



Museum Visitor Studies, Evaluation & Audience Research

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Audience Research

Telephone Interviews with Visitors

Prepared for the
Lower East Side Tenement Museum

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	ii
Summary of Principal Findings.....	ii
Discussion of Principal Findings.....	ii
Recommendations	ix
Reference.....	ix
INTRODUCTION.....	i
Methodology.....	1
Data Analysis and Reporting Method.....	2
PRINCIPAL FINDINGS	3
Visitor Characteristics	3
Visitor Motivations and Expectations	5
Overall Visitor Experience	7
Tour Experiences.....	11
Kitchen Conversation	16
Children’s Visit Experiences	18
The Museum’s Educational Approach.....	19
Post-Museum Visit Behavior	24
APPENDICES.....	26

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the findings of audience research conducted by Randi Korn & Associates, Inc. (RK&A), for the Lower East Side Tenement Museum. The evaluation identifies and examines the successes and shortcomings of the Museum's three major public tours—*Confino Living History*, *Getting By*, and *Piecing It Together*—as well as the facilitated *Kitchen Conversation* program that follows some tours. This summary provides a sketch of tour/program participants and their experiences. Please review the body of the report for more thorough coverage of the topics introduced here.

**Selected highlights of the study are included in this summary.
Please consult the body of the report for a detailed account of the findings.**

SUMMARY OF PRINCIPAL FINDINGS

RK&A conducted telephone interviews in May 2007 with 44 people who visited the Lower East Side Tenement Museum in April 2007 and completed a screener form following their tour/program participation. Among 44 interviewees, 11 each primarily represented one of the following four visit experiences: *Confino Living History* tour, *Getting By* tour, *Piecing It Together* tour, and *Kitchen Conversation* post-tour program.

RK&A selected the methodology of open-ended interviews to produce data rich in information. Open-ended interviews encourage and motivate visitors to describe their experiences, express their opinions and feelings, and share with the interviewer the meaning they constructed from an experience.

Trends and themes in the interview data are presented from most- to least-frequently occurring.

VISITOR CHARACTERISTICS

- ◆ Female interviewees (75 percent) outnumbered male interviewees (25 percent). Their median age was 47 years.
- ◆ Most interviewees (93 percent) were first-time visitors to the Museum. Slightly more than one-half (52 percent) had visited in a group of adults and children (under age 18), whereas more than one-third (39 percent) visited in a group of adults only. The remaining interviewees visited alone (9 percent).
- ◆ Most interviewees (91 percent) identified themselves as current United States residents, representing a total of 14 states, including six interviewees (14 percent) who currently reside in New York City (NYC). The remaining interviewees (9 percent) currently reside in Canada.

VISITOR MOTIVATIONS AND EXPECTATIONS

MOTIVATIONS

- ◆ Most interviewees learned of the Museum by word-of-mouth; for example, a friend visited and recommended the Museum to them.

- ◆ Regardless of where they reside, most interviewees said they felt a personal or familial connection to the Museum’s immigration history; for example, one interviewee’s grandparents lived on the Lower East Side in the early 1900’s.
- ◆ The majority of *Confino Living History* participants, along with several interviewees from other tours, said they visited the Museum because they thought it would interest their children and/or to educate their children about family history or United States history.

EXPECTATIONS

- ◆ Most interviewees indicated they generally expected an interesting experience based on positive recommendations but had no specific prior knowledge of the Museum. In contrast, about one-half of *Confino Living History* participants said they researched the tour prior to visiting and expected an interactive, child-friendly experience.

OVERALL VISITOR EXPERIENCE

- ◆ When asked to describe the Museum as if they were talking to a friend who has never visited or heard of the Museum, interviewees routinely noted that they had, in fact, done exactly that in everyday conversation since visiting. Most described specific aspects of their visit, often in great detail, including the appearance of the building, the immersive and personal nature of the tour, and stories and information about “real people” they learned about during the tour.

MISSION

- ◆ Most interviewees described the Museum’s mission in terms of sharing knowledge of or educating people about various aspects of past immigrant life, including family, work ethic, daily life, community, tradition, and diversity, in the United States, New York City, or the Lower East Side.
- ◆ About one-half also said the Museum’s mission revolved around connecting contemporary and historical immigrant perspectives. However, *Confino Living History* participants did not make this connection, instead saying that the historical immigrant perspective alone was the Museum’s mission.

PRE-TOUR EXPERIENCES

- ◆ Many interviewees also addressed aspects of the pre-tour experience, primarily the Museum’s store but also wayfinding (i.e., locating the Museum) and selecting a tour/program upon arrival.
- ◆ Regarding tour selection, all *Kitchen Conversation* participants said they were not familiar with a post-tour group discussion. About one-half suggested providing visitors with more advance notice and/or a “more accurate” or detailed program description to help inform their decision to participate and/or to prepare them for participation.

TOUR EXPERIENCES

OVERALL

- ◆ Nearly all interviewees said their tour experiences met or exceeded their expectations, with many linking their satisfaction level to their connection to the content. Overall, visitors were most satisfied with the tours’ experiential nature and the direct access to past tenement residents via interpretation of their stories and artifacts and/or access to current neighborhood residents as educators.
- ◆ Most also said they enjoyed the authenticity of the objects and information presented during the tours and of the tenement building. Many said they were surprised by the extent of the research the Museum had undertaken to present the individual and family histories of residents.

CONFINO LIVING HISTORY

- ◆ Tour participants overwhelmingly said they most enjoyed interacting with the costumed interpreter playing a “real person” and role-playing. Many also discussed the “hands-on” nature of the tour for children.
- ◆ Interviewees suggested the Museum provide a more engaging introductory activity for younger children (under age 8), more historical context, and more guidance or preparation for interactions with Victoria Confino.

- ◆ Nearly all *Confino Living History* participants discussed the historical immigrant experience as a major theme, including the difficulties of life as a newly arrived immigrant, the willingness of the immigrant community to help newcomers, and the strong work ethic of past immigrants.

GETTING BY

- ◆ Almost every *Getting By* participant said their most memorable tour experience was listening to the audio of a tenement resident reflecting on her childhood.
- ◆ Participants did not suggest any tour improvements but several said the Museum needs to expand its space or at least decrease the maximum number of participants in a tour group.
- ◆ Nearly all *Getting By* participants discussed the historical immigrant experience as a major theme, specifically the difficult lives of past tenement residents and the historical progression of immigration as evidenced during the tour.

PIECING IT TOGETHER

- ◆ More so than other interviewees, *Piecing It Together* participants said they most enjoyed firsthand opportunities to experience the lives of past tenement residents via the objects, artifacts, and interior elements of the building.
- ◆ Participants offered few, if any, suggestions for improving the tour beyond relieving the crowding of visitors inside the tenement.
- ◆ Most described major themes relating to past immigrants' poor living and working conditions, including the lack of distinction between work and home life and/or the poor working conditions of the garment industry.

KITCHEN CONVERSATION

- ◆ The majority of participants responded positively to *Kitchen Conversation*, describing it as a “unique” and “unusual” opportunity. In contrast, a couple others responded negatively, recalling feeling “uncomfortable” during the experience, uncertain about its purpose, and/or “bored” because of uninteresting or lengthy conversations. A couple others expressed mixed emotions, and another could not sufficiently recall the experience.
- ◆ Interviewees who responded positively or with mixed emotions said they appreciated the opportunity to reflect on their tour experiences, to connect history and contemporary issues of immigration, and to interact with other visitors who shared the same tour experience.
- ◆ Interviewees who responded negatively or with mixed emotions to the experience described feeling as if they were part of a “research experiment” (e.g., “being interviewed” or “probed” for emotions) or as if the moderator were following an “agenda,” whether political or rule-based.
- ◆ Further explanations of such negative or mixed responses varied, indicating that participants' perceptions depended on their group composition, the moderators' group facilitation skills, and, to some extent, individual interests/preferences.
- ◆ When asked about major themes during their visit, *Kitchen Conversation* participants provided idiosyncratic responses about immigration, past and/or present, often depending on which tour they participated in.

CHILDREN'S VISIT EXPERIENCES

- ◆ While the majority of interviewees who visited with children participated in *Confino Living History*, others participated in one of the other two tours and a few also participated in *Kitchen Conversation* with children. When asked about their children's responses to the Museum, interviewees discussed a few key aspects of their visit regardless of the tour: the interactive nature of the tours, particularly *Confino Living History*; the stories about “real people;” and the overall authenticity of the experience.

- ◆ Interviewees who visited with children said the Museum is appropriate for children age 8 and older but more enjoyable for children age 10 and older, particularly teenagers.

THE MUSEUM'S EDUCATIONAL APPROACH

STORYTELLING

- ◆ Overwhelmingly, interviewees said storytelling is their favorite strategy for learning information, particularly when they know the stories are about real people.
- ◆ Regardless of the tour they participated in, nearly all interviewees said that education staff successfully shared stories of past tenement residents to enrich and personalize tour experiences. Many recalled specific stories from their tour experiences.

ASKING VISITORS QUESTIONS

- ◆ Interviewees' reactions to this strategy were mixed. The majority said it worked well during their tours—particularly during introductory remarks and at points during the tour to stimulate visitors' thinking and discussion—because educators asked questions to help visitors feel comfortable and learn from each other.
- ◆ On the other hand, some interviewees said they did not recall being asked questions and could not comment on the use of this strategy. Several others said asking questions of visitors did not work well, primarily because tour participants were not comfortable answering questions or less frequently because educators asked fact-based or seemingly “contrived” questions rather than thought-provoking questions or those based on personal experience.

RESPONDING TO VISITORS' QUESTIONS

- ◆ In contrast, nearly all interviewees agreed education staff successfully encouraged and responded to visitors' questions during tours. Repeatedly, interviewees said staff knowledgeable and readily answered most, if not all, visitor questions and readily offered to help visitors find answers to any unanswered questions.

MAKING CONNECTIONS BETWEEN HISTORY AND CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

- ◆ When directly asked, many interviewees who participated in *Getting By* or *Piecing It Together* and/or *Kitchen Conversation* said education staff made connections between history being presented and contemporary issues, albeit to varying degrees.
- ◆ In contrast to other interviewees, those who participated in just *Confino Living History* recalled education staff (i.e., educators, facilitators, and costumed interpreters) making few, if any, connections between history being presented and contemporary issues.

POST-MUSEUM VISIT BEHAVIOR

- ◆ Most interviewees said they have talked about their visit experiences with others, whether immediately afterwards with others in their visit group, particularly children, and/or in the days and weeks since with family, friends, colleagues, and even strangers. Additionally, many said they intend to visit the Museum again themselves.
- ◆ Some interviewees said they have engaged in learning more about immigration history by reading books purchased in the Museum's store or visiting the Museum's Web site or related Web sites. A few said they have revisited family history, while a couple others said their children have voluntarily worked on school projects about immigration.
- ◆ A couple said they have reexamined their own attitudes toward immigration and are now more aware of immigration issues.

DISCUSSION OF PRINCIPAL FINDINGS

The immigrant experience has universal appeal, as evidenced by conversations with visitors to the Lower East Side Tenement Museum. Whether visiting from Canada, Ohio, or Brooklyn, interviewees' personal connections to the subject combined with recommendations from others prompted their participation in the tours. Few, however, anticipated the immersive, “unique” experience awaiting them inside the tenement. Surprised and awed by the authenticity of place and by the stories of “real people” who lived there, tour participants undoubtedly left the Museum with a deeper appreciation for and better understanding of historical immigrant experiences. The challenge facing the Museum is how to fulfill the first part of its mission—to promote tolerance—by building upon its success in providing the second part of the mission—to promote historical perspective.

This discussion begins with an overview of the Museum's current visitor experience from the interviewees' perspective. Next, this discussion highlights four key issues for the Museum to re-examine with regard to facilitating visit experiences, and concludes with recommendations.

EXCEEDING VISITORS' EXPECTATIONS

Without question, the Museum exceeds visitors' expectations, which is particularly noteworthy considering visits are usually driven by recommendations. Visitors expect to have an interesting and meaningful yet traditional museum visit because of the accolades they have heard; what they do not expect is to be immersed in the historical perspective. Repeatedly, visitors expressed surprise and appreciation for the Museum's devotion to authenticity in everything from the preservation of the tenement, to the well-researched and documented stories of 97 Orchard Street's former residents, to the objects and artifacts illustrating their lives. Furthermore, the interactive nature of the tours—touching the balustrade, standing in the apartments, role-playing the part of a newly arrived immigrant, hearing the voice of a past resident describe objects in the room—enthralled them. Quite simply, the Museum is like no other they have visited.

Age, residence, group composition—none of these factors significantly impacted the quality of the visitor experience or their overall satisfaction. All agreed the Museum engaged them and many described intensely meaningful experiences. Regardless of the tour or program they participated in, visitors said they enjoyed the Museum and left with a better understanding of and appreciation for historical immigrant experiences. More than that, some felt like they had lived history.

However, visitors' awareness and understanding of the Museum's dual mission of promoting tolerance and providing historical perspective varied depending on: 1) the prevalence (or lack thereof) of contemporary immigrant experiences during their tour; and, 2) their participation (or lack thereof) in *Kitchen Conversation*. When asked directly about making connections between history and current issues during their tours, visitors who recalled this educational strategy said either a self-identified recent immigrant led their *Getting By* or *Piecing It Together* tour, or an educator repeatedly highlighted the experiences of immigrants on the Lower East Side today, or visitors were among those who participated in *Kitchen Conversation*. Not surprisingly, these visitors were more likely to express awareness and/or understanding beyond the historical perspective when discussing the Museum's mission or major tour themes than were those who only participated in *Confino Living History* or who did not recall educators continually sharing contemporary immigrant perspectives.

KEY ISSUES IN FACILITATING EXPERIENCES

Promoting tolerance is an admirable and ambitious mission for any museum, but perhaps especially for a history museum. Too often, visitors criticize historical houses or history museums for failing to present history as a portal into the realities of modern life. For a Museum to aspire to advance a post-Museum visit behavior by providing a historical experience and offering present-day implications is inspiring. As discussed above, the Museum is successfully providing visitors the historical perspective. The next logical step is to harness the power of this experience and bring visitors back to their everyday lives with an increased awareness and understanding of immigrant experiences today. To pursue this, the Museum may need to reexamine four key aspects of facilitating experiences: explicitly and repeatedly delivering the Museum's mission, acknowledging visitors' existing perceptions, introducing the perspectives of today's immigrants, and accepting the consequences of taking risks.

DELIVERING THE MUSEUM'S MISSION

During all facilitated experiences, the Museum must explicitly and repeatedly provide the rationale (i.e., the Museum's mission) for the tour or program's content and educational strategies. By doing so upfront, the Museum is keying visitors into what to expect from the experience and what is expected of them. But once is not enough: visitors need this rationale reiterated throughout their facilitated experience to help ensure understanding and to prevent any misinterpretation of intent. For example, the few *Kitchen Conversation* participants who did not enjoy the experience expressed feelings of discomfort stemming from unfamiliarity with the program's purpose, delivery format, and duration. Moderators are trained to welcome participants and introduce the program concept; however, they may need to routinely remind visitors of the Museum's purpose and explicitly address their apprehensions about participating in an activity likely outside of their comfort zones.

ACKNOWLEDGING EXISTING PERCEPTIONS

It is important for the Museum and, in turn, education staff (i.e., educators and facilitators) to consider and acknowledge visitors' existing perceptions, particularly regarding immigration in the past and today. No matter how the Museum promotes tolerance in educational programming, visitors will construct meaning from the experience based on their prior understandings of immigration and related topics. Museum researchers have extensively studied how to create meaning through personal contexts. For example, Zahava Doering explains that each visitor has an internal storyline, or "entrance narrative," that differs for each museum visitor. A visitor's entrance narrative may have three components: a basic framework (i.e., fundamental way one construes and contemplates the world); information about a topic, organized according to that basic framework; and, personal experiences, emotions, and memories that verify and support this understanding (Doering, 1999).

Visitors may be more receptive to the Museum's message of tolerance if education staff directly acknowledge existing perceptions about immigration at the start of a tour or program. Likewise, education staff who understand the concept of entrance narrative may be more sensitive to how visitors often interpret the same message or information differently—or do not process it at all. For example, many visitors expressed amazement at the overcrowded living conditions of 97 Orchard Street, expressing appreciation, even reverence, for their ancestors. These same visitors likely listened to an educator's introductory overview describing immigrants living in similar conditions on the Lower East Side today. Yet they may not have recalled this contemporary information during interviews because their personal perspective about today's immigrants is complicated and they are preconditioned to think about immigrants and immigration historically; to make a significant impact on the visitor experience, visitors will need more exposure to contemporary immigrant perspectives.

INTRODUCING THE CONTEMPORARY IMMIGRANT EXPERIENCES

Undeniably, existing perceptions and attitudes are difficult to change. Before visitors can be receptive to a message of tolerance, they must be introduced to contemporary immigrant experiences and perspectives. Without them, using an educational strategy that connects the history presented with contemporary immigrant experiences does not work well for most visitors because the tours focus almost exclusively on the historical immigrant perspective—visitors are surrounded by history once inside the tenement. Contemporary immigrant perspectives need to be personalized, too, to compete with the power of the historical stories and to elicit strong responses from visitors. Visitors are familiar with immigration historically—often personally—before arriving at the Museum. Furthermore, visitors vividly recall historical immigrant experiences because they repeatedly heard about them via individuals’ stories and saw their living spaces and belongings. Likewise, those visitors who recall connections between this history and contemporary immigrant experiences do so because their educators shared stories of their lives as immigrants or pointed out street signs and other evidence of the Lower East Side’s immigrants today. Merely alluding to today’s immigrants during introductory and/or closing remarks is not sufficient for changing existing perceptions, let alone behavior. Education staff will need to weave these contemporary stories into all facilitated experiences to advance the Museum’s mission.

ACCEPTING THE CONSEQUENCES OF RISK-TAKING

Delivering a message of tolerance involves risk-taking, and the Museum must be willing to accept the consequences. Visitors do not expect a history museum to invite discussion of current issues, particularly a potentially volatile topic like immigration. The average visitor’s entrance narrative does not include such expectations for a museum visit, nor will most visitors anticipate being introduced to stories of current immigrants in addition to past immigrants. Some may not appreciate the opportunity to make connections between these two groups because they will see them as mutually exclusive. And that is a risk the Museum must accept if it hopes to promote tolerance so that others, hopefully most visitors, may leave the Museum forever changed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ◆ Re-examine how the Museum presents its mission to visitors. Consider presenting its dual messages—to promote tolerance and provide a historical immigrant perspective—at the start of every facilitated program, reiterating it throughout, and in concluding remarks to better communicate these intentions to all visitors.
- ◆ When training educators (i.e., costumed interpreters and facilitators), incorporate museum research about creating meaning through personal contexts, such as Doering’s concept of “entrance narrative,” to provide insight into the visitor experience.
- ◆ Re-examine the Museum’s strategy for connecting the history presented and contemporary immigrant perspectives in all facilitated experiences. Consider ways to uniformly and routinely present contemporary immigrant experiences; for example, through an audio recording or photographs. This strategy will give all visitors a personal perspective, not just those with certain educators.
- ◆ If the Museum does not already do so, consider establishing an open forum for education staff to exchange “best practices” for connecting history with contemporary immigration issues and immigrant experience. For example, if a moderator is experiencing difficulty generating interesting dialogue, other moderators may suggest ways to improve the dialogue.

- ◆ To further explore the issues raised by *Kitchen Conversation* participants, the Museum should consider exploring on its own in greater depth what, if any, changes should be made to the program's content or format. For example, senior staff may wish to sit in and participate in a variety of sessions (e.g., groups of different sizes, times, facilitators) and ask participants for informal feedback post-session.
- ◆ When appropriate, add new experiential opportunities (e.g., touchable objects, audio recordings) to existing and new tours and continue emphasizing their importance in training.
- ◆ To better reflect the experiences and suggestions of visitors, consider advertising the *Confino Living History* tour as recommended for children ages 8 and older.

REFERENCE

Doering, Z. (1999). "Strangers, Guests, or Clients? Visitor Experiences in Museums." *Curator*, 42(2): 74-87.

INTRODUCTION

This report presents the findings from audience research conducted by Randi Korn & Associates, Inc. (RK&A), for the Lower East Side Tenement Museum (the Museum). RK&A designed the study to assess the successes and shortcomings of the Museum's three major public tours—*Confino Living History*, *Getting By*, and *Piecing It Together*—as well as the facilitated *Kitchen Conversation* program that follows some tours.

The objectives of this research are to examine:

- ◆ Factors that affect the visitor experience, including age, residence, group composition, and participation in *Kitchen Conversation*;
- ◆ Visitors' cognitive and affective experiences of the Museum and tours/program named above;
- ◆ The extent to which each tour/program meets its stated objectives and the Museum meets its overall mission (i.e., which of the key content messages visitors remember from their visit experiences), and;
- ◆ Visitors' post-Museum visit behavior, particularly regarding immigration issues.

METHODOLOGY

To accomplish the stated objectives, RK&A used in-depth telephone interviews and developed a screener form to recruit tour participants for the study (see Appendix A for the screener). Following selected tours during April 2007, Museum staff invited adult visitors (one per household) to voluntarily complete a screener form, which included answering demographic questions and providing contact information for a telephone interview at a later date. Participants who completed screener forms received a complimentary Museum magnet from the Museum's store. Once the quota of eligible participants was met for a tour (approximately 40 visitors per tour), Museum staff stopped collecting screener forms for that tour and continued with the others until the quotas for all three major public tours and *Kitchen Conversation* had been met (a total of 154 screener forms). Since the sample was not randomly selected, the data are not representative of tour participants in general.

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

Post-visit telephone interviews were conducted with visitors two to four weeks after their Museum visit. Phone numbers were collected as described above. All interviewees were randomly selected from among eligible visitors (i.e., those who voluntarily completed screener forms on site at the request of Museum staff upon completion of tours in April 2007) and contacted via email or phone to schedule an interview.

The telephone interview guide was open-ended to allow individuals to express what was meaningful to them about their visit and their perceptions of the Museum (see Appendix B for the telephone interview guide). All interviews were audio-recorded with participants' permission and transcribed to facilitate analysis.

Open-ended interviews encourage and motivate visitors to describe their experiences, express their opinions and feelings, and share with the interviewer the meaning they constructed from an experience. Open-ended interviews produce data rich in information because interviewees talk about their personal experiences.

DATA ANALYSIS AND REPORTING METHOD

The interviews were qualitative, meaning that results are descriptive. In analyzing qualitative data, the evaluator studies the data for meaningful patterns and trends, and, as patterns and trends emerge, groups similar responses. Quotations in this report illustrate interviewees' thoughts and ideas as fully as possible. The quotations give the reader the flavor of visitors' experiences. Information about each interviewee, including their gender, the tour visited, their age, and the state they are from is included in brackets after each quotation.

Trends and themes in the interview data are presented from most- to least-frequently occurring.

PRINCIPAL FINDINGS

RK&A conducted telephone interviews in May 2007 with 44 people who visited the Lower East Side Tenement Museum in April 2007 and completed a screener form following tour/program participation. Among 44 interviewees, 11 each primarily represented one of the following four visit experiences: *Confino Living History* tour, *Getting By* tour, *Piecing It Together* tour, and *Kitchen Conversation* post-tour program.

VISITOR CHARACTERISTICS

VISITOR DEMOGRAPHICS

As shown in Table One, female interviewees (75 percent) outnumbered male interviewees (25 percent). Nearly 50 percent of interviewees came from the 45-55 age group, followed by those 35 to 44 (23 percent), 25-34 (16 percent), and over 65 (11 percent). The median age of interviewees was 47. Most interviewees (93 percent) were first-time visitors to the Museum. Slightly more than one-half (52 percent) had visited in a group of adults and children (under age 18), whereas more than one-third (39 percent) visited in a group of adults only. The remaining interviewees (9 percent) visited alone.

TABLE I
DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS: INTERVIEWEES

Characteristic	TOTAL %
Gender (n=44)	
Female	75
Male	25
Age (n=44)	
≤24	2
25-34	16
35-44	23
45-55	46
55-64	2
65+	11
Visitation (n=44)	
First-Time Visitor	93
Repeat Visitor	7
Group Composition (n=44)	
Adults and children	52
Adults only	39
Individual	9

As shown in Table Two, most interviewees (91 percent) identified themselves as current United States residents, representing a total of 14 states, including six interviewees (14 percent) who currently reside in New York City (NYC). The remaining interviewees (9 percent) currently reside in Canada.

TABLE 2
CURRENT RESIDENCES: INTERVIEWEES

COUNTRY / STATE/ NYC BOROUGH OF CURRENT RESIDENCE	INTERVIEWEES (n=44)
United States	40
New York (including NYC)	8
NYC - Manhattan	(3)*
NYC - Brooklyn	(2)
NYC – Bronx	(1)
California	7
New Jersey	5
Virginia	4
Ohio	3
Texas	3
Michigan	2
Washington	2
Maryland	1
Massachusetts	1
Minnesota	1
Nevada	1
North Carolina	1
Pennsylvania	1
Canada	4

*Parentheses are used since these individuals were already counted in the overall New York state number.

Per recruiting guidelines, all 44 interviewees participated in at least one of the Museum’s three major tours in April 2007: *Getting By* (17 interviewees), *Confino Living History* (16 interviewees), and *Piecing It Together* (13 interviewees). In addition, 12 of the 44 interviewees attended the post-tour program, *Kitchen Conversation* (including one interviewee who did not complete the program). See Table Three.

TABLE 3

TOUR/PROGRAM PARTICIPATION BY QUOTA GROUP: INTERVIEWEES

TOUR/PROGRAM	CONFINO LIVING HISTORY INTERVIEWEES (n=11)	GETTING BY INTERVIEWEES (n=11)	KITCHEN CONVERSATION INTERVIEWEES (n=11)	PIECING IT TOGETHER INTERVIEWEES (n=11)	TOTAL* (n=44)
Getting By	0	11	6	0	17
Confino Living History	11	0	4	1	16
Piecing It Together	1	0	1	11	13
Kitchen Conversation	0	1	11	0	12
Walking Tour	1	0	0	0	1

*Please note some interviewees participated in multiple tours/programs, thus the numbers do not add up to 44.

VISITOR MOTIVATIONS AND EXPECTATIONS

To better understand how visitors perceive and experience the Museum, RK&A questioned interviewees about what motivated their visit and what were their expectations for the tours in which they participated.

MOTIVATIONS

Most interviewees learned of the Museum by word-of-mouth, for example, a friend visited and recommended the Museum. Many interviewees (out-of-town visitors and locals) said they became aware of the Museum because they were researching places to visit in New York City and read positive reviews of it on travel Web sites and, to a lesser extent, in travel guidebooks. Some interviewees said they found out about the Museum through an article in a magazine or newspaper. A few said they visited the Museum’s Web site. Finally, a couple interviewees, both New York City residents, said they learned about the Museum by walking past it routinely.

Nearly all interviewees said they visited the Museum for multiple reasons. Regardless of where they reside, most interviewees said they felt a personal or familial connection to the Museum’s immigration history; for example, one interviewee’s grandparents lived on the Lower East Side in the early 1900’s (see the first and second quotations below). Many also said they have a general or specific interest in history (e.g., architectural, social, urban history, etc.) associated with the Museum, including a couple interviewees who said they work in the museum field (see the third and fourth quotations). Some others said they visited because they were looking for a unique or different New York City experience for themselves or for out-of-town guests (see the fifth quotation). A couple said they visited the Museum because their spouse wanted to visit, whereas another explained he just moved into the neighborhood and wanted to find out more about its past.

Both my husband and I have grandparents and great-grandparents that were immigrants and lived on the Lower East Side in the 19th century and early 20th century so it was part

of our personal histories and in turn we were really interested in the Museum. [female, *Getting By*, 49, Virginia]

I am interested in cities and my relatives were in the garment industry, were Jewish, and lived in a smaller city but were similar in background [to past residents of the Lower East Side]. [male, *Piecing It Together*, 24, New Jersey]

I was really just trying to get a little historical perspective of [New York] City and of the first immigrants to the United States. [male, *Confino Living History*, 34, Michigan]

The historical aspects of the immigrant experience [interested me], and I am also an urban planner so I was just interested in seeing what a tenement looks like because I have read a lot about them. [female, *Kitchen Conversation, Getting By*, 33, Canada]

It was my first visit to New York [City] so I read about different things to do and [the Museum] struck me as being something unique, different . . . I had never been inside a tenement building before so it was a first, if you will, and appealed to me for that reason. [female, *Getting By*, 48, Texas]

The majority of interviewees who participated in the *Confino Living History* tour, along with several from other tours, also said they visited the Museum because they thought it would interest their children and/or because they wanted to educate them about family history or United States history (see the quotation below).

I grew up in Brooklyn like my ancestors and was interested in getting a sense of what their experiences were like. We have two children and wanted to expose them to that history. [female, *Confino Living History*, 43, Brooklyn]

EXPECTATIONS

When asked about their expectations for tours they participated in, most interviewees indicated they generally expected an interesting experience based on positive recommendations from others, but had no specific prior knowledge of the Museum (see the first quotation below). Others, including a few who reported visiting the Museum's Web site prior to their visit, said they expected to see apartments of past immigrants to the Lower East Side but still had little, if any, tour-specific information (see the second quotation). Several interviewees said they had no expectations for the tours beyond just "going along for the ride" (see the third quotation).

I did not have any expectations other than everyone I knew who has gone [to the Museum] has said terrific things so I knew I would enjoy it and the quality was high. [male, *Getting By*, 49, Minnesota]

I just expected to see what it was like in these tenements for people living there and that was it. I did not even know which tour I was going on until I was there. [male, *Piecing It Together*, 54, California]

I really had no expectations whatsoever. I took my wife's advice that [the Museum] was supposed to be a fantastic and interesting experience and just went. I was an open book. [male, *Kitchen Conversation, Confino Living History*, 53, Virginia]

In contrast to other interviewees, about one-half of *Confino Living History* tour participants said they researched the tour prior to visiting with their children to ensure it would be age-appropriate and therefore expected an interactive, child-friendly experience (see the quotation below).

(What, if any, expectations did you have for your tour experience?) I knew that the Confino apartment tour was child-friendly and we would be able to touch things. It was important to me that my son feel very comfortable there and I was trying to provide an age-appropriate experience. [female, *Confino Living History*, 42, Maryland]

OVERALL VISITOR EXPERIENCE

When asked to describe the Museum as if they were doing so to a friend who had never visited or heard of the Museum, interviewees routinely noted that they had, in fact, done exactly that in everyday conversation since their visits. Rather than generally describing the Museum, most interviewees described specific aspects of their visit, often in great detail, including the building's appearance (see the first quotation below), the immersive and personal nature of the tour (see the second and third quotations), and/or stories and information about “real people” learned during the tour (see the fourth quotation).

[The Museum] is a tenement building that has been restored and remodeled with period furniture and props to recreate a feel of what tenement life was like back in the 19th and 20th centuries. [female, *Getting By*, 31, California]

It is not a museum in the sense that you go into an air-conditioned place and see artifacts in glass cases. [The Museum] is a virtual experience; that is the best way to describe it. You see where these people lived and you actually inhabit the space, even if it is just for a short time you get to occupy it. [female, *Piecing It Together*, 50, Texas]

[The Museum] has researched families that actually lived in that particular tenement and has taken great pains to recreate the apartments to make them look like that specific time period. It was a really cool experience. The tour we went on had a docent dressed up as a teenage daughter of this particular family that lived in that particular apartment in 1916. We were told to pretend we were a large family that just got off the boat and she told us what it was like to live in America and what we needed to do to fit in and we asked her questions about her life. Kids could walk around the apartment and touch things. [female, *Confino Living History*, 37, California]

[The Museum] is the actual apartments of immigrants from the late 1800's and you actually see where these families of six to 10 people lived in such small rooms, and they took in boarders. The stories the guide told were wonderful. Our guide himself had been raised in one of those tenements so he told his story and we really felt it. It was just amazing that people actually lived like this and did well and moved on. [female, *Kitchen Conversation, Getting By*, 51, New Jersey]

MISSION

In addition to describing the Museum, RK&A asked interviewees to share their perceptions of the Museum's mission or primary purpose. Most interviewees described the Museum's primary purpose in

terms of sharing knowledge of or educating people about various aspects of past immigrant life, including family, work ethic, daily life, community, tradition, and diversity, in the United States, New York City, or the Lower East Side (see the first and second quotations below).

To educate people on the history of New York and the people who came through and lived on the Lower East Side, and about a period of time in American history and about immigration. [female, *Kitchen Conversation, Getting By*, 48, Massachusetts]

To have people appreciate and celebrate the people who came into NYC and North America at that time and helped foster the textile industry and others in the area. The hard work they put in to make life better for all the people who would follow, their families. For us to have an appreciation of what [past immigrants] had to go through in order to make our lives as carefree as they are. You walk away with an appreciation of how much work they did and all they went through and how life was definitely more difficult than we complain about today. [male, *Piecing It Together*, 29, Canada]

About one-half of interviewees also said the Museum's mission revolved around connecting contemporary and historical immigrant perspectives (see the first and second quotations below). However, *Confino Living History* tour participants did not make this connection, instead describing only the historical immigrant perspective as the Museum's mission (see the third quotation).

[The Museum's mission] is to educate people about what immigrants went through coming to this country and what kind of conditions they lived under and hardships, and also to create an understanding for current immigrants going through similar situations. [male, *Getting By*, 42, Manhattan]

To see how immigrants were living here, what they went through. [The Museum] wants to make us aware, to constantly compare that this stuff is still happening today in different parts of the world so it keeps on happening, people are being abused, used. To teach what happened in NYC, how NYC came about, what it was like to be here. The mission is to show us that we are all coming from somewhere; we are all immigrants. [female, *Piecing It Together*, 35, Brooklyn]

The Museum's mission is to make people aware of what life was like when people did live in tenements and to give some insight into that immigrant experience. [female, *Confino Living History*, 72, New York]

Some interviewees who participated in *Getting By*, *Piecing It Together* and/or *Kitchen Conversation* described the Museum's mission as twofold: to preserve history by restoring the tenement, by recording oral history, and/or by recreating the past; and to help people remember history and/or think about its relationship to the present (see the first and second quotations below). In contrast, a few others said historic preservation was the Museum's primary purpose (see the third quotation). One participant said he could not articulate the mission because he did not recall the visit in detail (see the fourth quotation).

The [Museum]'s mission is basically to recreate history and then take a look at history to try to understand what the immigrant went through in the past and try to associate that with what immigrants are going through now. I think the Museum does a pretty good job [of that] by letting you take a tour of the tenement and making you wonder and do more research. [male, *Piecing It Together*, 46, New Jersey]

To preserve that part of history, make it come alive for people who visit NYC and to preserve the history of families and the oral history so people do not forget what it was like for immigrants who came before. [female, *Getting By*, 45, Virginia]

To preserve the tenements as they were. NYC is a booming place and I think we can lose parts of history so that is how I interpreted the mission is that [the Museum] is really trying to preserve history. [female, *Confino Living History*, 46, New Jersey]

I've forgotten what the mission or purpose is, so I'm at a little bit of a loss to answer that question. [male, *Piecing It Together*, 54, Ohio]

PRE-TOUR EXPERIENCES

When discussing the Museum overall, many interviewees also addressed aspects of the pre-tour experience, primarily the Museum's store but also wayfinding (i.e., locating the Museum) and selecting a tour/program upon arrival.

THE MUSEUM'S STORE

Several interviewees described the Museum's store as a positive and important part of their overall visit experience. They said they enjoyed the "high-quality" film playing in the store and the historical context it provided for their ensuing tour participation, the broad appeal of books and other inventory for sale, and the friendly, helpful staff available for assistance (see the first and second quotations below).

I love the bookstore. I love the fact that there is a movie that goes on periodically so you can get a feel of what you might see or expect. (What about the bookstore did you like in particular?) I loved everything about it. I loved that there were a lot of books that told the story about these people coming from all over the world to America. The people who worked there were extremely helpful and courteous . . . you could buy books, trinkets, watch a movie; it was all there. [female, *Piecing It Together*, 53, California]

First of all, you experience a bookshop before you go into the actual museum. They have a great selection of books about the history of New York City and city-related merchandise, a cool collection of stuff for kids. We needed to kill some time, and the kids were pretty engaged there. . . . we briefly watched the video that was on a loop and I was interested in it but the kids were not. [male, *Confino Living History*, 44, Michigan]

However, interviewees also said the store needs more space to accommodate all of its visitors, especially those waiting for tours to begin (see the first quotation below). Additionally, a few interviewees with younger children (under age 10) described the movie as being "over the heads" of younger visitors and suggested the Museum provide an alternative movie geared toward children (see the second quotation), although a few others said their older children (age 10 and older) enjoyed it. A few interviewees also suggested the Museum's store stock more books appealing to younger children.

[The Museum] needs more room to wait for the tour. It was pouring rain when we were there and we just hung out waiting in the bookstore. They need more space. [female, *Confino Living History*, 46, New Jersey]

[The Museum] did have a movie that was quite good but if they want to attract more kids they could have one geared toward them because it was a bit over their heads. If

[the Museum] had the space they could do a lot with the children's section [of the store].
[female, *Confino Living History*, 43, Pennsylvania]

WAYFINDING

Several interviewees said the Museum is hard to locate from the street because signage is insufficient and/or the Museum's entrance is atypical of museums (see the first quotation below). Despite difficulties locating the Museum, a few interviewees said they enjoyed exploring the Lower East Side as a result, and a couple speculated that the Museum intentionally blends into the neighborhood so that visitors will view it as part of its surroundings and explore its immediate vicinity (see the second quotation).

I guess I expected to find not a bookstore in front but a more standard museum entry. The address we had was different; we walked down the block looking for the number and right past the bookstore. We are pretty good with directions but had to double back and the signage was minimal at best. If you had a bunch of kids and were trying to get them there and did not know exactly where [the Museum] is, it would be frustrating because you would end up wandering before you found it, although it was not a bad experience for me. [male, *Piecing It Together*, 54, Ohio]

[The Museum] was difficult to find even with the address and a map. We found the tenement first, and then realized the shop was across the street. But I think the lack of signage lent itself to the idea that the Museum is a living museum and really we are looking at the whole neighborhood and area. [female, *Getting By*, 49, Virginia]

SELECTING A TOUR/ PROGRAM

A few interviewees said they had difficulty selecting from among the three major tours because they needed more information to inform their decision (see the first quotation below), whereas a few others said they arrived knowing which tour they wanted to take but were disappointed because it was already full. A few others suggested the Museum more clearly denote which tour is intended for children (see the second quotation) and add at least one more "child-friendly" tour.

We would have liked more information upfront about the tours to help make our decision [about which tour to take]. We did read the online explanations before visiting but those were brief. [female, *Getting By*, 65, the Bronx]

I was not sure if my choice of tour was appropriate so I asked someone behind the counter if it was the right tour. She said they are all the right tour. But nevertheless, one seemed geared for maybe a younger child to give them a better understanding, which I would rather do with my grandchild or children. And if and when they do come to New York with me, I would like to go again. [female, *Piecing It Together*, 53, California]

With regard to *Kitchen Conversation*, most non-participants did not recall being offered the opportunity to participate during their visit. Some others recalled being invited to participate or were aware of *Kitchen Conversation* prior to their visits but chose not to for various reasons (e.g., visiting with children, limited by time, uncertain what it was about). One non-participant said he purchased a tour with *Kitchen Conversation* but did not know where to go after the tour ended and never participated.

All *Kitchen Conversation* participants expressed unfamiliarity with the concept of a post-tour group discussion. About one-half suggested providing visitors with more advance notice and/or a "more accurate" or detailed program description prior to tours to help inform their decision to participate and

to prepare them for participation, or to require advance ticket purchase to ensure a minimum number of program participants (see the quotation below). The Museum's Web site currently describes the program as "a rare opportunity to explore topics stemming from The Tenement experience and to express opinions on pressing contemporary issues." Interviewees said they wanted more information when buying tickets (online or in person) about specific topics addressed (e.g., current immigration), the program format (i.e., facilitated discussion), the facilitator's role (e.g., moderator, not immigration expert), and the program's duration.

[The guide] threw *Kitchen Conversation* out there as an option right before the tour started like, 'By the way, we are one of the only museums in the world that offers a discussion....' I think it might be better when tickets are sold to either sell tours with [*Kitchen Conversation*] or without because a lot of people walked away [after the tour] and the dialogue would have worked better if more tickets were sold. Make people make that decision in the beginning.
[male, *Kitchen Conversation, Piecing It Together*, 29, California]

TOUR EXPERIENCES

OVERALL

Nearly all interviewees said their tour experiences—whether *Confino Living History*, *Getting By*, and/or *Piecing It Together*—met or exceeded their expectations, with many linking their level of satisfaction to their personal connection to the tour's content. Overall, visitors across all three major tours were most satisfied with the tour's experiential nature (e.g., turning off the lights, touching the balustrade) and its direct access to past tenement residents (e.g., the costumed interpreter portraying Victoria Confino, the audio recording of a former resident, stories illustrated with photographs or documents) and/or access to current neighborhood residents as educators (see the quotations below).

I was really surprised by how small the building was and it really increased our attention to how so many people were able to live in those apartments.... The Museum really took me back in time . . . it is different to read a book about our ancestors versus going to a place where they used to live so we would like to go back and take more tours.
[male, *Piecing It Together* tour, 54, California]

[The tour] was good. The one thing I loved most was the recorded story they let us listen to from an actual person who lived in the tenement. The tour went by really quickly and left you wanting to see more tenements. [female, *Getting By* tour, 31, Virginia]

I cannot wait to go back. I thought it was captivating and informative and I completely loved it. (What made it different from other museums?) It just seemed very real. The preservation and walking in and imagining being an immigrant like our group was supposed to be . . . it really worked.... Our tour guide lives in the area and talks about the neighborhood and its support of the Museum. You could sense pride and a desire to save a portion of history. The guide gave the perfect amount of information of where we are today and this is why this is important and the background [of the Museum].
[female, *Confino Living History*, 46, New Jersey]

The tour guide did such a great job of describing everything and what the families went through and how they would have done certain things in their day-to-day routine that you could almost visualize the family in the room with you . . . I remember just looking around and seeing how authentic things were. [male, *Piecing It Together* tour, 29, Canada]

Most interviewees also spoke in general about being pleased with the high level of authenticity of the objects and information presented during the tours and of the tenement building (see the first quotation below). Many said they were surprised by the extent of the research the Museum had undertaken to present the individual and family histories of residents rather than a broadly fictionalized immigrant experience (see the second quotation). The knowledge and enthusiasm of educators also impressed them (see the third quotation).

I was really entranced with the level of authenticity . . . I was just really impressed by how much research had gone into making [the Museum] as authentic as possible. [female, *Piecing It Together*, 47, New Jersey]

[The tour] met my expectations and more. I was not expecting so much detail about the lives of individual families, which I found really interesting. . . . I thought [the Museum] would just show what the apartments looked like; I was not expecting the link to real people. [female, *Kitchen Conversation, Getting By*, 33, Canada]

I really enjoyed my tour experience. The guide was very well informed and knowledgeable, not only about the building and the Museum but [also about] the families who were being highlighted. [female, *Getting By*, 31, California]

Several interviewees said they enjoyed interacting with and learning from other tour participants as well as from the educator (see the quotation below), including a few who said they were amazed by the diversity among tour group participants.

I learned a lot not only from the wonderful guide who led the tour and talked about our particular apartments and families but also from some of the people who were on our tour and were able to share some experiences of their own. I thought the tour was just really great and it more than lived up to my expectations. [female, *Confino Living History*, 48, Texas]

CONFINO LIVING HISTORY

When asked which aspects of the tour they enjoyed most, interviewees who participated in *Confino Living History* overwhelmingly said they most enjoyed interacting with the costumed interpreter playing a “real person” (i.e., Victoria Confino) and role-playing (see the first quotation below). Many also said they most enjoyed the tour’s “hands-on” aspects for children (see the second quotation).

[The tour] exceeded my expectations. The actress was phenomenal and my husband volunteered to be the father in the group. He is not the most expressive person but he actually said to me that he was really moved by it and he really got into it. Something about her character was very moving and warm and quite profound. I was really blown away by [the tour]; I loved it. [female, *Confino Living History*, 43, Brooklyn]

(What aspects of the tour did you enjoy the most?) I really enjoyed how the children were allowed to touch things in the apartment, for example the actual picture of the family passed around the room. [female, *Confino Living History*, 37, California]

Interviewees also described a few aspects of *Confino Living History* they would change. They suggested a more engaging introductory activity for younger children (under age 8) and to provide more historical context (see the first quotation below). Interviewees also suggested giving tour participants more guidance or preparation for their interactions with Victoria Confino (see the second quotation). In addition, a few said they would like to see more than one apartment and another asked for a handout with “talking points” for engaging in post-tour conversations with children.

(What aspects of the tour did you feel might have been changed?) It was skewed for older kids so it was successful for me and my older son but way over my younger son’s head.... I do not think the context for the apartment was delivered in an accessible way.... Once we were in the room with the actress, that worked but sitting in a group with the guide talking was definitely not for a 7-year-old or even my 10-year-old. [female, *Confino Living History*, 43, Brooklyn]

It was a little difficult to play a character with strangers . . . maybe give people a heads up ahead of time . . . like what to expect and questions you might want to ask . . . to make it more enjoyable, especially to make it easier for children to participate. [female, *Confino Living History*, 47, North Carolina]

MAJOR THEMES

When asked what, if any, major themes they recalled, nearly all *Confino Living History* participants discussed the historical immigrant experience, including the difficulties of life as a newly arrived immigrant, the willingness of the immigrant community to help newcomers, and the strong work ethic of past immigrants (see the quotations below).

(What, if any, major themes do you recall?) I would say some of the commonalities of different ethnic groups who were living in the area in terms of making adjustments to the new living situations, doing similar work and under similar kinds of economic constraint, and in terms of assimilating. [male, *Confino Living History*, 52, California]

(What, if any, major themes do you recall?) At that time, immigrants were not expecting people to take care of them. They were expecting to work together and for the people who came before them. On the other hand, the [United States] government did not step in to help and some living conditions were unlivable. Also [the theme of] how immigrants were taken advantage of. [female, *Confino Living History*, 44, Texas]

A few interviewees mentioned how they personally connected modern life to the historical immigrant experience when discussing the tour’s major themes (see the quotation below), including one who said the major theme was historic preservation.

(What, if any, major themes do you recall?) The idea that it was not an easy life but the United States still represented for people the idea that if you came and were willing to work hard, life was good. We saw [immigrants’] lives not compared to what we think of as minimum standards but [compared] according to where these people came from. So the idea that the American dream still has resonance today and we have a good lifestyle. [female, *Confino Living History*, 43, Pennsylvania]

GETTING BY

Almost every *Getting By* participant recalled listening to the audio of a past tenement resident reflecting on her childhood as the most memorable tour experience (see the quotation below).

(What aspects of the tour did you enjoy the most?) The best part was hearing the voice of the woman who lived in the 1930s apartment, being in that space and hearing her reminisce about different parts of the apartment . . . it was very powerful to hear the voice of someone who lived there. [male, *Getting By*, 66, California]

Getting By participants interviewed did not have any suggestions for improving the tour but several said the Museum needs to expand its space or at least decrease the maximum number of participants in a tour group to avoid visitors feeling “claustrophobic” in the apartments. One interviewee recommended the Museum limit tour groups to “three or four less than the 15 people in my tour group” or about a dozen participants.

MAJOR THEMES

Similar to *Confino Living History* participants, nearly all interviewees who participated in *Getting By* discussed the historical immigrant experience, specifically the difficult lives of past tenement residents, and the historical progression of immigration as evidenced during the tour (see the first and second quotations below). A couple interviewees said a major theme was the importance of preserving or learning about the history of immigrants in NYC to better understand life today (see the third quotation).

(What, if any, major themes do you recall?) Overall, the tour’s name is *Getting By* so [immigrants] had to do the best they could with what they had, which was not a whole lot, and it was just a hard life. [female, *Getting By*, 45, Virginia]

(What, if any, major themes do you recall?) That life was hard for these folks, which I knew but did not know how difficult it was because I never really studied this [history]. It was interesting to see that the neighborhood was German, then 20 years later Italian, and we saw a photograph of the street teeming with people. [female, *Getting By*, 54, Ohio]

(What, if any, major themes do you recall?) The importance of learning our history and to keep going back to it, to preserve it, because tenements are an important part of NYC, an important piece of our culture. To understand why America is the way we are today and how these immigrants came from nothing looking for a better life and it mirrors what’s still happening today so it is very relevant. [female, *Getting By*, 31, Virginia]

Although some mentioned the importance of community support and the impact of social or government policy changes in response to other questions, none raised these issues when asked directly about major tour themes.

PIECING IT TOGETHER

More so than other interviewees, those who participated in *Piecing It Together* said they most enjoyed firsthand opportunities to experience the lives of past tenement residents via the building’s objects, artifacts, and interior elements (see the first and second quotations below).

(What aspects of the tour did you enjoy the most?) Being in those rooms, climbing the stairs our ancestors climbed. (Why?) I liked it because while they are no longer here, I was able to experience perhaps very little of what they had to see. I am this modern woman going back in time to see how they lived in one room with everything they ever needed in that one room. [female, *Piecing It Together*, 53, California]

(What aspects of the tour did you enjoy the most?) I was most amazed at how intricate the fabric was that [past residents] were working on . . . and in that tiny area with children running around and food being prepared. How amazing that they could produce something so stunningly beautiful in such conditions. I really enjoyed the whole tour; we got a kick out of discovering things like this device in the crib that was a baby bottle, the way people adapted. [female, *Piecing It Together*, 53, California]

Similar to their *Getting By* counterparts, *Piecing It Together* participants suggested few, if any, tour improvements beyond relieving the crowding of visitors inside the tenement. One interviewee said perhaps the Museum intentionally hosts large tour groups to foster comparisons to past living conditions (see the quotation below).

(What aspects of the tour would you change?) I understand [the Museum] wants to push a lot of people through at once but it is very cramped in those small spaces. Perhaps that is done on purpose to give visitors a feeling of how tight the spaces were but there was no room for movement with 15 people on my tour. [male, *Piecing It Together*, 29, Canada]

MAJOR THEMES

Most *Piecing It Together* participants described major themes relating to past immigrants' poor living and working conditions (see the first quotation below), including the lack of distinction between work and home life and/or the poor working conditions in the garment industry (see the second quotation).

(What, if any, major themes do you recall?) Learning about the jobs people did, how they lived, the way they lived. The whole thing with water being an issue and outhouses and infant mortality rates being really high just gives you a wonderful snapshot into the daily existence of people who actually lived in those flats. [female, *Piecing It Together*, 53, Canada]

(What, if any, major themes do you recall?) People worked very hard and had few, if any, luxuries, but they were thankful for the opportunities they had to do hard work. The guide talked about how much the garment workers worked, on contract, and how they would get paid more if they produced more . . . they were strangers who did not speak English when they came. [female, *Piecing It Together*, 50, Texas]

A few others connected this history to their modern lives (see the first quotation below), and one interviewee said the most important theme was the link between immigrants' lives then and now (see the second quotation).

(What, if any, major themes do you recall?) The idea of preserving what these families went through at that time and all the hard work they endured and why they did it, the importance of family. How family fed into business and that connection between family business and home. Back then it was very common to work inside the home whereas now a lot of people work outside of the home. [male, *Piecing It Together*, 29, Canada]

(What, if any, major themes do you recall?) The most important thing we could get out of the experience was that the guide was able to link the history of immigrants and their position in society and ask for tolerance with the new immigrants nowadays because they are going through the same situation. [male, *Piecing It Together*, 46, New Jersey]

KITCHEN CONVERSATION

The majority of participants responded positively to *Kitchen Conversation*, describing it as a “unique” and “unusual” opportunity (see the first quotation below). In contrast, a couple others responded negatively, recalling feeling “uncomfortable” during the experience, uncertain about the program’s purpose, and/or “bored” because of uninteresting or lengthy conversations (see the second quotation). A couple others expressed mixed emotions, and another could not recall the experience well enough to provide an opinion.

(What was your opinion of being given the opportunity to participate in *Kitchen Conversation*?) It should be with every tour because immigration is a major issue in the United States and the majority of the population, myself included, do not think enough about the issue or they have not been exposed to a lot of different opinions. We had kids in our group and people from all over the country and were all of different viewpoints definitely. So just to have that dialogue and hear what other people were thinking would be worth doing as part of the whole program. [female, *Kitchen Conversation, Confino Living History*, 55, Nevada]

We discussed what we heard in the apartment [during the tour] but other than that I cannot remember [*Kitchen Conversation*] . . . it did not do as much for me as the tour. It just kind of passed by. [female, *Kitchen Conversation, Getting By*, 33, Canada]

Interviewees who responded positively or with mixed emotions said they appreciated the opportunity to reflect on their tour experiences, to connect history and contemporary issues of immigration, and to interact with other visitors who had shared the same tour experience (see the first quotation below). These participants recalled enjoying “good dialogue,” “different viewpoints,” “interesting stories,” and/or “pleasant, not controversial” conversations facilitated by “engaging,” “neutral,” and/or “welcoming” moderators (see the second quotation). In addition, a couple said they liked that participation in *Kitchen Conversation* is voluntary.

Just being able to share opinions with other people who had heard the same information that you just heard, and to share backgrounds and [to learn] how what they had seen and what they knew of immigration and tenement living and all that has affected their lives. One woman talked about her mother who was an immigrant and it was just a really unique thing to talk with other people you are on a tour with when normally everyone just goes off on their own, so that was very meaningful. [female, *Kitchen Conversation, Getting By*, 42, Ohio]

(What aspects of *Kitchen Conversation* did you enjoy?) I liked the fact that we were in there with people we did not know and there were a lot of different viewpoints at the table and people were made to feel pretty comfortable sharing and having a conversation. . . . [*Kitchen Conversation*] gets you to think about immigration in a way you would not necessarily think about it on your own and to think about ideas or opinions you would not necessarily have. Everybody brings something different to the table. [female, *Kitchen Conversation, Confino Living History*, 23, Michigan]

Interviewees who responded negatively or with mixed emotions described feeling as if they were part of a “research experiment” (e.g., “being interviewed” or “probed” for emotions) or that the moderator were following an “agenda” (see the first quotation below). Two interviewees further described this “agenda” as political (see the second quotation), that it promoted pro-immigration policies rather than encouraging an open dialogue of viewpoints, whereas another explained “agenda” as a rigid set of questions followed regardless of participants’ interests (i.e., “as if we were children.”).

In *Kitchen Conversation* I felt like we were being interviewed but there was no connection to the tour, [the facilitator] just wanted to know our feelings about this aspect of immigration or whatever. It was totally not connected to the tour. [female, *Kitchen Conversation, Piecing It Together*, 51, New Jersey]

There was almost a feeling like there was an agenda coming across [during *Kitchen Conversation*]. (Can you tell me more?) From my perspective it was good information but . . . I just thought maybe others would think the Museum was trying to put this agenda forth. (What do you mean by ‘agenda?’) Kind of arguing for better conditions and rights for immigrants. [male, *Kitchen Conversation, Piecing It Together*, 29, California]

When asked to further explain such negative or mixed responses, interviewees’ explanations varied, indicating their perceptions depended on factors such as group composition, moderators’ group facilitation skills, and, to some extent, individual interests/preferences. Interviewees who self-identified as participating in larger groups (8+ but particularly 10+) with participants of various backgrounds and nationalities responded more positively to *Kitchen Conversation* than did those in smaller groups (<8) with less diverse participants (see the quotation below).

(What aspects of *Kitchen Conversation* did you not enjoy?) It would have been more interesting if there were more people. It was just my friend and I and our husbands and we knew each other pretty well. It would have been interesting to have people from other places join in [the conversation]. [female, *Kitchen Conversation, Piecing It Together*, 65, California]

With regard to moderators’ skills, interviewees offered negative feedback (none of which was mentioned repeatedly) including a perceived pro-immigration bias, a lack of expertise on current immigration issues, misuse of wait time resulting in “awkward moments,” allowing conversations to be dominated by a few participants, not keeping conversations “focused,” and requiring participants to read rules posted on a chalkboard aloud in turn “like children.”

On the other hand, positive feedback from interviewees focused on the facilitator’s neutrality and ability to foster a friendly and open dialogue (see the quotation below).

(What aspects of *Kitchen Conversation* did you enjoy?) I liked that I was engaged and the person conducting the group was interesting and welcoming. The conversation was generally pleasant and not controversial at all. [male, *Kitchen Conversation, Confino Living History*, 53, Virginia]

With regard to individual interests/preferences, negative feedback included a few opposing viewpoints. For example, one interviewee expressed interest in sharing more personal stories with others during *Kitchen Conversation*, whereas another suggested less “story time” and more historical or current immigration-related information from the moderator.

MAJOR THEMES

When asked about major themes during their visit, interviewees who participated in a tour followed by *Kitchen Conversation* provided idiosyncratic responses about immigration, past and/or present, often reflecting individual tour participation. A few described how past immigrants endured hardships for the promise of the American dream, including one who also noted immigrants are still doing so today (see the first quotation below), while a few others discussed how the tenement itself, immigrant communities, and/or society at large evolved along with the immigrants (see the second quotation). A few interviewees said the major theme was defining who is an American then and now (see the third quotation). A couple said they did not recall any major themes from their visit.

(What, if any, major themes do you recall?) The power of the American dream . . . to stand in that tenement is to realize how powerful that dream was . . . as Americans, we lose sight of what a promised land this place is . . . it is hard to imagine today that people still hold on to the American dream but they do. . . . (Was this a theme in the tour or *Kitchen Conversation*?) Both. [female, *Kitchen Conversation, Getting By*, 52, New Jersey]

(What, if any, major themes do you recall?) Immigration was pretty much the theme throughout—their experiences and how they then moved on and other people came in to take their place. Also the theme of how the building changed . . . through regulations, and why that happened through social changes and how it affected the living situation. [female, *Kitchen Conversation, Getting By*, 48, Massachusetts]

(What, if any, major themes do you recall?) We got done [with the tour] and went into *Kitchen Conversation* for awhile and I was impressed by the idea that the educator said Victoria had been there four to five years and she asked us if Victoria is an American. Then it all came home to me what we were doing: the whole idea of where we stand with immigration and who's an American and who is not an American. [male, *Kitchen Conversation, Confino Living History*, 53, Virginia]

CHILDREN'S VISIT EXPERIENCES

While the majority of interviewees who visited with children participated in *Confino Living History*, others participated in one of the other two tours and a few also participated in the post-tour *Kitchen Conversation* program with children. When asked about their children's responses to the Museum, interviewees discussed a few key aspects of their visit regardless of the tour: the tour's interactive nature, particularly *Confino Living History*; the stories about "real people;" and the authenticity of the experience (see the quotation below).

My daughter is 13 and enjoyed the tour a lot; it was an interesting experience for her. She has talked about it since, specifically how unique it was to her when we listened to the tape of the woman who lived in the apartment. Being able to see the items described really made it feel like an authentic experience for her. [female, *Getting By*, 49, Virginia]

Interviewees also said the Museum is appropriate for children age 8 and older but more enjoyable for children age 10 and older, particularly teenagers (see the two quotations below).

Because my daughter was [age] 10 [the tour] was very appropriate for her. I know the [Museum]'s Web site said the tour was designed for children age 5 and above but I do not know

how much a 5 or 6-year-old would get out of it. [female, *Kitchen Conversation, Confino Living History*, 37, California]

My 15-year-old daughter was pretty captivated by the Museum. She talks a lot about it and we talk about going back. Teenagers are a tough lot. At first [my children] sat back and rolled their eyes a bit when we first started getting the orientation for being in character. But afterwards they had the same reaction I did—they were much more into the tour than they thought they would have been so I think that is huge to reach that audience. [female, *Confino Living History*, 46, New Jersey]

One interviewee who participated with an 11-year-old said *Kitchen Conversation* is not for families because the questions are mostly adult-directed and, therefore, do not engage children. Likewise, another interviewee (not among those selected to represent *Kitchen Conversation*) said she briefly attended the program but left after several minutes because she was visiting with her grandchildren and felt the moderator’s introductory questions (e.g., “Where is everyone from?”) were “repetitive” and the program would be “uninteresting” for children. On the other hand, a couple interviewees who participated in *Kitchen Conversation*, each accompanied by a child age 13, said it was a positive experience (see the quotation below).

My daughter is 13 and she thought the tour was interesting and participated in *Kitchen Conversation*, too. She is doing a project on immigration in the United States for school next week so I guess it stuck with her since she got to choose the topic and the information she gained was helpful to her also. (Did she ask questions during the tour and in *Kitchen Conversation*?) Yes. [female, *Kitchen Conversation, Getting By*, 42, Ohio]

THE MUSEUM’S EDUCATIONAL APPROACH

The findings reported in this section uncover interviewees’ reactions to various educational strategies used prominently in all three of the Museum’s major tours. The data presented include visitors’ responses when asked about docents’ use each of the following key strategies: storytelling, asking visitors questions, responding to visitors’ questions, and making connections between history and contemporary issues. Visitors were also asked to recall any additional educational strategies used during the tour.

STORYTELLING

Overwhelmingly, interviewees said storytelling is their favorite strategy for learning information, particularly when they know the stories are about real people (see the first quotation below). Regardless of the tour participated in, nearly all interviewees recalled that their educators successfully shared stories of past tenement residents to enrich and personalize their tour experiences (see the second quotation).

I liked [the storytelling]. I liked getting the history of the stories behind the families who actually lived in the building—that was good. (Why?) Because it was real information, not something made up on the spot. The stories sounded authentic. [Female, *Getting By*, 44, Manhattan]

My tour guide was excellent. He did a very good job presenting the stories. I was able to visualize the people living there. [Female, *Piecing It Together*, 35, Brooklyn]

Many interviewees recalled specific stories from their tour experiences, although stories varied depending on the tour taken. For example, several *Getting By* participants once again mentioned the audio recording of a former resident (see the first quotation below), whereas several *Piecing It Together* participants recalled stories about families' hardships associated with tenement life (see the second quotation). Several interviewees from both tours mentioned their educators' personal stories of growing up as recent immigrants, even in a similar tenement on the Lower East Side.

I remember the [audio] recording of the woman who lived in that one apartment as a little girl; that worked really well. You could stand there and imagine what the family is doing, the things she was talking about. [female, *Getting By*, 45, Virginia]

I remember the story of the sons who shared a sofa—three of them slept on the sofa—and they would use chairs for their legs and they could not sleep on the floor because the guide said they would be pestered by mice and maybe rats. [male, *Piecing It Together*, 54, Ohio]

Although *Confino Living History* tour participants did not mention any specific stories, they mentioned Victoria Confino's storytelling about life as an immigrant in America during the early 20th century as an engaging technique, particularly for children (see the quotation below).

Storytelling is invaluable in telling history. [Victoria Confino] told stories and it really helped make things more real and helped the children to picture history much better. [female, *Confino Living History*, 47, North Carolina]

Kitchen Conversation participants, who participated in various tours, recalled different stories depending on their tour experience but did not mention sharing stories with other *Kitchen Conversation* participants, whereas several participants from across the three tours mentioned storytelling by other visitors as a positive aspect of their experiences (see the quotation below).

I appreciated how the guide told stories but also others in the group shared stories and I liked that mix of everyone's experiences. [female, *Getting By*, 27, Manhattan]

A few interviewees said that although storytelling is a good technique, its success depends upon the storyteller's skill (see the first quotation below). A couple others said they would have enjoyed more storytelling during their tours (see the second quotation).

Storytelling is great when you have a great storyteller. We had a decent storyteller so it only worked okay. (What makes a good storyteller?) Someone who can convey the overall atmosphere as they tell it instead of a more historical looking-back. I did not feel [the guide] really put us there in that time period; it was more from this period looking back. A good storyteller paints the picture and points out details in ways you would not see on your own. [female, *Piecing It Together*, 68, New York]

I liked the storytelling. It gave you an idea of life back in that time period. But there was not a great deal of story time though during the tour; it was mostly answering questions. [male, *Kitchen Conversation, Confino Living History*, 80, Washington]

ASKING QUESTIONS OF VISITORS

Interviewees' reactions to the strategy of asking questions of visitors during tours were mixed. The majority said this strategy worked well during their tours because educators asked questions to help

visitors feel comfortable and learn from each other, particularly during introductory remarks (see the first quotation below) and then to stimulate thinking and discussion within the group throughout the experience (see the second quotation).

(Asking questions of visitors?) Great! It got people in our group talking about things that came out in conversation that would not have if the guide had not asked. It created cohesiveness in the group because everybody felt then like we could ask others questions, not just the guide. [female, *Getting By*, 48, Texas]

[Asking questions of visitors] definitely worked well, especially for the children because it made them think. It made all of us put the information being given into more of a concrete form. When you are asked questions and have to answer them, chances are you are going to remember more. [female, *Piecing It Together*, 47, New Jersey]

On the other hand, some interviewees said they did not recall being asked questions and could not comment on the use of this strategy. Several others said asking questions of visitors did not work well, primarily because tour participants were not comfortable answering questions (see the first quotation below) or less frequently because educators asked fact-based or seemingly “contrived” questions rather than thought-provoking questions or those based on personal experience (see the second quotation).

There was a slight hesitancy to participate and I do not know that [asking questions of visitors] added anything. I think our group was interested enough in the stories that the questions—if they were designed to get people in the mix—were not necessary. [female, *Confino Living History*, 43, Pennsylvania]

I do not remember [whether asking questions of visitors was] . . . annoying or satisfying during our tour. But I have never been a big advocate of that; it is like fake questioning. It does not really matter what you say because the guide will say it anyway. (Can you give an example?) We walked into the apartment in which the woman’s husband disappeared. The question was asked, if a woman was living in this situation, what were her options for earning a living? People threw out some guesses like take in laundry, whatever, and he said, ‘You’re right, that is exactly what she did.’ That to me is just juvenile, it is condescending, but other people may not feel that way at all. (Does that technique ever work?) If it is personal experience-based versus knowledge-based [it works]. [female, *Kitchen Conversation, Getting By*, 52, New Jersey]

RESPONDING TO VISITORS’ QUESTIONS

In contrast, nearly all interviewees agreed that educators succeeded in encouraging and responding to visitors’ questions during tours (see the first quotation below). Repeatedly, interviewees across all three tours said education staff (including the costumed interpreter portraying Victoria Confino) knowledgeably and readily answered most, if not all, visitor questions (see the second quotation) and readily offered to help visitors find answers to any unanswered questions (see the third quotation).

We were able to ask all types of questions; it was an open environment, questions were strongly encouraged. I liked that it was like debating, a really educational environment. [male, *Piecing It Together*, 46, New Jersey]

The guide was very willing and able to respond to questions. I had the sense that I could ask whatever I wanted to ask and she would have some information about it. I would

say the visitors asking her questions worked better for me [than the guide asking questions of visitors] because we had a small group so her doing the asking seemed less necessary. [female, *Getting By*, 31, California]

The tour guide did a very good job of responding to visitors' questions. A couple questions he did not know but said he would look them up or could contact us or referred us to the Web site. He was very upfront and honest about what he knew and if he did not know, which I liked. [female, *Kitchen Conversation, Getting By*, 42, Ohio]

MAKING CONNECTIONS BETWEEN HISTORY AND CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

When directly asked, many interviewees who participated in *Getting By* or *Piecing It Together* and/or *Kitchen Conversation* recalled their educators making connections between history being presented and contemporary issues, albeit to varying degrees. Several among them described how educators repeatedly and/or effectively made connections, for example by calling attention to the Lower East Side neighborhood today and encouraging comparisons between residents now and then (see the first and second quotations below). A few said educators made less overt or more general connections to past immigration issues that exist today (see the third quotation).

We did [make connections between history and contemporary issues], too, because the Lower East Side is still an area where immigrants live in tenements down the street and around the corner. So we were making connections between what was happening in the 1800s and in 2007. (How?) The guide did it really well, he talked about the fact that the great-grandchildren of those early immigrants who could not wait to get out of the Lower East Side are now coming back and renting very expensive apartments that have been rehabbed here. Nice little irony . . . and he asked lots of questions about what we saw on the street like we saw lots of Asian, maybe Chinese, signs so we talked about that. [female, *Getting By*, 54, Ohio]

[The guide] did point out that there are still countries and places where you have people working for minimum wages in these same conditions and we still buy their products and it is the only way they are still working that way. So he did point out that [immigration issues] are not just in the past and gone; we are not living now in utopia. It worked very well because it made you think more about what is happening around you. [female, *Piecing It Together*, 35, Brooklyn]

[Making connections between history and contemporary issues] was handled very well during the tour. I cannot give a single example but I would say that summed up the whole experience was imagining yesterday and living today and making that connection between the two. [female, *Kitchen Conversation, Getting By*, 52, New Jersey]

Some *Getting By*, *Piecing It Together* and/or *Kitchen Conversation* participants said they would have liked their educators to make more connections between history and contemporary issues (see the first quotation below). A few others did not recall educators making any connections between history and contemporary issues during their tours but added they prefer to make such connections themselves post-visit (see the second quotation). One interviewee disagreed with how the educator contrasted historical versus contemporary immigration (see the third quotation).

I would have liked to have seen more connections between history and contemporary issues. [The guide] could have talked more about that but there was not a lot of discussion about contemporary issues. [Female, *Piecing It Together*, 36, Manhattan]

(Making connections between history and contemporary issues?) No, that was not done during the tour part but we can all do that on our own later. Things that you learn remind you of things going on right now. That is maybe what the *Kitchen Conversation* was supposed to be about. [female, *Kitchen Conversation, Piecing It Together*, 65, California]

One or two times [the guide] alluded to current immigration and tried to state that immigrants were all welcome with open arms back then and now they are not so much but it seems like every wave of immigrants has had trouble. (So this was a connection between history and contemporary issues?) Yes, but I do not think immigration was quite so idyllic back then as he was trying to paint it. [male, *Getting By*, 49, Minnesota]

One interviewee said the educator's political viewpoints were apparent when discussing current issues during the tour, whereas the facilitator of similar discussions during the post-tour *Kitchen Conversation* remained neutral on current issues (see the quotation below).

[Making connections between history and contemporary issues] was pretty well done during the tour. Our guide seemed to have some definite political views that came through a little bit, and, frankly, I sympathize with him. (For example?) He talked about rent control and rent stabilization in NYC currently and the welfare system currently, and it became very clear by what he was saying that he was on one side of the issue, whereas the woman who ran our *Kitchen Conversation* was, I thought, very neutral and very good at just listening to what people had to say. (How did people respond to the tour guide?) I do not think there were any disgruntled visitors or anything, I just happened to notice. [female, *Kitchen Conversation, Getting By*, 33, Canada]

In contrast to those who participated in the other tours and *Kitchen Conversation*, interviewees who participated in just *Confino Living History* recalled education staff (i.e., educator, facilitator, or costumed interpreter) making few, if any, connections between history and contemporary issues (see the first quotation below). A few interviewees said they connected past and present immigration issues themselves following tour participation (see the second quotation). A few others said they would like the tour to make connections between history and contemporary issues (see the third quotation), whereas another said it was better to focus on just the history to avoid political issues (see the fourth quotation).

(Making connections between history and current issues?) That technique works well but not much of that happened. Obviously the United States still receives a lot of immigrants and there are issues of assimilation and intolerance so it was very easy to see what happened in the past is ongoing. [male, *Confino Living History*, 52, California]

There was not a whole lot of [making connections between history and contemporary issues] except in the debriefing and preparation portions [of the tour] because [the actress] cannot talk about anything beyond 1916. So that discussion happens afterwards with your family. [female, *Confino Living History*, 42, Maryland]

I do not remember [making connections between history and contemporary issues] coming up at all during our tour . . . but it is relevant with the immigrant issues you read

about in the newspaper today. So I would like to see more of that during the tour. [female, *Confino Living History*, 43, Pennsylvania]

[Making connections between history and contemporary issues] really was not emphasized; the tour focused more on the past. I think that is okay; you do not want to forget that there are still immigrants who struggle but sometimes you delve into political issues if you talk too much about current events. So I do not think I would have emphasized it any more than was done. [female, *Confino Living History*, 37, California]

OTHER EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES

When asked to identify any additional educational strategies used during their Museum visit, interviewees mentioned several, including: the film shown in the Museum's store; the costumed interpretation and role-playing in *Confino Living History*; the use of visual aids (e.g., photographs) and artifacts; the audio recording in *Getting By*; viewing an unrestored apartment; and viewing the tenement from the outside prior to entering.

POST-MUSEUM VISIT BEHAVIOR

When asked what kinds of activities, if any, they have engaged in as a result of their visit to the Museum, most interviewees said they have talked about their visit experiences with others. They discussed their visit, family history and/or current immigration issues immediately afterwards with others in their visit group, particularly children (see the first quotation below), and/or in the days and weeks since with family, friends, colleagues, and even strangers (see the second quotation). Interviewees said they have shared details of their experiences in these conversations and recommended others visit (see the third quotation). Additionally, many said they intend to visit the Museum again.

We spent hours with my mother and her father afterwards just reminiscing on their past right after we came home that night. My kids wanted to know if my mother had that many people living with her and were surprised to learn she shared a bed with two of her sisters. [My kids] were able to visualize it now that they have seen the size of a bed, a room and know it was not like it is now. We hope to visit again as soon as school is out. [female, *Piecing It Together*, 35, Brooklyn]

I just told a lot of people [about the experience]. Pretty much everybody I have come into contact with since with whom I have had a real conversation, I have talked about it. [male, *Getting By*, 42, Manhattan]

I have told people to visit the Museum, anyone who is going to New York City. My own family who still lives there I have told them all about it and to spread the word about what a great experience it was for us. I think the experience has sparked certain discussions about cultural differences with our children . . . and I have used what I learned in conversation recently so it was definitely a wonderful experience. We gained a lot from it. [female, *Confino Living History*, 47, North Carolina]

Some interviewees said they have engaged in learning more about immigration history by reading books purchased in the Museum's store or visiting the Museum's Web site or related Web sites (see the first quotation below). A few said they have revisited family history (see the second quotation), while a

couple others said their children have voluntarily worked on school projects about immigration. A couple interviewees said they have reexamined their own attitudes toward immigration and are now more aware of immigration issues (see the third and fourth quotations).

Other than tell my friends about it, we did buy some books at the [Museum]'s bookstore that we have read. During the tour the garment factory fire came up and we have talked about Googling that and learning more about it but have not had the chance yet.
[female, *Piecing It Together*, 53, Canada]

A day or two after [the Museum visit] we went to Queens to have dinner with cousins and had long conversations about my grandparents, and other conversations since with people about their families and the immigrant experience for them. And I bought a book. [female, *Getting By*, 49, Virginia]

[The Museum] has given me a bit more tolerance for newcomers. Even though I am an immigrant myself sometimes when you come [to the United States] . . . you more or less relax and say, 'Now we're here; let the other people struggle to get here, too.' But I think maybe more could be done in favor of the new immigrants. And the Museum has provided that to me, has broadened my experience. I would like to participate more.
[male, *Piecing It Together*, 46, New Jersey]

I have shared this experience with three to four colleagues and told them this was not a museum experience you would expect: go see what it is about. I have tried to question my own feelings about immigration and what is right and wrong, this whole dichotomy of American life living with immigrants. Now I am paying attention to these issues and watch for them. [male, *Kitchen Conversation, Confino Living History*, 53, Virginia]