correspondence school<sup>35</sup> that distributed God-based curriculum across the country.<sup>36</sup> The ideologues also founded a number of religious periodicals for home schooling parents and advocated for exclusive closed-communication home schooling groups. Home schooling groups were social networks in which like-minded home educators in a community came together to share curriculum ideas, socialize, and attend seminars, workshops and conferences. Closed-

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<sup>33</sup> Gaither, *Homeschooling*, 143.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 64.

<sup>35</sup> Note: Virgil Hillyer, headmaster of the Calvert School, created the first correspondence school (and curriculum) in 1905, as an effort to reach and educate those who could not attend school for whatever reason. The concept of correspondence programs took off in the homeschooling community in the following decades and spawned hundreds of similar ventures, including many that specifically catered to religious groups. More on the birth of correspondence schools can be found in Gaither’s *Homeschooling* on pages 77-78.

<sup>36</sup> Mitchell L. Stevens, *Kingdom of Children: Culture and Controversy in the Homeschooling Movement*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 152.

communion groups were exclusive in character, generally only allowing religious members and being effectively “closed” to community outsiders like pedagogues and other non-religious home educators.<sup>37</sup>

Highly structured and hierarchical organizations like the Home School Legal Defense Association (founded in 2000) emerged as national support and advocacy groups, fighting for the rights of home schooling families across the nation. The HSLDA still serves as the major organization for ideologues and often assists with religious home schoolers’ court disputes.<sup>38</sup> Whereas the ideologues’ organizations were highly structured and homogenous, with those like the HSLDA even establishing what Mitchell L. Stevens refers to as a “coordination of labors” for all members and volunteers, pedagogues founded more democratic and participatory organizations and support groups, with a more heterogeneous membership.<sup>39</sup> As ideologue groups and organizations like the HSLDA gained visibility in the media, the pedagogues created national organizations like the National Homeschool Association (NHA) and the American Homeschool Association (AHA). The NHA and AHA were inclusive organizations, accepting members of all religions, lifestyles and worldviews. These organizations advocated for open-communion home school groups that would welcome any and all home schooling families.<sup>40</sup>

In recent years, as home schooling has become more visible and mainstream, the hostility and debate between the pedagogues and ideologues has died down.<sup>41</sup> In addition to this, support groups and networks have expanded greatly in the past decade, ranging from regional to national groups. Many of these groups operate online. Along with more networks has come many more publications and periodicals for different kinds of home schoolers. Like the new networks, many

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<sup>37</sup> Mitchell L. Stevens, *Kingdom of Children: Culture and Controversy in the Homeschooling Movement*, 150-5.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 166-8.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 117.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 166-9.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 173.

of these publications are available online yet incorporate face-to-face interaction in the form of public events and conventions. Today, home educators subscribing to both the pedagogue and ideologue belief systems have a wide variety of venues, resources, and opportunities to practice their preferred style of educating freely.<sup>42</sup>

In summation, as discussed in the works of Gaither, Van Galen and Pittman, and Stevens, the home schooling movement emerged, grew and evolved due to an increasing amount of countercultural sensibility, the rapid increase and importance of a suburban lifestyle, a loss of faith and sense of disillusionment with the government and public education system, and the romanticized notion of the “cult of the child.” By studying the history of home schooling as portrayed by Gaither, Van Galen and Pittman, and Stevens, it can be ascertained that there was not one cause or event that caused the movement to occur; rather, it occurred as a reactionary response to a large number of social forces and shifts.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Mitchell L. Stevens, *Kingdom of Children: Culture and Controversy in the Homeschooling Movement*, 205-7.

<sup>43</sup> Gaither, *Homeschooling*, 112-4.



**CHAPTER TWO:  
HOME SCHOOLING TODAY:  
LEGALITY, DEMOGRAPHICS, AND OTHER CONTEMPORARY ISSUES**

*Laws and Regulations*

Compulsory education laws emerged in America following the Civil War. By the turn of the twentieth century, all of the northern states had specific compulsory education statutes set in place, the southern states following suit soon after.<sup>44</sup> Home schooling was not addressed from a legal standpoint until several decades later, when individual conflicts and court cases between home educators and state boards of education began to occur.<sup>45</sup> The cases became so frequent that by the 1980's, states began to pass home schooling statutes.<sup>46</sup> Legal cases had begun to address home schooling in terms of the U.S. Constitution, with parents citing the First and Fourteenth Amendments in their arguments in support of home education. Van Galen and Pittman noted that religious home educators primarily cited the First Amendment, stating that it was their constitutional right to remove their children from schools to educate them privately in a religious manner.<sup>47</sup> In contrast, nonreligious home educators cited the Fourteenth Amendment, which states that parents and guardians have the inalienable right to choose the method of their children's education.<sup>48</sup>

By the early 1990's, every state had legalized home schooling and had specific rules and regulations set in place for home schooling families. Currently, each state has its own set of regulations, some being relatively relaxed and others more rigid with a large number of

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<sup>44</sup> Val Galen and Pitman, Ed, *Homeschooling Perspectives*, 160.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 160.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 172.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 160.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 168.

regulations that home schooling parents and guardians must adhere to.<sup>49</sup> For instance, regarding teaching qualifications, some states require home educators to possess an official teaching certificate prior to home schooling, while others do not. Regarding correspondence, some states require little or no communication between home educators and official school boards, while other states require home educators to frequently communicate with educational bodies and officials. This communication can involve updating officials on specific indicators of children's learning and development, specifically through the submission of test scores, assessments and standardized tests mandated by the state or local school board, professional evaluations of student progress, and the process of curriculum approval. In some states, home visits by state officials are required for home educators to remain in accordance with the law. According to the classification of low to high regulation states established by the HSLDA, and based on the amount of required home educator notice and correspondence, there are only six states that are identified as possessing "high regulation:" North Dakota, Vermont, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New York and Pennsylvania. The majority of states have either low or moderate regulations. Ten states (Idaho, Texas, Alaska, Oklahoma, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Connecticut, and New Jersey) have no requirement for home educators to initiate contact with local or state boards of education.<sup>50</sup>

### *Home Schooling Demographics*

The most recent government-affiliated national demographic study of home schoolers was conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics' Institute of Education Sciences in 2007. This report concluded that as of Spring 2007, there were approximately 1.5 million

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<sup>49</sup> Gaither, *Homeschooling*, 175-85.

<sup>50</sup> "State Laws." Home School Legal Defense Association, accessed November 10, 2012, <http://www.hslda.org/laws/>.

children being home schooled in the United States. This figure shows a significant increase in the number of home schooled students over the past decade, as the national demographic studies from 1999 and 2003 concluded there to be 850,000 and 1.1 million home schooled students, respectively.<sup>51</sup> It is important to note that these are not exact figures. The margin of error that the NCES has deemed probable is 231,000, meaning the actual number of home schooled students could have been as high at 1.75 million at the time of the 2007 study.<sup>52</sup>

In 2010, Brian D. Ray, PhD, affiliated with the National Home Education Research Institute, conducted his own study to determine a more current population of home schooled students in the United States. His data sources included past published research from the U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Census Bureau, state boards of education, private companies and organizations catering to the home school population, surveys of individual families, and data from home school networks and organizations throughout the nation. Ray concluded that there were approximately 2.04 million home schooled students in the United States in 2010.<sup>53</sup> If this estimate is accurate, then home schooling has consistently become a more frequently practiced method of education in the United States in recent years.

### *Home Schooling Motivators*

While demographics are an important tool for analyzing the home schooling population in the United States, another important subject to address is the variance of motivating factors that lead parents and guardians to make the ultimate decision to educate their children in the

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<sup>51</sup> "Issue Brief: 1.5 Million Homeschooled Students in the United States in 2007," National Center for Education Statistics: Institute of Education Sciences, last modified December 2008, accessed October 30, 2012, <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2009/2009030.pdf>, 1.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>53</sup> Brian D. Ray, Ph.D, "2.04 Million Homeschool Students in the United States in 2010," last modified January 2011, National Home Education Research Institute, accessed November 1, 2012. <http://www.neri.org/HomeschoolPopulationReport2010.pdf>, 1.

home. One component of the National Center for Education Statistics' Institute of Education Sciences 2007 report on home schooling was the incorporation of interviews and questionnaires, intended to determine possible motivating factors for home education. Home educators were first asked the main motivating factors for their decision to home school, and then asked which of these motivations was the most important to them. The three major reasons that these respondents reported, as determined by the 2007 NCES report, "were concern about the school environment, [the desire] to provide religious or moral instruction, and dissatisfaction with the academic instruction available at other schools."<sup>54</sup> Of these motivating factors, religion or moral guidance proved the most important to the greatest number of respondents (36%) followed by concern for school environment and dissatisfaction with alternate schools (with 21% and 17%, respectively).<sup>55</sup>

A 2005 case study conducted by Ed Collom at Home Charter, a California K-12 home schooling charter school, identified similar motivational factors for home schooling. In a structured survey, home educators were given sixteen options for their motivations for enrollment at Home Charter.<sup>56</sup> Collom determined the main motivational factors for parents and guardians to enroll their children in Home Charter were similar to those in the NCES Report. In his 2005 study "The Ins and Outs of Homeschooling," Collom identified four main determinants for the decision to home school: "dissatisfaction with the public schools, academic and pedagogic concerns, religious values, and family needs" and noted that though these were the main factors home educators cited, home schoolers are "a heterogeneous population with varying

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<sup>54</sup> Brian D. Ray, Ph.D, "2.04 Million Homeschool Students in the United States in 2010," 2.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>56</sup> Ed Collom, "The Ins and Outs of Homeschooling: The Determinants of Parental Motivations and Student Achievement." *Education and Urban Society* 37.3 (2005): 307-335, accessed July 25 2012, 317.

and overlapping motivations [and] simple typologies cannot capture the complexities of [the group].”<sup>57</sup>

Brian D. Ray also addressed possible motivating factors for home schooling and attempted to connect them to the rise in home schooling families in recent years. In his 2010 study “2.04 Million Homeschool Students in the United States in 2010,” Ray cited economic stresses as a motivational factor for home education. Due to the recession, Ray postulated, more parents and guardians might be home full-time as a result of layoffs or similar scenarios. Ray suggested that individuals who had previously chosen to send their children to private schools might have decided instead to home school, due to a combination of personal beliefs and monetary losses.<sup>58</sup>

#### *Addressing the Social Issues of Home Schoolers*

There are two major characteristics of home schooled students that have been observed and studied in recent decades: social dealings and academic performance. Regarding their social standing, it has long been assumed by the general public that home schooled children are isolated from both their peers and the community at large. This preconceived notion has spawned a number of studies conducted to prove the opposite — that home schooled students are actually quite socially well adjusted. The first studies to disprove these notions of isolated and socially handicapped home schoolers occurred in the 1980’s.<sup>59</sup> The first major study that attempted to address this assumption was conducted by John Wesley Taylor in 1986 and entitled “The Self-Concept of Homeschoolers: A Nationwide Study.” Taylor distributed the Piers-Harris Self-Concept scale (a standardized questionnaire intended to determine an individual’s self-concept

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<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 331.

<sup>58</sup> Brian D. Ray, Ph.D., “2.04 Million Homeschool Students in the United States in 2010,” 3.

<sup>59</sup> Val Galen and Pitman, Ed, *Homeschooling Perspectives*, 50-5.

and self-identity) to randomly selected home schooling families on a national scale. The findings of this study showed that home schoolers had a significantly higher level of self-concept than other similarly aged children on a global scale. These findings led Taylor to conclude, “insofar as self-concept is a reflector of socialization... few homeschoolers [sic] are socially deprived.”<sup>60</sup>

Another study, part of the Washington Homeschool Research Project, was conducted by Dr. Jon Wartes in 1987 and also utilized questionnaires distributed to randomly selected home schooling families to assess the validity of claims of home schoolers’ social isolation. The results of this study demonstrated that home schooled children were extremely adept at “constructively interacting” with peers and adults, and thus were not to be considered socially isolated.<sup>61</sup>

A later study, conducted Brian D. Ray in 2011, concluded that home schooled children are socially well-adjusted, showing high levels of “peer interaction, self-concept, leadership skills, family cohesion, participation in community service and self-esteem.”<sup>62</sup> In this report, Ray highlighted the collective nature of the home schooling project as another indicator of a home schooler’s lack of isolation. These children and families participate not only in support groups and networks in their local communities, Ray stated, but also in home schooling cooperatives, where parents, guardians and educators teach a large number of children at one time, similar to a traditional classroom setting. In addition to this, home educators often incorporate a variety of out-of-home activities into their curriculum. This approach to home schooling incorporates frequent group field trips to educational sites like libraries and museums or volunteer excursions for church ministries or community organizations.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Val Galen and Pitman, Ed, *Homeschooling Perspectives*, 53.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 55.

<sup>62</sup> Brian D. Ray, Ph.D., “Research Facts on Homeschooling,” National Home Education Research Institute, June 8, 2011, accessed November 10, 2012, <http://www.nheri.org/research/research-facts-on-homeschooling.html>.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*

*Academic Performance of Home Schoolers*

Academic performance and achievement has also been a frequently studied subject regarding home schoolers. Prior to and during the 1980's, there was general public doubt as to whether home schooled students could academically perform at the same level as students who were educated in a traditional school environment. As a result of this skepticism, several studies were conducted in the 1980's dealing with the cognitive and psychomotor development of home schooled students. One major study that dealt with this issue was the Washington Homeschool Research Project, which began in 1985. This project gathered academic and achievement data from home schoolers across the state of Washington. Achievement was measured through test scores from standardized assessments and through questionnaires distributed to home educators.<sup>64</sup> Van Galen and Pittman noted that studies like the Washington Homeschool Research Project were intended to assess whether or not those "teaching their children in the confines of their homes can be pedagogically successful at transmitting to their children the highly prized curricula of American schooling."<sup>65</sup> The Washington Homeschool Research Project concluded that home schoolers have consistently high achievement scores that match and often surpass those of publically educated children. Findings also suggested that home schooled children advance, intellectually speaking, more quickly than conventionally schooled children.<sup>66</sup>

Later studies (specifically "Homeschooling in Alabama" conducted in 1987-1988 by J.F. Rakestraw, "Home Educated Children's Social/Emotional Adjustment and Academic Achievement: A Comparative Study" conducted in 1986 by M.M. Delahooke, and "Reasoning Abilities of Home-educated children" conducted in 1988 by D.N. Quine and E.A. Marek,)

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<sup>64</sup> Val Galen and Pitman, Ed, *Homeschooling Perspectives*, 45-6.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 43.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 46-7.

confirmed these earlier findings.<sup>67</sup> Though 1980's studies and projects confirmed home schoolers' ability to academically perform at or above the level of formally schooled students, researchers are still addressing the topic. Brian D. Ray's 2011 study on home schoolers is an example of a more recent work that further examines home schoolers' academic capabilities. Ray determined that "the home-educated typically score 15 to 30 percentile points above public-school students on standardized achievement tests" and further concluded that the degree of state homeschool regulation does not impact a child's academic achievement.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Val Galen and Pitman, Ed, *Homeschooling Perspectives*, 46, 47, 48-9.

<sup>68</sup> Brian D. Ray, Ph.D., "Research Facts on Homeschooling."



### CHAPTER THREE: THE INTEGRATED CURRICULUM, HOME SCHOOLERS, AND MUSEUMS

#### *The History of the Integrated Curriculum*

Interdisciplinary education and the concept of the integrated curriculum have been elements of school-based education for over 80 years, beginning in the 1930's as part of a progressive movement influenced by the philosophies of psychologist and educational reformer John Dewey. Dewey pushed for student-centered instruction that involved learning about different subjects through active discovery, a process that Susan M. Drake describes as "relevant real-world inquiries and explorations to promote deep understanding."<sup>69</sup> The movement picked up speed in the 1960's with an initial push by a number of public school educators to work together in an effort to connect fragmented lessons and subjects. The process by which these educators came together to create interdisciplinary curriculums was referred to as "teaming," and was touted as having a number of academic advantages.<sup>70</sup>

*Connecting the Curriculum through Interdisciplinary Education*, a book published in 1992 by the National Middle School Association, summarized a number of studies on teaming and interdisciplinary teaching and concluded that students learning in teamed environments consistently received higher achievement scores in both reading and math than those in traditionally subject-structured environments.<sup>71</sup> Later works like Sally and Donald Clark's 1997 article "Exploring the Possibilities of Interdisciplinary Teaming," echoed previous conclusions and reaffirmed that when implemented properly, teaming and interdisciplinary teaching had a number of advantages for both teachers and students. Teacher benefits of teaming, as described

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<sup>69</sup> Susan M. Drake, *Creating Standards-Based Integrated Curriculum: The Common Core State Standards Edition*, 3rd Edition (Thousand Oaks, California: Corwin, 2012), 7.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> John H. Lounsbury, Ed, *Connecting the Curriculum through Interdisciplinary Education* (Westerville, OH: National Middle School Association, 1992), 25.

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<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> John H. Lounsbury, Ed, *Connecting the Curriculum through Interdisciplinary Education* (Westerville, OH: National Middle School Association, 1992), 25.

by Clark and Clark, included “mak[ing] better use of faculty members’ skills” and enhancing constructive collaboration. Student benefits of teaming included more “flexible learning” and “opportunities to make connections across various subject areas.”<sup>72</sup>

Though the practice of integrating curriculums continued over the years, interdisciplinary education saw its major revival in the 1990’s, as educators became more dedicated to connecting school-based learning to the new interdisciplinary and globalized world around them.<sup>73</sup> At this time, according to John H. Lounsbury, public middle school educators on a national scale began “incorporating varied activities, offering choices, integrating skill development with content, and providing many opportunities for hands-on experiences [all of which] actively involved students in finding meaning.”<sup>74</sup> These middle school educators made a concerted effort to address relevant topics, have clear learning objectives, offer a variety of learning formats, allow for student input, and incorporate group activities, field trips, and community involvement initiatives.<sup>75</sup> Alongside this positive push for relevance, however, emerged the emphasis on accountability. Accountability emerged as a major issue when critics became concerned about students’ level of achievement in schools. This resulted in the development of specific curriculum standards (known as the Core Curriculum Content Standards), which vary by state, and the implementation of standardized testing and other similar achievement-based assessments.<sup>76</sup>

We are now in an age where both accountability and relevance are important issues with regard to both learning and curriculum. Drake believes that it is important in all educational

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<sup>72</sup> Sally N. Clark and Donald C. Clark, “Exploring the Possibilities of Interdisciplinary Teaming,” *Young Adolescents* 73.5 (1997): 267-271.

<sup>73</sup> Susan M. Drake, *Creating Standards-Based Integrated Curriculum*, v.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 38.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 39-40.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, xvi.

settings for a balance to exist between these two concepts. Drake believes that it is with this balance that students can learn most effectively and successfully.<sup>77</sup> Since the 1990's, there have been new educational efforts to advance and expand the practice of interdisciplinary and integrated curricula. It is now more necessary than ever before to train students to become competent global citizens. This is reflected in the new national and regional educational initiatives, seen in both the updated Core Curriculum Content Standards and the new Common Core Standards.<sup>78</sup>

### *The Integrated Curriculum and Home Schooling*

The interdisciplinary and integrated curriculum plays a major role in home education, as this method of education is widely supported and practiced by the home schooling community. Holt affirmed the importance of a relevant and interdisciplinary curriculum in *How Children Fail*, stressing that students' learning should be applicable to their lives and experiences, because children need knowledge that they can use to make important connections in the real world.<sup>79</sup>

While home schooled students are not learning in the traditional public school environment, these families still deal with the issues of relevance, accountability, and assessment that have gone hand in hand with the expansion of integrated curriculums in schools. As Holt espoused, the home schooling curriculum should be relevant to the students, and the subjects

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<sup>77</sup> Susan M. Drake, *Creating Standards-Based Integrated Curriculum*, xiv.

<sup>78</sup> The Common Core State Standards Initiative was organized by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State School Officers and began in 2009 as a state-led effort to bring state curriculum standards into the new 21st Century global economy. Implemented in 2010, the standards are now accepted by 45 states in the USA. Though this initiative has its opponents, advocates cite that the Common Core Standards succeed where state standards failed: in creating a meaningful destination, both cognitive and otherwise, for both teachers and students. The standards aim to be more inclusive than state curriculum standards and were developed by educators and professionals with the goal of providing the right learning tools and framework to prepare students for college, adulthood, the workforce, and to be competent citizens in the globalized and world. More information on the Common Core can be found on its official website, located at <http://www.corestandards.org/about-the-standards>.

<sup>79</sup> John Holt, *How Children Fail*, 169.

should overlap in a meaningful manner. Holt believed that “a field of knowledge...is a territory and knowing it is not just a matter of knowing all the items in the territory, but of knowing how they relate to, compare with, and fit in with each other.”<sup>80</sup> Relevance in education also involves the sentiments of the students; as with integrated education in a public school environment, integrated education in the home should encourage student input. Holt believed that student input was extremely important because children tend to achieve the highest levels of cognition when they truly care about the subject that they are studying.<sup>81</sup>

### *Choosing an Integrated Curriculum*

Home educators are gifted with a significant amount of flexibility and choice in selecting a curriculum for their children. The home educator enjoys much more freedom regarding curricular choice than the average public school educator who must adhere to oftentimes rigid content and curriculum standards. As mentioned earlier, there are a number of different options for curriculums in the sphere of home education: curriculums catering to specific religious or moral objectives, special audiences (gifted or special needs children), specific age groups, and ranging from the print-based to entirely web-based. Parents and guardians are also free to construct their own curriculum. Home educators are also free to choose to follow a model of integrated and interdisciplinary education in their schooling.<sup>82</sup>

The internet is ripe with integrated curriculums designed for home educators. One example is Chris Roe’s *America: An Integrated Curriculum*, a multi-volume, one-year curriculum designed for middle school-aged home schooled students. This print-based curriculum, published by Christian Novel Studies, incorporates traditional school subjects in

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<sup>80</sup> John Holt, *How Children Fail*, 179.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 265.

<sup>82</sup> Susan M. Drake, *Creating Standards-Based Integrated Curriculum*.

teaching children about the history of America, with an “emphasis on God’s will.”<sup>83</sup> According to the Christian Novel Studies description of Roe’s work, *America: An Integrated Curriculum* both connects subjects and offers multiple types of learning opportunities, offering lessons for “vocabulary, reading, history/geography, English, Bible [studies], health, music, art, arts and crafts, safety/manners, and spelling,” incorporating weekly science lesson plans and including a wide range of activities to enhance cognition and understanding.<sup>84</sup>

The Calvert School offers another popular option for an integrated home school curriculum, designed for students from Pre-Kindergarten through eighth grade. Unlike Roe’s curriculum, those offered by the Calvert School are secular and created and developed by former classroom teachers. The Calvert School’s curriculum, as stated on the organization’s official website “is built on a rich foundation of reading, writing, and arithmetic. That foundation is then layered with history, science, music, geography, and the arts to ensure no gaps in instruction.”<sup>85</sup> The curriculum comes with lesson manuals, access to educational counselors, and a multitude of online resources and activities.<sup>86</sup>

There are a large number of integrated curriculum options, both religious and nonreligious, for home educators and these two examples are merely a sample of the breadth and wealth of choices available. The widespread practice of home schooling and the continued and often emphasized importance of an interdisciplinary and integrated curriculum illustrate the fact that education is continuously changing and evolving. Drake argues that the popularity of home education and online curricula and learning tools show that “people want to learn on their own

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<sup>83</sup> Diane Wheeler, “America: An Integrated Curriculum,” review of *America: An Integrated Curriculum*, by Chris Roe, *The Old Schoolhouse Magazine*, 2012, *The Old Schoolhouse Reviews*, [http://thehomeschoolmagazine.com/Homeschool\\_Reviews/reviews.php?rid=377](http://thehomeschoolmagazine.com/Homeschool_Reviews/reviews.php?rid=377).

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>85</sup> “The Calvert Homeschool Curriculum: A Fully Accredited Homeschool Curriculum,” Calvert School, accessed December 20, 2012, <http://homeschool.calvertschool.org/why-calvert/homeschool-curriculum>.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*

time and in their own way.”<sup>87</sup> Learning and education are also becoming increasingly collective efforts. Now, more than ever, educators, parents, and children are coming together to form personal learning networks where they share knowledge and make connections. This occurs frequently in home schooling networks and support groups. These groups showcase the concept, believed by Drake, that “knowledge creation is collaborative.”<sup>88</sup>

Thus far, this chapter has discussed the practice of interdisciplinary and integrated education in both the traditional classroom and home environment. Museums serve as another environment in which this type of learning can take place. The following section of this chapter will discuss museums’ increasing commitment to interdisciplinary education and the developing relationship between museums and home schoolers.

### *The Integrated Curriculum and Museums*

Museums have been prevalent cultural institutions in America for a number of years. Recently, museums have further strengthened their educational mission and focus. This push began in 1991, when the American Association of Museums adopted the report *Excellence and Equity: Education and the Public Dimension of Museums* as a policy statement. *Excellence and Equity* was the first major report to address the educational role of museums and furthermore to state that “the missions of museums...should state unequivocally that there is an educational purpose in every museum activity.”<sup>89</sup> The report then presents a plan for action based on ten principles related to commitment to education, public service, and an emphasis on community involvement and collaboration, the first being to “assert that museums place education – in the

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<sup>87</sup> Susan M. Drake, *Creating Standards-Based Integrated Curriculum*, 153.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid*, 154.

<sup>89</sup> Ellen Cochran Hirzy, ed, *Excellence and Equity: Education and the Public Dimension of Museums*, American Association of Museums, Baltimore: Collins Lithographing, Inc., 1992, 3.

broadest sense of the word – at the center of their public service role”.<sup>90</sup> *Excellence and Equity* also touches on the importance of integration and relevant learning, stating the importance of museum educational programs to “supply a context in which to trace the continuity of human experience,... [address] questions that affect the global village, [and] serve as training grounds for... future professionals.”<sup>91</sup>

In the past two decades since the American Association of Museums published *Excellence and Equity* and adopted it as policy, museums have been expanding their educational roles, often addressing new audiences and approaches. In 1999, Stephen E. Weil addressed this phenomenon in his article “From Being about Something to Being for Somebody,” stating that museums were in the midst of being “substantially reshaped,” shifting their focuses from collecting to “a more entrepreneurial vision” of “providing a variety of primary educational services to the public.”<sup>92</sup> In the years since Weil’s article was published, museum education has continued to expand in both practice and reputation, as confirmed by more recent studies and reports.

In a 2012 report entitled “From Insurgency to Re-Branding: Museum Education's Long, Strange Trip,” Ken Yellis acknowledged the growth of museum-based education and the transformation of the museum landscape due in large part to “the increasingly sophisticated field of visitor studies, audience research, and evaluation, the growing professionalism of museum education training and practice, and the advocacy role of *Journal of Museum Education* and other publications.”<sup>93</sup> Also in 2012, The American Alliance for Museums’ Center for the Future

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<sup>90</sup> Ellen Cochran Hirzy, ed, *Excellence and Equity: Education and the Public Dimension of Museums*, 7.  
Note: For a complete list of the ten guiding principles of *Excellence and Equity*, refer to the official report.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>92</sup> Stephen E. Weil, “From Being about Something to Being for Somebody,” *Daedalus, Journal of The American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, 128:3 (Summer 1999): 170-190.

<sup>93</sup> Ken Yellis, “From Insurgency to Re-Branding: Museum Education's Long, Strange Trip,” *Journal of Museum Education*, 37:2 (Summer 2012): 57-65.



of Museums published a conceptual paper and report on the future of museum education entitled *On the Horizon*. This report drew upon statistics from the U.S. Census, Institute of Museum and Library Services, scholarly and educational publications, and specific examples of educational programming in museums and concluded that museums are “contribut[ing] to the educational landscape” with “an impressive scope of innovative educational experiences.”<sup>94</sup> This report also hypothesized that, if recent trends and growth in museum education are reliable indicators, “in the coming era, museums will play a key role in the new educational landscape.”<sup>95</sup>

One of the ways that museums have expanded their educational potential is their reflection of changes and practices in the formal educational system, including their adoption of the integrated and interdisciplinary curriculum which has become so prevalent in schools over the past several decades. Reflecting both the formal educational landscape and the ever-changing and pluralistic world in which we live, museums, as stated by educator Floyd Minuette are cognizant that their educational goals “must address authentic ways in which connections can be made to the lives of students.”<sup>96</sup> Museum educators acknowledge that learning situations and educational programs should seek to be truly dynamic, creative, integrated, relevant, and interesting. Museums offer unique learning opportunities and educational experiences that often cannot be found in the traditional classroom environment.<sup>97</sup>

While traditional classroom learning is often referred to as formal education, museum-based learning is often referred to as “informal learning.” Informal learning often refers to learning experiences that occur outside of the traditional formal venues, like the classroom

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<sup>94</sup> Scott Kratz and Elizabeth Merritt, *On the Horizon: Future of Education, Museums and the Future of Education*, American Alliance of Museums, Emerald Group Publishing: 2012, accessed April 25, 2013, <http://www.aam-us.org/docs/default-document-library/on-the-horizon-web-version.pdf?sfvrsn=0>, 8-9.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>96</sup> Minuette Floyd, “More than just a field trip... Making relevant curricular connections through museum experiences,” *Art Education* 55.5 (September 2002): 39.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 45.

setting. However, the “informal” in informal learning does not simply refer to the space in which learning takes place. The practice of informal learning in a museum focuses less on curricular and educational benchmarks and more on self-directed and individualized learning. Museum-based learning focuses more on the learning process than the product of learning. As museums are informal settings, the manifestation of learning in specific content knowledge, behavior or skills, cannot be assessed as it could in a school or home setting.<sup>98</sup>

The principles and practices of museum education emphasize the self-directed and voluntary nature of learning, intimating that visitors are able to choose what they learn and consequently control the amount of learning that they experience in a museum visit.<sup>99</sup> Museum education combines individual and collaborative learning, to foster both individual discovery and social learning skills.<sup>100</sup> Learning experiences in a museum setting are often extremely creative and experiential, offering a variance of hands-on and artistic learning opportunities. It can be argued that traditional education settings can also offer opportunities for self-directed learning, individual and collaborative discovery, and hands-on art activities. However, museums offer something that the typical classroom cannot: the opportunity for direct engagement with works of art and historical artifacts.<sup>101</sup> This unique capacity for object-based learning is a concept stressed in *Excellence and Equity*. The report states that direct interaction between museum

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<sup>98</sup> Karen Knutson, et al, “Approaching Art Education as an Ecology: Exploring the Role of Museums,” *Studies in Art Education* 52.4 (Summer 2011), accessed December 20, 2012, <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.shu.edu/docview/1011399521?accountid=13793>.

<sup>99</sup> To learn more the self-directed nature of museum visitation, refer to John H. Falk and Lynn D. Dierking’s 2011 work *The Museum Experience*. This work examines the many factors that contribute to a visitor’s individual museum experience, including personal, sociocultural and physical contexts, and studies the nuances of museum visitation through the lens of The Interactive Experience Model, a framework created by Falk and Dierking.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>101</sup> Karen Knutson, et al, “Approaching Art Education as an Ecology,” 310.

visitors and objects helps provide fertile “meeting grounds where enriching experiences are offered through human interaction and interaction with objects and ideas.”<sup>102</sup>

Though museums, classrooms and at-home home learning environments often offer different learning opportunities and experiences, educators in all three venues share the overarching vision and goal of increasing children’s learning, knowledge and understanding. These shared goals and visions make collaboration a very important practice for museums. Collaboration has taken the form of numerous school-museum partnerships. Knutson contends that the sentiment behind these partnerships is “that formal and informal arts education organizations, in tandem, are a key component of a healthy lifelong learning ecology.”<sup>103</sup>

Museum education programs serve as a complementary and supplementary experience to a traditional education. School-museum partnerships have been prevalent for over a decade, working together to increase student learning and engagement with the arts. While school-based learning can lead to engaging and educational experiences in museums, museum-based learning can also help develop skills and concepts that can assist students in the classroom.<sup>104</sup> Schools do not serve as the only collaborative partner for museums. In recent years, museums have collaborated with a number of different groups and organizations, from various community associations to major corporations.<sup>105</sup> Scott Kratz and Elizabeth Merritt state, in their 2011 article “Museums and the Future of Education,” that since the onset of these partnerships and collaborations, museums have taken on a stronger and more significant role “in the new educational landscape,” due to the fact that the “U.S. educational system is on the cusp of

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<sup>102</sup> Ellen Cochran Hirzy, ed, *Excellence and Equity*, 12.

<sup>103</sup> Karen Knutson, et al, “Approaching Art Education as an Ecology,” 310.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, 312.

<sup>105</sup> Anna Johnson, et al, *The Museum Educator’s Manual: Educators Share Successful Techniques*, Plymouth: AltaMira Press, 2009.

transformational change.”<sup>106</sup> Kratz and Merritt believe that as the U.S. faces “rising dissatisfaction with the formal educational system and due to the proliferation of non-traditional forms of primary education,” arguably the most prolific being the practice of homeschooling, museums have become an increasingly innovative and important component of a child’s education.<sup>107</sup>

### *Home Schooling and Museums*

As the number of home schoolers in the United States has increased in recent years, so has the importance and prevalence of museum education programs designed especially for home schooled students and families. As evident by the widespread participation by home schooling families in networks, support groups and cooperatives, these parents and guardians are seeking extra-curricular activities for their children — activities that incorporate interdisciplinary education, the opportunity for socialization with other home schoolers, and the prospect of innovative learning techniques like hands-on and art-making activities. Museum educator Katrina Richter emphasizes this fact in her article “Homeschoolers are Always Late: What Every Museum Needs to Know About Alternative Learners” by stating that “98 percent of homeschooled [sic] students are involved in two or more extracurricular activities per week... [a] substantial part of their day [is thus dedicated] to the pursuit of non-traditional learning opportunities” and “museums can be a key ingredient in the alternative learner mix.”<sup>108</sup> In addition to seeking innovative learning and socialization opportunities, home schooling parents

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<sup>106</sup> Scott Kratz and Elizabeth Merritt, “Museums and the future of education,” *On the Horizon* 19. 3 (2011): 310, Accessed January 15, 2013, 188-195, Accessed January 15, doi: 2013.10.1108/10748121111163896.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, 310.

<sup>108</sup> Katrina Richter, “Homeschoolers are Always Late: What Every Museum Needs to Know About Alternative Learners,” *Museum News*, April/May 2007, *American Association of Museums*, accessed January 17, 2013, <http://www.aam-us.org/pubs/mn/homeschoolers.cfm>.

want their children to learn about new subjects through different educational methods. This concept was affirmed at the 2009 American Association of Museums Roundtable Discussion on School Programs, during which museum professionals stated that home educators “encourage their children to learn through different means.”<sup>109</sup>

Museum education programs also offer a valuable complementary learning experience for home schoolers, because they can educate students on subjects that home educators are unfamiliar with or feel uncomfortable teaching, one subject being art history. Regarding art history, museum educator Cynthia Raso believes that this is a particularly difficult subject to teach to children, stating that some educators, both school and home-based, “find it difficult to understand themselves or... struggle with translating these themes into fun and accessible experiences.”<sup>110</sup> Museums, Raso states, offer many “innovative and comprehensive” educational programs on the subject of art history, many of which are designed specifically for home schooled audiences.<sup>111</sup> These programs offer learning opportunities including interactive guides with lesson plans and activity sheets, video-conferenced programs for distance-learning opportunities, and numerous museum-based programs on a multitude of art historical subjects.<sup>112</sup>

Science is another subject that can be difficult to teach in the home, especially without access to laboratories and other similar scientific settings. Jill Caryl Weiner addresses this subject in The New York Times article “The Home-Schooled Don’t Just Stay at Home” where she states that educational state standards for the sciences are challenging, especially for home educators without specific content knowledge or training in the teaching of the subject. Weiner

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<sup>109</sup> “Notes from 2009 AAM Roundtable on School Programs – Planning for Homeschool Programs,” *Museum-Ed*, accessed January 17, 2013, <http://www.museum-ed.org/notes-from-2009-aam-roundtable-on-school-programs>.

<sup>110</sup> Cynthia Raso, “Museum Resources and the Homeschooler,” *Art Within Reach*, September 12, 2011, accessed January 17, 2013, <http://www.artwithinreach.org/museum-resources-and-the-homeschooler>.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*

added that home educators who were tested in focus groups expressed a desire for comprehensive classes in the sciences to help them reach state standards.<sup>113</sup> Museums have yet again proven to be vital in the home school community by offering exclusive science education programs to home schoolers, which provide access to content specialists and laboratory settings. Richter acknowledged the importance of such programs for home educators and their families, affirming that museum education programs that “successfully integrate laboratory components” are especially popular among home schoolers.<sup>114</sup> As museums have increasingly created programs and events for the home school audience, it is pertinent to research these specific endeavors, in an effort to assess the value of these programs for home educators.

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<sup>113</sup> Jill Caryl Weiner, “The Home-schooled Don’t Just Stay at Home,” *New York Times*, March 14, 2012, accessed January 17, 2013, [http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/15/arts/artsspecial/museums-welcome-home-schooled-students.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/15/arts/artsspecial/museums-welcome-home-schooled-students.html?_r=1), 3.

<sup>114</sup> Richter, “Homeschoolers are Always Late.”

## CHAPTER FOUR: THE EXPERIENCE OF A NEW JERSEY HOME SCHOOLER

### *Laws and Regulations*

New Jersey can be classified as a state with low home school regulation. Laws and statutes are relatively relaxed, compared to those of high regulation states, regarding teacher qualification, correspondence, curriculum requirements, and assessments. Home schooling parents and guardians are not required to possess any specific degrees or certifications in order to educate their children. More often than not, these home educators are also not required to notify the board of education that they wish to educate their child somewhere other than school (though it is suggested to avoid issues with compulsory attendance regulations).<sup>115</sup> The two reasons it is necessary to inform the board of education of the intent to home school are 1) if the student has been refused entry to a school by the district and has refused to submit an appeal, or 2) if the parent or guardian is removing the student from high school (a case which only requires the completion of a transfer form). New Jersey also does not require a specific amount of days of instruction for students educated in the home, although public schools must be open 180 days out of the year. However, the amount of home instruction is meant to be equivalent to that of public schools. Home school is not defined as a specific type of institution; rather it is qualified by the State of New Jersey Board of Education as “elsewhere than at school.”

In accordance with the home school regulations in the state of New Jersey, instruction by home educators is expected to be academically equivalent to what children would learn in public schools.<sup>116</sup> Despite this statute, there is no regulation that requires the board of education to

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<sup>115</sup> “Frequently Asked Questions: Homeschooling,” State of New Jersey: Board of Education, accessed November 10, 2012, [http://www.state.nj.us/education/genfo/faq/faq\\_homeschool.htm](http://www.state.nj.us/education/genfo/faq/faq_homeschool.htm).

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*

approve or review a program or curriculum taught at home. In the same vein, home schooled students in the state of New Jersey are not required to adhere to Core Curriculum Content Standards or the newly initiated Common Core standards. The outcomes of home schooled children thus become the sole responsibility of the parents or guardians who are educating them; the board of education possesses no authority to monitor home schooled children's progress, academic or otherwise. The local board of education is only allowed to interfere or intervene if it is determined that there is credible evidence that the home schooled student is not receiving equivalent or adequate instruction from their parent or guardian. If this is the case, the board of education has the right to investigate the situation by requesting documents or through the pursuance of a legal case against the parent or guardian.<sup>117</sup>

Regarding assessment, home educators in New Jersey are not required to submit any official reports or progress indicators. Home schooled students do not have to take standardized tests of any kind. Grade placement is also a relative non-issue in the home school statutes of New Jersey and only truly comes into play if a home schooled student is returning to a public school environment. In this case, according to the official regulations of the State of New Jersey Board of Education, "placement should be based on an objective assessment that is given to all students for that subject or grade."<sup>118</sup>

If the child in question is to re-enroll in public school in order to receive a degree or diploma, he or she may be subjected to assessments based on his or her grade of entry, including "NJ ASK 3, 4; NJ ASK 5, 6, 7; the Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment (GEPA); High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA); or the Special Review Assessment (SRA) and Alternative

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<sup>117</sup> "Frequently Asked Questions: Homeschooling," State of New Jersey: Board of Education, accessed November 10, 2012, [http://www.state.nj.us/education/genfo/faq/faq\\_homeschool.htm](http://www.state.nj.us/education/genfo/faq/faq_homeschool.htm).

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*



Proficiency assessment.”<sup>119</sup> The New Jersey Board of Education states that home schooled students can obtain a high school diploma through “completing 30 general education credits leading to a degree at an accredited institution of higher education and by performing at the proficient or advanced proficient level of achievement in all sections of the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA).”<sup>120</sup>

### *Accountability and Assessment*

Regarding accountability and assessment, it is best to understand these as fluid and overarching terms when related to the practice of home education in New Jersey. Through a certain lens, accountability and assessment in a governmental and institutional sense can be seen as a non-issue with home schoolers in New Jersey, due to the fact that regulations appear minimal. However, both accountability and assessment are major issues for New Jersey’s home educators. These parents and guardians are entirely held accountable for their children’s well-being and education and, perhaps most importantly, they are responsible for ensuring that their children obtain a high school diploma. There is no outside governmental body that assists or intervenes with New Jersey home educators in the pursuance of a high school diploma, thus the accountability lies entirely with the parent or guardian.<sup>121</sup>

While New Jersey home schoolers do not have to routinely participate in standardized assessments, any home schooled student who wishes to obtain a high school diploma or certificate of completion must pass the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA), Special

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<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>120</sup> “Frequently Asked Questions: Homeschooling,” State of New Jersey: Board of Education, accessed November 10, 2012, [http://www.state.nj.us/education/genfo/faq/faq\\_homeschool.htm](http://www.state.nj.us/education/genfo/faq/faq_homeschool.htm).

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*

Review Assessment (SRA) and Alternative Proficiency Assessment (APA).<sup>122</sup> If the student does not wish to receive an official high school diploma, the General Education Development test (GED) serves as another option for high school completion. Though students who pass the GED will not receive a diploma from their regional high school, they will obtain an official New Jersey State High School Diploma. The GED, which can be completed at home and online, serves as a symbol that a student has achieved the academic knowledge and skills equal to that learned in a traditional four-year high school education.<sup>123</sup> The Home School Legal Defense Association acknowledges the importance of passing the GED and other similar standardized tests (including the SAT, ACT, and Advanced Placement tests), in order for home schooled students to apply to colleges and render them eligible to compete in the work force.<sup>124</sup>

### *The Home School Curriculum*

Though there are no regulations in the state of New Jersey requiring home educators to adhere to or follow the Core Curriculum Content Standards or Common Core Standards, New Jersey home schooling parents and guardians do in fact follow curriculums in the instruction of their children. Home educators are given the option, through the New Jersey State Board of Education, of requesting curriculum information from their local school and board of education.

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<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>123</sup> The GED's official website states that the test has five sections: Social Studies, Science, Reading, Mathematics, and Writing. The Social Studies section covers U.S. and world history, geography, civics and government, and economics. The Science section covers physical sciences, life sciences, and earth and space sciences. The reading section covers both reading comprehension of various types of literature and a writing aptitude section. The mathematics section covers basic math, measurement and geometry, probability and statistics, and algebraic equations. The test is primarily multiple choice. In order to pass this test, one must be familiar with all of the aforementioned subject areas. More information on the sections and learning requirements of the GED can be found at the following website: <http://www.gedtestingservice.com/testers/test-sections>.

<sup>124</sup> "Homeschooling Thru High School: Testing," Home School Legal Defense Association, accessed January 31, 2013, <http://www.hslda.org/highschool/testing.asp>.

The board is required to provide curriculum materials to these educators if it is requested.<sup>125</sup> This is only one of many options for home schooling parents and guardians to employ a curriculum in the teaching of their children. As stated by the Education Network of Christian Homeschoolers of New Jersey, choosing “a curriculum is one of the most important homeschooling [sic] decisions [a] family will make, so care should be taken to thoroughly investigate all the options available.”<sup>126</sup> There are a number of options and resources available to New Jersey home educators regarding curriculums. Curriculums can be purchased online through accredited companies or correspondence schools, such as The Calvert School, Alpha Omega, Christian Light Education, and Home Science Adventures.<sup>127</sup> This is often referred to as “distance learning.” Home educators can also attend a number of curriculum fairs or workshops and public events like seminars and conventions.<sup>128</sup>

### *The Home School Cooperative*

Yet another option for choosing a curriculum is becoming a member of a home school cooperative, where like-minded parents and guardians come together and teach the children of multiple families at once, in a group setting. These cooperatives vary in size, function, and targeted audience. For instance, some groups operate on a local level, within towns, communities, or counties. Some cooperatives are much larger and operate on a national or international scale, employing technology and the internet to distribute curriculum and instruct

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<sup>125</sup> “Frequently Asked Questions: Homeschooling,” State of New Jersey: Board of Education, accessed November 10, 2012, [http://www.state.nj.us/education/genfo/faq/faq\\_homeschool.htm](http://www.state.nj.us/education/genfo/faq/faq_homeschool.htm).

<sup>126</sup> “Getting Started with Homeschooling,” ENOCH of New Jersey, accessed November 10, 2012, [http://www.enochnj.org/index.php/getting\\_started](http://www.enochnj.org/index.php/getting_started).

<sup>127</sup> There are a number of lists and reviews of home school curriculums available on various websites. These selections were taken from Home School Reviews, a service provided by the company Home School, Inc. The full list of reviewed curricula and home education products can be found at the following page: <http://www.homeschoolreviews.comreviews/curriculum/showall.aspx>.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*

students. Some groups are more formally structured and focus on teaching entire curriculums. Others focus exclusively on socialization and field trips. There are both religious and non-religious cooperatives and cooperatives that are inclusive of all ages of students or age-specific.<sup>129</sup>

### *Support Groups, Activity Groups and Networks*

Going hand in hand with these cooperatives are home schooling networks, support groups, and activity groups. Like home schooling cooperatives, these groups vary in size, function and targeted audience. According to Ray's 2011 study, these groups are beneficial for home schooling parents and guardians, students, and families as a whole. Support groups and networks offer a forum for public discourse among home educators – a place for them to share their opinions, tips and techniques. For the children, networks and activity groups offer new opportunities for socialization, learning and entertainment. Groups meet at regular intervals and often provide workshops, special events, and field trips to places like museums and theaters.<sup>130</sup> In New Jersey alone, there are almost fifty home school networks and support groups, many offering unique and specific extra-curricular experiences. Some groups cater to Christian home schoolers, while others focus on secular learning. There are groups limited to towns and counties, and groups that operate state-wide. New Jersey also offers several home schooling support groups for students with special needs, including groups for children on the Autism Spectrum, children with emotional or physical disabilities, and children with Down syndrome. While these groups can vary tremendously, the New Jersey Homeschool Association notes that

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<sup>129</sup> "NJ Homeschool Co-Ops," New Jersey Homeschool Association, accessed November 20, 2012, [http://jerseyhomeschool.net/?page\\_id=588](http://jerseyhomeschool.net/?page_id=588).

<sup>130</sup> Brian D. Ray, Ph.D., "Research Facts on Homeschooling," National Home Education Research Institute, June 8, 2011, accessed November 10, 2012, <http://www.nheri.org/research/research-facts-on-homeschooling.html>.

their ultimate purpose is the same: “to share ideas, materials, experiences, information, to offer social and comprehensive learning opportunities for our children, and support member families.”<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> “Support and Activity Groups,” New Jersey Homeschool Association, accessed November 20, 2012, [http://jerseyhomeschool.net/?page\\_id=43](http://jerseyhomeschool.net/?page_id=43).

**CHAPTER FIVE:  
ASSESSING MUSEUM EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR HOME SCHOOLERS:  
A CASE STUDY OF THREE NEW JERSEY MUSEUMS**

*Abstract*

This is an exploratory case study of museum education programs for home schoolers in the state of New Jersey. The study attempts to determine the value of these programs for home educators in fulfilling curricular and educational requirements, social desires, and other needs. The value of these programs was assessed through the implementation of a questionnaire distributed to home educators. The three New Jersey museums chosen for this study were Liberty Science Center of Jersey City, Montclair Art Museum of Montclair, and Maculloch Hall Historical Museum of Morristown, all of which offer museum education programs specifically designed for home school audiences.

*Literature Review*

Thus far, there is little scholarly literature available on the subject of the value of museums for home schooling families. However, there have been a number of studies on home schooling that have addressed the use and value of informal education settings for this audience. Cathy Matherly's 2000 study "Exploring Nature from the Inside Out: Homeschooling Opportunities at Informal-Learning Facilities," highlighted the variance of educational opportunities for home schoolers, citing that informal learning settings like museums and aquariums offer unique learning opportunities to help students understand nature.<sup>132</sup> In the comprehensive 2012 study "Homeschooling Education: Longitudinal Study of Methods,

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<sup>132</sup> Cathy Matherly, "Exploring Nature from the Inside Out: Homeschooling Opportunities at Informal-Learning Facilities," *Legacy* 11.4 (Jul-Aug 2000).

Materials, and Curricula,” Linda G. Hanna studied home schooling families in Pennsylvania for a period of ten years and concluded that over that time, there was a significant increase in networking amongst families and visits to informal learning settings like libraries.<sup>133</sup> On the subject of libraries as an informal learning setting, several works discussed their importance to the home school population, including Theresa Willingham’s 2008 article “Libraries and Homeschoolers”<sup>134</sup> and Bea Baaden and Jean O’Neill Uhl’s 2009 study “Homeschooling: Exploring the Potential of Public Library Service for Homeschooled Students.”<sup>135</sup> Both of these works acknowledged the unique and various benefits that libraries offered to home schooling families, including opportunities for socialization and group learning and access to a wealth of books and other written materials.

While the relationship between home schooling families and informal educational settings has been discussed in a number of articles and studies, there is little published on the specific subject of home schoolers and museum education programs. Miriam Musco’s 2011 study “What Do They Want from Us? Understanding the Needs of Homeschoolers in Museums,” sampled Christian home educators in New Jersey and North Carolina, conducting interviews and distributing questionnaires to ask these home educators about their museum experiences. This study sought to assess Christian home schoolers’ feelings about museums and concluded that these home schoolers valued opportunities for hands-on learning, curricular connections and introduction to new topics in museums.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Linda G. Hanna, “Homeschooling Education: Longitudinal Study of Methods, Materials, and Curricula,” *Education and Urban Society* 44.5 (Sept. 2012).

<sup>134</sup> Theresa Willingham, “Libraries and Homeschoolers,” *Knowledge Quest* 37:1 (Sept/Oct. 2008).

<sup>135</sup> Bea Baaden and Jean O’Neill Uhl, “Homeschooling: Exploring the Potential of Public Library Service for Homeschooled Students,” *Journal of the Library Administration & Management Section* 5.2 (Mar 2009).

<sup>136</sup> Miriam Musco, “What Do They Want from Us? Understanding the Needs of Homeschoolers in Museums,” (MA Thesis, New York University, 2011).

### *Introduction to Study*

In an effort to assess the meaning and value of museum programs for home educators on as large a scale as possible, this case study, conducted in February of 2013, incorporates three types of museums: one science museum, Liberty Science Center of Jersey City, one art museum, Montclair Art Museum of Montclair, and one historic house, Maculloch Hall Historical Museum of Morristown. The participants of this study were the home educators in attendance at three specific home school programs at these museums. Participants were given an eight-question multi-format questionnaire that assessed their sentiments on museums with regard to fulfilling the educational and social needs of their curriculums. All willing participants in attendance were sampled. The ultimate goal of this case study was to determine the value of museum programs for home educators, with regard to fulfilling educational and curricular requirements, social desires and other needs.

### *Instrument*

The method used in this study is a homogenous sampling; a small sample size that fit the goals of the study was selected.<sup>137</sup> The sample for this study was limited to New Jersey home educators who attend home school programs at museums, specifically those in who were in attendance at the three selected programs. The study is primarily qualitative; the instrument used for gathering information was the multi-format, eight-question questionnaire distributed to participants.

The questionnaire was given to home educators during the programs when they were isolated from the program in question. The participants (the home educators) were informed of

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<sup>137</sup> Judy Diamond, et al. *Practical Evaluation Guide: Tools for Museums and Other Informal Educational Settings*. Plymouth: AltaMira Press, 2009, 53.



the study's purpose and asked for their consent to participate prior to handing out the questionnaire. To further aid the participants, a brief description of the study and its purpose and goals preceded the questionnaire on the handout.<sup>138</sup> The eight-part questionnaire was designed to take between 5 and 10 minutes to complete and combined both polar (anticipating a yes-or-no or fixed response) and open-ended queries. The questions posed were those felt to be most pertinent and relevant to the study. These questions addressed such issues as the participant's level of attendance at museum programs, the type of curriculum taught in the participant's home, motivations for attending home school programs at museums, and opinions on the value of museum programs in supplementing and complementing their child's curriculum and education. The goal of this questionnaire was to determine the level that New Jersey's home educators value museum programs in relation to their children's curriculum and education. The questionnaire is provided on p. 47.

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<sup>138</sup> Judy Diamond, et al. *Practical Evaluation Guide: Tools for Museums and Other Informal Educational Settings*, 70.

## HOME SCHOOL PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE

**Purpose of Study:** I am a graduate student in the Museum Professions program at Seton Hall University and am writing my Master's Thesis on the place of museums in a New Jersey homeschooler's education. I am conducting this questionnaire in order to both gain a better perspective on how home educators view museum programs as components of their children's curriculum and to assess the value and importance of such programs.

1. Is this your first time visiting \_\_\_\_\_ for a Home School Program? Please circle the appropriate answer.

Y                      N

2. If you answered "yes," what made you decide to attend this program? If you answered "no," how many Home School Programs have you attended at \_\_\_\_\_?

3. How many times a year do you visit a museum with your child or children? Circle the best choice.

0-1                      1-3                      3-5                      5-7                      7-10                      > 10

4. What type of curriculum do you follow at home? Circle all that apply.

Religious              Secular              Based on Common Core and/or Core Curriculum Content Standards

Purchased Curriculum              Co-operative Curriculum              Create Your Own

Other (Please explain) \_\_\_\_\_ Do Not Wish to Answer

5. How do museum education programs like this one reflect your curricular needs?

6. Do you feel that museum visits are an important part of your child's education? Please explain.

7. What learning opportunities do museums offer to your child's education that you could not find elsewhere?

8. Please circle the motivational factors that led you to attend this program with your child. Circle all that apply.

Specific learning opportunity              Exclusivity of Program              Socialization Aspect

Hands-on Component              Cost              Opportunity for parental involvement

Other (Please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you so much for your participation!*

Note: All open-ended questions were given sufficient answer space.

*Case One: Liberty Science Center*

*Program Title:* “Forensics: CSI at LSC”

*Date and Time of Program:* Tuesday, February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013, 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM and

Wednesday, February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2013, 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM

*Date and Time of Study:* Wednesday February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2013, 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM

*Target Audience:* Parents/guardians of attending home school students

*Total Number of Students in Attendance:* 9

*Total Number of Parents/Guardians:* 5

*Total Number of Parents/Guardians Who Participated in Study:* 5

Liberty Science Center, located in Jersey City, New Jersey, offers several programs and workshops for home schooling families. Workshops for children ages 8-16 are located in the facility’s laboratories and offer one to two day science learning experiences on various topics and themes. These programs and workshops offer hands-on learning opportunities, support and adhere to specific Core Curriculum Content Standards, and seek to address and engage a multitude of learning styles. Liberty Science Center offers a home school workshop four times in a calendar year, once per season.

The program used for this study was “Forensics: CSI at LSC,” a two-day program designed for 8-10 year olds and 11-13 year olds. These age groups were split during the program so the lessons and activities were more tailored to the students’ developmental capabilities and skills.<sup>139</sup> Though the program was two days in length, only one day of the program was attended for this case study. The program itself took place in the laboratory, with one scientist/educator

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<sup>139</sup> “Home School Programs,” Liberty Science Center, accessed January 28, 2013, <http://lsc.org/for-educators/programs-at-the-center/homeschool-programs/>

and one assistant educator presiding over the group. The children were broken down into smaller groups of three during the program, in order to work on certain hands-on activities together. Throughout the program, the scientist explained several practices in forensics and crime scene investigation, and after each explanation, had the students participate in a hands-on activity. There were several different activities included in this program that included both individual and collaborative work. Students completed CSI worksheets individually and in small groups, investigated simulated crime scenes as teams, and performed a simulated blood splatter analysis in small groups.

*Case Two: Montclair Art Museum*

*Program Title: "Organic Monoprints"*

*Date and Time of Program: Thursday, February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2013, 12:00 PM to 2:00 PM*

*Date and Time of Study: Thursday, February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2013, 12:00 PM to 1:30 PM*

*Target Audience: Parents/guardians of attending home school students*

*Total Number of Students in Attendance: 27*

*Total Number of Parents/Guardians: 11*

*Total Number of Parents/Guardians Who Participated in Study: 10*

The Montclair Art Museum in Montclair, New Jersey, offers a monthly program for home schooled students. The monthly program is divided into two separate workshops for children ages 4-8 and children ages 9-12. Each month, the program revolves around a different artistic theme, one that corresponds either to a part of the museum's permanent collection or to a current exhibition on display. The program is two hours in duration and combines a one-hour

gallery tour and lecture, conducted by a museum educator, and a one-hour hands-on art project, overseen by an art educator.

The program used for this study was “Organic Monoprints,” which focused on the different methods of making art prints. According to the MAM website, the program was designed exclusively for children 4-8 years old; however, the students in attendance spanned from toddlers to teenagers.<sup>140</sup> During the program, the students, guided by a museum educator, explored the temporary exhibition “The New Spirit: American Art in the Armory Show, 1913” and discussed the various methods of creating prints. The educator also discussed aspects of American history and introduced several American artists to enrich her explanation of printing and monoprints. Following the gallery tour, the students organized in a large studio space and participated in a hands-on art project, during which they each created their own prints using paint, paint rollers, and transparent papers.

### *Case Three: Maculloch Hall Historical Museum*

*Program Title:* “Walking Through the Secret Garden”

*Date and Time of Program:* Tuesday, February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2013, 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM

*Date and Time of Study:* Tuesday, February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2013, 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM

*Target Audience:* Parents/guardians of attending home school students

*Total Number of Students in Attendance:* 11

*Total Number of Parents/Guardians:* 6

*Total Number of Parents/Guardians Who Participated in Study:* 6

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<sup>140</sup> “Family Fun at MAM,” Montclair Art Museum, accessed January 30, 2013, <http://montclairartmuseum.org/learn-family.php>

The Maculloch Hall Historical Museum of Morristown, New Jersey, has recently begun offering educational programs for home schoolers. The programs are in the form of series and explore one general theme over the course of a season in several two hour programs. Each program is conducted by a museum educator and involves lessons, discussions, tours of the historic home and adjacent gardens, and hands-on activities related to the theme of the series. This home school series, while suggested for students between the ages of 7 to 13 years old, does not have any specific age limitations or restrictions. Individual programs are thus not broken into smaller age groups, like the home school programs at Liberty Science Center and Montclair Art Museum.

The theme of the home school series used for this study was “Walking Through the Secret Garden.” The series of four two-hour programs focused on the book *The Secret Garden* and the main character’s journey from India to England. The program also connected this book to George Maculloch (for whom the museum is named) and his move from India to Scotland as a child. Each program covers a section of the book and the lessons and activities of that specific program correspond to the plot of the novel. The specific program used for this study explored Chapters 1-6 of *The Secret Garden*. During this program, the educator discussed the first six chapters of the novel with the students and their parents/guardians, asked questions and initiated dialogue amongst the students. Following the discussion, students participated in various art activities and the program concluded with a brief introduction to George Maculloch and a tour of the historical museum, facilities and garden.<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> “Spring 2013 Homeschool Series: Walking Through the Secret Garden,” Maculloch Hall Historical Museum, accessed January 30, 2013, <http://www.macullochhall.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Spring-2013-MHHM-Homeschool-Series-Walking-Through-the-Secret-Garden.pdf>.

## *Summary of Findings*

### **Museum Visitation**

The responses collected from the distributed questionnaire indicated that New Jersey home educators are routine museum visitors. When asked the question “How many times a year do you visit a museum with your child or children?,” the majority of answers reflected a frequency in museum visitation, with thirteen out of twenty-one respondents indicating that they visited museums over ten times a year, six respondents visiting five to ten times a year, and only two respondents indicating that they visited museums one to three times a year.

With regard to the specific programs studied, there was a blend of first-time visitors and regular attendees. Two of the five respondents at Liberty Science Center were previous attendees of the museum’s home school programs. All ten respondents at the Montclair Art Museum had previously attended Home School Day. Four out of six respondents at the Maculloch Hall Historical Museum had previously attended the institution’s home school programs. In total, sixteen respondents were previous home school program attendees and five respondents were first-time visitors at these specific programs.

These first-timers cited specific reasons for why they chose to attend the program. Two out of three first time attendees at the Liberty Science Center cited content as a major factor, with one writing that their “child was interested in this” and the other writing “the topics forensics and CSI” as the deciding factor for attending. The third respondent indicated that she was relatively new to home schooling and was exploring her options with museum education programs.

Similar to the responses of the home educators at the Liberty Science Center were those at the Maculloch Hall Historical Museum. Two out of six respondents indicated that this was their first visit to the museum for a home school program and, like the respondents at the Liberty

Science Center, primarily cited content as their reason for attending, with one stating that her “daughter loves...The Secret Garden” and the other stating that her “kids were interested.”

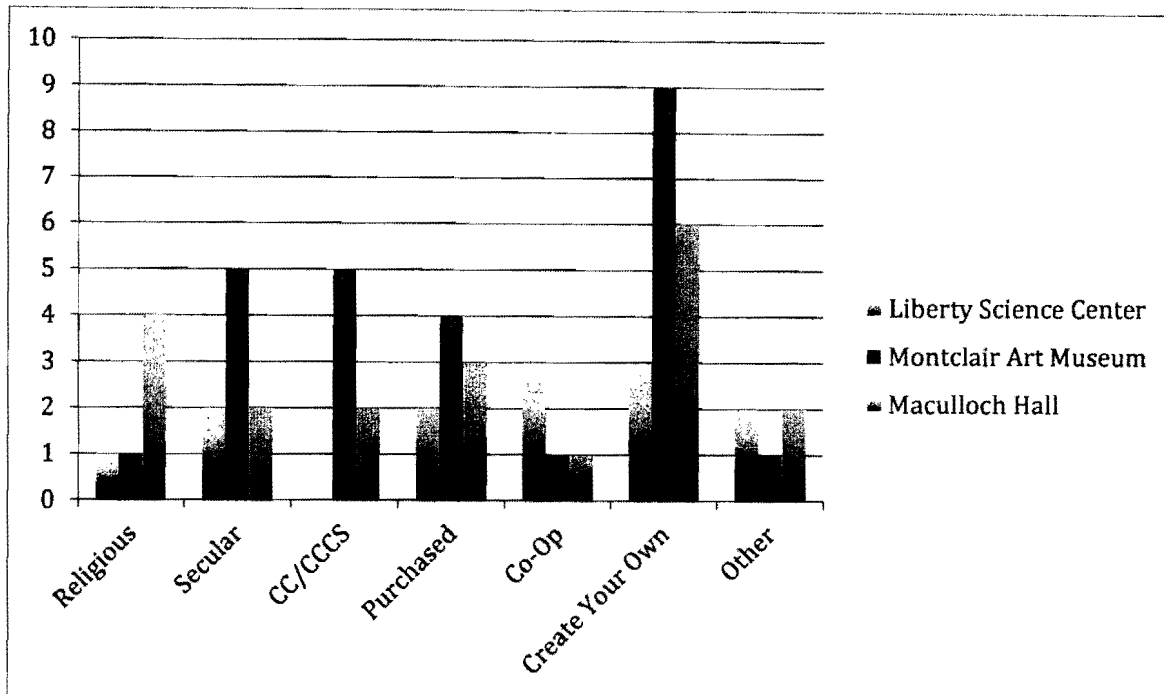
The Montclair Art Museum was the sole museum in which all respondents were repeat visitors. The home educators in this case were not just prior visitors to the monthly Home School Day program – the majority of them had a long history of attending the program. One respondent indicated that she had attended Home School Day for “3 years,” another attending “monthly, over 12 [programs] over the source of 4 [years],” another attending “monthly for 6 years” and yet another attending “most of homeschool [sic] days.”

### **Curricular Choices**

The next series of questions posed in the questionnaire related to home school curriculums and asked respondents what type of curriculum they followed and how they felt museum education programs reflected their curricular needs. Regarding the question on the type of curriculum respondents followed, the questionnaire offered a variety of answer choices (including a write-in section) and allowed respondents to choose more than one answer. The curriculum options offered in the questionnaire were religious, secular, based on Common Core/Core Curriculum Content Standards, purchased, co-operative, create your own, other (opportunity for a write-in) and “do not wish to answer.” The choices of respondents varied both by home educator and museum, but the majority of the respondents selected more than one choice to describe their curriculums. The following chart displays the frequency of answer choices, broken down by museum.



### Curricular Choices of Respondents by Museum



This chart illustrates that the most popular curriculum of these home educators was a “Create Your Own” curriculum, with eighteen out of twenty-one respondents selecting this choice. Behind the option of creating one’s own curriculum, the most common curricular choices for respondents were secular and purchased, both selected by nine out of twenty-one respondents. Seven respondents adhered to Common Core and Core Curriculum Content Standards and six respondents employed a religious or co-operative curriculum. Five respondents indicated another option, with two out of five citing that they chose an “eclectic” curriculum, likely suggesting that these educators chose a number of different curricular options to suit their children’s specific educational needs. Breaking down these curricular choices by museum indicated that the largest number of religious home educators chose to visit the home school program at the Maculloch Hall Historical Museum. Other than the majority of religious home educators at the Maculloch Hall’s home school program, there are no major trends associated

with these specific museums. Respondents from all three museums typically chose a combination of curricular choices that likely best fit their family's individual and specific needs and desires. The variance of curricular choices shows that there is not one particular group of home educators who visit museums for home school programs; in this case study, a wide variety of home educators, with different educational and curricular preferences, were all regular museum visitors.

### **Museums and Curricular Needs**

The second question posed on the subject of curriculum connected it to the value of museum education programs. The specific question posed was, "How do museum education programs like this one reflect your curricular needs?" There was a variance of answers to this question, with all of the respondents confirming that museum education programs reflect their diverse curricular needs in a number of ways. While each answer was unique to the respondent, there were visible trends amongst the answers as a whole. The majority of respondents mentioned the enrichment opportunities these programs offered, by introducing new subjects, expanding upon subjects that were already being covered, and offering unique experiential and hands-on activities. Respondents mentioned museum education programs that "offer a new perspective...through a hands-on art experience," "provide experience[s] that could not be obtained elsewhere," "enhance learning from home...[and] act as a springboard [to] explore [currently covered topics] more intensely," and "allow...children to explore a wide breadth of information on multiple topics they might not otherwise be exposed to."

The respondents at the Liberty Science Center specifically mentioned the importance of the lab experience in the fulfillment of their curricular needs. Three respondents mentioned the

program's unique experiential nature and two mentioned the unique curricular opportunity that the museum provided for "science education in a group setting with lab work or other types of hands-on activities." The two respondents who mentioned the importance of a hands-on lab experience in their curriculum cited the difficulty of providing hands-on experiences at home.

Other responses to this question were less common than those discussing curriculum enrichment and experiential learning opportunities. Three respondents, all from the Montclair Art Museum, mentioned the museum's setting which helps instill art appreciation in students, both assisting in children's abilities to "foster an opinion of art" and allowing them to "participate in art instead of just being observers," as two home educators wrote. Two respondents from the Montclair Art Museum also mentioned that the programs offer new perspectives to students and, according to one respondent, "broaden their horizons." Several respondents mentioned the opportunity that museums presented for socialization. Two respondents mentioned the benefit of having another teacher, with one explicitly stating, "I don't want my child to only learn from me." One respondent stated that museums offer "cross-curricular connections" and another stated the value of museum education programs in fulfilling state standards.

From these answers, it is apparent that these New Jersey home educators believe that museum education programs help meet curricular needs in a number of ways. These respondents, on the whole, were less concerned with regulatory issues like meeting state standards and more concerned with incorporating deeper exploration of subjects, new topics, and unique experiential learning endeavors into their curriculums.

### Why Museums Matter

In the next part of the questionnaire, respondents were asked, “Do you feel that museum visits are an important part of your child’s education? Please explain.” Of the twenty respondents who answered this question, all but one responded in the affirmative and offered thoughtful and diverse responses. Like the previous question, the majority of respondents mentioned the value of the introduction and reinforcement of subjects and the experiential hands-on component that museum education programs provide. Several respondents mentioned how museums can make subjects more relevant to children, one stating that museums “make the material real for [the students].” Other answers included references to the expansion of children’s visions and the capacity of museum programs to give children something that would not be available at home, whether it be a new teacher, hands-on experience, or face-to-face encounter with art, history, and science. Other notable responses included:

- “Yes. The use of museums sets the kids up for lifetime learning.”
- “Kids need to be surrounded by beauty,”
- “Yes...Homeschooling [sic] is about developing a love of learning – and learning everywhere. [sic] So visits to museums...are great.”
- “Yes. Absolutely! Museums are a wonderful way to learn about history as a living experience.”
- “Absolutely for cultural, scientific, historical, and artistic experience that is also visual, tactile and exploratory.”

Respondents from the Montclair Art Museum tended to mention a specific educational subject in their answers to this question more so than the respondents from the other two museums. Four out of the eight of the Montclair Art Museum home educators that answered this

question explicitly mentioned art education and/or art appreciation in their responses. This was likely due to two factors: the fact that the Montclair Art Museum is an art museum and the fact that all of these respondents were prior/regular visitors of the museum's home school program, which focuses on a different arts-related subject each month. One respondent affirmed the importance of museums in their child's education by stating, "art education and seeing art 'for real' adds to becoming a cultured adult." Another respondent shared this opinion that "an understanding and appreciation of art and music is important for all students." Though the answers to this question were similar to those before it, these are less concerned about the details of an at-home curriculum and more concerned with the long-term learning goals these home educators hope to achieve with their children.

### **Museum-Based Learning Opportunities**

When asked, "What learning opportunities do museums offer to your child's education that you could not find elsewhere?" the answers received, like those before, were diverse yet showed certain trends. Many of the respondents in all three case studies mentioned both the unique opportunities for enrichment and deeper understanding of certain topics and the emphasis on experiential and hands-on learning. One respondent expanded on the concept of experiential learning by stating that "museums offer more opportunity to use all senses instead of just seeing art in a book."

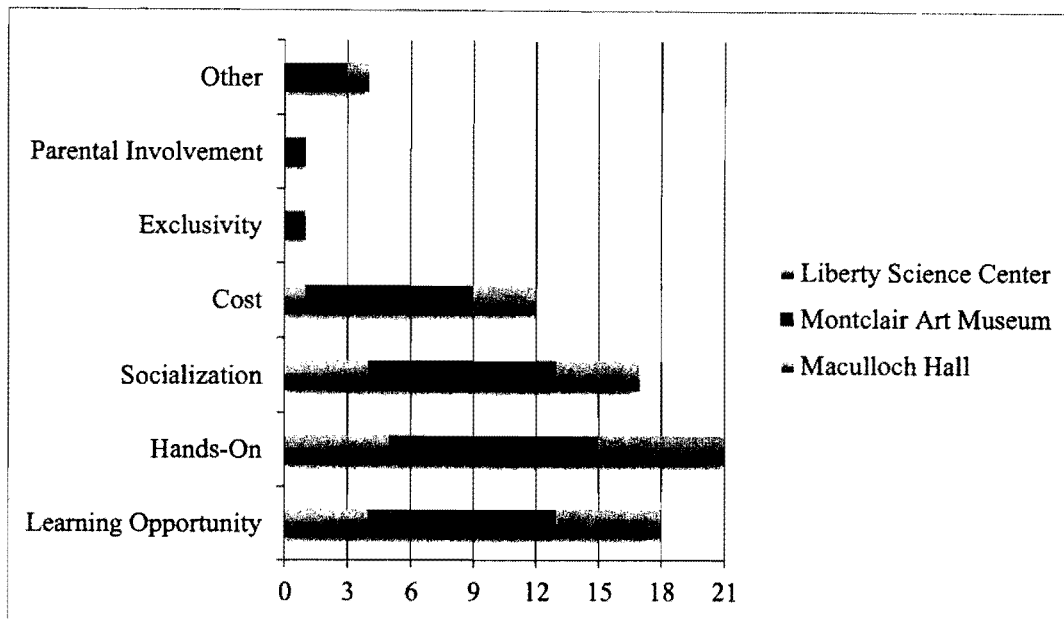
Respondents from all three museums programs mentioned the opportunity to experience and engage with actual works of art, historical documents/artifacts, and scientific methods and practices as one of the unique learning experiences offered by museums. One respondent at the Montclair Art Museum expanded on this notion by adding that museums offer her children

“exposure to multiple art methods, historical experiences or graphic representations of scientific concepts.” One respondent at the Liberty Science Center emphasized the importance of the actual lab experience in her child’s education. Several responses were less common but effectively conveyed the uniqueness of museum educational programming. These responses touched the opportunity that the museums provided for “self-initiated thought [and] expression,” “an understanding of the process, not just an understanding of the finished product” and access to a “collection of stimulating materials that lead to other interests or avenues of study.” These answers reflect the goals of museum education programs to provide self-directed learning experiences, explain art, history, and science processes through engaging and multi-format programs, and offer opportunities for cross-curricular connections and integrated learning.

### **Motivations for Museum Visitation**

The last question posed on the questionnaire addressed the motivational factors that drove home educators to attend museum education programs, offering seven possible motivators and allowing respondents to select as many as they felt were applicable. The seven choices provided were: specific learning opportunity, exclusivity of program, socialization aspect, hands-on component, cost, opportunity for parental involvement, and other (where respondents had the opportunity to write in additional factors). All of the respondents chose more than one factor for attending these programs. To view all participant responses from each museum, refer to Figures 1, 2, and 3 in the Appendix.

### Motivational Factors of Respondents: Totals



When analyzing the total responses of all participants, seen in the above chart, the most common motivational factor was a hands-on component. This choice was selected by 100% of respondents. The two other motivational factors that were most important across all three museums were a specific learning opportunity and the socialization aspect provided by the program. Eighteen out of twenty-one respondents (86%) selected a specific learning opportunity as a motivational factor. Following closely behind this motivational factor was the opportunity for socialization, which served as a motivator for seventeen out of twenty-one respondents (81%). Cost, which was selected by twelve respondents in total (57%), was a much more common answer at both the Montclair Art Museum and the Maculloch Hall Historical Museum than it was at the Liberty Science Center, where it was only chosen as a factor by one out of five respondents. This can likely be attributed to the cost of each specific program. The home school programs at both the Montclair Art Museum and the Maculloch Hall Historical Museum are

reasonably inexpensive, the former costing \$18 for non-members and \$6 for members<sup>142</sup> and the latter costing \$8 per session.<sup>143</sup> The program offered at Liberty Science Center is significantly more expensive, costing \$40 for non-members, \$35 for members and \$6.75 per chaperone.<sup>144</sup>

### *Conclusion and Implications for Future Study*

Museum education programs offer valuable and unique learning opportunities for home schooled children, opportunities that assist in fulfilling home educators' curricular and educational needs and desires. This conclusion is supported by the resulting data from the questionnaire employed in this case study of three New Jersey museums. Museum education programs are valued by New Jersey home educators for a number of reasons, including enrichment and experiential learning opportunities, the introduction of new or difficult topics, group learning and socialization, and opportunities to engage with actual works of art, historical artifacts, and scientific practices. The results of the questionnaire also indicated that museum education programs are not only valuable to one type of home educator, but to a wide variance of home educators who employ a number of different curriculums in their teachings, including religious, secular, purchased, co-operative, those based on the Common Core and Core Curriculum Content Standards, and those created by the educators themselves.

This case study supports the importance of museum education programs in a home school curriculum and encourages future study on the subject. As the home schooling population in the United States has been continuously increasing in recent years, museums have the opportunity to flourish through their offerings of home school education programs. The presence of home schoolers in museums is becoming a national and noteworthy topic and more and more museums

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<sup>142</sup> "Family Fun at MAM."

<sup>143</sup> "Spring 2013 Homeschool Series: Walking Through the Secret Garden."

<sup>144</sup> "Home School Programs."



are incorporating home school programs in their regular educational programming. However, there is still a significant lack of research on the subject of home schoolers in museums. In the future, it is pertinent to take a two-pronged approach to the study of this subject. Future researchers should further study the demographics of home schoolers' museum visitation, in an attempt to see if there are visitation trends for regions and locations, certain types of museums, subjects and themes of programs, and backgrounds and lifestyles of home educators. It is equally important for future research to further assess the educational and curricular needs of the home educators who attend these museum programs. Studies should seek to learn more about the specific characteristics, motivations, desires and needs of home educators, in order for museums to be more effectively in providing for this unique, important, and significant audience.

Over the years, home schooling has faced stigmatization due to mass misconceptions and stereotypes, yet has prevailed as an institution, now accepted as a valid form of education and practiced by upwards of 1.5 million people in the United States.<sup>145</sup> As the home schooling population continues to grow, home educators are increasingly seeking unique and innovative educational experiences to supplement their at-home curriculums. This paper has addressed one of the major venues that home schooling parents employ to enhance their children's education: the museum. Museums offer a truly unique learning experience for home schoolers, with specially designed programs that address many of the needs of home educators, including the desires for introduction to new subjects, enrichment of current materials, cross-curricular connections, hands-on and experiential learning opportunities, interaction with content specialists, engagement with works of art and historical artifacts, and opportunities for socialization with peers and like-minded families. In recent years, the number of home school programs in museums has increased dramatically, as the home schooling population has grown

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<sup>145</sup> "Issue Brief: 1.5 Million Homeschooled Students in the United States in 2007,"

and museums have acknowledged the potential value of this unique audience. Through studying the history and contemporary issues of home schooling in America, the importance of the integrated curriculum for both home and museum educators, and the beliefs and opinions of home educators on the value of museums, it can be concluded that museums are an invaluable component of a contemporary home school curriculum.

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Appendix A

Motivational Factors of Respondents by Museum

Figure 1:

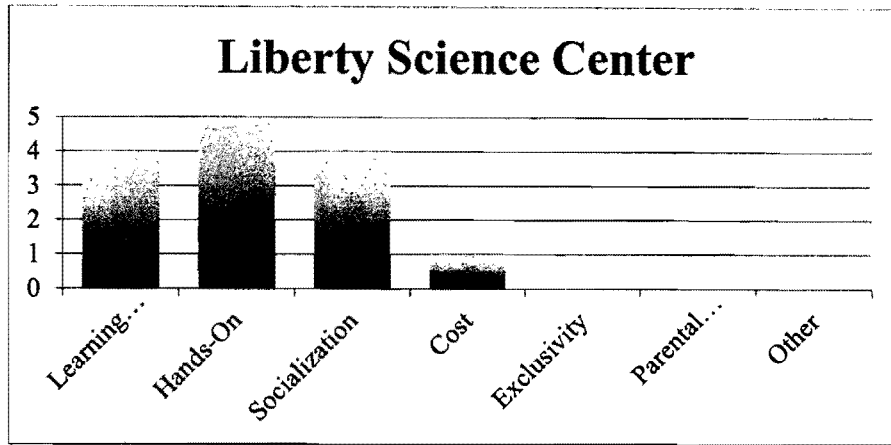


Figure 2:

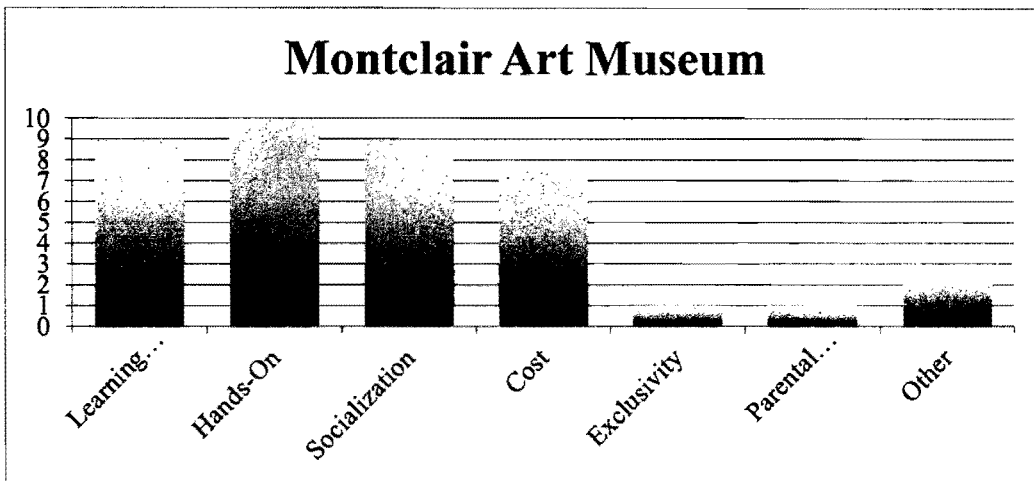
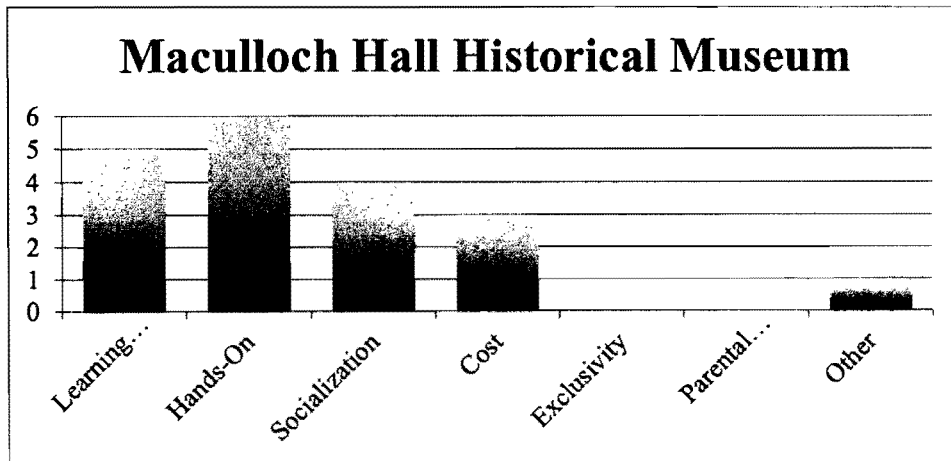


Figure 3:





## HOME SCHOOL PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE

*Purpose of Study:* I am a graduate student in the Museum Professions program at Seton Hall University and am writing my Master's Thesis on the place of museums in a New Jersey homeschooler's education. I am conducting this questionnaire in order to both gain a better perspective on how home educators view museum programs as components of their children's curriculum and to assess the value and importance of such programs.

1. **Is this your first time visiting the Liberty Science Center for a Home School Program? Please circle the appropriate answer.**

R1: N  
 R2: N  
 R3: Y  
 R4: Y  
 R5: Y

2. **If you answered "yes," what made you decide to attend this program? If you answered "no," how many Home School Programs have you attended at the Liberty Science Center?**

R1: DNA  
 R2: DNA  
 R3: Child was interested in this and the schedule worked.  
 R4: The topic forensics and CSI.  
 R5: We just started homeschooling a month back and were happy to find this class and others at other museums. We just started and this is our first month and we have 3 activities.

3. **How many times a year do you visit a museum with your child or children? Circle the best choice.**

R1: >10  
 R2: >10  
 R3: 5-7  
 R4: >10  
 R5: 5-7

4. **What type of curriculum do you follow at home? Circle all that apply.**

R1: Secular, Purchased, Co-op, Create your own, other: "a bit of each"  
 R2: Co-op, Create your own, other: "We participate in two co-ops, then we follow a curriculum that I create. We supplement with classes and tutoring."  
 R3: Religious, Purchased  
 R4: Secular  
 R5: Co-op, Create your own

5. **How do museum education programs like this one reflect your curricular needs?**

R1: The children have access to educational activities and programs they never would in a public or private school.  
 R2: Science education in a group setting with lab work or other types of hands-on activities that exceed my ability to recreate at home.  
 R3: Often they introduce a different topic that we're not covering.  
 R4: Museum programs are much more experiential than most other curriculum.  
 R5: They help to enrich it since I can't create a lot at home so I love this.



**6. Do you feel that museum visits are an important part of your child's education? Please explain.**

R1: Of course! Many times we visit a museum after we've studied that area. It brings the material alive [sic] and relevant.

R2: Absolutely for cultural, scientific, historical, and artistic experience that is also visual, tactile and exploratory.

R3: Yes. It exposes them to a variety of things and experiences.

R4: Yes. We find museums to be more important than most other activities.

R5: Yes, we always have included museums even before homeschooling.

**7. What learning opportunities do museums offer to your child's education that you could not find elsewhere?**

R1: Special programs like the Liberty Science Center give the children a real lab experience, not just uninspiring pages of a textbook.

R2: Collection of stimulating materials that lead to other interests or avenues of study.

R3: Hands on learning, historical documents.

R4: Hands-on time with experts or those passionate about a topic.

R5: Giving access to information and study that would otherwise be impossible.

**8. Please circle the motivational factors that led you to attend this program with your child. Circle all that apply.**

R1: Specific learning opportunity, Hands-on component, Socialization

R2: Specific learning opportunity, Hands-on component, Socialization

R3: Specific learning opportunity, Hands-on component, Socialization

R4: Specific learning opportunity, Hands-on component, cost

R5: Hands-on component, Socialization



## Montclair Art Museum

### HOME SCHOOL PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE

*Purpose of Study:* I am a graduate student in the Museum Professions program at Seton Hall University and am writing my Master's Thesis on the place of museums in a New Jersey homeschooler's education. I am conducting this questionnaire in order to both gain a better perspective on how home educators view museum programs as components of their children's curriculum and to assess the value and importance of such programs.

1. Is this your first time visiting the Montclair Art Museum for a Home School Program? Please circle the appropriate answer.

R1: N  
 R2: N  
 R3: N  
 R4: N  
 R5: N  
 R6: N  
 R7: N  
 R8: N  
 R9: N  
 R10: N

2. If you answered "yes," what made you decide to attend this program? If you answered "no," how many Home School Programs have you attended at the Montclair Art Museum?

R1: DNA  
 R2: 3 years  
 R3: DNA  
 R4: DNA  
 R5: "Many, over 12, over the course of 4 yrs [sic]"  
 R6: 6  
 R7: "5-6 years of going once a month"  
 R8: Monthly for 6 years  
 R9: Most of homeschool days, ceramics homeschool class  
 R10: DNA

3. How many times a year do you visit a museum with your child or children? Circle the best choice.

R1: 5-7  
 R2: >10  
 R3: >10  
 R4: 7-10  
 R5: >10  
 R6: >10  
 R7: >10  
 R8: 5-7  
 R9: >10  
 R10: >10

**4. What type of curriculum do you follow at home? Circle all that apply.**

- R1: Secular, Based on CC/CCCS, Purchased (Written in: Math), Create your own (Written in: Eclectic)
- R2: Secular, Create your own
- R3: Secular, Based on CC/CCCS, Other: "started online high school this year"
- R4: Based on CC/CCCS, Create your own
- R5: Create your own
- R6: Based on CC/CCCS, Purchased, Co-op, Create your own
- R7: Purchased, Create your own
- R8: Secular, Create your own
- R9: Create your own
- R10: Religious, Secular, Based on CC/CCCS, Purchased, Create your own

**5. How do museum education programs like this one reflect your curricular needs?**

- R1: Aids in fostering an opinion of art, an appreciation of expression
- R2: They offer a perspective on diversity and creativity through a hands-on art experience that I cannot offer at home.
- R3: This program is very helpful. Not only does it help meet the state standards, the students love it.
- R4: We use museum ed. Programs for enrichment.
- R5: Inspirational regarding technique, possibility, meeting other children who have similar creative impulses
- R6: It allows my children to explore a wide breadth of information on multiple topics they might not otherwise be exposed to.
- R7: They add a different perspective to the child's life to broaden their horizons. I don't want my child to only learn from me.
- R8: Cross-curricular connections
- R9: It is a connection between the art we look at and admire and hands on creation of our own art. This way we participate in art instead of just being observers.
- R10: Often the programs provide experience that could not be obtained elsewhere. Each program can be a mini field trip in addition to the actual workshop.

**6. Do you feel that museum visits are an important part of your child's education? Please explain.**

- R1: Yes, art education and seeing art "for real" adds to becoming a cultured adult.
- R2: Yes. Absolutely! Museums are a wonderful way to learn about history as a living experience.
- R3: Yes. I believe an understanding and appreciation of art and music is important for all students.
- R4: DNA
- R5: Yes, viewing work by other working artists expands my children's visions of what is possible.
- R6: See above.
- R7: Yes. The use of museums sets the kids up for lifetime learning. Their habit of going to museums will follow them into adulthood.
- R8: Yes, to make the material real for them
- R9: Kids need to be surrounded by beauty. Also, they need to see the variety of the ways to express themselves.
- R10: YES (sic). We use museum and historical society programs to enhance our science, art, history and humanities curriculum.

**7. What learning opportunities do museums offer to your child's education that you could not find elsewhere?**

R1: Self-initiated thought, expression

R2: The opportunity to have an experiential process through the arts and observing ancient artifacts.

R3: A broad understanding. Museums offer more opportunity to use all senses instead of just seeing art in a book. People who work in the museum generally have a love of art that can be contagious for hesitant students.

R4: Through the museum, children are able to learn about art, history, culture.

R5: Pottery and sculpture sessions, in particular.

R6: Exposure to multiple art methods, historical experiences or graphic representations of scientific concepts.

R7: Looking at original art and discussing it, looking at artifacts from the past.

R8: Hands on, visual, local connections or materials otherwise not attainable

R9: Exposure to fine art, originals

R10: At MAM, an understanding of the process not just an understanding of the finished product.

**8. Please circle the motivational factors that led you to attend this program with your child. Circle all that apply.**

R1: Specific learning opportunity, hands-on component, socialization

R2: Specific learning opportunity, hands-on component, socialization, exclusivity of program, cost

R3: hands-on component, socialization, cost

R4: Specific learning opportunity, hands-on component, socialization

R5: Specific learning opportunity, hands-on component, socialization, cost, other: "collective expression in a focused way"

R6: Specific learning opportunity, hands-on component, socialization, cost, opportunity for parental involvement, other: "my sons have a particular interest in art."

R7: Specific learning opportunity, hands-on component, socialization, cost

R8: Specific learning opportunity, hands-on component, socialization, cost

R9: Specific learning opportunity, hands-on component, cost, other: "wonderful teacher Mrs. Peggy"

R10: Specific learning opportunity, hands-on component, socialization, cost



## **Macculloch Hall Historical Museum HOME SCHOOL PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE**

*Purpose of Study:* I am a graduate student in the Museum Professions program at Seton Hall University and am writing my Master's Thesis on the place of museums in a New Jersey homeschooler's education. I am conducting this questionnaire in order to both gain a better perspective on how home educators view museum programs as components of their children's curriculum and to assess the value and importance of such programs.

**1. Is this your first time visiting the Macculloch Hall Historical Museum for a Home School Program?**

Please circle the appropriate answer.

R1: N

R2: N

R3: Y

R4: N

R5: Y

R6: N

**2. If you answered "yes," what made you decide to attend this program? If you answered "no," how many Home School Programs have you attended at the Macculloch Hall Historical Museum?**

R1: This is the third one.

R2: DNA

R3: My daughter loves the book discussed – The Secret Garden.

R4: 1 prior to this.

R5: A friend told us about it and kids were interested.

R6: DNA

**3. How many times a year do you visit a museum with your child or children? Circle the best choice.**

R1: 7-10

R2: >10

R3: >10

R4: 1-3

R5: 1-3

R6: >10

**4. What type of curriculum do you follow at home? Circle all that apply.**

R1: Religious, Based on CC/CCCS, Create your own, Other "Eclectic"

R2: Religious, Secular, Purchased, Create your own

R3: Secular, Based on CC/CCCS, Create your own

R4: Religious, Purchased, Cooperative, Create your own

R5: Create your own, Other "Waldorf"

R6: Religious, Purchased, Co-op, Create your own

**5. How do museum education programs like this one reflect your curricular needs?**

R1: Socialization opportunities, more detailed instruction about specific topics, experiencing a different teacher

R2: They provide a group experience and enhance learning from home. Also museum programs act as a springboard for topics we explore more intensely – i.e. Civil War, art, etc.

R3: Reinforce skills learned at home. Sometimes, classes at museums are/provide the curriculum.

R4: It brings to light the local facilities available for education.

R5: Brought more depth to a book we know and like

R6: They add to and supplement what we do at home – and add some “hands on”

**6. Do you feel that museum visits are an important part of your child’s education? Please explain.**

R1: Yes – love the visits. Homeschooling is about developing a love of learning – and learning everywhere [sic]. So visits to museums, etc. are great.

R2: Yes. Museums increase interest in topics and provide real world, hands-on learning.

R3: Yes. We love the ability to reinforce studies, particularly if there are hands-on opportunities.

R4: Yes. They offer a hands-on, visual approach to learning that children like.

R5: Only if they represent/reinforce something the kids are interested in and want to see otherwise they tend to be overwhelming.

R6: Yes, they are able to provide some education that I may not be able to provide at home.

**7. What learning opportunities do museums offer to your child’s education that you could not find elsewhere?**

R1: Very detailed exhibits/material from other time periods/cultures

R2: Exposure to art, historical artifacts, relation to language arts

R3: Seeing/touching history, science, etc. Group interaction not found at home.

R4: DNA

R5: Being able to see artwork, artifacts.

R6: An opportunity to “engage” with an instructor and groups of children.

**8. Please circle the motivational factors that led you to attend this program with your child. Circle all that apply.**

R1: Specific learning opportunity, Hands-on component, Socialization aspect

R2: Specific learning opportunity, Hands-on component, Cost

R3: Specific learning opportunity, Hands-on component, Socialization aspect

R4: Hands-on component, Socialization aspect, Other “the fact that it is local for us”

R5: Specific learning opportunity, Hands-on component, Socialization aspect, Cost

R6: Specific learning opportunity, Hands-on component, Cost